

Human Rights City Alliance & Partner Groups- Follow-up meeting to the Summit vs. Racism 2017 February 1, 2017

MEETING OUTCOMES SUMMARY: How to Get Involved

The Human Rights City Alliance is working to bring Pittsburgh residents together to make human rights a reality in our city. As new threats to these rights unfold with the Trump presidency, our local work to defend, protect, and strengthen human rights is extremely urgent. Please get involved! Here's some ways to do that:

Immigrant Rights

- Write your member of [City Council](#) to ask him/her to support [the legislation sponsored by Dan Gilman](#) to protect immigrants.
- Support work to promote county level protections (we'll keep you posted, or get in touch if you can help)
- Join working group to plan May Day March for Immigrant Rights (contact Antonia Domingo Antonia Domingo (antoniadomingo[at]gmail [dot] com)
- Join working group to plan Teach-in on Immigrant Rights-Sunday April 30 (contact Antonia Domingo Antonia Domingo (antoniadomingo[at]gmail [dot] com)
- Join working group to support welcoming messaging projects around the city (contact pghrights [at] riseup [dot] net)

Housing Justice/Tenant Union Organizing

- Next Greater Pittsburgh Tenants Union General Meeting **Tues. March 14** 6.30 PM, 1 Smithfield Street, Downtown Pittsburgh. Meetings 2nd Tuesday of Every Month.
- Join a working group, contact Reggie Good reggie [at] northsidetenants [dot] org (Committees: Education, Policy, Advocacy-more below)

Women's Rights

- Spread the word about the new [City Ordinance protecting women's rights](#). Invite groups you know to join the coalition.
- Attend [Pittsburgh for CEDAW](#) meetings, Tuesday, Feb 21 and every 3rd Tuesday at the Friends Meeting House, 4836 Ellsworth Ave.

Police Accountability/ Reform

- Support the [Alliance for Police Accountability](#) –monthly meetings 1st Wed. of each month.
- Sign open letter to new police chief urging him to continue promoting anti-racism reforms in the Police Department (details to come soon)
- [Contact Mayor Peduto](#) and tell him to sign the [Mayoral Pledge to end Police Violence](#)

Human Rights Education

- Join working group to plan convening/s to allow residents to envision “what kind of community do we want to live in?” and to discuss ideas for how to make that vision real. Contact pghrights [at] riseup [dot] net
- Help promote decentralized activities to advance human rights learning. Contact pghrights [at] riseup [dot] net

MEETING NOTES Human Rights City Alliance & Partner Groups- Follow-up meeting to the Summit vs. Racism 2017 February 1, 2017

Introduction to the Human Rights City Alliance and the global Human Rights Cities movement. People around the world have been organizing locally to demand that public officials better protect residents' basic rights, following the *Universal (i.e., no borders) Declaration of Human Rights*. Pittsburgh City Council passed the Human Rights City Proclamation in 2011, becoming the 5th Human Rights City in the United States. The Human Rights City Alliance is working to build broad alliances of human rights defenders to hold public officials accountable to human rights standards. (See www.pghrights.org)

Working groups met on the following issues, which represent the work and leadership of the [Human Rights City Alliance Steering Committee](#): Immigrant rights, housing justice, womens rights/gender justice, and police accountability/criminal justice reform. The groups focused on key projects and ways for people to get involved to defend some of the most vulnerable groups in our community and build a society based on human rights.

Immigrant rights breakout group, facilitated by Monica Ruiz (Casa San Jose), Antonia Domingo (LCLAA) 25 people in attendance

Events of last week have been especially traumatizing and scary for undocumented and immigrant community

- Discussed campaign for Martin Esquivel-Hernandez-he has not yet been released and work continues to stop his deportation.
- Discussed Sanctuary City and how this relates to Pittsburgh's being a Human Rights City
 - The city government agrees not to cooperate with ICE, in a variety of ways (refuse to turn people over wo warrant, some refuse to share police data, some refuse to turn people over without a specific crime)
 - The term sanctuary city has become politicized, so people are preferring other terms like "welcoming city", or "4th amendment city"
 - White House executive order blocks federal grants to cities with sanctuary policies- Other cities are uniting to resist this, there are [questions about its legality](#)
 - Dan Gilman's efforts in city council to strengthen existing city commitments to protect immigrants in the city.
 - language access program
 - promise that no govt services would be denied
 - commitment to DACA
 - Pgh currently has **unofficial/unwritten** policy not to turn people over to ICE unless unless they are charged with particular crimes. Gilman's legislation strengthens this.
 - There are 90 police departments in Allegheny County, we **need county-wide policy**

