



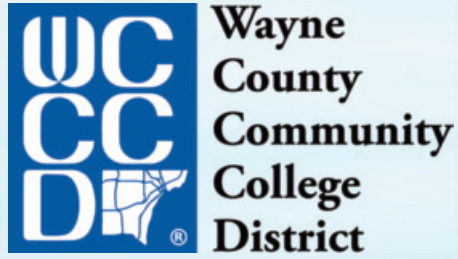
15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

ENGAGE, EDUCATE AND EMPOWER

Hosted by Wayne County Community College District

June 18-20, 2026

Detroit, Michigan



WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and the entire Wayne County Community College District family, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome you to Detroit, Michigan, and to the Curtis L. Ivery Downtown Campus. We hope your time at Wayne County Community College District is productive, inspiring, and memorable.

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE



www.wcccd.edu



Dr. Keith Dwight Parker
Chairman, National Civil Rights Conference

Dear National Civil Rights Conference Participants:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Fifteenth Annual National Civil Rights Conference and the June 17th Pre-conference Workshop on the campus of the Wayne County Community College District. The National Education and Empowerment Coalition, Inc., the Wayne County Community College District are proud to co-sponsor the Fifteenth Annual National Civil Rights Conference. The 2026 conference, held in Detroit (MI), will provide an opportunity to remember, reflect, and jumpstart the spirit, commitment, and courage that fueled a movement that changed the nation. During this day and age and at this time, when important voting and citizenship rights are under attack, we can and should do nothing less than follow the example of history. We appreciate your presence and participation in activities focusing on civil rights, social justice and human dignity.

The three-day conference provides a wide range of topics related to the conference theme, Engage, Educate and Empower: Striving in the Motor City. I hope you will take full advantage of the workshops, artistic productions, sessions, tours, vendors and networking opportunities that will be available.

This conference, more than any other, provides a broad range of learning experiences for you to engage in. More important, this conference promises to generate considerable intellectual dialogue and debate, as well as create opportunities to strengthen existing networks and forge new relationships.

Again, welcome to the Fifteenth National Civil Rights Conference. If I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,

Keith Parker

Dr. Keith D. Parker, Chair

2026 NCRC Planning Committee

Message from Dr. Curtis L. Ivery Chancellor Wayne County Community College District



Dear National Civil Rights Conference Attendees,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and the entire Wayne County Community College District family, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome you to Detroit, Michigan, and to the Curtis L. Ivery Downtown Campus for the National Civil Rights Conference.

We are deeply honored to host this important gathering of scholars, educators, activists, community leaders, policymakers, students, and advocates who are committed to advancing opportunities for all people. Your presence here reflects a shared dedication to preserving the lessons of the past while working collectively to build a collective future.

Detroit is a city whose history is inseparable from the ongoing struggle for freedom and equality. From its critical role in the Underground Railroad as a gateway to freedom for thousands seeking liberation across the Detroit River into Canada, to its leadership in labor rights, educational access, voting rights, and economic justice movements, Detroit has long stood at the forefront of transformative change. The stories of courage, resilience, and determination that emerged from this city continue to inspire generations of leaders and advocates across the nation.

Wayne County Community College District is proud to carry forward that legacy. Established to expand educational opportunity and strengthen communities, WCCCD remains committed to empowering individuals through education, workforce development, civic engagement, and lifelong learning. We believe that education serves as one of the most powerful tools for creating educational pathways.

As you engage in thoughtful dialogue, attend educational sessions, share research, and build new partnerships throughout this conference, I encourage you to take time to experience the rich history and vibrant culture of our city. Detroit's museums, historic landmarks, neighborhoods, and community organizations offer powerful reminders of the individuals and movements that helped shape our nation's ongoing pursuit of justice and equality.

This conference arrives at a particularly meaningful moment in our nation's history. As America approaches its 250th anniversary, we are reminded that the work of democracy is ongoing. Each generation is called upon to examine the promises of liberty and justice and to ensure that those promises extend to every member of society. Your work, your scholarship, and your advocacy play a vital role in advancing that mission.

We hope your time at Wayne County Community College District is productive, inspiring, and memorable.

With warm regards,

Dr. Curtis L. Ivery
Chancellor
Wayne County Community College District



NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE COMMITTEE



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DR. KEITH DWIGHT PARKER



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DR. KEITH DWIGHT PARKER



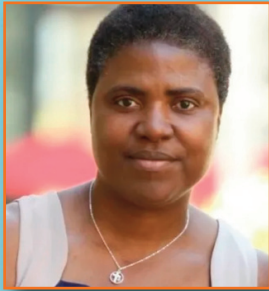
DR. CAROLYN CARTER



DEBI GHATE



KIM M. JOHNSON



KOLLOH W. NIMLEY



DR. PAUL ORTIZ



DR. LESLIE RODRIGUEZ-MCCLELLAN



DR. RONALD B. SCOTT



DR. DORA TILLES



National Civil Rights Conference

Featured Speaker



BANKOLE THOMPSON

Visiting Scholar Wayne County Community College District Opening Keynote Speaker

Topic: The Battle for America's Story: Media, Power and Economic Justice
This address will examine who shapes public understanding of the fierce urgency of the issues, whose voices are amplified, and whether the American narrative is broad enough, honest enough, and courageous enough to confront the unresolved questions of economic justice.

