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**Forty Acres and A School:  
Black Community Organizers Break \$100,000 Upon Launch of  
Massive Reparations Drive for Black Liberation and Land**

**“This goes beyond HR 40,” says [DiDi Delgado](#). “We have the means and the tools to enact large-scale reparations right now.”**

DiDi Delgado is the head of the nationally-known DiDi Delgado Experience ([#DoneForDiDi](#)), a longtime Boston-area poet, and an organizer for Black liberation. After their success with the 40,000-person Fight Supremacy march in Boston Common in 2017, as well as the \$35,000 raised for [#RentForMoms](#) in December of 2020, today Delgado announces they are ready for a new challenge: 40 Acres And A School.

“This campaign is already off to a strong start, with over \$100,000 raised before we’ve truly begun.” The #DoneForDiDi team pledges to raise a whopping \$1 million this year, a start to their plan to purchase land on which a community center and working farm will be built. Delgado says the farm, likely to be in New England, will provide Black community with sustainable spaces for art, healing, and transformative justice, as well housing and education.

It’s no accident that the #DoneForDiDi team has picked July 3rd to launch what is their largest initiative yet. “In 1852, Frederick Douglas nailed it when he told white people, ‘This Fourth of July is *yours*, not *mine*. *You* may rejoice, *I* must mourn.’ The 4th has been an ‘Independence-If-You’re-White Day’ for centuries, but this weekend we take steps to turn that around.”

**Plans for the farm include:**

- A community healing space for retreat, ritual, and respite
- An intergenerational Freedom school
- A community farm growing food and healing supplies
- Spaces for artistic exploration and expression of Black identities and Black liberation
- Restorative and transformative justice facilitation around cannabis and other issues that have typically resulted in incarceration and oppression for Black communities
- Housing for Black visionaries and freedom fighters
- Accessible and reliable transportation to and from the farm and the school
- Compensation for the Black radical thought leaders who will guide educational programming.

“[Forty Acres and A School](#) is our radical vision to build a liberatory epicenter for transformative futures. This campaign changes the historic redlining of property into literal green: both healing and nutritional plants, with the money earned going directly into the hands of Black folks,” says Delgado.

Fiyah Angel of the #DoneForDiDi team--a longtime organizer and healing practitioner-- says, “This is a project that realizes not only self-determination, sustainability and the means to generational wealth, but also communal healing and remembering of our whole selves in connection with land. All of this has historically been denied the Black community. This is justice for us, by us. It’s food justice, healing justice, land justice, transformative justice - this is medicine.”

Sandy Broadus, a board member for the upcoming non-profit, Done for DiDi Inc, explains the longer-term plan. “Over the next 2 years we are launching a \$5 million fundraising campaign to purchase land, structures, and tools, as well as to pay salaries and provide living space and

transportation. Our farm will create jobs for Black Marginalized Genders (MaGes), and over time will generate sustainable income via sales. This income should allow a buy-back of Black neighborhoods from gentrifiers in the Boston area. Those of us who were thought to be property, we are building power and creating our own space for our humanity, our agency, and our relationship to land and wealth.”

## **The Best Experts**

Delgado came to direct reparations work after co-founding Black Lives Matter Cambridge with Stephanie Guirand, Toni Bee, and Mari Gashaw in 2015.

“As I became more well-known as an artist and organizer, I expanded my reach to new audiences and communities. I began experimenting with direct reparations asks on behalf of hyper-vulnerable individuals. #DoneForDiDi was born out of providing amplification for the necessary, valid stories of cash-poor Black women and non-men. We’re able to organize the labor and cash of white people to make reparations to Black MaGes that are long past due. I noticed that many experts that are credentialed in poverty are far removed from living within the narrative of poverty. We assert that persons experiencing poverty are the best experts. People know what they need.”

Broadus confirms that since Delgado began this work “nearly half a million dollars in reparations has been raised, and over 700 Black women, femmes, and other MaGes have received reparations in direct payments for food, housing, mental and physical health care, and emergency security issues. The organizational model also provides resources directly to Black MaGe organizers across the US, especially those working in marginalized communities.”

## **This Moment In History**

Of the 3.4 million farmers in the United States today only 45,000 are Black, according to the [USDA](#). This number is down from 1 million a century ago, during which Black farmers in America were pushed off of more than [12 million acres of farmland](#). This loss is due to systemic racism, [biased government policy](#), and social and business practices that have denied equitable access.

Meanwhile, [white people own 98 percent of farmland](#) in the United States. Bill Gates alone owns the most land under any single owner in the country - 242,000 acres. This is equivalent to one-third of the state of Rhode Island.

Land is a key to wealth, and the descendants of the enslaved have been purposely kept from owning it. Referencing the broken promise of 40 acres in Sherman's field order, Representatives John Conyers and Sheila Jackson Lee began in 1989 to introduce the [H.R. 40 Bill](#), which calls for a commission to study and develop proposals for reparations from the U.S. government for chattel slavery to African Americans. Some estimate that had the promise of 40 acres and a mule been upheld, Black communities would hold [over \\$6.4 trillion of accumulated wealth](#).

"H.R. 40 is an important conversation," Delgado notes, "but it is neither land nor cash directly to Black MaGes. We don't have time to wait while the government avoids responsibility. People are dying under the many facets of systemic racism."

Angel elaborates, "The right wing is taking offices either by exploiting elections or storming the capitol. We need a place to hunker down and stay safe, and we deserve to build a space for us to heal, survive, and thrive. We are building the culture and the world we need."

Delgado sums up, "Reparations are due now."