



2011 Convening

Using Human Rights to Achieve Racial Justice: We Shall Overcome

What: Two-day convening for advocates, funders, journalists, litigators and others interested in human rights and its application to racial justice issues.

When: November 7-9, 2011

Location: Radisson Plaza Warwick Hotel, Philadelphia, PA

Goals:

1. To improve advocates and funders' ability to use human rights values, standards and strategies to fight racial injustice through sharing experiences and lessons learned.
2. To strengthen human rights organizing, advocacy and litigation outcomes by establishing and/or enhancing alliances across racial justice issues among advocates and funders.
3. To build the capacity of groups, especially those led by affected community members, to promote racial justice and human rights.
4. To help advocates and funders more effectively use arts, culture and new media for racial justice communications and advocacy through trainings and site visits.

Advocacy content will address:

- How human rights values, standards and strategies can be used to help secure racial justice. Content will include an exploration of how advocates and funders can most effectively tackle:
 - racial profiling related to harsh immigrant enforcement practices;
 - racial disparities in arrests/sentencing/imprisonment;
 - race-based discrimination in school disciplinary policies;
 - the justification of racial profiling in national security policies;
 - racial inequities in housing, healthcare access and employment practices; and
 - the criminalization of low-income communities/people of color/immigrants.
- The key policies and practices related to racial justice that advocates seek to change and the tactics which have been most effective.
- How CERD can be used to maximum advocacy advantage.
- The most effective litigation strategies to secure racial justice.
- Efforts to win and use a federal Commission on Human and Civil Rights in conjunction with state/local enforcement mechanisms and how this can impact racial justice.

Organizing content will address:

- How advocates can work more effectively across diverse race-based issues using a human rights frame.
- How race-based issues provide a connective glue to bring advocates together under a human rights frame.
- Best funder practices for supporting community organizing efforts.

Communications content will address:

- How race-based issues are being framed and communicated. How this messaging can be improved to maximize advocacy outcomes and achieve policy/practice impact.
- How arts and culture can be used more effectively to educate and mobilize diverse constituencies around racial justice (e.g., winning hearts and minds, creating change).
- How to build and sustain robust relationships between artists, human rights activists and funders and what impact this can have.

Who: Approximately 120 advocates, artists and media representatives from across the United States (representing more than 60 social justice/human rights organizations in which racial justice is a key component of the work). Participants are primarily grantees of the Ford Foundation, Just and Fair Schools Fund, Overbrook Foundation and U.S. Human Rights Fund. They will be joined by up to 50 funders who support racial justice and/or human rights work.

Potential Outcomes: Best practices in racial justice and human rights organizing, advocacy, litigation and communications will be identified and shared. The number of donors and amount of resources to support this work will expand. New and strengthened alliances between donors, between advocates, and between donors and advocates will be forged. Participants will gain enhanced capacity to use human rights to secure racial justice. Journalists and artists will become better informed about human rights and racial justice issues.

Follow-Up Steps: Codify and share lessons learned among participants with other advocates and funders through a convening report. Participants and allies create mechanisms to facilitate ongoing linkages and collaborative efforts. Communications needs and gaps around using human rights to fight for racial justice are addressed through ongoing technical assistance.

Convening Advisory Committee:

Jennifer Allen, *Border Action Network*
Rini Banerjee, *The Overbrook Foundation*
Don Cipriani, *Just and Fair Schools Fund*
Nijmie Dzurinko, *Philadelphia Student Union*
Jane Golden, *Mural Arts Project*
Titi Liu, *Asian Law Caucus*
Kirsten Livingston, *The Ford Foundation*
Andi Perez, *Youth United for Change*
Juhu Thukral, *The Opportunity Agenda*
Alix Webb, *The Poverty Initiative*

USHRF Steering Committee Members:

Anonymous Donor
Atlantic Philanthropies
Butler Family Fund
Ford Foundation
Libra Foundation
Mertz Gilmore Foundation
Oak Foundation
Open Society Foundations
Overbrook Foundation
Shaler Adams Fund

USHRF Staff:

Sue Simon, Director
Angela Kahres, Program Associate
Justin Restauri, Program Associate
Sasha Hammad, Program Assistant, USHRF/Just and Fair Schools Fund

Interested in attending? Please contact Angela Kahres at akahres@publicinterestprojects.org

Draft Convening Agenda

Monday, November 7

1:00-2:00 pm

Lunch

2:00-2:30 pm

Welcome Remarks

2:30-4:00 pm

Opening Plenary

Sharing Experiences: Using Human Rights to Secure Racial Justice Across Social Justice Sectors

