

THE KEYSTONE

A BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER
PUT PEOPLE FIRST! PENNSYLVANIA



SPRING/SUMMER 2020





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WHO WE ARE

Put People First! PA gives voice to everyday people who are struggling to meet our basic needs. We define our basic needs as things we need to live healthy and fulfilling lives — things like education, housing, health care, jobs at living wages, food, and a healthy environment.

We're a membership organization made up mostly of people who know from our life experience that poor and working people need to unite and have a voice. No one else is going to do it for us.

We're building, county by county, all across Pennsylvania. We're urban and rural. We're multiracial. We're politically independent. Until we unite, we don't have the power to change things.

Join us! We need you! www.putpeoplefirstpa.org

Put People First! PA's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the start of the pandemic in the US in early March, Put People First! PA has moved almost all of our organizing online. Every Healthcare Rights Committee now meets on a video/conference call. When our late March Dental Health Advocacy Day with partners was cancelled, we created an online rally with testimonies and representatives videoing in to hear our demands. Put People First! PA has updated our technology education and access, too. We've had

trainings on organizing via social media, how to use our zoom video call platform, and a training on phone banking instead of door knocking. We got a grant from the Movement Voter Project to increase accessibility by paying for devices and data plans for leaders in the organization who faced those barriers. Our Community Care team hosts Thursday evening movies and Friday night virtual potlucks to break isolation. We've also taken it to the streets when absolutely necessary. We're pushing a food distribution Project of Survival programs in Southeastern, Southwestern and South Central PA with plan to expand statewide. And we've taken to the streets -- safely breaking shelter in place rules -- in seven organized actions in four locales to fight against the issues that will make this pandemic even more deadly. Here is a collection of PPF-PA material related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

PUT PEOPLE FIRST! PA'S
COVID-19 STATEWIDE DEMANDS

**TO GOVERNOR WOLF:
PROTECT OUR WORKING CLASS RESIDENTS!**

- 1** We demand the reopening of Hahnemann and all closed hospitals during this crisis. These hospitals must remain open after the crisis is over!
- 2** We demand the immediate production of testing kits for all PA residents.
- 3** We demand the immediate production of personal protective equipment for all healthcare workers and frontline workers.
- 4** We demand that all private hospitals be brought under public control for the duration of this crisis to ensure accountability to the public.
- 5** We demand the expansion of Medicaid to cover every resident in PA.

To learn more, go to www.PUTPEOPLEFIRSTPA.org/coronavirus

<https://www.putpeoplefirstpa.org/coronavirushelp/>

<https://www.putpeoplefirstpa.org/coronavirus>

[Visit PPF-PA's blog for more reportbacks from the front lines.](#)

From the Front Lines: Put People First! PA's Response to the Pandemic

I'm Denyne the co-coordinator for the Mon Valley Healthcare Rights Committee and also the Resource Coordinator for a Community Center in the subsidized housing neighborhood where I live. This is an impoverished community with many seniors, single parent families with 4-5 kids, and many people with healthcare struggles. I've been working with a food bank to hold monthly food distributions since we opened the Community Center last summer.

Normally, we give out staples - meat, bread, milk, and a variety of fruits and vegetables - enough to last each family a couple weeks. This week, the delivery truck brought us three items - lettuce, yogurt and spinach wraps - and only about 50 servings of each for a neighborhood with 300 addresses. In the richest country in the world, how is it that the best our system has to offer seniors, pregnant moms and diabetic kids is lettuce, yogurt and spinach wraps?

Meanwhile, we're seeing news about vegetables rotting in the field and milk getting dumped down the drain. It's not that there isn't enough to go around. It's that our system isn't set up to meet our basic needs, our human rights. This pandemic is a wake up call. More and more people are being thrown into poverty. And in communities like this one, we're going deeper into poverty. We are going to make sure everyone in this neighborhood can get the food we need. But more than that we are going to invite them to join our movement to end poverty. We can't just organize for what we need to survive the next few weeks - that's just a bandaid. We need to organize to get rid of this whole system that could ever allow for so much poverty for the many, with so much wealth for the few. ***

Johnstown Healthcare Rights Committee Co-Coordinator, Savannah: Last week five of us from Johnstown strategized with the PPF-PA Campaign Team about how we can take some of our statewide COVID-19 demands to City Council, including reopening the local hospital. We are also working on the demand of housing all residents who are homeless in the downtown Johnstown Holiday Inn that Mark Pasquerilla owns. Pasquerilla is a real estate profiteer who owns half of the city. Also, we are demanding that we get public hand-washing stations for all of the city and that all rent, mortgage, and phone bills are relieved due to this pandemic.***

PPF-PA Member & Medical Worker, Karim S.: I'm trying to focus on the meaning of this terrible moment, and the chain of dysfunctions that has already caused so many so much harm. The shortages, the inefficiencies, the discomforts—all of these aren't mere inconveniences to be dealt with, or temporary problems to be overcome.

Our health system is broken. It has been broken for a long time and has been deteriorating steadily, somehow under the radar, even as it put increasing strain and burdens on the many lives it didn't simply ruin outright.

