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Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform Appoint New Executive Director Damion Shade

Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR) announced today that Damion Shade, who most recently served as Project Manager for the ProsperOK project at OKPolicy, has been chosen to lead the organization as its next Executive Director. Shade will replace interim director Sarah Edwards, who accepted the role last year after Kris Steele announced his intention to step down to focus on his work with TEEM.

"Damion is an outstanding leader and effective communicator who has the unique ability to bring people of differing opinions together to tackle complex issues and create meaningful solutions," said OCJR Founder and Board Chair Kris Steele. "The entire OCJR Board is elated to welcome Damion as the Executive Director of Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform!"

Shade grew up in Tulsa. His professional career has involved nearly two decades of leadership in public education, journalism, advocacy, criminal justice research, and public policy. Shade is one of the primary architects of Oklahoma's historic Clean Slate legislation, and he has advocated for numerous successful legislative reforms. After nearly three years as the Criminal Justice Policy Analyst at the Oklahoma Policy Institute, Shade served as Project Manager for ProsperOK. During that period Shade also served as the Chair of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) at the State Priorities Partnership Network in Washington DC.

"Assuming the role of Executive Director of Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform is an incredible honor. OCJR wrote the blueprint for criminal justice reform in Oklahoma. I'm truly privileged to lead this team," Shade said. "Together we will work to build a justice system that invests in common-sense strategies to better protect victims and prevent crime while reducing the cost of Oklahoma's incarceration crisis on families. This is a pivotal moment in our state's history, and I appreciate the confidence that the Board of Directors has placed in me."

Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform is a 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission is to serve as a catalyst for systemic change in Oklahoma's criminal legal system to promote just and appropriate accountability while reducing mass incarceration and its long-term harm to families. We are committed to research, education and advocacy. For more information, visit www.okjusticereform.org.

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