

MERCY PICTURES

DOCUMENTARY:

A Fire You Can't Put Out

**A film by Mark Vikram Purushotham
and Dr. Andrew M. Manis**

Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth altered the course of history and gave us the blueprint for **Courage** in the face of unimaginable danger, **Love** in the face of pernicious hatred, and a **Guiding Principle** through which we can earn true reconciliation.

“A Fire You Can't Put Out” is a documentary that has been in development and production for two and a half years. We are eager to finish conducting our interviews this spring and move into post production this summer.



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We have interviewed renowned scholars and public figures who understand the historical context from which our story emerges.

We have done painstaking research, supervised by historian Dr. Andrew M. Manis, author of the definitive biography on Reverend Shuttlesworth.

We also need to create the soundscape that will accompany the distinctive visuals of this grand narrative.



Avenues of Funding:

1. National Foundations:

including the Lilly Foundation, The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African History & Culture, and the National Endowment for Humanities. A large commitment has been secured from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

2. Academic Institutions:

including George Washington University, Xavier University, Emory University, Alabama State University, and Morehouse College. A large commitment has been secured from the University of Cincinnati.

3. Corporate Sponsors:

including Proctor & Gamble, Kroger, 5th 3rd Bank, Seimens Corp, Paycor and Fidelity Investments.

4. Individual Donors & Non-Profits:

Justine Giboney, leader of the And Campaign in Atlanta, is the latest advisor to join our team, and will be helping bring other stakeholders to the table.

We have received support from individual donors who have participated in meaningful conversations with us at small gatherings. They have been moved by our by our presentations and are grateful for the project.



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Our country grapples with its long, arduous history of racial divisions. Important lessons can be drawn from the wisdom of Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth, a transcendent figure in American history who has been largely unheralded.

The fight for Civil Rights was arguably the most important and consequential movement of the last century. It points the way forward for our country even today. There's more work to do.

Our production team is looking for funding partners who recognize this as a compelling story and understand the need to share it with a broad audience.



ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



Mark Curnutte is a full-time faculty member and instructor of social justice at his alma mater, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. A 34-year newspaper reporter, the final 25 at *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, he was part of the “Enquirer” team that won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting for “Seven Days of Heroin.” Reporting on social justice issues, he was selected three times (in 2013, 2014, and 2019) by the Society of Professional Journalists as the top reporter in Ohio.



John Archibald is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and columnist for the *Birmingham News*, *The Huntsville Times*, and the *Press-Register*. He graduated from the University of Alabama in 1986 and began work as a reporter for the Birmingham News. He began writing his column in 2004, where he focuses on politics. In 2018, Archibald was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary “for lyrical and courageous commentary that is rooted in Alabama but has a national resonance.”



Cheryl D. Grant, J.D., M.Div., retired Judge, served 20 years in the Judiciary and a total of 59 years in the legal and criminal justice professions. She served as a social worker, police officer, Assistant U. S. Attorney for Southern District of Ohio, and assistant professor of Business Law. She was Chief Investigator in the Cincinnati Office of Municipal Investigations, public defender, and the Assistant Ohio Attorney General. She is the owner of a private practice of law, concentrating in Civil Rights litigation, family law, and criminal law. She currently serves as Associate Minister of the Zion Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio.



Reverend Devon Jerome Crawford is the National Executive Director of the Multifaith Initiative to End Mass Incarceration. Founded by Sen. Raphael Warnock, the Multifaith Initiative leverages the power of U.S. faith leaders and communities to demand and promote an end to mass incarceration at the local and national levels through training, advocacy, and direct action. Prior to leading EMI, Rev. Crawford was the inaugural Staff Director of the William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice in the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.



Courtis John Fuller is a news broadcaster in Cincinnati, Ohio, who is active in politics and in local community affairs. Fuller is an on-air personality at WLWT-TV. He was named “Cincinnati’s Favorite TV Personality” by the Broadcast Hall of Fame. He is a member of several community boards and commissions, including the Greater Cincinnati Tall Stacks Commission and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees.