You don't have to spend any time inside an emergency room to understand the single most consequential fact about our health system: it is built on a foundation of denying care. [Read the full article in N+1 here.](#) ***

Lancaster Healthcare Rights Committee Co-Coordinator, Matt: The Lancaster HRC has been in the thick of battling the COVID-19 pandemic. We have started a community Facebook discussion group to connect those in need to resources available in the community and to share thoughts, concerns, political discussions and actions. We were able to get meals to those in need by partnering with Lancaster Food Not Bombs & Lancaster County Homeless Union on Saturday at Binns Park to share food, inform the unhoused on what is going on with the virus, resources they can utilize and how they can join the movement. We also listened to their stories and connected with them on a deep level. We are continuing to connect with the community through digital base building and organizing. Many wonderful people are coming our way. They are beginning to see why we have fought so hard for the old St. Joe's hospital. They are becoming aware of the pitfalls of a system that puts money over people. It is time for us all to stand together.***

From the Front Lines: Incarceration and COVID-19

compiled by Tammy Rojas



Governor Wolf's COVID-19 plan identifies prisoners as a vulnerable population. Yet the plan is inadequate and puts many lives at risk. County Prisons and privately owned facilities are left to make their own decisions on how to tackle the pandemic and are not being regulated by the state, as stated on the pa.gov website: **"County prisons are not operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and are not impacted by this quarantine."**

We demand that all individuals over 50 incarcerated or detained and those with greater health risks be released immediately. Our state claims they are reducing the population in the prison system and are giving inmates reprieves, however the percentage given reprieve at each facility is less than 1% - in fact its approximately only .001%.

Anonymous- PPF-PA Member from Western, PA

After the state stopped all visitations and the facilities were placed on lockdown in light of COVID-19, our member experienced severe stress.

"I was a nervous wreck and I was losing my mind. For several days I didn't hear from my [loved one] and I didn't know what to think," they said.

They felt a sense of relief when they were finally able to get back in touch with their loved one, but their stress hasn't lifted entirely. "It's a constant concern and worry for the families of those who are incarcerated," they said. "Those on the outside are just as stressed and worried as those on the inside and so they're going through their own torment right now. They worry if they're incarcerated loved one will get sick and or die from COVID-19." *Continued on pg 6.*

“It's a constant concern and worry for the families of those who are incarcerated.”

From the Front Lines: Incarceration and Covid-19 Cont'd

They shared other concerns facing their incarcerated loved one, "I ordered his commissary as usual and he got it weeks later than he normally would have." This leaves families of those incarcerated wondering if their loved ones are receiving the things they need. They went on to share, "[Their] trial date was moved from the end of May 2020 to mid September 2020 and we were hoping [they] would be released after the trial date."

When asked, what do you most want people to take away and understand about how this COVID-19 pandemic is affecting those who are incarcerated and their families, they responded, "It's important to understand that the people who are incarcerated now are not safe and their lives are in danger. We should be releasing as many inmates as possible. The close quarters means the virus could spread quickly and the inadequate healthcare services provided in prisons gives families on the outside great concern."

Matthew Rosing- Lancaster HRC

Matthew was incarcerated for a total of nine years in both state and county facilities. His last term of incarceration was in 2013-2014.

"I was denied bail because I was homeless," he said. "At the end of the fourteen and a half months I was found not guilty and then released. If I was incarcerated during the COVID-19 pandemic I would not have met the requirements to be released under reprieve according to the plan put forth by Governor Wolf."

While he was an inmate at SCI Mahanoy from 2005-2009 he regularly met with a priest. "The one saving grace I had was the ability to meet with my priest regularly, which kept me sane," he said. "To hear inmates can't meet with their faith leader it makes me incredibly sad to know that they don't have that connection especially during such a stressful time."

During his time at SCI Mahanoy he also worked in the infirmary which gave him a first hand view of the inadequate care that inmates receive. "It horrifies me to think of working in the infirmary and seeing what I saw back then when there wasn't a pandemic going on," He said.

"The lack of healthcare the inmates received when there wasn't a pandemic, it concerns me greatly that with a healthcare crisis like this there will be many unnecessary deaths."

When asked what do you most want people to take away and understand about how this COVID-19 pandemic is affecting those who are incarcerated and their families, Matthew said, "After reviewing Governor Wolf's COVID-19 plan for the incarcerated population, seeing the endless stream of those still being incarcerated thus continuing to add to the incarcerated population and seeing a very small percentage of inmates receiving reprieve and being released and the staff at the prison facilities coming and going, it's clear the COVID-19 pandemic has potential to spread rapidly throughout the entire prison system and decimate the population and that concerns me greatly."



Why We Need the Leadership of the Poor: The Coronavirus and the Crisis of Poverty

by the Kairos Center

We at the Kairos Center know that the public health crisis of the coronavirus that we are facing this year results from a deeper, much longer-term crisis — that of poverty and inequality and of a society that despises the poor and ignores the needs of 140 million poor and low-income people. We are also aware that in times such as these, it is all the more important to enact the demands of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival if we want to fully address this crisis.

We have been sounding the alarm: the virus hurts the poor disproportionately, and then, because of poverty, it hurts everyone more. People are told to stock up on food and prescription drugs but many cannot afford to. People without access to clean, safe water risk this virus compounding the other public health impacts of poisoned water, the lack of sanitation, and water shut-offs. People without stable housing have nowhere to self-quarantine and stay exposed to increased health risks. People without health insurance can't go for treatment. People who are sick without access to paid sick time may have to still go to work. So many people are being forced to choose between the risk of getting and spreading the virus and losing their job, being unable to pay rent, and struggling to feed themselves and their kids. And why must they choose between these options?

People must choose because we don't have the right to paid sick time; we don't have the right to housing, the right to water, the right to living wage jobs so that a family might have a small savings to weather this storm. Our country doesn't guarantee health care nor living wages nor decent housing and education. Indeed, it seems our government doesn't actually care about the 140 million poor and low-income Americans that make up nearly half this country.

