

The Tennessee Human Rights Commission;
Metro Human Relations Commission;
United Nations Association; and
Tennessee United for Human Rights

With Partner Organizations

Present...

*International
Human Rights
Day 2015*



Celebrating the 67th Anniversary of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
December 10, 2015
John Seigenthaler Center

International Human Rights Day



On October 24, 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations came into being with the purpose of saving future generations from the devastation of international conflict.

United Nations representatives formally adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. The Declaration was drafted by representatives of all regions of the world and encompassed all legal traditions. It is the most universal human rights document in existence, delineating the thirty fundamental rights that form the basis for a democratic society.

Following this historic act, the Assembly called upon all Member Countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.”

Today, the Declaration is a living document that has been accepted as a contract between a government and its people throughout the world.

In Tennessee, the Human Rights Day celebration has become a time to reflect and look to the future. During the event, we honor those who have given a lifetime of service to making human rights a reality, those who have demonstrated outstanding service to forward human rights and those who are picking up the torch and carrying it forward.

Program Agenda

Master of Ceremonies—Beverly Watts
Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Remarks on the Universal Declaration—Melody Fowler-Green
Executive Director, Metro Human Relations Commission

Gubernatorial Proclamation—Annazette Houston
Chair, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Mayoral Proclamation—Frank Trew
Chair, Metro Human Relations Commission

Metro Council Resolution—Fabian Bedne
Council Member, City of Nashville District 31

Human Rights Rising Advocate Award Presentation
Ashford Hughes, Sr.

Human Rights Rising Advocate Award Presentation
Aisha Lbhalla

Outstanding Service Award Presentation
Dr. Marisa Richmond

Special Tribute to *Francis Guess*
Reflections—Spencer Wiggins, Accelerated Learning Solutions

Lifetime Achievement Award Presentation
Kwame Lillard

Lifetime Achievement Award Presentation
Bernard Werthan

Closing Remarks—Beverly Watts
Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Unity Prayer—Rev. Brian Fesler
Pastor, Church of Scientology

Master of Ceremonies



Nashville native **Beverly Watts** was appointed the Executive Director of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission in July 2007. Prior to her current appointment, she served as Special Advisor to the Chair at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission responsible for state and local relations. She has more than 25 years of civil rights enforcement and education experience in the public and private sector. Beverly is the recipient of numerous awards including the July 2005 Induction to the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame. She is the recipient of the 2005 Louisville Metro MLK Freedom Award; 2003 Women Leading Kentucky Martha Layne Collins Leadership Award and the 2003 EEOC/FEPA Award for Innovative Outreach to name a few. She is a graduate of Tennessee State University, Southern Illinois University, and has attended Duke University Leadership Program for State Executives and the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Remarks on the Universal Declaration



Melody ("Mel") Fowler-Green is the Executive Director of the Metro Human Relations Commission. Prior to taking the helm at the Commission, Mel was a public interest and civil rights attorney. She represented workers from many service industries including restaurant staff, cable installers, landscapers, construction workers, and farm workers in wage & hour actions (including large class actions) and in employment discrimination cases. Mel also served as the first staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee. Mel graduated *cum laude* from Georgetown University Law Center in 2000. She also holds an MA in Women's Studies from the University of Cincinnati, and a BA in Theatre from the University of Michigan-Flint.

Rising Advocate Awards



Ashford Hughes, Sr. was recently appointed to serve in the Mayor's Office of Economic Opportunity and Empowerment. He worked as Assistant Business Manager for the Southeast Laborers District Council, local 386. In his capacity he served as political coordinator, community and worker organizer on multiple labor issues and campaigns. Ashford serves as a member on several Non-Profit Boards including the Martha O'Bryan Center, Fifty Forward, Nashville Emerging Leaders and the Tennessee Equality Project.



Aisha Lbhalla has for years been involved in community outreach, education and interfaith bridge building; and in 2011, she founded the Muslim Women's Council. She organizes an annual "Dinner Dialogue" bringing participants of various religious backgrounds to learn about the faith practices and traditions of others. Aisha is a Commissioner on the Metro Human Relations Commission and through the Tennessee Department of Health Office of Minority Health and Disparities Elimination, she serves as a Health and Wellness Ambassador.

