



JUSTICE COLLAB NEWS

The Justice Collaboratives is an initiative of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century



From the Desk of Dr. Ron Daniels, IBW's President

Greetings Sisters & Brothers,

The progressive and uplifting work of our Justice Collaboratives in Washington DC, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Baltimore continues to impress me as we build momentum collectively towards meaningful drug policy and criminal justice reforms, at both the national and local levels.

The various city reports in this edition of our Collab Newsletter attests to the steady progress we've made in the past few months, from the successful 'Free Her' rally on the National Mall in DC on [June 21st](#) to the inspiring 'Mother-to-Mother' town hall meeting in Baltimore in mid-May and to the enthusiasm and positive energy being generated by the newly-formed Philadelphia Region Justice Collaborative.

I am also very pleased with the progress made by the Pittsburgh Collaborative in taking the first steps towards implementing a pilot of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program (LEAD) within targeted neighborhoods in that city. Our Philadelphia Collaborative has also expressed a keen interest in exploring a LEAD program in the "city of brotherly love."

At the end of July, IBW issued its "Report Card" on the Obama Administration's drug policies and practices over the past 12 months. The document has been widely circulated on the Internet and has received a fair amount of media coverage, to date. I urge the four collaboratives to circulate the Report Card among all your members and networks and also bring it to the attention of the local print and electronic media in your respective cities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 13th

Philadelphia Region Justice Collaborative Meeting

(Hosted by The Alliance of Black Social Workers, Philadelphia Chapter)

10AM - 12PM

ABSW House

1924 W. Diamond Street, Philadelphia PA 19121.

Contact: Lois Hayman [215-235-1626](tel:215-235-1626).

September 17th

Pittsburgh Collaborative Meeting
(Place, time to be announced)

September 24th - 27th

Congressional Black Caucus — 44th Annual Legislative Conference
Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

October 1st

Washington DC Justice Collaborative Meeting

(Hosted by Rev. Dr. Joseph O Evans, MT.)

Carmel Baptist Church, 901 3rd St NW, Washington DC.

Contact Brenda Campbell

[202-842-3411](tel:202-842-3411)

6PM-8PM

The Black Family Summit (BFS), ably led by Baba Lenny Dunstan, is working with a number of black professional organizations to explore the creation of "Family Healing Circles" in a select number of cities as a cooperative effort between BFS members and the four justice collaboratives.

These circles will marshal the collective experience of participating organizations towards an holistic approach that could provide crucial healing for fathers and sons who are forced to deal each and every day with the stresses and traumas caused by both personal and structural racism. The circles will also take up other critical issues such as parenting skills, mediation/conflict resolution, inter-generational dialogues, leadership development and organizer training.

Finally, I want to repeat my call for all four Justice Collaboratives to establish and maintain active channels of communication among each other in order to facilitate sharing and exchange of information, insights and resources.

Forward Ever, Backward Never.

New Justice Collaborative Launched in the Philadelphia Region

"We've Come This Far by Faith"

By Lois Hayman

We organizers and activists in the Philadelphia area have come quite far in a little more than a year in establishing a Justice Collaborative in our region.

When IBW's Baba Leonard Dunston and Sis. Rosaline Preudhomme approached the Alliance of Black Social Workers and the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice Pennsylvania Chapter in May of 2013 with a request to work on a town hall meeting and a conference, we knew that discussing the issues of violence and fratricide in our communities was timely. However, we didn't know then how so many people and organizations were working along the same lines.

Between May and October of 2013, we were able to gather a number of like-minded organizations and individuals to work on the town hall meeting which was held successfully on November 22, 2013 at Resurrection Community Methodist Church where Bishop Michael Tyson is the pastor.

IBW was able to bring a number of high-profile national black leaders to address the nearly 400 people who attended the event. They included Dr. Julianne Malveaux, George Frazer, Dr. Marc Lamont-Hill, Susan Taylor and our own Dorothy Johnson-Speight. Local leaders who also addressed the rally were Bilal Quayyum, Shondell Revell, and Chad Lassiter. The town hall meeting was simulcast on WURD, Philadelphia's popular black radio station. The Moderator for the meeting was Nick Taliaferro of WURD.