The question forever posed to us when we talk about the demands of the Poor People's Campaign is, "How can we afford to enact universal health care or living wages and free education?" But as we are seeing in this moment,

the cost of not providing for people's basic needs far outweighs the cost of providing them. We are connected in a global community and we can no longer pretend otherwise. We have the abundance and the technology to solve many of society's problems — but it will take a focus on people over profits and a political will to end poverty, racism, militarism, ecological devastation and the distorted moral narrative that ties all of these systems together.

It is in the lives of the poor that the increasing crises of our time intersect most clearly, whether it be the coronavirus, climate disaster, or endless war. It is this position that the poor hold that makes the leadership of the dispossessed the only solution to the dangerous situations we find ourselves in today as a society. Without a movement of the poor leading the way, we will always remain merely reactive to every crisis — public health, ecological, or economic — with the most impacted left to suffer and die at the margins of society. [...] With the poor leading the way, we must enact a transformative moral agenda that radically restructures our society to account for the needs of all of us. [...]

Today, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival is one of the major vehicles for the unity and organization of the poor as a social force. As one of the national anchor organizations of the Poor People's Campaign, the Kairos Center is aware that the increasing urgency of this Campaign is more apparent every day. Do whatever you can to support this work. Talk and share about these issues and help people shift their focus from just the coronavirus to the systems underneath it.

Visit the Kairos Center website for more information on our work. And please pray for all those impacted in every way by this pandemic and the poverty and disdain for life that underlies it.

Visit
<https://kairoscenter.org/>
for more information.



Reflections on the 2020 Winter Steering Committee Retreat

by Phil Wider, Steering Committee Co-Coordinator



From the evening of January 22nd to the afternoon of January 26th approximately thirty PPF-PA coordinators and members (and several of their children) met in South Central PA for our organization's annual Winter Steering Committee Retreat. These yearly retreats have been an important time for PPF-PA's leaders (coordinators of our Healthcare Rights Committee and statewide teams) to start the year by studying together, planning out campaign strategy and building our collectivity as the organization's Steering Committee. This year's retreat, which had an additional day added, was no exception.

The goals of this year's retreat were to - 1) deepen the Steering Committee's clarity, competency, commitment and connection; 2) ratify the 2020 Healthcare Is a Human Right Campaign and agitate the Steering Committee to take up and make major advances in PPF-PA's organizing work in 2020; and 3) advance the development of key organizational systems and processes and ensure the Steering Committee's ability to contribute to and wield PPF-PA's internal democracy and discipline.

Many Steering Committee members participated in planning and facilitating the various study sessions, coordinator skills building workshops and strategy discussions which were

all aimed at assisting the Steering Committee in accomplishing these goals.

Additionally, a team took care of the advance logistics for the retreat and then upon arrival involved everyone in work assignments that helped make the retreat a success - cooking and clean up after meals, time keeping, ice breakers, etc. In the evenings there was time for us to hang out and reflect on the day's sessions, share poetry and art, a no-pressure sing-along style jam and playing fun games!

As with past Winter Steering Committee Retreats, this year featured political education sessions that rooted PPF-PA's theory of change and organizing approach in the organizing history of the poor and dispossessed. These sessions, which covered the themes of the political instruments of the working class and the electoral arena and class struggle, included hearing lessons from members who had participated in the Labor Party of the late 1990s and early 2000s. This year's working class internationalism session featured a report back from a PPF-PA leader who had attended an advanced political theory course at the Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandes (ENFF) in Brazil, hosted by the Landless Workers Movement (MST), as well as a report back from four PPF-PA leaders who attended a school on internationalism in North Carolina.

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Reflections on the 2020 Winter Steering Committee Retreat Cont'd



Our Leadership Across Difference workshop, which focused on gender and gender oppression, enabled leaders to meet in regional groups and discuss the Leadership Across Difference challenges they've faced in their organizing.

After leading months of organization wide review and feedback on the 2020 Campaign Plan, the Campaign Team facilitated a lively discussion which culminated in a unanimous ratification of the 2020 Campaign Plan and the launch of yearlong planning in Healthcare Rights Committees and Statewide Teams. As the 2020 Campaign Plan states "Our Healthcare Is a Human Right (HCHR) Campaign is an organizing campaign, the vehicle through which PPF-PA recruits new members, develops leaders, and takes action to: 1) build and unite a permanently organized base of poor and dispossessed working class people in all parts of PA and 2) pass HCHR legislation at the state level." The three main pillars of the 2020 Campaign Plan are once again to build the Nonviolent Medicaid Army, to target profiteers and to hold power holders accountable to our platform and policy vision.

Having learned some deep lessons about our organizing work in 2019, a base building for coordinators workshop reviewed the basics of PPF-PA's base building work (including our commitment to regular 1 on 1's with members) and introduced a new Healthcare Rights Committee Development Path which frames the building of Healthcare Rights Committees as achievements of our class, especially as they become political centers of gravity in their regions. The retreat also featured excellent workshops for coordinators in PPF-PA's Legislative Practice and Fundraising.

A set of workshops on PPF-PA's organizational systems and practices introduced a new formulation of the expectations of PPF-PA coordinators, a revised Leadership Development Path, a hot off the presses first draft of PPF-PA's New Member Handbook, a training on the PPF-PA database, a review of PPF-PA's Community Agreements and a template to assist PPF-PA members in sharing regular self-criticism, constructive feedback and appreciation with each other.

