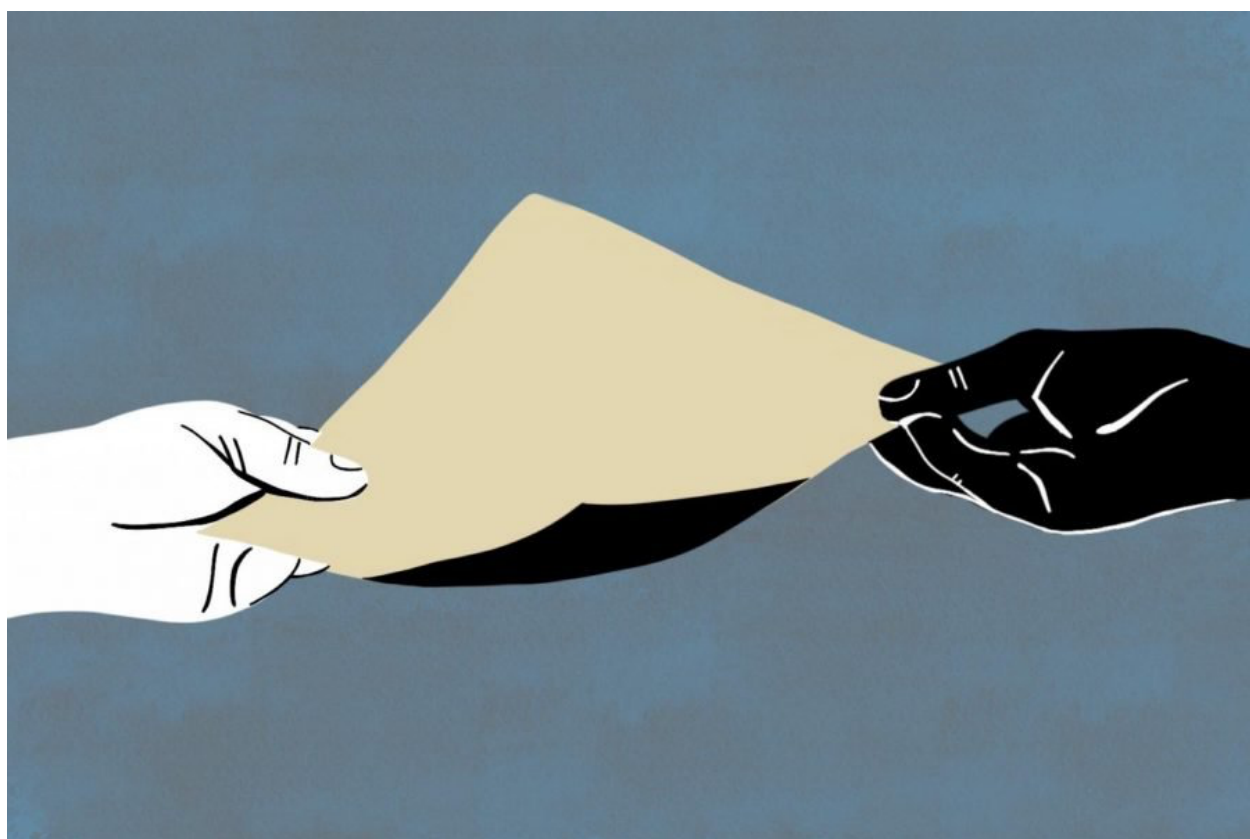


The Daily Northwestern

NORTHWESTERN AND EVANSTON'S ONLY DAILY NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1881

Reparations Stakeholders Authority of Evanston announces a community reparations fund to complement city initiative



[Daily file illustration by Emma Ruck](#)

Comprised of a term-limited team of Black residents, the RSAE will be responsible for fundraising, developing grant processes and administering grants toward reparations work.

[Maia Spoto](#), City Editor

February 3, 2021

The Reparations Stakeholders Authority of Evanston is set to establish an Evanston Reparations Community Fund, which will be housed at the Evanston Community Foundation.

While the city's \$10 million reparations fund can only be used for housing programs and economic development, the RSAE fund, will allow the community to pursue other avenues for repair, Ald. Robin Rue Simmons (5th) said.

In addition to housing and economic development, the RSAE fund will contribute toward education, health and wellness and cultural support. The fund will also continue reparations work after tax revenue for the city's current reparations program is no longer available.

Comprised of a term-limited team of Black residents, the RSAE will be responsible for fundraising, developing grant processes and administering grants toward reparations work.

"It is important that the Reparations Stakeholders Authority is governing and managing, leading and guiding this fund," Rue Simmons said. "That it is a voice that represents the collective body of the Black community, and what reparations means to the Black community."

Rue Simmons initiated the RSAE idea a year ago alongside Rev. Michael Nabors, Pastor Monté Dillard, Ald. Peter Braithwaite (2nd), Henry Wilkins, Spencer Jourdain and Dino Robinson. The RSAE is a component of the National African American Reparations Commission's 10-point Reparations Plan. The commission [endorsed](#) Evanston's reparations program last summer.

The team, initially led by Dillard, Nabors and Robinson, will model the convening of community members during initial public meetings in 2019 that set priorities for the city's existing reparations program.

Robinson, founder of the Shorefront Legacy Center, said the RSAE will use the guidelines set up by the city's Equity and Empowerment Commission as a starting point in its work.

“We are prioritizing whatever the community prioritizes first,” Robinson said. “The Stakeholders Authority is really a conduit where we’ll listen to the residents and what they’re looking for.”

The fund will include one pool of money for immediate use and another for long-term growth. Contributors will be permitted to earmark funds toward one of the two funding pools, Robinson said.

Joi-Anissa Russell, ECF vice president of philanthropy and communications, said she is excited to see momentum building behind the RSAE fund.

“This effort has definitely been led by community members, and we are just one piece of this whole historic moment,” Russell said. “We’re really proud to hold the fund and see what (the RSAE) has in store.”

Community members can attend the virtual RSAE meeting set for Feb. 18. At the meeting, leaders will begin setting criteria for its application and fund-release process.

“We want to make sure we are acting responsibly, making it less cumbersome and having a framework of accountability,” Robinson said. “The important thing is that the distribution of funds is dictated by the harmed community and distributed by members of this harmed community.”

Angeli Mittal contributed reporting.