The Tennessee Human Rights Commission, Metro Nashville Human Relations Commission, United Nations Association, Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter and Partner Organizations Present...

International Human Rights Day 2011

December 7, 2011
Metro Nashville Public Library
International Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is observed by the international community every year on December 10th. It commemorates the day in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Although the Declaration with its broad range of political, civil, social, cultural and economic rights is not a binding document, it inspired more than 60 human rights instruments which together constitute an international standard of human rights. Today the general consent of all United Nations Member States on the basic Human Rights laid down in the Declaration makes it even stronger and emphasizes the relevance of Human Rights in our daily lives.

Cover Art: The right to a nationality.
This is a right many do not realize we have. We are simply born with a nationality that is of the country we are born in. Each body has a flag of the country it is on top of and there is one body that is in the middle of the ocean with a question mark over its chest instead of a specific country; has no nationality. My art means that it would be ridiculous if one person could not call their country of birth their country, just like it looks ridiculous for a person to have to call "their country."

~Priscilla Serrano (age 16)
**Freedom to Move.**
I chose the “Freedom to move” because it represents the right that you have to go anywhere you want and nobody can tell you no. I also chose that one because it reminds me of when we moved from Egypt to America and of all the people, animals etc. that move. To me, my art means that you could move to anywhere because it’s your freedom, not anybody else’s.

—Dina Mikaiel (age 14)

**The Right to Play**
I chose the right to play because everyone has the right to play and have fun. The art work that I did is explaining a soccer field. The soccer field means a sport that anyone can play and enjoy. You can play any other sport you want.

—Ragy Ragy (age 15)
Food and Shelter for All
My art is basically a house with food and people in it. It also has grass and a blue sky. I chose this because it was different to have a house with food and faces. My art means a home with food and an enjoyable family.
~Frankshaska Barksdale (age 14)

Welcome by Ms. Caroline Blackwell
Executive Director, Metro Nashville Human Relations Commission

The Metro Human Relations Commission protects and promotes the dignity of all people through a menu of services that help ensure safety, health, security, peace and general welfare in Davidson County. Committed to community education and advocacy for diversity—and for the cultural awareness, understanding, and behaviors needed to foster inclusion—the Commission assists individuals and organizations in understanding and defending their civil and human rights.

www.nashville.gov/humanrelations

Master of Ceremonies, Ms. Beverly L. Watts
Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

The Tennessee Human Rights Commission is an independent state agency responsible for enforcing both the Tennessee Human Rights Act and the Tennessee Disability Act which prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodation on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, disability, familial status and age. The Commission is also responsible for coordinating the State of Tennessee’s compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

www.tn.gov/humanrights
The Human Rights Advocate Award

The Human Rights Advocate Award is given to individuals who have dedicated their life and career to the advancement of human rights. These people have made significant contributions to human rights in Tennessee, and recipients are recognized annually at the Tennessee celebration of International Human Rights Day.

New in 2011 is the introduction of the Rising Advocate Award. This is bestowed upon individuals early in their career who have already demonstrated a dedication and contribution to human rights.

Past recipients of the Human Rights Advocate Award include:

2010 Awardees  
Rev. Dr. Don Beisswinger  
Dr. Tommie Morton-Young  
Ms. Jocelyn Dan Wurzburg

2009 Awardees  
Mr. Fred Cloud  
Ms. Inez Crutchfield

2008 Awardees  
Rev. Dr. James Lawson  
Mr. John Siegenthaler

Note: While the Rev. Dr. Lawson and Mr. Siegenthaler were honored in 2008, the Human Rights Day Committee did not start presenting trophies until 2009. The Committee decided to offer special recognition this year to these gentlemen with the presentation of a commemorative trophy.

Freedom of Religion
I learned that every human being has the freedom of religion and no one should have the power to take it away from them. I also learned that there are a lot of human rights around the world that are not being respected as they should.
~Ashraf Soliman (age 17)

Freedom of Expression
My art means that people have the right to express themselves in different ways, in art or the style they wear clothes. I chose freedom of expression because I like to express myself in art. And my art means to me that there are many ways for people to express themselves.
~Sergio Salazar (age 15)
The Right To Education

In my piece of art, I chose what we normally use in school. In the middle, I put a teacher or person that’s over a main foundation of learning and getting an education if someone teaches us. For me art is part of me. It’s a way I express myself and the way I feel. I put creativity into everything I do.

~Gina Garcia (age 15)
The Freedom To Move
I chose the freedom to move. When I was choosing my Human Rights, I thought freedom to move was good to make a collage. I was trying to find nature and the American flag to be in my collage. I found what I needed, so my collage has waterfalls, birds flying and American flags.

