



# JUSTICE COLLAB NEWS

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

MAY 2019

ISSUE NO 13

## FEATURED ARTICLE

## Congrats to Mothers in Charge on the One Year Anniversary of the Participatory Defense Initiative!



**Philadelphia, PA** — Congrats to Dorothy Johnson-Speight and her awesome team for the one-year anniversary of implementing the Participatory Defense initiative into their other outstanding programs. Mothers in Charge recently celebrated the one-year anniversary for this program. Ms. DeVonte Douglas, the Participatory Defense Facilitator at Mothers in Charge, summed up this program as one of; “Best Outcomes” designed as a community meeting that allows those who have been accused of a crime to get immediate assistance from those who understand how the criminal justice system works...

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## **The DC Justice Collaborative** Always Find a Path to Confront a Local Issue Together.



### **Seeking Justice, Correcting Oppression: A Sex Work Decriminalization Summit for Clergy and Lay Leaders was the theme for the February 26, 2019 event at the Allen Chapel AME Church.**

The DC Justice Collaborative members were joined by members of the allied clergy lay leaders and other supporters, in continuing the conversation about why it is imperative that we end the criminalization of sex work as part of the justice reform movement. IBW partnered with BYP100 and The WIRE (Women Involved in re-entry Efforts), as well as Broken Links Justice Ministry at Allen Chapel, to exchange information and explore ways by which support to fight for sex work decriminalization can be garnered.

Several topics were outlined, and a powerful video presented by BYP100 allowed all the participants to hear personal stories regarding this issue. The agenda also included a historical timeline, connecting values activity as well as story telling and feedback.

Discussion further centered on outlining “why decriminalize sex work instead of legalize?”



## WHY DECRIMINALIZE SEX WORK INSTEAD OF LEGALIZE?

Because Black women face structural barriers to employment and economic security, and experience structural violence by police and law enforcement, full decriminalization would create better access to resources and alternative employment while reducing incarceration among Black women.

### Decriminalization

Eliminates all laws and prohibits the state and law enforcement officials from intervening in any sex work related activities or transactions

De-prioritizes arrest and reduces interactions between police and sex workers

Retroactively seals criminal record and provides a pathway for sex workers who want to transition into other employment

Provides allocated resources for people who have historically and currently are being criminalized for sex work.

### Legalization

Regulation of sex work with laws regarding where, when, and how sex work could take place

Requires sex workers to keep up with registration fees,

costs, and licenses, which is difficult for people with little money and resources

Provides a pathway for law enforcement interaction and regulation of where, when, and how (criminalization is not removed)

Provides allocated resources to law enforcement to regulate consensual, private behavior

The Local Planning Team members namely:

- » Rev. Shirley Gravely-Currie, Allen Chapel AME
- » G. Rosaline Preudhomme, Institute for the Black World 21st Century (IBW)
- » Tanisha Murden, Women Involved in Reentry Efforts (The WIRE)
- » Samantha Master, BYP100
- » Je'Kendria Trahan, BYP100
- » Atty. Nnennaya Amuchie, BYP100

Worked collaboratively to ensure that as many of the desired objectives were met. Following this summit, that same evening, the DCJC convened its quarterly meeting and was hosted by the Public Welfare Foundation.

Highlights of the Summit were outlined and members of the collaborative were able to garner a sense of what was discussed as well as the next steps on this initiative.

### Next Steps:

- I. March, 2019 webinar.
  - II. DecrimNOW presentation to congregation and/or Movement for Black Lives.
  - III. Small group case study/reading group with other faith leaders.
  - IV. Involvement with ANCs/local politicians.
  - V. Canvassing with DecrimNOW after church services.
  - VI. Faith leaders lobby day before re-introduction of Sex Work Decrim Bill in April, 2019.
  - VII. Join DecrimNOW at a press conference for the re-introduction of the bill.
  - VIII. Co-write an Op-ed for DecrimNOW blog.
  - IX. Direct service day for folks involved in sex work.
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## A Salute to Commissioner Salim Adofo



*From left to right: Rosaline Preudhomme, Dr. Taiwan Lovelace, Commissioner Salim Adofo, Ron Hampton, Dr. Ron Daniels*

Another main agenda item at the collaborative meeting was a salute to Commissioner Salim Adofo, who recently won the election to become a Community Commissioner in Ward 8. Above is Commissioner Adofo accepting his certificate of recognition as he is flanked by Dr. Taiwan Lovelace and Ronald Hampton co-conveners of the collaborative, as well as Dr. Ron Daniels, IBW president and G. Rosaline Preudhomme, IBW staff member.



## Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative Works to extend Knowledge and Build Network Allies

### Pennsylvania State Clean Slate Law

Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative (PJC) Member Ginger Underwood organized a presentation Feb. 18th on the **Pennsylvania State Clean Slate Law** that allows for the sealing of felony conviction records. Jeff Williams of Foundation for Hope's Northside Diversion Program, Taili Thompson of the Allegheny County Department of Health's Violence Prevention Office and Rev. Cornel Jones of Pittsburgh's Group Violence Intervention Program. The program was held at the Community College of Allegheny County's (CCAC) North side Campus.

