

2025 Leadership Summit

November 7-8 | Atlanta

Friday, November 7

12:00–1:00 PM — Summit Registration & Welcome Lunch

The Carter Center | 453 John Lewis Freedom Parkway NE, Atlanta, GA 30307

Please join us for a casual buffet lunch to kick off the summit and (re)connect with our learning community!

1:00–4:30 PM — 2025 Facing History Leadership Summit Day One

The Carter Center | 453 John Lewis Freedom Parkway NE, Atlanta, GA 30307

Join us at the inspirational Carter Center for a day of learning and exploration centered around the fundamental principles of justice and equality. We'll examine the complex challenges we face in the ongoing struggle for civil rights while honoring remarkable achievements of upstanders who have persisted in the name of progress and deepening our shared learning about the history of this work and what it takes to continue it today.

- **1:00–3:00 PM — Building Inclusive Communities: Lessons from Atlanta**

- **Welcome and Connections**

Welcome remarks, Summit framing, and a look into Facing History's critical work ahead from Facing History staff and leadership.

Jill Garling – Chair, Board of Directors, Facing History & Ourselves

Desmond K. Blackburn, PhD – President and CEO, Facing History & Ourselves

- **Atlanta Panel**

This panel discussion will explore Atlanta's history—and its transformation into a global metropolis known for economic empowerment and social progress. Our panelists will delve into the city's impressive advancements and its ongoing challenges, providing key insights and lessons for building more inclusive communities today.

Shirley Franklin – Former Mayor of the City of Atlanta

Dr. Maurice Hobson – Historian, Social Scientist, Africana Studies Scholar, Professor at Georgia State University

Moderator: Jason Butler – Program Associate, Facing History & Ourselves

- **3:00–3:20 PM — Break**

- **3:30–4:30 PM — Breakout Sessions**

Today's breakout sessions will delve into the historical context of the struggle for civil rights and equality in Atlanta and beyond. Grounded in Facing History themes on US history, fostering civil discourse, contemporary antisemitism, building bridges across difference, these sessions will provide insights into recent scholarship, explorations of key Facing History tools, and a foundation of learning for the rest of the summit.

- **Lessons from Little Rock: A Conversation with Terrence Roberts**

Join Dr. Terrence Roberts, author and member of "The Little Rock Nine", in a reflective conversation examining his book, *Lessons from Little Rock*, and his personal story as one of the nine students to desegregate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957. How does this history shape the pursuit of educational justice and equity today? This session will also highlight the updated Facing History unit "Choices in Little Rock" and explore the lasting significance of this history.

Dr. Terrence Roberts – Author, Activist and Facing History Board of Scholars Member

Moderated by Francesca Colletti – Executive Director, Facing History & Ourselves New England

- **Crucial Conversations in Challenging Times**

Facing History's approach to navigating complex conversations about identity, community, and history empowers educators and leaders to confidently navigate diverse opinions, respond to unplanned moments, and create spaces where all voices can be heard. This session will explore the tools and resources Facing History has developed to support this proven approach.

Sarah Shields – Director, School Partnerships, Facing History & Ourselves

- **Combating Contemporary Antisemitism: Educator Resources**

What kind of impact are we having combating antisemitism? Is our professional learning helping educators gain the necessary tools to address this issue in the classroom? The continued rise of contemporary antisemitism presents a danger to our civic values and our democratic co-existence, as it erodes civil dialogue, pits us against one another, and reinforces negative stereotypes and conspiracies about Jews. This interactive session will peer into resources for Brave Classrooms, our online professional learning offering, and examine evaluation results to assess impact.

Dimitry Anselme – Chief Officer, Growth & Engagement, Facing History & Ourselves

- **Standing Together Against Hate: How Allyship Can Strengthen Black and Jewish Communities**

In a world facing rising extremism and hate, the need for solidarity has never been more critical. This session will examine the historical and contemporary challenges of anti-Black racism and antisemitism, explore the dynamics between the two communities, and discuss the complexity of moments of solidarity and distance, considering the various choices people can make in the face of bigotry and hate.

Dexter Britt – Program Associate, National, South, Facing History & Ourselves

David Rhodes – Senior Program Associate, Jewish Education, Facing History & Ourselves

4:30–5:30 PM — Carter Presidential Library Self Guided Tour

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum | 441 John Lewis Freedom Parkway NE, Atlanta, GA 30307

The Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum offers an inspirational look at the 39th President. The Museum traces Carter's life from his childhood in Plains, Georgia through his Nobel Peace Prize-winning work at The Carter Center. All summit attendees are invited to explore at their own pace and enjoy photographs, historic artifacts, and interactive displays.

5:30–7:00 PM — Dinner Reception

The Carter Center | 453 John Lewis Freedom Parkway NE, Atlanta, GA 30307

We'll enjoy dinner in the beautiful Carter Center while we reflect on the day's sessions and connect as a learning community.

Saturday, November 8

7:30–8:30 AM — Breakfast

Emory Conference Center Hotel | 1615 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

Whether you are staying at the Emory Conference Center Hotel or not, you are welcome to join us for breakfast!

8:45–11:40 AM — 2025 Facing History Leadership Summit Day Two

Emory Conference Center Hotel | 1615 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

Reconvening as a learning community and building on the previous day's foundations, we'll examine how lessons of history are being applied to today's most pressing challenges, how those challenges resonate within the classroom, and how Facing History is working right now to empower educators.