Bankole Thompson stands at the intersection of journalism, scholarship, and public conscience. As a Visiting Scholar at Wayne County Community College District, he has dedicated his life's work to examining the enduring questions of democracy, economic justice, freedom, race, and human dignity that define the American experience.

A nationally acclaimed Detroit journalist, author, public intellectual, and civic thought leader, Thompson is the founder and chairman of The PuLSE Institute, an independent anti-poverty and economic justice think tank committed to

advancing equity and economic security. He is also the host of Bankole's Nation podcast, a widely respected platform that convenes consequential conversations about leadership, justice, power, and the future of American democracy. Past guests on the podcast include former Flint Mayor Karen Weaver, author Michael Eric Dyson, civil rights activist Rev. Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes III, U.S. Senator Gary Peters, Dr. Julius Garvey, the last remaining son of Marcus Garvey, Congressman Jonathan Jackson and among other guests.

Throughout his career, Thompson has occupied a distinctive place in American journalism as both chronicler and moral witness. As a twice-a-week opinion columnist for The Detroit News, he has challenged institutions and leaders to confront the ethical implications of public policy, inequality, and representation. His journalism has consistently sought to elevate voices often excluded from the centers of power while insisting that democracy remains accountable to its highest ideals.

Among his historic achievements, Thompson is recognized as one of the first Black editors in the nation to conduct exclusive sit-down interviews with President Barack Obama, helping to broaden the national conversation about leadership, race, opportunity, the presidency and democratic inclusion. His interviews with President Obama have become part of a larger body of work that reflects Thompson's commitment to bringing consequential and historic voices into meaningful dialogue with the public.

His contributions to journalism and civil rights earned him the prestigious Rainbow PUSH Coalition's 2018 Let Freedom Ring Journalism Award, which was personally presented to Thompson by the late Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr., one of the nation's most consequential civil rights leaders during a ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary death of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.. The honor recognized Thompson's unwavering commitment to truth-telling, racial equity, social justice, and the democratic responsibilities of a free press.

In another historic distinction, Thompson was appointed to the National Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) by his mentor and friend, civil rights icon and former SCLC Board Chairman, the late Rev. Dr. Bernard LaFayette Jr., a founding strategist of the Civil Rights Movement, architect of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and close associate of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Thompson is the first journalist in history to serve on the decision-making body of the organization Dr. King founded, served as president and infused his personal legacy into.

Thompson's influence extends beyond journalism into scholarship and public thought. For example, in 2022, he delivered a major keynote address for Brown University Forum on Race and Democracy hosted by Brown President Christina Paxson examining the complex relationship between race and democracy in America, challenging audiences to consider how history, power, and civic responsibility shape the nation's future. His address reinforced his reputation as a leading voice on the moral and democratic questions confronting contemporary society. His intellectual legacy is preserved in the Bankole Thompson Papers at the Bentley Historical Library, one of the nation's premier archival institutions at the University of Michigan alongside the papers of every Michigan governor. The collection, rare for a living journalist, documents decades of reporting, commentary, interviews, civic engagement, and advocacy dedicated to advancing a more inclusive and equitable democracy.

Thompson's literary contributions have likewise earned national recognition. His acclaimed book *Fiery Conscience* published in 2023 and reviewed by *Forbes* and which documents his decades of speaking truth to power, is listed as a reference in the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, affirming its significance within the broader tradition of Black intellectual thought, civil rights scholarship, and the ongoing quest for racial justice. His latest sixth book, *HOPE: On The Mountain of Fear*, released on May 26 continues that intellectual and moral journey, exploring how hope can serve as a transformative force amid political polarization, economic inequality, and democratic uncertainty. The book argues that hope is not passive optimism but a courageous moral practice capable of sustaining communities through their most difficult challenges.

Whether interviewing presidents, writing columns, delivering keynote addresses, teaching students, preserving the historical record, or building institutions that foster civic dialogue, Bankole Thompson's work is guided by a singular belief: that journalism at its highest calling is a public trust. It is a vocation rooted not merely in reporting events but in illuminating truth, expanding democratic possibility, and helping society imagine a more just and humane future.

In an era marked by division and distrust, Thompson's career stands as a testament to the enduring power of ideas, the necessity of moral courage, and the belief that democracy flourishes when truth, justice, and hope remain at the center of public life.



2026 NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

Awardees



DR. CURTIS L. IVERY

Dr. Curtis L. Ivery, Chancellor of the Wayne County Community College District, has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to equity, education, and human dignity. His work stands as a testament to the enduring struggle for civil rights in America and demonstrates how leadership rooted in compassion, justice, and action can transform lives and communities.

Dr. Ivery's philosophy of leadership is deeply personal and profoundly impactful. As he has stated, "I just always said if I ever had an opportunity to be in a leadership role, I'd do everything I could to make sure people would be OK." This guiding principle is not merely aspirational; it is evident in every aspect of his work. His leadership reflects a moral commitment to the well-being of others, rooted in both lived experience and a deep understanding of structural injustice. His advocacy extends beyond institutional walls, reaching into the broader fabric of society where education, equity, and justice intersect.