All in all, it was a highly productive retreat that built our camaraderie and discipline and set our Steering Committee up for the upcoming year.

"Our organization is committed to building leaders because leaders in the past created followers rather than new leaders."

- Retreat reflection from Rica of the Pittsburgh Healthcare Rights Committee

Water is a Human Right

by Tammy Rojas, Lancaster Healthcare Rights Committee, Media & Communications Team

In December 2019, right before Christmas, the Lancaster, PA City Administration chose a tactic of threatening to shut off access to water to residents who live in properties that have not yet complied with the mandatory water meter upgrade. Water is a basic ingredient to life, therefore it's a basic human right and taking away that right could lead to dire consequences.

Residents didn't only face losing their access to water, having their water shut off could also make them homeless. If a resident has their water shut off for 72 hours the property could then be condemned and the residents of said property would be forced to vacate. Immediately after the first threat of water shut offs, the Lancaster Healthcare Rights Committee of Put People First! PA and regional partners in the PA Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, began placing pressure on city officials to stop the water shutoffs.

After residents spoke out at the December 10th City Council meeting, the administration removed rental properties from the water shut off list until further notice, leaving homeowners still at risk. At Put People First! PA when we say "Everybody In, Nobody Out!" We mean it. We went back to City Hall to demand an end to the water shut offs for everyone immediately! Under no circumstances should anyone lose access to any of their basic human rights. There is a misconception about home-ownership - they say owning your own home is a way to create wealth. I would argue that what happened on the 500 block of North Plum Street in Lancaster, PA earlier in 2019 says otherwise.

Seventeen people found themselves immediately displaced after an inspection discovered the basement of one home dropped by seven inches, which was caused by two underground anomalies that were a part of the limestone bedrock. Just because someone is a homeowner doesn't mean they don't struggle to make ends meet or face barriers of their own. Home-ownership doesn't guarantee that you will never face homelessness.

Instead of resorting to shutting off water access, the administration could have coordinated the neighborhood groups to help those in need within the community who face barriers that may have made it difficult for them to comply with the mandatory meter upgrade.

The water shut-offs in Lancaster are only the most recent example in Pennsylvania and across the United States where the poor and dispossessed are denied their human right to water by the state and profiteers. While the water crisis in Flint, Michigan is well documented, in the Woodlands area in Western PA, over 50 families have not had access to clean drinking water for nearly as long as Flint because their area has been so severely fracked.



The poor and dispossessed in our community have enough to face these days as wealth inequality rises across our nation. Our local government shouldn't add to the pressure we face on a daily basis just to survive. The holidays

are the time of year we should be joyous: giving, caring, and thankful. No one should be having to stress over whether they will lose their water or become homeless at Christmas!

Water for the Woodlands

by Michael Bagdes-Canning, Marcellus Outreach Butler (MOB), co-founder of Better Path Coalition, PA Poor People's Campaign Coordinating Committee

In late 2010, families in the Woodlands, a 400 acre community in Butler County, were dealing with a series of strange happenings. One family's well suddenly went dry. Another family was dealing with flu-like symptoms. Another noticed that their water was a turquoise color. Another's was black. Some saw a film on top of their water. One family's dog wouldn't drink from its water dish. Each family thought they were the only ones having problems.

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The Woodlands Cont'd

One evening, Mary Williams (I've changed the names of Woodlands residents because some of the families have signed a nondisclosure agreement when they settled with the driller) was feeling particularly bad with flu-like symptoms and asked her husband, Joe, to get her a drink of water. When Joe turned on the tap, instead of water, foam gushed from the faucet. They both knew that this had to be related to the nearby fracked well. Just a few years before, they had been told by a water testing company that their water was so pristine that they should consider selling it.



The next morning, they called the driller and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The driller provided Mary and Joe with replacement water but insisted that they were not responsible for the problems. When DEP tested the water, they told Mary and Joe not to drink the water.

Soon, the Williams started talking to their neighbors. When they did, they found that the water problems in the Woodlands were widespread. The families organized and demanded that the driller and DEP make them whole. The driller soon started supplying 50 families in the Woodlands with water.

The families connected with Dr. John Stolz, an expert on drilling and water contamination. Stolz began testing. Stolz's testing, which included lowering a camera down into a well to determine from which direction the water was flowing through several aquifers, and looking for chemical indicators in water samples, found a link between contamination and drilling.

But before that testing was done, DEP found that the driller was not responsible for water contamination in the Woodland. The driller immediately stopped supplying replacement water – even though DEP told residents the water was still not safe to drink.

In 2012, Marcellus Outreach Butler started a water drive. A local church, White Oak Springs Presbyterian Church agreed to house the water and that was the beginning of the Water For the Woodlands water bank (<https://sites.google.com/site/waterforwoodlands/>). That water bank is still serving 50 families. Each Tuesday, families come to pick up 20 to 25 gallons of water.

What do we need to live healthy, fulfilling lives? What does it mean that our basic human needs are not guaranteed? Families cannot go from pristine water to poisoned wells and a water bank. The only way to change this is through organizing. The Better Path Coalition is a statewide, grassroots-led coalition forging a path to a clean, renewable energy future for Pennsylvania and a government that puts the people's interests before those of the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries. To learn more visit <https://www.betterpathcoalition.org/>.

