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Desmond Meade Receives Prestigious 2021 MacArthur Fellowship Award

President of Florida Rights Restoration Coalition honored for work restoring voting rights and empowering people

ORLANDO, FL — January 28, 2021 Desmond Meade, Executive Director of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRC), has been selected as a 2021 Fellow and recipient of a “genius grant” by the John D. And Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The MacArthur Fellowship is a prestigious honor given in recognition of a person’s originality, creativity, self-direction, and capacity to contribute importantly to society.

The awardees are individuals who work in a wide range of fields. Recipients may be writers, scientists, artists, social scientists, humanists, teachers, or entrepreneurs, and are selected through a stringent selection process.

“I am both humbled and extremely grateful to be named a 2021 MacArthur Fellow, and to receive this year’s genius grant,” Meade said. “I am honored that others would think that I am deserving of such a prestigious award.”

Accompanied with a “no strings attached” stipend of \$625,000, the Fellowship Program is intended to encourage people of outstanding talent to pursue their own creative, intellectual, and professional inclinations.

The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition is excited that its Executive Director was chosen as a Fellow. “This recognition of Desmond highlights the FRRC’s work to expand democracy, stimulate our economy by creating jobs and access to housing for returning citizens, and develop a new narrative that recognizes and honors the humanity in all of us,” said FRRC Deputy Director Neil Volz.

Desmond Meade is well known throughout the State of Florida and country as a civil rights leader and criminal justice reform activist. A returning citizen himself, and author of “Let My People Vote,” the Macarthur Fellowship adds to the growing list of recognition that Meade has received because of his work and leadership. From being named Central Floridian and Floridian of the Year, to being honored in TIME Magazine as one of the 100 Most Influential People in 2019.

About the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

FRRC is a grassroots, membership organization run by Returning Citizens (Formerly Convicted Persons) who are dedicated to ending the disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions and creating a more comprehensive and humane reentry system that will enhance successful reentry, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety. For more information, visit <https://floridarrc.com/>.

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