Throughout his career, Dr. Ivery has been an unwavering advocate for civil rights and social justice. His public writings and speeches consistently address the enduring realities of systemic racism, economic disparity, and social inequality in the United States. In one of his most compelling reflections, he asserts that the question of equality ultimately comes down to a fundamental societal choice—whether we truly believe all people are created equal or not. This clarity of conviction underscores his lifelong commitment to confronting injustice and advancing equity through both thought and action.



REV. WENDELL ANTHONY

For more than two decades, Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony has served as one of the nation's most influential civil rights leaders as President of the Detroit Branch of the NAACP, the largest branch in the country. Under his visionary leadership, the organization has become a national model for advocacy, civic engagement, and community mobilization. The annual NAACP Detroit Fight for Freedom Fund Dinner, the largest sit-down dinner of its kind in the United States, attracts nearly 10,000 attendees each year and serves as a powerful platform for advancing dialogue on justice, equality, and democracy.

Rev. Anthony's commitment to community transformation extends far beyond organizational leadership. As the longtime pastor of Fellowship Chapel, he has built a ministry centered on service, empowerment, and opportunity. Through the James E. Wadsworth Jr. Community Center, he has overseen programs that address critical needs in health and wellness, workforce development, youth engagement, and economic empowerment. His work reflects a comprehensive vision of civil rights that recognizes the importance of educational, social, and economic equity in strengthening communities.

A defining aspect of Rev. Anthony's legacy is his dedication to mentoring the next generation of leaders. Through the Isuthu Institute for young men and the Intonjane Institute for young women, he has helped countless youth develop leadership skills, cultural awareness, personal responsibility, and a commitment to service. His impact on civic participation has been equally profound through the creation of the "Take Your Souls to the Polls" initiative, which has encouraged greater voter engagement and strengthened democratic participation. Together, these efforts reflect a lifetime devoted to empowering individuals, uplifting communities, and advancing the ongoing pursuit of civil rights and social justice.



DEBI GHATE

Debi Ghate is President of Steadfast as well as Executive Fellow at the State Policy Network and Initiative Director for the George Mason University's "Voices for Liberty: Free Speech, Civil Rights and Social Progress" program. She also serves as Strategic Advisor for UniteNY.

Ms. Ghate is a trained lawyer, previously practicing civil litigation in Ontario, Canada before moving to California to join the Ayn Rand Institute. At the Institute, she oversaw the education and policy programs before serving on leadership teams at two Foundations, including the Charles Koch Foundation and the Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship. She was previously the Senior Director of Grant Strategy at The Snider Foundation and most recently the Vice President of Strategy and Programs for Philanthropy Roundtable before launching Steadfast, which provides fractional non-profit management and program execution support for non-profits interested in protecting both individual rights and flourishing communities.

Ms. Ghate serves on the boards the National Education Empowerment Coalition, FAMM, and the National Liberty Museum. She received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, Biology and French at the University of Toronto and a Bachelor of Laws at the University of Calgary.



2026 NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

Awardees



TWYLA N. GARRETT

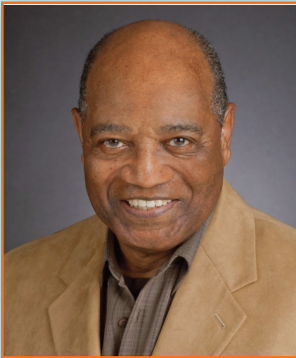
Twyla N. Garrett is a force of transformation—an honored entrepreneur, bestselling author, change-making developer, and sought-after keynote speaker. Rooted in Midwest grit and global vision, she builds legacies brick by brick and idea by idea.

Born in Ohio, Twyla is a global real estate visionary now splitting her time between Richmond, VA, and Cape Coast, Ghana. Her entrepreneurial journey began in 1996 with a bookkeeping service and evolved through the successful sale of a homeland security consulting firm. Today, she is the principal behind an ever-growing portfolio that extends from domestic projects to impactful development in Africa, showcasing her ability to build, scale, and lead with a truly global purpose.

Twyla's mission is to impact 10 million lives through real estate, leadership, and inclusion. This mission is actively advanced by The Garrett Foundation, which addresses critical needs in inner cities through its focus on:

- Creating pathways for families to achieve economic stability and build generational wealth.
- Combating food deserts by ensuring communities have access to nutritious food.
- Providing essential products to eliminate barriers to education and dignity.

Through these initiatives, Twyla uses her business to forge social mobility and economic justice, turning blueprints into tangible, life-changing outcomes for underserved communities



JOHN HARDY

John W. Hardy stands among the unsung heroes of the Civil Rights Movement—those whose sacrifices, leadership, and personal risk laid the foundation for the freedoms we continue to fight to protect today. Beginning his activism in Nashville, Tennessee, during the height of the movement, Mr. Hardy became actively involved with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the NAACP Youth Chapters, and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council. From 1958 to 1963, he participated in some of the most critical direct-action campaigns of the era, including lunch counter sit-ins, protest marches, and economic boycotts—strategies that reshaped the moral and political landscape of the United States.