PPF-PA Members in Action



Rally & Candlelight Vigil 4 Families

Dec 18 @4-5:30pm outside Blair County Courthouse (423 Allegheny St, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648). Families from across Pennsylvania fighting for their loved ones will speak. While many enjoy family warmth & togetherness during the holidays, too many face separation and despair. Families will share their experiences being torn apart – by removal of children from poor households, imprisonment, separation at the border and deportation. Add your voice and stand against family separation!

**Take away Our Poverty, Not Our Children!
Reunite Our Families!**



Jennina Rose Gorman, Altoona Healthcare Rights Committee Members of Put People First! PA, and Every Mother is a Working Mother Network supported by the PA Poor People's Campaign: NCMR hosted a vigil on December 18, 2019 outside the Blair County Courthouse to demand an end to family separation.

≡ The Tribune-Democrat

Letter to the editor | Organizations shed light on MLK

Rev. Calvin Hart, Johnstown Healthcare Rights Committee

February is Black History Month, and the Rev. Martin Luther King is one of the many contributors to shine a light on black history. Commonly known because he was a reverend, he is being studied more because of his political stances.

Coming more from a strict religious background, his political contributions were unknown. You can't watch everything that is produced on TV and gain a clear perspective on King.

PutpeoplefirstPA.org is a new force that is based largely on the teachings of King. [...] With proper stimuli, there can be positive results. I thank our Holy God for his Holy Spirit, who is ever-present no matter what the circumstances may be.

"The dispossessed of this nation – both white and Negro – live in a cruelly unjust society. ... There are millions of people in this country who have very little or even nothing to lose. If they can be helped to take action together, they will do so with a freedom and a power that will be a new and unsettling force in our complacent national life." – Martin Luther King Jr.



Our Needs Are Our Rights: Organizing & The Dental Crisis

by Jacob Hope, Base-building team,
PA Coalition of Oral Health

Our teeth are a part of our body. That sounds like common sense. But to our healthcare system, our teeth are these magical things in our mouth that have no effect on the rest of our body. This hasn't been good for our dental or overall health. To make matters worse, the PA Government cut the Medicaid (welfare insurance) dental benefit in 2011, eliminating coverage for needed procedures like crowns, root canals, periodontal services (deep cleanings for your gums), and anything more than 1 set of dentures. Medicaid will only cover it if you beg your Medicaid insurance company, who 95% of the time still denies you. Basically, dental care for poor and dispossessed Pennsylvanians got even worse! The State said they cut the benefit to "save money," but we really know they are just continuing their war on the poor! Put People First! PA is fighting back.

This idea that our oral healthcare should be treated differently from our overall healthcare is the result of efforts by dentists, the government, and the ruling class. Dentists have historically practiced dentistry as a small business they own (a "dental practice") to give them an upper middle class life. They have tended to focus more on cosmetic dentistry and surgical procedures, which are more profitable than preventative dentistry. Over the past 100 years, many dentists have resisted policies that would give dental care to masses of poor and working people because they saw it as a threat to that business model. On top of that, the ruling class has continued the idea that dental care is a luxury instead of a basic right. Finally, the Federal government codified the separation of dental care and overall healthcare when it passed the Social Security Act of 1935 and created Medicare, which to this day does not cover any dental services.

PPF-PA is fighting back through our campaign to restore the Adult Dental Benefit in Medicaid. We have already had success.

First, our most important success has been the leaders we continue to find, recruit, and develop through this fight. Leaders like Tammy and Anne in Lancaster, Angie in Pittsburgh, Denyne in Mon Valley, Jacob Butterly in MontCo, and Summer in Philly. We have also won our members material support through taking collective action, like with Summer Mills here in Philadelphia. I met Summer after her Medicaid company denied coverage for multiple root canals she needed. Summer was in a lot of pain, so PPF-PA acted quickly. We mobilized 15 people statewide on short notice to do a call-in day targeting her insurance company. The insurance company still refused to cover her root canals, and Summer was forced to take out a credit card to pay for her dental care. But PPF-PA did not give up. We went to the media to ramp up pressure. WHYY, a local NPR station, did a radio story and an online story on Summer. Immediately after a reporter reached out to the insurance company, the insurance company gave in! Summer got a call saying they would cover her root canals! Victory!

While this might be a drop in the bucket of the dental crisis in Pennsylvania, we should also celebrate our victories. Winning Summer some needed dental care is a victory. Our strategy of organizing people directly affected by the dental crisis was effective. That is a victory. Learning more about our opponents is a victory. Improving our use of tactics like call-in days and building relationships with media is a victory. We must expand the action we take across the state to win people the dental care they need. With dental offices closed across the state, the dental crisis will deepen. So too must our organizing.



What's so scary about strangers? Base-Building Intensive Group

by Beckett, Philadelphia Healthcare Rights Committee, Base-Building Intensive Group

There is an army of people out there who are screwed by the system, are experts in how screwed they are, and would benefit from a total overhaul of how things work.

When we're each milling about as individuals - putting all our energy into taking care of ourselves and whoever depends on us - there's not much we can do to change those systems that feel so crushing.

But when we are organized - learning how to move together, to each take small actions that coordinated become a big action - we have power, we can change things.



As I understand it, base-building means getting more and more people who are milling about as individuals to join us in moving together. It's about growing the Nonviolent Medicaid Army. One of the greatest powers of our class is our numbers - the people whose needs are not being met are, of course, an overwhelming majority - and base building is how we tap into that power. We bring new people into the organization as well as deepening the leadership of current members, so that we have more power and can get more done.

