

County Executive Crowley: Appoints Jeffery Roman as Office on African American Affairs Executive Director

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MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley announced today that Jeffery Roman will assume the role of Executive Director of the Office on African American Affairs (OAAA) effective July 13, 2020. Roman’s appointment, pending confirmation by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, will enable the County to play a larger part in advancing health and racial equity throughout the region.

“In the face of COVID-19 and racial unrest that has reached a boiling point, the County is ready to step up and build up our region as a place where all residents can thrive,” said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. “Jeff Roman is an organizer and a mobilizer. With Jeff at the helm of the Office on African American Affairs, I’m certain we can bring together our communities and institutions to achieve health and racial equity for all.”

Milwaukee County’s vision is to be the healthiest County in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity, and OAAA has been a key driver in Milwaukee County’s efforts to shift its own institutional power and dismantle white supremacy and racist policies and practices. Moving forward, the office will work to increase coordination among institutional players that advance health and racial equity throughout all 19 municipalities in Milwaukee County.

“Government leaders along with grassroots organizations are actively responding to ‘crisis’ with strategy, hope and action,” said Roman. “There is hard work being done from the big corner offices at the County Courthouse, to the corner blocks hardest hit by poverty, violence and disinvestment. I am eager to bring together these efforts and lift up the voices of Black, African American, Indigenous, Latinx and

other people of color in Milwaukee County.”

Roman is a Milwaukee native who has extensive experience mobilizing and supporting equity-based and community-centered programs, policy advocacy and collective impact initiatives. He has a long track record of working with grassroots, philanthropy, nonprofits and the public sector, as well as diverse groups of Milwaukee residents. Roman was also a two-term commissioner and past chair of the Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission; executive director of the nonprofit Urban Roots Milwaukee; benchmark coordinator and program officer for the Milwaukee County Brighter Futures and Milwaukee Minority Male Achievement Program; and equal opportunity coordinator at the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute. He is a member of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, National Black Child Development Institute and Center for Black Equity. Roman is also a founding member and board member of BYP 100, a national member-based and direct-action organization that mobilizes and trains Black youth, activists, scholars, innovators and policy makers ages 18-35.

Roman takes the place of Nicole Brookshire, who was appointed by County Executive Chris Abele in 2017 as OAAA’s founding executive director. Since 2017, OAAA has secured and guided Milwaukee County to:

- Become the first jurisdiction in the United States to declare racism a public health crisis;
- Support the County in focusing its first strategic plan in 20 years on racial equity;
- Develop and implement a racial equity tool to analyze the racial impact of cuts and investments on the 2020 and 2021 budgets;
- Establish membership in the national Government Alliance on Race and Equity;
- Train more than 3,600 county employees in racial equity and implicit bias;
- Launch a Racial Equity Ambassador program to elevate employees at all levels of Milwaukee County’s departments to advance health and racial equity;
- Implement a survey of County employees to provide their perspectives on racial equity and inform future policy and strategy; and
- Build critical community and institutional partnerships.

Moving forward, OAAA and Milwaukee County will seek to partner with the City of Milwaukee, the County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council and suburban municipalities, the State of Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Delegation of elected officials, the Milwaukee County Human Rights Commission, Community Justice Council, the

County and State COVID-19 Emergency Operations Centers, the business community and more.