Mr. Hardy's life is a testament to the enduring impact of grassroots activism. He represents a generation of leaders whose names may not always appear in textbooks but whose contributions were essential to the success of the Civil Rights Movement. His work bridges the historical and the contemporary, reminding us that the fight for justice is both inherited and ongoing.



DR. GLORIA HOUSE

Dr. Gloria House, known also by her chosen African name, Aneb Kgositsile, is a poet, essayist, educator and human rights activist. She completed her bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of California, Berkeley, and earned her doctorate at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Dr. House designed the major in African and African American Studies at the University of Michigan—Dearborn, and served as Director of the AAAS Program before retiring in 2014. She is Professor Emerita in Humanities and African American Studies at University of Michigan-Dearborn, and Associate Professor Emerita in Interdisciplinary Studies at Wayne State University, where she was a faculty member for 27 years. During her career at Wayne State University, Dr. House won distinction as an excellent instructor, a pioneer in comparative cultural studies, and an organizer for equitable treatment of minority students, staff and faculty.

Dr. House has received many honors for her social justice advocacy, including the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights (2017), the Lillian Benbow Award for Education of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority (1999), the Edward Said Scholar-Activist Award of the Michigan Peace Team (2012), the Harriet Tubman Award of the National Organization of Women, Michigan Chapter (2011), the Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, Jr. Champion of Justice Award (2022), and the City of Detroit Arts, Culture, Entrepreneurship Medal of Excellence, 2025.

June 17th Pre-conference Workshop

Sponsors: *Mission Possible and the National Civil Rights Conference Logistics*

- **Time: 1:00 – 5:00 PM**
- **Location: Room 236**
- **Participants: 20-30 civic engagement-minded community members from the Detroit region**
- **Staff/hosts**
 - o Debi Ghatge
 - o Tim Hoefer
 - o Manon Loustaunau
 - o Harry Nathan Gottlieb
 - o Katie Rogala Fahey

Purpose of the Convening. This convening is designed to bring together community members who have demonstrated a strong interest in civic engagement but who rarely have structured opportunities to engage across ideological differences. Our goal is to create a room where community members can interact directly with each other to explore where they share common ground and what underlies this. The National Civil Rights Conference, as an organization, shares these goals with Mission Possible. Its participants are some of the most open-minded and sincere during conferences and discussions.

About Mission Possible. Mission Possible is an emerging national movement dedicated to rebuilding American self government by strengthening civic culture, trust, and cross ideological collaboration. The program provides structured, well facilitated opportunities for people who want to engage across difference but lack access to environments where that is possible.

Unlike many civic bridge efforts that draw from narrow ideological slices, Mission Possible intentionally brings together a truly wide range of participants—left, right, and those in between—and centers their work on co-created Shared Principles and Principled Commitments. These frameworks articulate the civic values, responsibilities, and norms that support a healthy self governing society. They serve as the foundation for all Mission Possible convenings.

The program is highly interactive, emphasizing small group deliberation, collaborative problem solving, and trust building. Across prior convenings with civic leaders from across the political spectrum, Mission Possible has seen exceptionally high post program retention, with participants continuing to stay engaged, collaborate, and build relationships long after the formal sessions end. Many say they have never experienced a room like Mission Possible's.

Why This Convening Matters. This will be the first Mission Possible convening hosted at an HBCU. Most prior participants have been from various existing movements, from democracy reform to freedom conservatism. But those movements do not represent those fighting for civil rights. Nor do they represent all of our communities. This convening represents an important next step in testing whether the principles, methods, and insights developed through earlier gatherings of civic leaders can translate effectively to civil rights advocates and interested community members.

The goals for the day include:

- Creating a rare, structured space for cross ideological dialogue among lawyers, who are more used to being on opposite sides.
- Engage participants with the Shared Principles and Principled Commitments earlier Mission Possible participants have been helping to co-create and discuss what underlying shared values anchor these.
- Piloting interactive exercises that have proven successful with other civic leaders
- Learning from the participants' experiences to refine future programming



15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026

Wayne County Community College District - Curtis L. Ivery Downtown Campus

8:00am – 4:00pm

8:00am – 4:00pm

8:30am – 9:10am

Vendor Table Setup

Registration

Welcome

- Honorable Mary Sheffield, Mayor of Detroit (Invited)
- Keith D. Parker, PhD, 2026 National Civil Rights Conference Chair

Opening Keynote

Introduction of Speaker

Speaker

Contemporary Civil Rights Reflections from Ida B. Wells-Barnett for a Future in Relation to Human Rights Practices in East African Region

Dr. Thomas Otieno Juma, Senior Lecturer of Public Administration, University of Kabianga — Kenya

Dr. Fred Omweri Siambe, Lecturer of Public Administration, Machakos University - Kenya

I have a dream! Defending civil rights as a self-represented litigant in District Court by establishing claim under TITLE VII, TITLE IX and 42 USC § 1983