- WHAT CAN FOLKS DO? The Human Rights City Alliance and allies will keep folks informed about local policy and opportunities to help support immigrant protections.
- **May Day march planning**
 - Annual May Day march has been a focus for immigrant rights/solidarity organizing since early 2000s mass mobilization by immigrants. This year we want to make this march HIGHLY VISIBLE and BIG. Bridging all groups around the city around immigrants, worker rights, and human rights generally.
 - series of events leading up to march
 - Current leaders most tied to Latino community, we need to be more inclusive of other communities
 - Location/ plans to link with Women’s March Organization --organizing marches nationally on May 1
 - May Day weekend Popular education activities—need to Connect march agenda to ongoing action, advocacy. Big march can be an opportunity to mobilize
 - Teach-in on Sat. or Sunday June 29 /30--get people together to talk about/learn about issues—Also-more time for folks to network and learn about the work of different groups than is possible at a march. Teach in would build up to the Monday May 1 march.
 - Other linked events, i.e., service events, political advocacy
 - National actions in Washington DC planned April 29 (climate) and [May 6 \(Immigrant rights\)](#)
 - Invite public officials to march and other activities
- Other activities/ ongoing
 - **Human Rights Messaging:** lawn / window signs—i.e., church/ schools/ other group projects to make signs of welcome/inclusion/love.
 - call reps, mayor call and thank people doing good work--local reps never hear from constituents
 - [How to help immigrant neighbors-5 steps anyone can take](#)

Housing Justice

Key organizing focus: Pittsburgh Area Tenants Union

- Topics of discussion:
 - Volunteer recruitment
 - Displacement issues
 - Recent housing wins
 - Penn Plaza development
 - Possibility of looking at other cities’ examples
- Action items and goals:
 - Talk to residents in different neighborhoods and get people involved in Pittsburgh Tenants Union
 - Identify core issues in each neighborhood
 - Identify specific policy issues that affect Pittsburgh residents
 - Form committees to take on different activities
 - PTU Policy Committee

- PTU Income Subsidize Housing Committee
- PTU Tenant Advocacy Committee
- PTU Resident Education Committee
- PTU Credit Enhancement Committee
- Next Greater Pittsburgh Tenants Union General Meeting Tues. March 14 6.30 PM, 1 Smithfield Street, Downtown Pittsburgh. Meetings 2nd Tuesday of Every Month.

Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women- Local Ordinance Marcia Bandies, [Pittsburgh for CEDAW](#) (17)

- Outreach to groups that may be interested in this ordinance. Invite them to attend/present at a monthly CEDAW meeting to build awareness of work happening & foster collaboration;
- People volunteered to create a marketing program for us to help get the word out about the Ordinance and how it might help women and girls. They will present at our next CEDAW Meeting;
- Plans to meet with City Council Members to discuss Ordinance and its implementation/relevance for particular districts.
- Marcia Bandes will be presenting on the CEDAW Ordinance at the Unitarian Church weekly forum on **Feb 12 at 9-10 am**, everyone is welcome. (605 Morewood Avenue, **Pittsburgh**, PA 15213)
- Next CEDAW monthly meeting is Tuesday, Feb 21 at the Friends Meeting House, 4836 Ellsworth Ave. Everyone is welcome.

Police Accountability/ Fighting Racism in the Criminal Justice System

- [Alliance for Police Accountability](#) needs volunteers to support various pieces of work on policy and community/family support. Human Rights City Alliance seeks volunteers to attend APA meetings and support these tasks, seek ways to link city/police practices with Human Rights. APA regular meetings 1st Wednesday each month, Kingsley Association, 6435 Frankstown Ave. Pgh 15206
- People volunteered to write an open letter to new police chief welcoming him to his post, reminding him that we're a Human Rights City, encouraging him to continue McLay's work to fight discrimination in the police force, and promising to support him in carrying out that work. We will invite other groups to sign this letter.
- We are working with the **Northside Coalition for Fair Housing's Diversion Program** to help keep youth out of prison and to address the challenges people with criminal records have in finding secure, quality housing.
- **March 22-24** Chicago human rights lawyer [Standish Willis](#) (founder, Black People Against Torture, and chair of the [Chicago Chapter of The National Conference of Black Lawyers](#)) and Sali Vickie Willis (community organizer and youth educator and president of the National Conference of Black Lawyers) for a public lecture by Standish Willis at the University of Pittsburgh Law School on Thurs. March 23 at 7pm. The Willises will also visit an area high school and two community spaces in neighborhoods most

impacted by human rights violations. *We need help organizing and supporting this visit and with outreach.*