



JUSTICE COLLAB NEWS

The Justice Collaboratives is an initiative of the IBW 21st Century

JUNE 2017

ISSUE NO 10

FEATURED ARTICLE

State of the Black World Conference in Newark, New Jersey

The Spirit, Power & Significance of an Historic Gathering



They came by the hundreds, more than two thousand in all, from the greater Newark/New York region, Black America and the Pan African World, drawn by the urgent impulse to connect, network, bond, share and unite...

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The Spirit, Power and Significance of an Historic Gathering

SOBWC Was a Major Success



SOBWC IV, Closing Ndaba (Photo – Tom Flicklin)

They came by the hundreds, more than two thousand in all, from the greater Newark/New York region, Black America and the Pan African World, drawn by the urgent impulse to connect, network, bond, share and unite in the wake of one of the most hate-filled, demagogic and divisive presidential elections in decades; an election which produced a presidential regime, elected by less than a majority of the popular vote; a regime imbedded with racism, white nationalism and Islamophobia. It is one of the most threatening moments since the arrival of Africans on these hostile American shores.

November 16-20, 2016, Africans from the far reaches of the U.S. and the Pan African World -- South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Haiti, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, Costa Rica, Columbia, Venezuela, Brazil, Canada and Europe converged on Newark, New Jersey, one of the great historical epicenters of Black Freedom Struggle, for State of the Black World Conference IV -- responding to the Call. It's Nation Time Again!

In yet another hour of grave crisis, people of African descent, Black people, came seeking to be inspired, revitalized, informed and armed to intensify the essential, continuing struggle to defend and promote the dignity, survival, development, interests and aspirations of Afri-

cans, Black people, in America and the Pan African World. As the words "it's nation time" reverberated throughout the gathering, a spirit of Black love, sharing, bonding, healing, collaboration, resistance, self-determination and renewed commitment to build and strengthen Black institutions, to control the politics and economics of Black communities, territories and nations permeated the deliberations.

"These voices from members of the IBW Justice Collaboratives are illustrative of the powerful tenor of the deliberations and proceedings."

While it is impossible to capture the full meaning of the words of the formidable array of more than one hundred Speakers, Panelists and Resources People who shared their insights, knowledge and wisdom with this remarkable gathering, these voices from members of the IBW Justice Collaborative, are illustrative of the powerful tenor of the deliberations and proceeding. One of the many sessions, focused on Ending the War on Drugs. A synopsis of this is noted on the following page.

Ending the War on Drugs and Mass Incarceration

Wide-ranging discussions and proposed solutions at SOBWC

In spirited workshops during the successful State of the Black World Conference in Newark, NJ racial and social justice activists and advocates vowed to continue the relentless struggle to end the devastating “War on Drugs” in all its destructive manifestations, end police occupation, violence and killing of Black people and end the scourge of mass incarceration.

They pledged to work for the decriminalization of drugs within the context of a racial, social, economic justice and public health framework and to continue advocating for pre-arrest diversion programs like the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) initiative. In addition, workshop participants agreed to continue to mobilize/organize victims of crime to become a constituency for criminal justice reform and de-incarceration and to assist formerly incarcerated persons/returning citizens to empower themselves as a constituency for social justice and social change.

They discussed the need to consolidate existing Justice Collaboratives and expand to other cities (within the limits of IBW’s capacity) to advocate for drug and criminal justice reform and strengthen the Police Reform and Accountability Task Force as a Resource Center to promote models of police restructuring that will enable Black people to establish control over the police/law enforcement and empower citizens too create safe, just and wholesome communities.



SOBWC IV, Working Session - Beyond the War on Drugs: Healing Black Families and Repairing Communities (Photos by Risasi Dias)



For the SOBWC IV Declaration of Intent and Call to action,
Conference Photos and Videos - **Visit sobwc.ibw21.org**

Images From SOBWC IV

Photos taken by photographers Risasi Dias and Tom Flicklin during the State of the Black World Conference IV, held November 16-20, 2016 in Newark, NJ at the Robert Treat Hotel. For more photos visit sobwc.ibw21.org



Voices From Justice Collaborative Members

"It was a remarkable sharing of updates, viewpoints, visions and plans."

There were so many high points to the State of the Black World Conference IV 2016 that it is difficult to determine where one should start the 'telling'.

From the 2,000 people who came through the conference from the four corners of the Diaspora to the youthful panelists and attendees, to the Elder organizers, leaders, scholars and everyday folk it was a remarkable sharing of updates, viewpoints, vision and plans. The energy was a living palpable thing that was transformative.