Dr. Keiron D. Bailey, University of Arizona

Moderator, Dr. Ronald B. Scott, Vice President Emeritus, Miami University

Leveraging Community Data & Collaborative Advocacy to Break Barriers to Equality

Desiree Chang, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

Moderator, Kim M. Johnson, President/CEO, Florida IMPACT

Democracy Will Not Come: The 1942 Lynching of James Edward Person in Edgar County, Illinois

Renatto Carr, PhD, John Martinson Honors College, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

Moderator, Dr. Omekia McNeal, Let's Have Manversation Inc.®

Differentiating Between Faith and Ideology: Hindu Pluralism and Hindu Nationalism in Civil Rights Spaces

Vidya Thirumoorthi, Hindus for Human Rights

Pradeep Sopory, Hindus for Human Rights

Moderator, Terry Carter, Member, 2026 NCRC Planning Committee

Emotionally Intelligent Leadership: Building Emotional Literacy to Strengthen Civil Rights and Social Justice Movements

Dr. Dianna Hollins

Moderator, Dr. Antoinette Gazda, Valdosta State University

Engaging the Next Generation of Male Leaders in Mental, Social & Civic Responsibility

Dr. James Bush, LPC, Let's Have Manversation®

Moderator, Dr. Ella Davis, Professor of African American Studies and English

Wayne County Community College District-CLI Downtown Campus

Gallery

Entry Ways Main Floor

CLI Atrium

CLI Atrium

Keith D. Parker, PhD

TBD

9:20AM - 10:30AM

Session I-A

WORKSHOP

Session I-B

ROOM I23A

Session I-C

ROOM I23B

10:40AM – 11:50 PM

Session 2-A

ROOM 218

Session 2-B

ROOM 236

Session 2-C

ROOM I24

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE - THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026 - *Continued*

12:00pm – 1:50pm

Dr. Ronald Scott and Deborah Scott Recognition Luncheon

Lunch Served

Introduction of Honorees

Awards Presentations

CLI ATRIUM

Last Minute Gourmet Catering

Dr. Keith D. Parker
Chair, 2026 NCRC Planning Committee

Dr. Keith D. Parker

Dr. Omekia McNeal, Member

2:00pm – 3:10pm

**Session 3-A
ROOM 124**

Lives in Deathless Constellation: Poetry of Heartache—A Literary Response to Violent Acts Committed against Civil Rights Movement Youths

Dr. Antoinette Gazda, Valdosta State University

Moderator, Dr. Carolyn Carter, NCRC Board Member

Workshop

**Sessions 3-B
ERC**

The Psychology of the Vote and Its Impact

Jessica Fortune Barker, Founder & Lead Organizer, Lift Our Vote[®]

Moderator, John W. Hardy, Boiasamie & Theater Alive, Inc.

**Sessions 3-C 218
ROOM 218**

Research to Repair: Connecting Urban Renewal Project R-51 to Affordable Housing in Athens, GA
Claire Hagan and Faith Tucker, HOHA Program Coordinator & R-51 Research Director, Historic Athens

Drs Jerry Shannon, Liam England, and Keagan Croom, University of Georgia

Kelly Girtz, Athens-Clarke County

Moderator, Dr. Keith D. Parker

3:20pm – 4:30pm

**Session 4-A 123A
ROOM 123A**

From Detroit to Congress: Charles C. Diggs Jr. and the Transformation of Civil Rights Leadership

Dr. Marion Orr, Brown University

Moderator, Dr. Keiron D. Bailey, University of Arizona

**Session 4-B
ROOM 123B**

Partnering with Human Rights Commissions: Strategies to Engage, Educate, and Empower Communities

Jennifer Booz

Moderator, Dr. Ronald B. Scott, Vice President Emeritus, Miami University

**Session 4-C 236
ROOM 236**

Reflections of Brilliance: The Kujichagulia of Four (unsung) QUEEN Mothers of the Civil Rights Movement

Dr. Calvin DaRonne Harvell, Henry Ford College

Moderator, Dr. Frederick Douglas Dixon, Western Carolina University

PLENARY I

4:40pm – 5:00 pm

Session 5

America 250: Using your right to free speech for good
Debi Ghate, Mission Possible and Partner at Steadfast

CLI Atrium

5:00 pm - Until

TBD by Detroit-area planning committee members!

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE - FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2026

8:00am – 12:00pm Vendor Table Setup Gallery

8:00am – 12:00pm Registration Entry Ways Main Floor

8:30am – 9:10am Welcome Atrium

- Bankole Thompson, Visiting Scholar, Wayne County Community College District
- Keith D. Parker, PhD, 2026 National Civil Rights Conference Chair

Opening Keynote . Atrium

Introduction of Speaker, Kim M. Johnson, President/CEO, Florida IMPACT

Speaker, Bankole Thompson

Topic: The Battle for America's Story: Media, Power and Economic Justice Visiting Scholar, WCCCD

Founder and Dean of the Independent and National Anti-Poverty Think Tank

Nationally Acclaimed Detroit Journalist and Standard-Bearer for Economic Justice Issues

PLENARY II

9:20am - 10:30am

Session 6

Atrium

House of Diggs: The Rise and Fall of America's Most Consequential Black Congressman, Charles C. Diggs, Jr.
Dr. Marion Orr, Brown University

10:40am – 11:50 am

Session 7-A 236

Room 236

Reflections of a Civil Rights Foot Soldier: The Sit-Ins, Freedom Rides & Voter Registration
John W Hardy, Actor, Educator & Civil Rights Activist, Boiasamie & Theatre Alive, Inc.