### Stop the Violence Initiative Summit

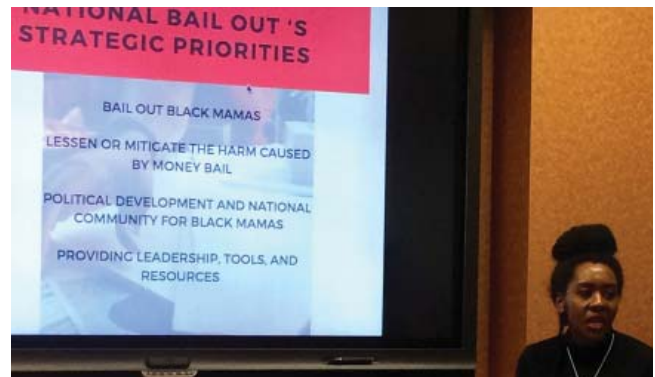


Rick Adams, PJC Convener gave Welcome remarks at the **Stop the Violence Initiative** summit February 23rd at the Lincoln Avenue Church of God that was hosted by PJC member organizations; the W. Pa Black Political Assembly, the Black Political Empowerment Program and the Coalition Against Violence, other sponsors included Black Women for Positive Change and the National Black Presbyterian Caucus. The meeting focused on the new initiative funded by the city for 5 years supported by \$2.5 million. City Councilmen Ricky Burgess and Daniel Lavelle, Assistant Police Chief LaVonnie Bickerstaff, Rev. Cornell Jones and Jay Gilmer of the Mayor's Office par-

ticipated. PJC representatives are lobbying to be on the monthly steering committee and quarterly roundtable committee meetings. This initiative is intended to:

- 1) Reduce police officer related and proximity related violence,
- 2) Coordinate all city activities and resources for violence prevention and
- 3) Increase funding for violence prevention programs.

### End the Money Bail System



Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative members attended the recent Movement 4 Black Lives (MV4BL) Convergence February 8th in Atlanta Ga. and participated in the **End the Money Bail System** Workshop.

PJC is planning to question candidates competing in the May 21st spring Primary for City Council, Common Pleas Court and County District Attorney. **Candidates will be asked their positions** on Ban the Box enforcement, reform and elimination of the money bail system, safe needles and diversion programs, decriminalization and legalization of marijuana legislation.

## Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative: Spot Light on Mothers in Charge



**Congrats to Dorothy Johnson-Speight and her awesome team for the one-year anniversary of implementing the Participatory Defense initiative into their other outstanding programs.**

Mothers in Charge recently celebrated the one-year anniversary for this program.

Ms. DeVonte Douglas, the Participatory Defense Facilitator at Mothers in Charge, summed up this program as one of; “Best Outcomes” designed as a community meeting that allows those who have been accused of a crime to get immediate assistance from those who understand how the criminal justice system works. The accused is joined on the court appointed date and time by the community volunteers assigned from the Participatory Defense Program. These volunteers have been engaged in preparing the accused on how best to present themselves and state their case the most effective

manner possible. The objective is to demonstrate to the Judge and Prosecutor that their case requires much more information than what is presented on the docket sheet. The community Hub, as established by the program consist of volunteers who help the person who is accused present themselves and the information pertaining to their case, in the best light possible. The main goal of the Community Hub is to help the accused understand the aspects of the criminal justice system which center on issues from the arrest to the appeals stage.

When Ms. Speight -Johnson was asked why she thought this program would be an effective service for the community, her response was, “Mothers in Charge remain



Screenshot: *Participatory Defense in Philadelphia* video by Defender Association of Philadelphia

committed to ensuring that those who are involved in any aspect of the criminal justice system, are prepared to manage this situation as effectively and efficiently as possible. Given the trauma that an arrest causes to the accused, the family and community, the goals of the Participatory Defense program were a perfect fit for our agency.”

As Mothers in Charge looks back at the past year, the program goals which aa outlined were met.

- » **Help clients, families and community understand the criminal justice system and the defense process**
- » **Understand and anticipate what is expected at each stage and each hearing, and get support to prepare for each step**
- » **Access community-based resources that can help support the clients in what can be a long and isolating process**

This program further helps the lawyers assigned to each client to do the following:

- » **Meet with the clients who are now better prepared and equipped to share relevant information**
- » **Get additional information and intelligence from the client about the situation and context of their case**
- » **Prepare the best possible defense by having a fuller picture of the client and their circumstances**

What Makes the program Work?

Setting up a community Participatory Defense Hub with weekly meetings where community leaders offer support on a case by case basis.

As a most effective organization, the Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative, salutes one of its members, Mothers in Charge for always seeking ways to work with the community for justice and healing in so many caring and thoughtful ways.