I got involved in the Winter Base-Building Intensive Group (BBIG) because it was a way to dig deeper into Put People First! PA. I was excited to get more involved, especially in work that's so essential to what PPF-PA is doing. But I was also a little nervous because I'm shy. I freeze up around new people, and I knew base building would involve a lot of trying to connect with new people.

A side note about my "shyness" is that I don't think it's some random obstacle that's unrelated to the exploitative world we're fighting against. I believe I'm shy largely because I have been taught all my life, in a million big and small ways, that I should be scared of people; that they are my enemy; that our differences are un-bridgeable; that I am best off sticking to myself. These individualist, anxious ways of thinking are the opposite of what is needed to organize with people; it's in the ruling class's interest for us all to think like this. I need to work through my shyness, not only so I can be a better base builder, but also because learning to love all people by default, recognize our shared needs, and fight for them together across difference is the revolutionary work itself.

As I'd hoped, being in the BBIG has already helped with that work. For one thing, I've found that talking to people I don't know has actually been much easier and more fun than I expected! When I've gone doorknocking, more experienced members of PPF-PA always prepare and support me. And, I find that when I'm focusing on what I have in common with people - our basic human rights - and inviting them to work side by side for the same goals, the frozen, fearful parts of me start to thaw. That feels good.

I've been learning all of this stuff and more in the BBIG, at our opening retreat and in our biweekly phone calls, where members from across the state discuss plans and troubleshoot concerns. I am always amazed at our collective wisdom - together we have so many answers! As someone quoted Willie Baptist at our retreat, "why just think with your own brain when we can use everyone's brain?" I'm excited for PPF-PA's collective intelligence to grow even wider, deeper, and more brilliant with each person we connect and get organized with through base building.

Restore the Adult Dental Benefit in Medicaid NOW

by Barbara White, Pittsburgh Healthcare Rights Committee, Campaign Team

On April 2nd, 2020, Put People First! PA hosted our first Virtual Lobby Day. We had planned to join an in-person lobby day in Harrisburg on March 17th with the PA Coalition on Oral Health, but it was cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Undaunted, we contacted people who had signed up to join us that day to tell their stories about why we need full dental services for adults on Medicaid.

In this COVID-19 crisis, with dental offices closed and even routine care unavailable, it means that small dental problems can become big problems and lead to needs that are not covered. Four of our members spoke about how poor dental care negatively affects total health, including heart disease and diabetes, 2 of the conditions that leave us at risk for COVID-19. They also spoke about how lack of sufficient dental care makes it difficult to smile, to get respect and employment, even when the person does everything they can to take care of their teeth.

We had about 40 members from across the state on the call, including Pittsburgh, the Mon Valley, Westmoreland County, Altoona, Harrisburg, York County, Lancaster, Philly, and Northeastern PA. The legislators who attended were affected by our stories and have vowed to work on the issues. Rep. Sara Innamorato attended. She is co-sponsor of HR799 to engage in research on the effects of losing the adult dental benefit in 2011. We were also joined by Rep. Austin Davis, Sen. Sharif Street, and staff from Rep. Matthew Bradford and Sen. Art Haywood. Rep. Austin Davis signed on to HR 799 on the spot!

The larger issues of the day - people losing jobs, losing health insurance, losing their lives due to COVID-19 - were central to our discussion, too, since we hold power-holders accountable to the needs of all working-class people in this crisis. *2019 Year-end fundraising graphic below - highlighting PPF-PA's campaign strategy.*

Put People First! PA
Healthcare is a Human Right!

You only get
what you're
organized to
take!



Put People First! PA made big strides in our Healthcare is a Human Right Campaign based on three strategic pillars:

- **Research and Take Action Against Profiteers, and Build Support for a Public Healthcare Advocate:** We challenged the "rights" of those who currently control the healthcare system to make a profit off of us by pushing for a Public Healthcare Advocate and holding a statewide week of Medicaid Marches targeting healthcare profiteers.
- **Expand the Nonviolent Medicaid Army:** We had thousands of organizing conversations with working class people of all backgrounds in cities and towns across PA, with a specific focus on people who are on, qualify for, or are unfairly excluded from Medicaid.
- **Hold Powerholders Accountable to our Platform:** We're held officials' feet to the fire around our policy platform and vision that includes 1) no cuts, hurdles or hoops to Medicaid and CHIP 2) restore the adult dental benefit in Medicaid and 3) create a Public Healthcare Advocate for Pennsylvania.

WWW.PUTPEOPLEFIRSTPA.ORG/DONATE

Member Reflection: Margot Rathke

Lancaster Healthcare Rights Committee, PPC Moral Student Organizing Fellow



I cannot pinpoint the exact day, meeting, or conversation, in which I became a member of the movement. I first met with some leaders of Put People First! PA in the Economics Department at Franklin & Marshall College in June 2019 at the start of my 10-week summer research project. I remember being taken back by Tammy Rojas's personal story and how the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival gave her hope and purpose at a time when she felt most vulnerable and lost. Little did I know, this Campaign would have a comparable - although for different reasons - impact on my life, as well.

Put People First! PA is part of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival (PPC:NCMR). In collaboration with PPF-PA, I am working with a cohort of students to replicate the PPC:NCMR National Moral Budget on a local scale for the County of Lancaster. While doing this research, specifically working with the City of Lancaster Financial Statements and grants, I have found what skills and insights I have to bring to the table. At my training as a PPC Moral Fusion Student Organizing Fellow, we spoke about how everyone plays a unique role in this movement. While some people can inspire groups of people through personal storytelling, others can use their musical talents to bring strangers together in unison.