The following day, those of us who were energized by the call-to-action given to us by the leaders and the crowd, met to start the work of planning a mini-conference and the next town hall meeting. Since then, 15 organizations and a cadre of individuals have met regularly at various venues across the Philadelphia metro region and we agreed to name ourselves the Philadelphia Regional Justice Collaborative (PRJC).

The mission of PEJC is to work with individuals, organizations, grass roots groups, and faith-based entities to promote justice reform in the Philadelphia region. The mission is grounded by mutual respect, the wisdom that is inherent in people of Afrikan ancestry, the variety of expertise in our community, and the strengths that all of us bring to the table.

We also agreed to engage in educational programming with and for our communities, to promote research on crime in our communities, and to strategize with interested parties to increase peace and to prevent and reduce crime/violence.

Our action plans include increasing our membership to 30 organizations, addressing economic development as a means of violence prevention, developing a social agenda that will strengthen families in urban areas, strengthening families who have persons returning home from incarceration, increasing voter participation, promoting voting rights for prisoners and formerly incarcerated persons and providing voter education.

We are well on our way to holding our second annual town hall meeting in November and holding a one-day conference. The theme for the conference is *Our Brothers and Sisters Keepers: Developing Strategies for Addressing Violence and Fratricide*.

We are also working toward replicating the LEAD program initiated in Seattle, Washington by the end of 2015.

Pittsburgh JC Hosts Film Screening & Panel Discussion on Fatherless Young Black Males



Speakers at the Pittsburgh panel included IBW's President Dr. Ron Daniels.

IBW's President Dr. Ron Daniels recently joined a panel discussion organized by the Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative following the screening of the groundbreaking film 'Spit and Anger', produced by Kenny Braswell, nationally recognized advocate for fatherless black boys.

Bro. Braswell's powerful film focuses on the angst and anger of a black male child growing up without a

father. (<http://www.spitinanger.com/>)

The panel also consisted of moderator, State Representative Jake Wheatley, Malcolm Thomas, Caitanya Champion & Reuben Brock. Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative (PJC) The Northside Fair Housing Coalition, a

member of the Pittsburgh Justice Collaborative, hosted the viewing and discussion at the Letter Carriers Building. The event drew a diverse audience of young and old, male and female.

The spirited discussion following the film demonstrated how deep and multipronged the pain is in our communities. A young man in his 20s and without a criminal record told how badly the courts treated him as he petitioned to have visiting rights with his children.

In an emotional testimony the youthful father expressed his desire to be a good father and despite him having steady work the court viewed him as an undesirable. Those gathered endorsed the idea of organizing "hearing circles" as part of the solution.

On another front, two Pittsburgh Foundations have expressed interest in supporting a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) type program in this city. To date, a portion of a \$55,000 dollar award will be used to document a harm reduction diversion pilot project being run by PJC members in order to make the case for an expanded initiative.

DCJC Helps Organize & Mobilize for Successful "Free Her" Rally

Over the past three months, several members of the DC Justice Collaborative were actively involved in working with Sis. Andrea James and her team from the Boston-based Justice as Healing group to organize and mobilize for the successful "Free Her" rally held on the mall in the nation's capital on June 21st.

DCJC members participated actively in a series of weekly 'Free Her' rally planning meetings held at the Washington's historic Metropolitan AME Church. They were instrumental in reaching out to DC-based grassroots organizations as well as returning citizens and members of the faith community. They also provided support in logistics and security at the rally site.

"We wanted to have a huge public event to raise our voices and raise awareness of all the women inside who are separated from their families and their communities," said Sis. Andrea.