Moderator, Jessica Fortune Barker, Founder & Lead Organizer, Lift Our Vote[®]

Workshop

Session 7-B I24

ROOM I24

Holding the Line: Legal Observers, Clergy, Grassroots Organizers, and
Movement Leaders at the Front End of Protest Arrests

Walter James III, LLM, JD. Founder, Civil Rights and Criminal Justice Reform
Advocates; CEO, National New Christian Leadership Movement

Moderator, Dr. James Bush, LPC, Let's Have Manversation[®]

Session 7-C

ROOM ERC

From Fear to Force: Deconstructing James Meredith's March Against Fear and Dr. King's Poor People's Campaign
Dr. Frederick Douglas Dixon, Western Carolina University

Moderator, Kim M. Johnson, President/CEO, Florida IMPACT

12:00pm – 1:20pm

Authors Recognition Luncheon

CLI Atrium

Lunch Served

Last Minute Gourmet Catering

Introduction of Authors

Dr. Keith D. Parker

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE - **FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2026** - *Continued*

Session 8

PLENARY III

1:30pm – 2:40pm

Coexisting Across Lines of Difference, Debi Ghate, Mission Possible and Partner at Steadfast
Mike Reitz, Executive Vice President Mackinac Center
David Dulio, Interim Chief Community Engagement Officer Director, Center for Civic Engagement
Distinguished Professor, Department of Political Science, Oakland University

3:00pm - Until

Experience Juneteenth in Metro Detroit!

The 2026 Juneteenth festivities in Detroit are opportunities to celebrate, learn, and reflect on a significant moment in U.S. history.

A little background on this holiday:

- **The Emancipation Proclamation, issued in 1863, declared an end to slavery in the southern states; however, many enslaved people in Texas did not learn of their freedom until June 19, 1865;**
- **In recognition of this history, June 19 was formally designated as Juneteenth National Independence Day in 2021; and**
- **Across the country—and here in Detroit—Juneteenth is commemorated through a range of events and activities that invite community engagement, education, and reflection.**

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE - SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026

8:00am – 12:00pm Vendor Table Setup Gallery
8:00am – 12:00pm Registration Entry Ways Main Floor
8:30am – 9:10am Welcome **Room 236**
Opening Remarks Dr. Keith D. Parker
9:20am - 10:30am
Session 9-A Continuity and Contention: Comparing Immigration Enforcement and Economic Outcomes Across U.S. Administrations
ERC

Dr. Ogbonnaya John Nwoha – Louisiana Tech University
Dr. Lemmy Akoma – Grambling State University
Dr. Cameron Sumlin – University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Frances Staten – Grambling State University (Retired)
Dr. Vivian Nwoha – Louisiana Tech University

Moderator, Dr. Frederick Douglas Dixon, Western Carolina University

Session 9-B **ROOM I24**

The Inconvenient Color of Law
Jeffrey Kass, CatheXis Publishing
Jeffersonian Democracy and Spencerian Social Darwinism in American Thought
Asa Gordon, Research Historian and Consulting Curator, African American Civil War Memorial Museum
Grace Powell, Louisiana Christian University
Dr. Keith D. Parker, National Education and Empowerment Coalition, Inc.

Moderator, Dr. Ella Davis, Professor of African American Studies and English, WCCCD-CLI Downtown Campus

Workshop **Session 9-C** **ROOM I23A**

Misogynoir Is the Context: Understanding Gender-Based Violence Against Black Women
Karen Lopez-Scott

Moderator, Dr. Omekia McNeal, Let's Have Manversation Inc.®

PANEL DISCUSSION **10:40am – 11:50 pm** **Session 10-A** **ROOM 236**

Empowering Youth to Serve and Research the Elderly: An Intergenerational

PANEL/VIGNETTE

Dr. Frances Staten, Grambling State University, Professor Emeritus

Moderator, Terry Carter, Member, 2026 NCRC Planning Committee

Session 10-B

Moderator

Session 10-C .