~Yeimi Ruiz (age 14)

Freedom of Expression
I choose Freedom of Expression because everybody deserves to be heard. It’s important because for society to work people need to put their ideas together. It affects society by the laws we have and the government we choose. It is globally recognized and that’s why people have petitions. Everybody’s entitled to their own ideas.

~Precious Simmons (age 17)

Speaker: Dr. Amir Arain
Religion as a Human Right

Dr. Arain was born in Pakistan, grew up in Saudi Arabia and graduated from medical school in Karachi, Pakistan. He did his professional training at Vanderbilt University. Now a Neurologist, he specializes in epilepsy at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and directs the Salam Clinic, a charity clinic at Salahadeen Islamic Center. Dr. Arain has been affiliated with the Islamic Center of Nashville since 1999 and currently serves as its Vice President and Director of Public Relations. He has been involved with several interfaith efforts including Common Table at the Scarritt Bennett Center and Interfaith Dialogue at Lipscomb. He has appeared on several TV and radio shows representing the Muslim community in Nashville and has been involved with immigrants’ rights, serving on the board of Tennessee Immigrants and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC). Dr. Arain strives to foster tolerance, love and better understanding among human beings.
Ms. Remziya Suleyman
Rising Advocate Award Recipient

Remziya is a native of Kurdistan who came with her family to the U.S. in 1991 during the first Gulf War. She holds a Masters in Public Administration and certificate in Non-profit Management from Tennessee State University. She is known for her political activism on immigration issues, interfaith organizing, and her work in the Kurdish community to raise awareness on Kurdish genocide.

She has spoken to diverse audiences on Kurdistan and its people, her own experience as a refugee and a Muslim woman, and on life in her community after September 11. Her story was featured in the award-winning documentary, Little Kurdistan USA, as part of the Next Door Neighbors series produced by Nashville Public Television.

She was recognized as one of the Nashville Scene’s “Nashvillians of the Year” for her work in Nashville’s immigrant communities in response to the historic flood of 2010, and her organizing and advocacy were highlighted in the recent New York Times article “The 9/11 Decade: Young Muslims Coming of Age.”

As Policy Coordinator for the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Remziya led a successful effort to mobilize Muslim leaders throughout the state against what could have become the most extreme anti-Muslim legislation in the country.

Remziya currently serves on numerous boards, including the Metro Human Relations Commission and Kurdish Women for Better Health, and serves as an advisor to the Kurdish American Youth Organization’s Nashville chapter.

Mr. MarQo Patton
Rising Advocate Award Recipient

Born and raised in Ohio, MarQo knew there were not many opportunities for black youth, particularly males. At the Columbus Alternative High School he learned that “it was not about beginnings, but about how one finishes.”

Graduating from Fisk University with high honors and a degree in Music Business, MarQo had plenty of opportunity to take on a professional singing career. Instead, he devoted his time and energy to helping disadvantaged children receive a full education, thus upholding the Right to Education as laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He became a corps member of Teach For America, and serves the Metro Nashville Public School systems as an elementary school teacher. He is now pursuing a Masters of Education.
Dr. Sheila Peters is Associate Professor of Psychology at Fisk University, where she has served as Associate Provost, Chair of Psychology and Faculty Assembly Chair. She served as Interim Director of the Fisk Race Relations Institute and continues to provide training for cultural competence in communities, institutions and systems of care. Currently, she is the Quality Enhancement Plan Director and provides leadership to the infusion of critical thinking across the university curriculum. Dr. Peters is a national expert on youth development in the juvenile justice arena and provides training on gender-specific programming for females as well as males at risk for entering the juvenile justice. She has worked with youth for over twenty years including serving as a Board member to Realsports Leadership Academy. Her research interests focus on civic engagement, the status of women in higher education and the burden of celebrity on professional athletes.

Within the Fisk community, Dr. Peters serves as the advisor to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Junior Class and Fisk C.A.R.E.S. (Compassionate Activism through Responsible Engagement in Service). She has provided leadership in service learning activities including the Alternative Spring Break targeted Katrina impacted New Orleans. She serves as the Director of the Fisk Counseling Center and provides leadership to the Project Stop Now, domestic violence prevention program.

Dr. Peters’ civic contributions include serving as past President of the Nashville Branch of the NAACP, former commissioner of the Metro Human Relations Commission, board member of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, Oasis, and the ACLU. Currently, she serves as an Executive member of the NAACP and board member for Tennessee Voices for Children. She is a former member of Societas Docta, Inc. and the Coalition of 100 Black Women, and is an alumnus of Leadership Nashville. She serves as Parliamentarian of the Parthenon Chapter of the Links, Inc., a member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. Nashville Alumnae Chapter and the Nashville Women’s Breakfast Club and as a volunteer in the “I Have a Future” comprehensive adolescent prevention program.
On August 26th, 2003, Jerry Lee was elected president of the Tennessee AFL-CIO Labor Council, which represents approximately 80,000 union workers across the state. As president, he led the Council’s lobbying in the Tennessee Legislature, where he supported issues aimed at improving working conditions, health care, benefits and legal justice for all working people. He was president until August 16, 2011.