Fernando Garcia, Border Network for Human Rights

Kim McGill, Youth Justice Coalition

4:00-4:30 pm

Break (light snacks)

4:30-5:45 pm

Keynote Speaker TBD

6:00-9:00 pm

Dinner Reception with Philadelphia Human Rights Advocates and Elected Officials

Tuesday, November 8

8:00-9:00 am

Networking Breakfast

Tables Organized by Issue Area

9:00-10:30 am

Trainings/Break-out Sessions

1. Art and Advocacy: A Picture Tells 1,000 Stories

Kelly Matheson, WITNESS

Rahwa Habte, OneAmerica

Travis McAdam, Montana Human Rights Network

2. The Long Search for Women's Rights and Racial Justice

Florrie Burke, Freedom Network

June Zeitlin, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

3. Connecting the Dots: An Institutional Case Study of Donor Collaboration and Impact

Kirsten Levingston, Ford Foundation

Mayra Peters-Quintero, Ford Foundation

4. International Human Rights Mechanisms: Using Them to Secure Racial Justice in the U.S.

Ejim Dike, Urban Justice Center

TBD

5. Shining a Light on the Evidence Through Human Rights Documentation

Phil Tegeler, Poverty & Race Research Action Council

Maisie Chin, Community Asset Development Re-defining Education (CADRE)

10:30-10:45 am

Break (light snacks)

10:45-12:15 pm

Trainings/Break-out Sessions

- 1. Advocate and Donor Partnerships: We're All in This Together**
Rini Banerjee, The Overbrook Foundation
Criminal Justice Fund Representative, Open Society Foundations
TBD
- 2. Say It LOUD: Resonant Human Rights and Racial Justice Messaging**
Julie Rowe, The Opportunity Agenda
TBD
- 3. The Post 9/11 Decade: Racial Profiling and Strategies to Fight Back**
TBD
- 4. Bringing Human Rights Home and Securing State and Local Accountability**
Eric Tars, National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
Cathy Albisa, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative (NESRI)
Risa Kaufman, Human Rights Institute at Columbia Law School
- 5. Tomorrow's Challenges and Today's Youth on the Rise**
Youth Leader, Philadelphia Student Union
Manuel Criollo, The Labor/Community Strategy Center
Damekia Morgan, Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC)

12:15-1:45 pm

Networking Lunch

Tables organized by strategic approach (e.g., litigation, human rights documentation, organizing, research, advocacy, alliance building, arts/culture, strategic communications, education and outreach)

1:45-5:30 pm

Site Visits and Learning Tours

- 1. Mural Arts Project**
- 2. Media Mobilizing Project**
- 3. Poverty Initiative—Visit Liberty Bell**
- 4. Asian Arts Initiative & Casa Monarca**
- 5. MIMIC- Men In Motion In the Community**

6:00-9:00 pm

Offsite Dinner

Interested in attending? Please contact Angela Kahres at akahres@publicinterestprojects.org

Wednesday, November 9

8:00-9:00 am

Breakfast

9:00-10:30 am

Trainings/Break-out Sessions

- 1. Sustainable and Creative Funding Strategies Demand Diversity**
Melissa Johnson, Neighborhood Funders Group
- 2. Together at Last? Civil Rights and Human Rights**
TBD
- 3. We Love Lawyers: Litigation as a Tool to Advance Human Rights and Racial Justice**
Mary Meg McCarthy, Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center
TBD
- 4. Old, New, Borrowed or Blue: The Ever Changing Media Sector**
Steve Katz, Mother Jones
Sandi Close, New American Media
- 5. Community Organizing For the People, By the People?**
Helen Johnson, Southern Echo
Youth leader, Youth United for Change

10:30am-11:00 am

Break (light snacks) and hotel check-out

11:00-11:30 am

Final Reflections and Next Steps

What Do We Want and How Do We Get There From Here?

Don Cipriani, Just and Fair Schools Fund
TBD

11:30am-1:00 pm

Closing Plenary

Innovative Cultural Arts Practices Can Win Hearts, Minds... and Policy Change

Michelle Coffey, Lambent Foundation
Mallika Dutt, Breakthrough
Mica Root, Media Mobilizing Project
Nijmie Dzurinko, Philadelphia Student Union

1:00 pm

Box Lunch / Departure

Interested in attending? Please contact Angela Kahres at akahres@publicinterestprojects.org