[For reports, photos and video clips of the "Free Her" rally visit the IBW Website.](#)

Baltimore JC Hosts "Mother-to-Mother" Town Hall Meeting

In an effort to create public awareness of the destructive impact of the 'War on Drugs' on black women and children, IBW and the Baltimore Justice Collaborative held a Town Hall meeting on May 19th at the Real News Network's main studio in downtown Baltimore.



The outstanding all-women panelists at the 'Mother-to-Mother' Town Hall meeting.

After a screening of the award-winning movie, 'The House I Live In' which focuses on the failed War on Drugs, an outstanding panel of mothers from Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington DC discussed a range of strategies to end the epidemic of violence and murder of young black men and women in our communities.

The panelists were Andrea James, co-founder and executive director of Boston's

Justice as Healing; Dorothy Johnson-Speight, founder and executive director of Philadelphia's Mothers in Charge; Erica Bridgeford, community activist and public speaker; Mildred Samy, co-founder of Mothers of Murdered Sons & Daughters of Maryland and Daphne Alston, co-founder of Murdered Sons & Daughters of Maryland; Delegate Jill Carter (MD's District 41).

Greetings, welcome remarks and acknowledgments were given by IBW board member Rev. Shirley Gravely-Currie and the panel's moderator was Sandy Mallory of WEAA, the radio station at Baltimore's Morgan State University.

After the panel discussion, IBW's Roz Preudhomme and board member Harris Floyd presented a special IBW recognition award to Nannie Jeter, Connecticut-based community activist and public figure, who is featured in the film. In her acceptance remarks, Nannie Jeter spoke words of wisdom that touched the hearts of all present.

[Click here to view the video clip of her brief speech.](#)



Nannie Jeter with her IBW award.

The event ended with closing remarks by Dr. Ron Daniels, President of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century.

IBW Issues a "Report Card" on the Obama Admin's Drug Policies

At the end of July, 2014, the Institute of the Black World 21st Century (IBW) released a "[Report Card](#)" on the Obama Administration's efforts over the past year to reform, if not end, the failed "War on Drugs" which has turned out to be a "war against poor and powerless black people across the country".

"Over the past year, the Institute of the Black World 21st Century (IBW) has invested a significant amount of time and resources in research, advocacy and organizing around the War on Drugs", said Dr. Ron Daniels,

IBW's President. "A year ago, hundreds of protestors from New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Washington DC came together in the nation's capital to proclaim that we have suffered long enough and that the time had come to bring an end to an ill-conceived and destructive policy/strategy".

A year later, on the occasion of the 43rd anniversary of the declared 'War on Drugs', IBW is releasing a "report card" on the response of the Obama Administration to the demands we made a year ago. Our report which gives the Administration a C grade finds a mixed record of some significant steps taken by the White House and the Justice Department over the past 12 months along with persistent and unacceptable inaction and foot-dragging in a number of critical areas.

The IBW Report Card reflects an array of observations and critiques of official drug policies over the past year. It is IBW's summary of significant developments in official drug policy reform as well as in the growing social movements to end the War on Drugs. The various sections of the report are culled from a wide body of academic research, news reports, analyses and commentaries by authoritative and prestigious sources in the fields of journalism, scholarship, public policy research, activism and advocacy. Much of this material can be found in the archives of the special ["War on Drugs" section of IBW's website](#).

IBW is using this report card to repeat its demands of a year ago when we marched to the White House on June 17th 2013, i.e. that President Obama should:

- Intensify efforts to eliminate the disparity in sentencing between powdered and crack cocaine.
- Issue an **Executive Order** terminating the War on Drugs and replacing it with a national initiative that treats drugs and drug addiction as a public health issue.
- Issue an **Executive Order** ending the practice of using incarcerated persons as prison labor.
- Allocate more federal funds for drug education, counseling and treatment.
- Form a Presidential Commission to initiate a National Dialogue on the regulation and taxation of drugs.
- Mobilize moral and political support for direct public sector jobs and sustainable economic development programs with priority inclusion of formerly incarcerated persons targeted to transform distressed Black communities.

[**Read the Report Here**](#)