What impressed me? What didn't impress me is a better question. Mayor Ras Baraka welcoming us to Newark, and joining us in honoring the legacy of Amiri Baraka. The youth designed and led Hip Hop Activism workshop, The Criminal Justice Plenary, The Town Hall on the 2016 Presidential Election, the --- hell the whole four days had us elders, the young and everyone in between 'turned up' and ready to keep in touch and expand our work to build the nation!

Rick Adams
Chair, IBW

The State of the Black World Conference has motivated me to put more effort into working with the people who are like minded. The conference has rejuvenated me to bring a "new" energy to the organizations that I am engaged in. I left the conference with a sense of restored peace, a recommitment to serve the community, and a zeal to redouble all my efforts to empower Black people.

Amina Saunders
Co-Convener, Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative

A phenomenal gathering of concerned, conscious Black people, sharing and caring for our people everywhere. Asante Sana.

Laura C. Djjols
Pennsylvania Chapter of National Action Network and member of the Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative.

Wonderful, informative, action oriented. Excellent presenter, organized and inexpensive. Great networking opportunities.

Vivian M. Drayton
Alliance of Black Social Workers, Philadelphia, and member of the Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative.

I attended the IBW 21st Century's State of the Black World. This event takes place every four (4) years after the national elections in the U.S. and it involves the evaluation of the elections and the potential impact on African Americans, and their communities. This was my third experience at attending and participating in this very well attended event of African American people.

There were individuals attending the conference from the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean Countries. Also, there were a wide range of topics discussed at the conference's plenary and working sessions. The topics were taken from the unfinished agendas of economic, education, liberation, and social justice organizations working in our communities.

My role was to lead the discussion "Beyond the War on Drugs: Healing Families and Repairing Black Communities". We also used examples of a successful strategy presently working in the state of California. The effort is led by the Alliance of Safety and Justice to gain access to VOCA funds (victims of crime), as well as to organize victims voices against the effort to construct more prisons and to invest the money into services for victims and their families.

In my session, we heard from members of organizations working on these issues and the difficulties associated with working in the African American communities involved in repairing the damages left as a result of the war on drugs which was a WAR ON BLACK PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES. The most promising of those strategies were "The Community Trauma Healing Center" concept. This begins with a partnership with a hospital in your community along with social service professional, community outreach persons, and case management which is designed to provide wrap around care and services to victims of crime and their families.

The representative from Newark, New Jersey gave several examples of how the concept is working in her city and some of the obstacle to getting this model up and running with very little money. However, they were able to gain some VOCA funds from the city along with the valuable assistance of other social service professional and volunteers.

So, as the session concluded, we pledged to work with the members and organizer of the National Alliance of Safety and Justice learn more about VOCA funds as well as the use of the money to establish "Community Trauma Healing Center" in our communities.

Ronald E. Hampton
DC Justice Collaborative ,co-convener and chair of the IBW Police Reform and Accountability Task Force.

VOCA An unprecedented Opportunity

Heralds a dramatic increase in funds



PHOTOS: VOCA workshop participants in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

Over the past several weeks, IBW’s Justice Collaboratives, along with members of the Black Family Summit have conducted a series of training workshops in Washington, DC, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia to explain how and why activists and advocates can take advantage of VOCA (Victims of the Crime Act) funds.



VOCA offers an unprecedented opportunity for advocates and service providers working to improve the outcomes for people who most commonly and repeatedly experience crime and violence in the United States. In 2015, the U.S. Congress approved a federal cap of \$2.3 billion, up from \$757 million the previous year, for victim services across the country.

This dramatic increase (more than 200 percent) is the amount of funds that can go to crime victims under the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). But a concerted effort is needed to ensure that a sufficient portion of the new funds reach overlooked and under-resourced service providers and communities.



VOCA funds can help advocates and service providers to accomplish their goals by increasing efforts to:

- Elevate the voices of individuals and communities who experience crime most often and whose needs typically go unmet.
- Build state-based advocacy capacity that will engage VOCA administrators and assist them in directing funds too hard to reach crime survivors.
- Raise awareness about who is most likely to be harmed, especially by repeat crime, but least likely to be recognized or helped as victims of crime.



This need for change is driven by the fact that crime can have a long lasting impact on individuals, families and entire communities. Survivors of crime, especially victims of violence, often need assistance in recovering from these traumatic experiences both to minimize the immediate physical and psychological impacts and also to help them avoid future harm.