Outstanding Service Award



In 2008, **Dr. Marisa Richmond** made history as the first trans woman to win an election in the state of Tennessee. She has worked tirelessly to ensure transgender equality, and equality between Caucasian and African American transgender people in Tennessee. As such, she is President of the Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition and served on the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Equality Project & Board of Advisors of the National Center for Transgender Equality. She served on the Board of the International Foundation for Gender Education working to create and support gender inclusive education at the local, national, and international levels.

Artistic Presentations

Bob Teague supports several education and nonprofit initiatives and in his spare time is a guitar virtuoso.

Vic Sorrell is an HIV prevention and education specialist who always takes the time to inspire people through music.

Daniyah Kazadi is an on-site interpreter whose heart lies in promoting human rights work for the people suffering in Burundi, Africa.

Southern Word uses literary and performing arts to offer creative solutions for youth to build literacy and presentation skills and act as leaders in the improvement of their communities.

The **Nashville Community Choir** provides high quality inspirational presentations throughout the year as well as a unique level of musical education to members of all faiths.

Special Tribute



Known largely as a civil rights advocate and humanitarian, **Francis Guess** served on the National Civil Rights Commission and as the first African-American commissioner for the Tennessee departments of Labor and General Services under then-Gov. Lamar Alexander. Guess, a Nashville native, worked in military intelligence with the U.S. Army during the Vietnam conflict. He would later earn a bachelor's degree in political science from Tennessee State University and a master's degree in business administration from the Vanderbilt University Owen Graduate School of Management. Eventually, he completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University. In the public sector, Guess, a Republican, served 30 years as a member of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. Nationally, he was appointed as a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights by then-President Ronald Reagan. In a statement to *The Tennessean*, former Mayor Karl Dean noted that Guess helped "to get Tennessee to become one of the first states to observe the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday."

Lifetime Achievement Awards



Kwame Lillard personifies the irrepressible spirit that defined the Nashville Movement, and is a lifelong advocate and activist for civil rights and the advancement of the Movement's legacy. A devoted disciple of Jim Lawson and Kelly Miller Smith, he was significantly involved in the management of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's Nashville Movement offices, the Nashville sit-ins, and in the coordinating of the freedom rides and training of freedom riders. Kwame Lillard has challenged both Tennessee State University and the City of Nashville to remember their roots in the Movement, the recognition of the students of SNCC, and the City's responsibility to advance the gains made possible by the Movement. His knowledge of the history of Tennessee State University, and the Nashville Movement remains an emotional recollection, and at the same time, his advocacy has taken on a currency that shows his equally genuine passion for the legacy of the Nashville Movement and his vision for the City of Nashville.



Bernard Werthan has been a long-standing community member in Nashville and in Middle Tennessee. He received a BS in Business and Engineering Administration from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, joined the Army in the 1950s and then returned to Tennessee, where he was employed by Werthan Packaging and eventually became the President and Chairman of the Board. He was active with The Temple, serving as president for two years, as well he has served with the Nashville Jaycees, Tennessee State University College of Business Board of Advisers, First American National Bank Board, Goodwill, the Urban League of Middle Tennessee, YMCA and Nashville OIC. Since retiring in 2000, he has been active in a number of community activities including Leadership Nashville, Vanderbilt University Divinity School Board of Visitors, Family of Abraham and United Way. He has had a lifelong interest in foreign affairs and activities of the United Nations and currently serves on the Board of the United Nations Association and the Faith and Culture Center.

Acknowledgements

Event Chair

Rev. Brian Fesler, *Church of Scientology*

Planning Committee Members

Julie Brinker, *Church of Scientology*

Melody Fowler-Green, *Metro Human Relations Commission*

Michael Goff, *United Nations Association*

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Francisco Guzman, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*

John Pantermuehl, *Tennessee United for Human Rights*

Samantha Perez, *Metro Human Relations Commission*

Beverly Watts, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*

Event Host

A very special thank you to the First Amendment Center & Gay Campbell for hosting the event.

Photography

Thank you to Flashville Photography & Terry L. Green Photography for graciously capturing the event.

Program Booklet

Thank you to the Church of Scientology for program design and printing.

Refreshments

Thank you to the Metro Human Relations Commission for providing wonderful refreshments.

More Information

Visit www.nashvillehumanrights.org, join our mailing list, and see **photos** from this year's event, full-length versions of the **Awardee Interview Videos**, the full version of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, and much more!