- **8:45–10:45 AM — Moving Beyond Polarization: Dialogue Across Difference**

- **Welcome Remarks**

Welcome remarks and from Facing History staff and leadership.

- **The Sum of Us: A Keynote and Q&A with Heather McGhee**

Heather McGhee is the author of the *New York Times* bestselling book *The Sum of Us*. She will discuss the importance of confronting historical injustices and building cross-racial alliances to achieve shared prosperity and true democracy, and explore how this crucial work can begin in the classroom.

Heather McGhee – Author, “The Sum of Us”

- **Insights from the Field: A Panel Discussion**

Abby Weiss, Smith Family Senior Vice President & Chief Officer of Program and Thought Leadership, will moderate a panel discussion that will feature district-level leaders and other partners who will offer insights into the state of education in their communities as well as the opportunities for our district partnership model.

- **10:45–10:55 AM — Break**

- **11:00–11:50 AM — Breakout Sessions**

Today’s breakouts will showcase Facing History’s current initiatives in schools and classrooms, and highlight the powerful impact that we can have when we empower educators to build classrooms that promote collaborative dialogue and support students in becoming reflective, empathetic upstanders.

- **Strengthening Democracy**

Facing History’s new civic education resources engage students in learning about the fundamentals of what makes democracy work. This session will explore the multifaceted nature of democracy, how we can assess the strength of democracy, and the importance of civic engagement in democracy.

Erica Hodgkin – Senior Director, Civic Education, Facing History & Ourselves

- **Evaluation at Facing History**

Join us to explore the powerful evidence behind Facing History & Ourselves’ work. Drawing from decades of internal evaluation, we’ll demonstrate how our program consistently leads to meaningful results, including improved academic success, stronger civic engagement, and a more positive school climate. You will leave with a deep understanding of our impact, compelling statements to use in your work, and a look ahead at our plans to continue measuring and sharing our unique value in the education landscape.

Dennis Barr – Senior Director, Evaluation, Facing History & Ourselves

- **District Partnerships: Collaborating with Facing History for Lasting Impact**

Join us to explore how Facing History’s district partnerships help districts reach important academic goals by providing high-quality instructional materials and customized professional development. Learn how we have supported districts in improving educator confidence, meeting state mandates, and bolstering student engagement, and how we can continue to spur meaningful change in more and more districts.

Jason Butler – Program Associate, National, Facing History & Ourselves

Jeremy Nesoff – Senior Director, District Partnerships, Facing History & Ourselves

- **Building Belonging through Social Studies and English Language Arts**

School leaders know that a feeling of belonging is essential for student well-being and academic mindsets and perseverance. In this session, learn how Facing History curricular resources in English Language Arts and Social Studies combine academic rigor with the development of students’ social emotional competencies to deepen their understanding of what it means to truly belong – and to create a space of belonging for others.

Lisa Lefstein-Berusch – Program Director, Ohio, Facing History & Ourselves

- **11:50 AM–12:40 PM — Nourishing Connections: Reflections Over Lunch**

Dr. Steven Becton, Chief Officer of Regional Operations & Organizational Equity, will join us over lunch to guide us in a reflection of the day’s learnings as we prepare to visit local historic landmarks and cultural institutions.

1:30–4:30 PM — Afternoon Programming | Optional Excursions & Tours

Multiple Locations

All summit attendees are invited to participate in one museum or landmark tour of their choosing. Additional information about the tours and a preference survey will be shared with all registered guests in September.

- **1:30-3:00 PM – APEX Museum**

In the heart of historic Sweet Auburn district, experience African-American history at the APEX (African-American Panoramic Experience) Museum. Our visit will begin with two short films and then guests will tour the gallery, viewing exhibits like *Sweet Auburn Street of Pride*, which celebrates Black achievement and entrepreneurship, and *Africa: The Untold Stories*, a comprehensive look at ancient African history that challenges common textbook narratives.

- **2:00-4:30 PM — The Breman Museum**

The Breman Museum is a cultural center that weaves Jewish History through everyday life. Visitors will be guided on a tour of the permanent Holocaust exhibition, *Absence of Humanity: The Holocaust Years 1933–1945*. Following the guided tour, visitors will attend a presentation with Holocaust survivor and author Robert Ratonyi.

- **2:30-4:30 PM — National Center for Civil and Human Rights**

The National Center for Civil and Human Rights is more than a museum—it's a journey into truth, memory, and movements. On this tour you'll explore the stories of past freedom fighters and today's changemakers. NCCHR reopens on November 8, 2025, after extensive renovations, and we are excited to offer this opening day tour to our Facing History community. If the opening date shifts, you'll be notified and reassigned to your second or third choice.

- **3:00-4:30 PM — Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park**

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park & Preservation District was established to protect and promote the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. This visit will offer opportunities for inspiration and contemplation through a self-guided tour that explores key sites such as MLK Jr's birth home, the King Center, and most notably a visit to the Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church where guests will listen to sermons delivered by Dr. King. This tour requires walking between sites (0.6 miles round trip) outside.

5:00–7:00 PM — Dinner Reception

Auburn Angel | 302 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

We'll gather for a farewell dinner at Auburn Angel, a beautifully restored restaurant in the heart of Atlanta's Sweet Auburn District. We will take time to celebrate the connections we've made and will look ahead to our collective work as ambassadors supporting Facing History's growth and expansion!