Diane McWhorter is an American journalist, commentator, and author who has written extensively about race and the history of Civil Rights. She won the Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction and the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize in 2002 for *Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama, the Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution* (Simon & Schuster, 2001; reprinted with a new afterword, 2013).



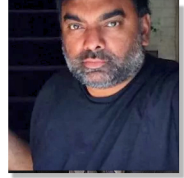
Justin Giboney is an attorney, political strategist, and civic leader based in Atlanta, GA. As the co-founder and president of the AND Campaign, a Christian civic organization, Justin focuses on the intersection between faith and politics. In 2012 and 2016 Georgia’s 5th congressional district elected him as a delegate for the Democratic National Convention. He’s the co-author of *Compassion (&) Conviction – The AND Campaign’s Guide to Faithful Civic Engagement* and his work has been featured in men and prompted authorities to reexamine numerous killings during the Civil Rights era.

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OUR TEAM

This film seeks to tell the story of one of the most significant and courageous figures of the American Civil Rights movement, whose story has been largely forgotten by history. It also intends to locate Rev. Shuttlesworth not merely as a historical figure, but one whose word and action continue to inspire and inform the fight for equality and justice today.

Director and Producer, Mark V. Purushotham Mark has worked in the media communications field for thirty years. Programming he has contributed to has appeared on MSNBC, The History Channel, and the A&E Network. He was the Co-Producer of "Race to the Moon," a documentary on the Apollo 8 Space Mission which appeared as part of the prestigious "American Experience" Series on PBS. Most recently, his biographical film on Jamaican sociologist and author, Erna Brodber, which was commissioned by Vanderbilt University, premiered at the prestigious New School in Manhattan.



Author and Historian, Andrew M. Manis Andrew Manis is a Emeritus Professor of History at Middle Georgia State University in Macon, Georgia USA. He grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, during the Civil Right era. An ordained Baptist minister, he earned a BA from Samford University in his hometown and an MDiv and PhD from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

Producer, Peter Sasowsky Peter Sasowsky is the founder of Serious Motion Pictures, LLC a script-to-screen production company producing work for commercial clients as well as narrative and documentary films on culture, environment and the arts. His documentary feature Heaven + Earth + Joe Davis, won top honors at SF Indie Film Festival, and Memphis Independent Film Festival. His short narrative film Mojave was awarded best Narrative Short at the Greenpoint Film Festival.



Videographer, Glenn Hartong Glenn Hartong is an Emmy Award winning producer, director, director of photography, and editor. He was a photojournalist and video producer with *The Cincinnati Enquirer* and Cincinnati.com for 26 years. He is currently a partner at ChiliDog Pictures, a production company specializing in narrative and documentary video. His video work has appeared on ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, CNN, CNBC, ESPN, Netflix Deutsche Welle TV, and France24.

Editor, Stacy Doose Emmy award-winning editor Stacy Doose started as a video editor in 1988 on one of the first non-linear systems in the midwest. His work has appeared on PBS, Fox Sports Net, ABC, and the USA Today network. He is an adjunct professor at his alma mater The University of Cincinnati. Other credits include lighting director for The Ohio Players and mixing countless live audio productions.



Local Historian and Researcher, Gina Ruffin Moore is the author of *Cincinnati: The Black America Series* (Arcadia Publishing). She has written several articles for the Cincinnati Enquirer on African-American history. Gina Ruffin Moore is the Learning and Development Manager for the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati. She is an elected member of the Princeton Board of Education and also serves on the board for the Friends of Harriet Beecher Stowe House. BC, CBS, NBC, PBS, CNN, CNBC, ESPN, Netflix Deutsche Welle TV, and France24.

WHEN

A Fire You Can't Put Out aims to be finished for the summer of 2025.

HOW

Would you like to be a part of this special, important film? We are currently seeking sponsors. To learn more on how to get involved as a sponsor, please email mvp@merciypictures.org.