Moderator

ROOM I23A

TBD

ROOM I23B

TBD

PRESENTER	SESSION	AFFILIATION
Dr. Lemmy Akoma	Session 9-A	Louisiana Tech University
Keiron D. Bailey	Session 1-A & 4-A	University of Arizona
Jessica Fortune Barker	Session 3-B & 7-A	Founder & Lead Organizer, Lift Our Vote®
Jennifer Booz	Session 4-B	Executive Director, Anchorage Equal Rights Commission
Dr. James Bush	Session 2-C & 7-B	LPC, Let's Have Manversation Inc.®
Renatto Carr, PhD	Session 1-C	Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
Terry Carter	Session 2-A	Member, 2026 NCRC Planning Committee
Desiree Chang	Session 1-B	Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
Keagan Croom	Session 3-C	University of Georgia
Dr. Ella Davis	Session 2-C & 9-B	WCCCD - CLI Downtown Campus
Dr. Frederick Douglas Dixon	Session 4-C, 7-C, 9-A	Western Carolina University
Ms. Joyce A. Driver	Conference Volunteer	
David Dulio	Pre-conference Workshop	Interim Chief Community Engagement Officer Director, Center for Civic Engagement Distinguished Professor, Department of Political Science, Oakland University
Liam England	Session 3-C	University of Georgia
Dr. Antoinette Gazda	Session 2-B & 3-A	Valdosta State University
Debi Ghate	Session 5 & 8 Pre-conference Workshop	Mission Possible and Partner at Steadfast
Kelly Girtz	Session 3-C	Athens-Clarke County
Asa Gordon	Sessions II-A	Research Historian and Consulting Curator, African American Civil War Memorial Museum
Harry Nathan Gottlieb	Pre-conference Workshop	Room 236
Claire Hagan	Session 3-C	HOHA Program Coordinator & R-5I Research Director, Historic Athens
John W. Hardy	Session 3-B & 7-A	Boiasamie & Theatre Alive, Inc.
Dr. Calvin Harvell	Session 4-C	Henry Ford College
Tim Hoefler	Pre-conference Workshop	Room 236
Dr. Dianna Hollins	Session 2-B	Founder & Chancellor, Ekklesia Institute
Walter James, III	Session 7-B	Founder, Civil Rights and Criminal Justice Reform Advocates; CEO, National New Christian Leadership Movement

PRESENTER	SESSION	AFFILIATION
Kim M. Johnson	Session I-B Session 7-C	President/CEO, Florida IMPACT
Dr. Thomas Otieno Juma University of Kabianga – Kenya	Session I-A	Senior Lecturer of Public Administration
Jeffrey Kass	Session 9-B	CatheXis Publishing
Karen Lopez-Scott Workshop Facilitator	Session 9-C	Founder & CEO, Gender-Based Violence Advocate & Corporate
Manon Loustaunau	Pre-conference Workshop	Room 236
Dr. Omekia McNeal	Session I-C Session 9-C	Let's Have Manversation Inc.®
Dr. Ogonnaya Nwoha	Session 9-A	Louisiana Tech University
Dr. Marion Orr	Session 4-A Session 6	Brown University
Mrs. Emery W. Parker	Conference Volunteer	
Dr. Keith D. Parker	Session 3-C Session 9-B	National Education and Empowerment Coalition, Inc.
Grace Powell	Session 9-B	Louisiana Christian University
Mike Reitz	Session 8	Mackinac Center
Dr. Ronald B. Scott	Session I-A & 4-B	Miami University, Vice President Emeritus
Dr. Jerry Shannon	Session 3-C	University of Georgia
Dr. Fred Omweri Siambe University – Kenya	Session I-A	Lecturer of Public Administration, Machakos
Pradeep Sopory	Session 2-A	Hindus for Human Rights
Dr. Frances Staten	Session 10-A	Grambling State University, Professor Emeritus
Vidya Thirumoorthi	Session 2-A	Hindus for Human Rights
Bankole Thompson	Thursday morning	Opening Keynote
Faith Tucker	Session 3-C	Historic Athens



Civil Rights and Social Justice Award Recipients

Past and Present

2026 DETROIT, MI - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Dr. Curtis L. Ivery
- Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony
- Debi Ghate
- Twyla N. Garrett
- John W. Hardy
- Dr. Gloria House

2025 NASHVILLE, TN - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Jessica Fortune Barker
- Judge Rachel L. Bell
- Dr. M. Christopher Brown
- Dr. Agenia Walker Clark
- Jimmy Garland
- Dr. Glenda Baskin Glover
- Dr. Dianna Hollins
- Lonnell Matthews, Jr.
- Reverend Horace Sheffield
- Reverend James 'Tex' Thomas

2024 HUNTSVILLE, AL - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Dr. Penny Brown Reynolds
- Rep. Laura Hall
- William Hampton
- Nadine Strossen
- Beulah Ballard Toney

2023 TALLAHASSEE, FL - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEE

- Reverend Dr. Ernest Ferrell
- William Gary
- Dot Inman-Johnson
- Revend. Henry Steele
- Sheyann Webb-Christbug

2022 BATON ROUGE, LA - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Jerome H. Smith
- Calvin Johnson
- Bob Moses
- Don Hubbard
- Robert Jones
- Edwin Williams, Sr.
- Fred Johnson
- Kevin Griffin
- Matt Suarez
- Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins

2021 OXFORD, OH - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Reverend James Lawson
- Cecile Scoon, Esquire
- Dr. LaMarr D. Shields
- Carl B. Westmoreland

2020 CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Postponed due to COVID-19

2019 BIRMINGHAM, AL - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Tyrone C. Parker
- Attorney Angela A. Allen-Bell
- Ernest Sickey

2018 MERIDIAN, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Pamela D.C. Junior
- Attorney Faya Rose Toure'
- State Senator Henry 'Hank Sanders
- Dr. Frances Staten
- Dr. Willie J. Greer Kimmons
- Grand Master Maurice F. Lucas

