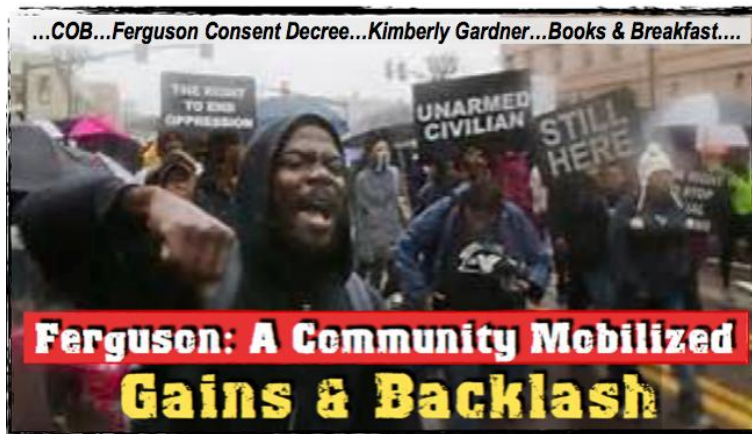


# List of Achievements Resulting from Ferguson Unrest

By Johnson Lancaster



Community organizers are gearing up to resist attacks on civil liberties, labor, women and people of color. Locally, the events of Ferguson recede in the rear view mirror of history and observers are asking the question "What did we gain in the aftermath?"

Below are at least 14 tangible

achievements we can identify:

- Thousands of people mobilized in massive protests and demonstrations nationwide inspired by events in Ferguson following the execution of teenager Michael Brown by Ferguson jackbooted thug Darren Wilson.
- Attention was focused on a study by the Arch City Defenders that documents St. Louis metropolitan municipal courts treating Black residents as ATMs, imposing punitive warrants and exorbitant fines that enrich the coffers of the suburbs at the expense of people who can least afford the penalties.
- This study and the subsequent publicity generated led to sweeping municipal court reforms, among them, a 20 percent limit on how much of St. Louis County municipalities' budgets can be raised by municipal court fines, down from 30 percent.
- Kimberly Gardner was carried into the office of St. Louis Circuit Attorney by the momentum of dissatisfaction with the police and criminal injustice system.
- Outgoing St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce was compelled by new video, photographic and documented evidence to reopen a fatal police involved shooting and charge former St. Louis police officer Jason Stockley with the murder of Lamar Smith.

- Ferguson Commission member Rasheen Aldridge unseated Rodney Hubbard Sr. to become the committeeman of St. Louis's Fifth Ward and protester Bruce Franks Jr. unseated Penny Hubbard for State Rep. of the 78<sup>th</sup> District.
- A broad coalition of groups including CAPCR, OBS and the Aldermanic Black Caucus successfully instituted a Civilian Oversight Board as an additional check on incidents of police brutality meted out against residents of the city of St. Louis.
- The COB successfully circumvented a legal challenge brought by two St. Louis police officers to prohibit access to required statements law enforcement personnel must make to the SLPD internal affairs when they were being investigated.
- The U.S. Department of Justice imposed a consent decree on the City of Ferguson to redress systemic oppression of Black residents by the corrupt police department and municipal court.
- Three Black Ferguson residents were elected to the City Council; Ella Jones, Wesley Bell and LaVerne Mitchum.
- Gov. Jay Nixon established Ferguson Commission to review causes behind Ferguson unrest and make recommendations. These recommendations influenced policy efforts coming out of President Barack Obama's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Initiative.
- A successor organization to the Ferguson Commission called Forward Through Ferguson has grown out of the need to ensure recommendations are not ignored.
- The momentum from Ferguson unrest reinvigorated social and economic justice movements nationwide and sparked campus activism that led to the St. Louis University Clock Tower Accords. The agreement increased the budget for the African-American studies department and created more opportunities for students of color, while cultivating a positive environment for racial equity on campus and throughout the St. Louis region.
- The local organizers of Hand Up United, Anti-Racism Collective, St. Louis Artists and South City Solidarity emerged along with other networks

nationwide to form the political education infrastructure for resistance against ongoing repression of the expanding authoritarian regime.

America is descending into a resurgent era of fascism. We have no choice but to maintain the momentum of sustained and prolonged resistance. We must reject the misguided, ill-conceived efforts of right-wing ideologues to return our society to the “good old days” of American apartheid and xenophobia.

CAPCR will continue to advocate for true police accountability in the face of the so-called “blue lives matter movement.” This discredited concept is nothing more than an attempt to deflect attention from years of police abuse and misconduct. A fed up community has mobilized to challenge the systematic disrespect from public servants who are paid by our tax dollars.