



New Voices Pittsburgh
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International Human Rights Day in Pittsburgh focuses on women and poverty

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Pittsburgh, PA – Monday, December 10, 2012: New Voices Pittsburgh joins with thousands of other groups across the country celebrating International Human Rights Day today. Human Rights Day commemorates the adoption of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recognizes the continuing need to work for the advancement of both economic and political Human Rights for all people.

This day is particularly important in Pittsburgh. In 2011, Pittsburgh was declared a Human Rights City by City Council through the work and activism of the American Friends Service Committee and the Racial Justice Through Human Rights Youth Group. The proclamation declared that Pittsburgh must act as “a model for communities in the US and around the world to witness practical ways the human rights framework can make every citizen a partner of sustainable change.”

Yet, according to the US Census Bureau, Pittsburgh has the highest rate of poverty among working-age African-Americans of all large US metropolitan regions (28%). The poverty rate is more than 60% higher than the national average and more than half of all people in poverty are women. More than one-fifth of all children in the US live in poverty, despite the vast wealth enjoyed by the top 1%. Allegheny County's infant mortality rate for Black children younger than age 1 was among the nation's highest at 20.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2009. In April 2012, the Measure of America – a project of the Social Science Research Council – released the report [Women's Well-Being: Ranking America's Top 25 Metro Areas](#) which cites that “African American women in Pittsburgh have a life expectancy comparable to that of women in developing countries such as Honduras or Jamaica.”

While politicians argue over who will bear the costs of the new austerity, New Voices Pittsburgh believes there is enough for everyone if we confront inequities in access to opportunities and resources. As a Human Rights City in a country that prides itself as a Human Rights leader, Pittsburgh must work locally and globally to address Human Rights violations. To that end, New Voices Pittsburgh will be working with the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign to organize a Court of Women on Poverty in Philadelphia October 18-20, 2013. “Women in Pittsburgh deserve a basic existence that affirms our Human Rights where we can experience a long and healthy life, have access to knowledge and a decent standard of living.” says La'Tasha D. Mayes, Executive Director of New Voices Pittsburgh.

This tribunal will give space and voice to those most affected by poverty in all its forms but who are traditionally excluded from public and policy debates. Drawing from the lived experiences of women in poverty in Pittsburgh, the Court will advance analyses and policies to address poverty and other Human Rights violations and organize for political action to affirm the local, national and international Human Rights of women. The Court also advances this year's United Nations International Human Rights Day theme, “My Voice Counts.” This emphasizes the rights of all people “to make their voices heard in public life and be included in political decision making.” In 2013, New Voices Pittsburgh will continue to organize women particularly Black women to act for their own Human Rights leading up to the World Court of Women in Philadelphia. For more information about New Voices Pittsburgh, visit www.newvoicespittsburgh.org and the World Courts of Women Against Poverty, visit www.worldcourtsofwomen.org.

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