2017 MERIDIAN, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Judge Arthur L. Burnett, Sr.
- Mrs. Mable Hoskins Oatis
- Dr. Ann Elizabeth Armstrong
- Dr. Gregory Crawford
- Eva M. Tisdale

2016 MERIDIAN, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- April Love
- Asa Gordon
- Reverend Neddie Winters
- Dave Dennis
- Johnny Delk

2015 MERIDIAN, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Awardees from conference in Mississippi

2014 PHILADELPHIA, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- William LaForge
- Congressman John Lewis
- Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
- Atty. Constance Iona Slaughter-Harvey
- Paula C. Johnson and Janis L. McDonald

2013 MERIDIAN, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Judge Veldore F. Young
- Reverend R. Gerald L. Durley
- Flonzie Brown Wright
- Jeff Steinberg
- The Jackson Advocate

2012 PHILADELPHIA, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Joan Sadoff
- Jerusalem Temple Church
- Bishop Ronnie C. Crudup, Sr.
- Jerry Mitchell
- Richelle Putnam

2011 PHILADELPHIA, MS - CIVIL RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDEES

- Loreda Fox
- The Philadelphia (MS) Coalition
- Tougaloo College
- Reverend Dr. Charles Johnson
- Rosalie Steve



DABO
DETROIT

Welcome to Detroit
15TH ANNUAL
CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

As we gather for the 15th Annual Civil Rights Conference in Detroit, let us honor the sacrifices of those who came before us by renewing our commitment to justice, equity, and the ongoing pursuit of freedom for all people.



DABO DETROIT IS COMMITTED TO COMMUNITY

Our mission is to empower Detroit residents through health, housing, education, and economic support—offering wraparound services that restore hope and create lasting impact.

Rev. Horace Sheffield, III, MA, MPA
"A Social Change Agent With A Spiritual Mandate"
DABO Detroit, CEO




is proud to sponsor


The 2026 National Civil Rights Conference

The Voices for Liberty Initiative examines the intersection of civil rights and free speech through significant research and scholarship, a nationwide speakers bureau, and numerous public events.

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Welcome to Detroit

15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE



Storykeeper
Heritage Network, LLC
Learning from the Past, Building the Future

Dr. Carolyn Carter
drcartercarolyn@gmail.com
www.thekitchengenealogist.com



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Dr. Omekia McNeal, h.c. COFOUNDER
Dr. James Bush, LPC, h.c. COFOUNDER

— Congratulations —

AS WE

ENGAGE, EDUCATE AND EMPOWER

AT THE

15TH ANNUAL

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS

CONFERENCE

— DETROIT, MICHIGAN —

Let's Have Manversation Inc.® is a God-Given vision.
We create transformative conversations and supportive communities that empower men to heal, grow, lead, and live with purpose—strengthening families, rebuilding communities, and advancing the Kingdom of God.

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www.letshavemanversation.com

SUPPORT OUR MISSION
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2025 NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN NASHVILLE, TN



2025 NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN NASHVILLE, TN





Planning Committee Members
16th Annual NCR Conference

16th Annual NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

Savannah

JUNE 17-19, 2027

GEORGIA

ENGAGE, EDUCATE AND EMPOWER: THE CALL-TO-ACTION CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

The National Education and Empowerment Coalition is proud to sponsor the Fifteenth Annual National Civil Rights Conference. This exciting and informative conference will be held in Savannah, Georgia, June 17 – 19, 2027. This conference promises to generate considerable intellectual dialogue and debate, as well as create opportunities to strengthen existing networks and forge new ones.

The National Civil Rights Conference will coincide with the Juneteenth Federal Holiday (Juneteenth, a holiday commemorating the Emancipation Proclamation in the United States. Although Juneteenth celebrations were documented as early as 1866, it was not officially recognized as a federal holiday until 2021, when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act).

The National Civil Rights Conference is soliciting papers, panel sessions and workshops for the June conference. The conference theme is Engage, Educate and Empower: The Call-to-Action. While the conference program planning committee welcomes papers, panels, and artistic productions on any aspect of human and civil rights, priority will be given to submissions related to the conference theme.

The deadline for submission of paper, panel and artistic production proposals is April 1, 2027. Proposals must include title of paper, panel, or artistic work, author (s) name and affiliation (s), 200 to 250-word abstract of the paper or panel, contact information and must be submitted electronically to kdparker@civilrightsconference.com.

Conference attendees and program participants are required to register for the conference. Registration includes admission to all sessions, and exhibit halls and daily keynotes. Service-learning training/registration (10 to 20 instructional hours or 1.0 to 2.0 CEUs) will be offered (at a small fee) to registered participants and specific audiences such as teachers, principals, and education leaders.

Registration information and materials will be posted on the following web site: <http://civilrightsconference.com>. You may contact the planning committee chair (kdparker@civilrightsconference.com) or visit the above web site for additional conference-related information.

National Civil Rights Conference
NCRC Website & Mailing Address
<http://civilrightsconference.com>
3282 Salinger Way
Tallahassee, FL 32311-3685