



# NAACP

## PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONFERENCE

### PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Allegheny County

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### **GOOD WORK & ADVOCACY LEADS TO TERMINATION**

On the web page of the Montgomery County of Pennsylvania Public Defender, you will find the following words in describing the climate of their office, "Client-centered advocacy, Community outreach, and Holistic Results. Clearly the Commissioners have a different interpretation of what those words mean since on February 26, 2020, they terminated the positions of Chief Public Defender Dean Beer, and Deputy Public Defender Keisha Hudson Brooks.

Both Chief Defender Dean Beer and Deputy Defender Keisha Hudson Brooks exemplified what it means to advocate for clients, reach out to the community and produce results that impact individuals and families. The community at large is thankful for their work in valuing indigent persons who deserve the same effective representation as someone who can afford to pay for a private attorney.

Kenneth L. Huston, President of the NAACP Pennsylvania State Conference fully supports the action of the presidents of the six Montgomery County Branches (Ambler Branch, President Shaykh Anwar; Muhammad, Cheltenham Branch, President Dr. Craig Browne; Main Line Branch, President Diana Robertson; Norristown Branch, President John Milligan; Pottstown Branch, President Jonathan Corson; Willow Grove, President Valerie Ward; and their efforts to bring some understanding as to why these terminations took place. The travesty of this action is going to have a negative rippling impact on not just Montgomery County, but the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Criminal Justice reform in many areas is needed and in Montgomery County, at least two individuals saw it as their mission to advocate for the kind of reform that if adopted would improve the lives of those who are unfortunately most victimized by the system. This fight is not over. The demand for answers is not over. The local branches will continue to advocate for criminal justice reform as well as support the programs initiated by Chief Defender Dean Beer.

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest nonpartisan civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities. The Pennsylvania State Conference was established in 1934 and pursues the same mission throughout the Commonwealth.