

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 2017*



Celebrating the 69th Anniversary of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
December 7, 2017
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.

In accordance with our theme, the **symbol** on the front cover of this booklet is the one used by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for Freedom of Expression and Democracy.

Program Agenda

Opening Musical Performance—Imaginarium

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

Gubernatorial Proclamation—Annazette Houston
Chair, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

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

Mayoral Proclamation—Phyllis Hildreth
Chair, Metro Human Relations Commission

Human Rights Rising Advocate Awards

Kayo Beshir

Pratik Dash

Madison White

In Memoriam—Rev. Bill Barnes & Frank Trew

Panel ~ Freedom of Expression

Moderator—Justin Jones, 2016 Human Rights Rising Advocate
Tré Hardin, Public Art Coordinator for Metro Arts Commission
Camilla Hester, President, UNA at Belmont University
Krishna Patel, President, Lipscomb UNICEF Campus initiative

Spoken Word Performance—Jazmyn Bolden and Zhariah Hubbard
Tennessee State University Speech & Debate Team

Outstanding Service Awards

Jerry Redman

Zulfat Suara

Lifetime Achievement Awards

Senator Thelma Harper

Joey King

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



influential on his life.

Kayo Beshir is an undergraduate majoring in International Relations at Middle Tennessee State University and is a leader on and off campus in his efforts to protect human rights. Kayo is on the executive board of the MTSU UNICEF Campus Initiative and also leads the Nashville Congressional Action Team. Beyond these efforts, Kayo is very politically active and has a refugee background that has been



in Tennessee and directing the work to build the immigrant electorate through registering voters and engaging immigrants in the electoral process.

Pratik Dash was born in Franklin, TN. He spent five years in India where he earned his Master's degree from the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology. When he returned to the U.S. in 2014, he joined Women On Maintaining Education and Nutrition (W.O.M.E.N) as Development Coordinator. In March of 2015, Pratik joined staff at TIRRC where his role includes organizing the South Asian community



interning with Free for Life International, supporting local efforts to fight human trafficking. The summer of 2017 was spent working as an Americorps VISTA member in Silverton, Colorado, leading summer educational programs for disadvantaged children.

Madison White began her college education by being recognized as a Daniels' Fund full scholarship recipient for high achievement both as a student leader, and a community advocate. For the last three years, she has been actively involved in local pro bono legal clinics, and also volunteers her time with nonprofits such as Make a Wish Foundation and Second Harvest Food Bank. In 2016, Madison spent the summer

Outstanding Service Awards



Jerry Redman co-founded Second Life of Chattanooga in 2007. Second Life is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating awareness, advocacy, and collaborative action about the issue of sex trafficking and exploitation in Southeast Tennessee. Second Life also coordinates and provides a range of services for trafficking survivors. Jerry's primary responsibilities with Second Life include long-

term organizational and strategic development, fundraising, and acting as the primary liaison between Second Life of Chattanooga and the various governmental and law-enforcement representatives and agencies with which Second Life partners. As CEO of Second Life of Chattanooga, Jerry serves as Co-Chair of the Greater Chattanooga Coalition Against Human Trafficking Executive Committee. Jerry holds a Master's Degree in transformational leadership from Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., and a Bachelor of Science degree in business from Lee University in Cleveland, Tenn.



Zulfat Suara is a CPA and currently serves as Chair of the American Muslim Advisory Council (AMAC) and is President Elect of the TN Women Political Caucus. Prior to joining the National Women Political Caucus board, she served as treasurer and VP of Political Planning at the state level. In 2003, she started the Hardeman County branch of Junior Achievement. She is a past state president of the Business and

Professional Women of Tennessee. Zulfat is fierce advocate for all of Tennessee's women and Muslim communities, working tirelessly to address inequities that affect women in the workplace and continuously seeking to bring about fairness for all. For the last four years, she served as Chair of BPW's Women's Day on the Hill and coordinated a joint legislative day for seventeen women organizations on issues affecting Tennessee Women and Children. Zulfat is the recipient of many awards and recognitions including the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award and in 2015 she was inducted into the Tennessee Women Hall of Fame by the Tennessee Economic Council on Women.

Lifetime Achievement Awards



Thelma Harper is the first African-American woman State Senator of Tennessee, elected in 1991. She continued to break the glass ceiling by becoming the first woman to preside over the Senate. She has served as an elected official for almost 40 years, her service beginning in 1980 when she was elected as Executive Committee Woman for the 2nd district. She was next elected to the city council in 1983 where she served for 8 years. She simultaneously served as the 2nd District Councilwoman and as State Senator of the 19th District to complete her term in the city council. In 2004, when asked by *The Tennessean* whether the Tennessee state constitution should be changed to say the right to an abortion is not guaranteed, she replied that the issue should not be written into the state constitution. In 1996, Thelma Harper was one of only two state senators that did not vote in support of a bill to ban gay marriage in Tennessee. Senator Harper proposed legislation that would rename U.S. Highway 41 as Rosa Parks Boulevard, which was later successfully passed in both the House and the Senate.



Joey King is a board member of Veterans for Peace. He is a distinguished military graduate from Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville. He also graduated from army schools in Airborne, Ranger, Pathfinder Divisions. He served as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division and in Vicenza, Italy he was a platoon leader and company executive officer. In his resignation letter he said, "I, LT Joey B King, resign my commission.... I am resigning because of a personal conviction that war is an unacceptable means of resolving differences among nations." Since leaving the US Army he has been active in several organizations including the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Truth-in-recruiting in Middle Tennessee, Gandhi-King Conference on Peacemaking, Veterans Day Parade Nashville, Stop the Bombs Oak Ridge TN, and School of the Americas Watch. Joey participated as an international election observer in El Salvador in March of 2009 and is a contributor to the 2012 book, "Why Peace." He has been chair of Veterans for Peace Middle Tennessee since 2006 and served on the National Board of Directors for Veterans for Peace from 2009-2012.

Acknowledgements

Event Chair

Rev. Brian Fesler, *Church of Scientology*

Planning Committee Members

Lauren Bradish, *Free for Life International*

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Melody Fowler-Green, *Metro Human Relations Commission*

Lynn Grassmeyer, *Amnesty International*

Barbara Gunn Lartey, *Metro Human Relations Commission*

Frank Guzman, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*

Gabrielle Thompson, *Free for Life International*

Katie Thompson, *Free for Life International*

Beverly Watts, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*

Erika Wynn, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*

Performances

Thanks to Imaginarium for opening our event, and thank you to Jazmyn Bolden and Zhariah Hubbard of the TSU Speech & Debate Team for providing inspirational words during our program.

Event Host

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

Awards

Thank you to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission for providing the awards.

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 and past events, the **Awardee Interview Videos**, the full version of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, and much more!