The Tipping Point grant was awarded to the Racial Justice Coalition of Asheville (RJC) to support and advance our Every Black Voice (EBV) campaign's community engagement and research work. During the first half of this grant period the EBV campaign hosted four Lunch and Learns from July to October 2023. These are small-scale EBV events that focus on engaging and educating community members about our work, the local reparations process that is occurring in Asheville and Buncombe County, and how they can get involved. Thus far, our Lunch and Learns have engaged a total of 40 community members. Our last Lunch and Learn of the year hosted 22 community members, the most attendees that we have had at these small-scale events thus far. This was also the first Lunch and Learn that featured a guest presenter, as local historian Priscilla Robinson educated attendees on the history and impact of Urban Renewal in Asheville. The Lunch and Learns were well received by community members and we are excited to continue hosting the events in 2024.

In addition to beginning our small-scale events, one of our major goals was to complete the EBV Research Report. The report was finalized in November 2023, and it will be published in early 2024. EBV surveys reached over 1,300 Black community members; 239 of those community members were interviewed about their experience in Buncombe County, as well as their thoughts on the local reparations process. The stories and voices captured in these interviews illuminate the truth of the Black community's experience here in Buncombe County, as the interviews offered a space for truth-telling, storytelling, and reconciliation that will inform our local reparations process. This report will be shared with the Community Reparations Commission (CRC) to inform recommendations for reparations and the process, published on our website, and, most importantly, disseminated throughout the community to ensure that every Black voice captured to produce the report is heard throughout the City and County. We initially set out to interview 1,000 of the community members that our survey reached. However, we learned that even with more online engagement, this was not a goal that we could achieve due to our small team's capacity. Our priority was to get this information out to the CRC and the community, so we utilized the 239 interviews that were achieved to form the research report.

Due to internal shifts within our organization and focus being placed on completing our EBV Research Report by the end of 2023, we found it best to hire social media canvassers in December once the report was finalized so that their work could support us in engaging as many community members as possible with the research. This decision was made to ensure that RJC can provide proper support to the social media canvassers and the social media campaign that they will work with us to launch. In the spirit of RJC’s community-centered values, we are working with two social media canvassers who are being trained in media marketing by a local marketing professional whose work centers the Black community. The canvassing and documentation for social media began on December 3rd when a canvasser documented the Peak Academy fundraiser, an event where RJC provided popular education to students and parents on the local reparations process and racial justice. RJC also discussed with them future opportunities for our organization to support Black youth in Asheville. This is something that will be incorporated into our social media campaign that will be launched in early 2024. Our Lunch and Learns and social media campaign will be informed by the results of the EBV Report in order to engage our audience with its content.