A large part of both Put People First! PA and the PPC:NCMR is providing statistical evidence to change the narrative around who is poor in this state and the detrimental effects of systematic racism, poverty, the war economy and ecological devastation. As an economics major with a minor in applied mathematics, I have been able to use my analytical mindset and software skills to provide evidence based research for those confronting local officials and policy makers. As a PPC Moral Student Organizing Fellow, I additionally learned about the importance of incorporating college students into this movement. I have seen first hand how the lack of adequate resources or inclusive policies set forth by college administrators can have a grave effect on the success of marginalized students. While students have unique skills and insights to lift the Campaign, leaders of the Campaign can equally provide resources, alternative support systems, and new found confidence for students to demand their voices be heard and needs be met on campus.

I remember the first PPF-PA meeting I attended to share our initial findings. Having never worked with a grassroots organization, I had no idea how these meetings would run and I was nervous about coming across as clueless. As we went around introducing ourselves and sharing how we were, I felt an immediate sense of belonging and support. These meetings, the relationships I have built, the movement we are supporting, all remind me that the work we are doing is important. Whatever that unanswered question or systematic imbalance that you cannot simply ignore, find people who equally care and tackle it together.



Can we be together while being different?

by Lina Martínez,

Montgomery County Healthcare Rights Committee



I'm Lina Martínez and I was born and raised in Colombia. This is my 11th year in the United States and currently I work as a non-tenured university professor. If I had to go through a typical US-centered identity checklist, I would be marking many categories: immigrant, person of color, woman, queer, hispanic, latinx, mixture of indigenous and black people, etc. Only when I moved to the US these categories became something so pervasive in my daily life. Living daily experiences as a performative act where I am always read as Other is one of the biggest adjustments I've gone through in my years in this country.

But more than those identity markers, it is their intersection with class difference that has deeply marked my experience here. In Colombia, my family would qualify as middle class. Here in the US, based on my current income, I would be lower-middle class, but I also have substantial debt from paying visas and USCIS processes to be able to stay here and work. I teach and have taught in really wealthy schools, where a year of education costs more than \$60,000 dollars. Outside of my work in Academia, I have been developing relationships with different communities in the Philadelphia area, and have seen the immense gap that keeps growing between those who have so much and those that struggle everyday to make ends meet.

With my experiences in those two extremes of society - the wealthy and the poor - I have made the political choice to center my pedagogy around community-based learning, with the hopes of teaching my students - in communities and the university- about the intersectional nature of class inequalities and how it is in the hands of future generations to find an alternative to a ruthless capitalist system that threatens our communal well being.

This political choice aligns well with the ideological and programmatic standards of Put People First! PA, and that is the main reason I joined the organization. I have been reluctant to join organizations that, to me, focused on defending the rights of a particular group based on one identity marker. I joined PPF-PA because it goes beyond that and can see how we are all interconnected and how the basis of our well being is the defense of basic human rights for everyone. Our well being is dependent on the well being of those most oppressed and unprotected in our societies. It is clear now, when we face so much uncertainty with the spread of COVID-19, and it is clear also as we understand that our healthcare system is in need of deep restructuring to serve everyone, and not just those who can afford it. I joined PPF-PA to connect with more people that think like me and whose priority is to fight for the well being of everyone, regardless of race, gender, immigrant status, but with a clear awareness of redistributing for the people who need it the most.



Building Bridges: Working Class Youth Brigade to Venezuela

by Jamie Blair, Philadelphia Healthcare Rights Committee, Media & Communications Team

For two weeks in February, I represented Put People First! PA on an educational exchange to Venezuela with 16 young people from the US, Jamaica and Brazil representing different parts of the organized working class. These included organizations of black and brown youth for an end to prisons, organizations focused on political education, a feminist artist collective, and socialist political formations. We were hosted by similar organizations of Venezuelan youth. We went as a “Brigade,” which draws on a history of solidarity efforts between countries. Our goal was to build Internationalism, or working class unity among the movements of our different countries.

Venezuela is a country of 30 million people located in South America. After decades of austerity and privatization, democratically elected President Hugo Chávez began the “Bolivarian Revolution” in 1999, which is made up of social and economic reforms that value participatory democracy and mass anti-poverty programs. In 2015 under President Obama, the US government imposed economic sanctions on Venezuela because the South American country prioritized social welfare policies that value people over neoliberal policies which value the profits of transnational corporations. In spite of - and in response to - these, the Venezuelan government and people have creatively found ways to build out their society, in the midst of imposed scarcity, to care for their people.

When I was building relationships in Venezuela, I kept coming back to PPF-PA’s Leadership Across Difference framework. I shared that in Pennsylvania, we are taught to fear each other across differences of race and geography by the media, by miseducation, by politicians and social codes.



There are similar dynamics that play out at the international level as both major political parties and corporate media keep the US people ignorant to the reality in Venezuela. In PA, we’re able to break through these divisions by studying our history, our current context, and through people from across the state coming together to learn from one another. Admittedly, it’s a bit of a farther trip for Pennsylvanians to exchange with Venezuelans or others from across the world.

Why is this so important? The forces that we’re up against have long been organized internationally, waging a divide and conquer strategy against the poor across the world. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called this the “cruel manipulation of the poor.” If we want to stand a chance at transforming society so that people come before profit, we can’t stop at our Pennsylvania or US borders. We need to stand with the poor and working class around the world. There are many lessons to learn and strength to draw from in all directions. In this moment of pandemic, we’ve been able to see brilliant examples of the way governments that are designed to care for people are able to provide for the basic needs of their people and beyond. We learn from each other and are strengthened to demand more for each other’s humanity.