Jerry is a journeyman electrician and completed a five year apprenticeship program under the Nashville Electrical Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee. He has been a member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Works Local Union 429 in Nashville since April 1958. He was elected in 1998 and served two terms as Business Manager and Financial Secretary of Local 429. He has also served as President of the Nashville Building and Construction Trades Council from August 2000 to August 2009.

Jerry holds a Bachelor of Science Degree with honors from the University of Tennessee. He has certificates in Labor Law, Organizing and Leadership from the George Meany Center. He is a 2004 graduate of Leadership Nashville.

Jerry’s dedication to economic and social justice is exemplified through his involvement in these organizations: Leadership Nashville, A.Philip Randolph Institute, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, NAACP, TN Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, TN Dept of Human Services, Families First Advisory Council, Steering Committee for Nashville’s Agenda, AFL-CIO Appalachian Council Executive Board, State Workers Compensation Advisory Council, State Unemployment Compensation Advisory Council, Mid-Tennessee Jobs with Justice Executive Board, Tennessee Employment Relations Research Association where he is a past president, Tennessee Center for Labor-Management Relations Foundation, Tennessee Center for Labor-Management Relations, Middle Tennessee Alcohol and Drug Council and the Labor, Education and Health Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.
Acknowledgements

Event Co-Chairs
Shirley Sims-Saldana, Metro Nashville Human Relations Commission
Rev. Brian Fesler, Church of Scientology

Planning Committee Members
Mr. Brad Branson, Metro Nashville Public Schools
Ms. Julie Brinker, Church of Scientology
Mr. Eben Cathey, United Nations Association, Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter
Dr. Paulette Coleman, Nashville NAACP
Mr. Frank Guzman, Tennessee Human Rights Commission
Ms. Tiffany Irene, Citizens for Global Solutions
Ms. Alethea Kelly, Women On Maintaining Education and Nutrition
Ms. Bobbie Porter, Tennessee Human Rights Commission
Ms. Mary Pat Silveira, United Nations Association, Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter
Mr. A.J. Starling, Tennessee AFL-CIO Labor Council
Ms. Beverly Watts, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Hosting Venue
Metro Nashville Public Library

Artwork
Special acknowledgement is made to Ms. Emma Lancaster, Art Instructor at Antioch High School, for helping her students learn about human rights by submitting artwork for Human Rights Day. All art in this program booklet is from her classes.

Next Year
If your organization would like to participate in the planning for 2012, please contact us at info@NashvilleHumanRights.org.

More Information
Visit www.NashvilleHumanRights.org to sign up on our mailing list and see:
• the full Universal Declaration of Human Rights
• information about Human Rights Day
• educational videos
• a resource directory of Tennessee human rights organizations
• pdf versions of this program
• links to the organizations who exhibited this year
• information about past events and award recipients
• and much more!

We are all born free and equal
From my project I learned there is still a lot of discrimination that goes on, but we are all actually equal, even though we look different from each other.
~CarDaja Payne (age 16)
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. We are all born free and equal
2. Don’t discriminate
3. The right to life
4. No slavery
5. No torture
6. You have rights no matter where you go
7. We’re all equal before the law
8. Your human rights are protected by the law
9. No unfair detainment
10. The right to trial
11. We’re always innocent until proven guilty
12. The right to privacy
13. Freedom to move
14. The right to seek a safe place to live
15. The right to a nationality
16. Marriage and family
17. The right to your own things
18. Freedom of thought
19. Freedom of expression
20. The right to public assembly
21. The right to democracy
22. Social Security
23. Workers’ rights
24. The right to play
25. Food and shelter for all
26. The right to education
27. Copyright
28. A fair and free world
29. Responsibility
30. No one can take away your human rights

Abridged version. Get more information and read the Declaration in full at www.NashvilleHumanRights.org

We’re All Equal Before the Law
I wanted a divided line in the middle of the collage board. Next, I wanted to put people suffering and in hard times on one end of the board. Then put happy, rich people on the other side, and at the bottom put different races and cultures and having people holding hands being united and not separated. I chose this art because I deeply feel bad for all the people on this world putting each other down—when we should be building each other up and not fighting. My art means that we need to reunite as one no matter who you are, no matter what gender, race, culture or belief.

~Jayvon Roberts (age 14)