Read the full piece on
<https://www.putpeoplefirstpa.org/blog>

Construyendo puentes: Brigada juvenil de la clase trabajadora en Venezuela

por Jamie Blair, traducido por Lina Martínez,

Durante dos semanas en Febrero representé a Put People First!PA en un intercambio educativo llevado a cabo en Venezuela con otras 16 personas jóvenes de Estados Unidos, Jamaica y Brasil, quienes representamos a la clase trabajadora organizada. Entre las diferentes organizaciones se encontraban jóvenes negros y de color que luchan por la abolición de las prisiones, organizaciones enfocadas en la educación política, un colectivo de arte feminista y formaciones políticas socialistas. Nuestros anfitriones pertenecían a organizaciones juveniles similares en Venezuela. Viajamos como una “brigada”, partiendo de la historia de solidaridad que ha unido los esfuerzos realizados entre estos países. Nuestra meta era contribuir a la construcción del Internacionalismo, o a la unidad de la clase trabajadora entre los movimientos de nuestros diferentes países.

Venezuela es un país de 30 millones de habitantes localizado en Sur América. Después de décadas de austeridad y privatización, el presidente electo democráticamente, Hugo Chávez, inició la “Revolución Bolivariana” en 1999, la cual fue constituida por una serie de reformas económicas y sociales que dan valor a la participación democrática y a los programas masivos en contra de la pobreza. Durante la presidencia de Obama en el 2015, el gobierno de Estados Unidos impuso sanciones económicas a Venezuela ya que el país suramericano priorizaba las políticas de bienestar social que daban mayor valor a las personas que las políticas neoliberales que priorizaban, por su parte, las ganancias de las corporaciones transnacionales. A pesar de - y en respuesta a - estas políticas, el gobierno y las personas venezolanas encontraron maneras creativas de construir su sociedad, en medio de la escasez impuesta, con el fin de cuidar a su gente.

Al construir mis relaciones en Venezuela, me encontraba regresando continuamente al marco de pensamiento propio del Liderazgo a través de la Diferencia de PPF-PA. Compartí que en Pensilvania, los medios de comunicación, la desinformación, los políticos y los códigos sociales nos enseñan a temer los unos de los otros por nuestras diferencias de raza y geografía. Existen dinámicas similares que surgen a nivel internacional cuando analizamos cómo los dos partidos políticos dominantes y los medios corporativos mantienen a las personas de Estados Unidos en estado de ignorancia sobre la realidad de Venezuela. En Pensilvania, podemos romper con estas divisiones estudiando nuestra historia, nuestro contexto actual y a través de las personas en todo el estado que se unen para aprender unas de otras. Claro está que sería un viaje un poco más largo para lograr un intercambio entre las personas de Pensilvania y de Venezuela o de otros lugares del mundo.

¿Por qué es tan importante esto? Las fuerzas que enfrentamos han estado organizadas por mucho tiempo a nivel internacional, librando una estrategia de “divide y reinarás” en contra de los pobres del mundo. El reverendo Martin Luther King Jr. llamó esto la “cruel manipulación de los pobres”. Si queremos tener un chance de transformar a la sociedad de manera que las personas estén por encima del lucro, no podemos detener nuestra lucha sólo en las fronteras de Pensilvania o Estados Unidos. Debemos marchar con los pobres y la clase trabajadora alrededor del mundo. Hay muchas lecciones que aprender y estrategias que rescatar en todas las direcciones. En este momento de la pandemia, hemos podido ver ejemplos brillantes de la forma cómo los gobiernos diseñados para cuidar de la gente logran suplir las necesidades básicas de sus pueblos y más allá. Aprendemos unos de otros y nos fortalecemos para exigir más de nuestra humanidad mutua.

The National Union of the Homeless Then and Now: Lessons Lessons from the Struggle to End Homelessness

by Kristin Colangelo, Philadelphia Healthcare Rights Committee



The National Union of the Homeless (NUH) developed out of an economic shift, computerization, robotization, and deindustrialization, that resulted in mass layoffs and ultimately family homelessness. This was a new face of homelessness that the country had not seen before. It was a shift from the stereotype of skid row homelessness to displacement of entire families and communities. The current US shelter system was created in reaction to this shift.

This significantly impacted industries represented by trade unions. This unprecedented economic shift created the conditions that led to the formation of a new type of union of those permanently pushed out of the production

process, the NUH. Many members of the old trade unions became members of the new homeless unions, which confronted the various apparatuses of the US government.

At its height, the NUH had over 30,000 members in 25 cities and began to exert considerable political influence. It carried out a number of nationally synchronized housing takeovers and protests. These protests culminated in the 1989 Housing Now! march of over 200,000 participants. The efforts around that march resulted in a meeting with Jack Kemp, ED of Housing and Urban Development, during which he promised to allot a large amount of money toward public housing. This money was ultimately siphoned into the NPIC, especially focused around DC and the Community for Creative Non-Violence. In reaction to these false promises, starting on May Day of 1990, the NUH organized rounds of mass takeovers of HUD housing involving 13 cities. These efforts resulted in multi-million dollar housing programs in several major cities run by and for poor and homeless families as well as other important concessions.

During this period of struggle the crack epidemic hit the streets of our country and the newly constructed nationwide shelter system was filled with many addicted homeless men and women. The double pronged attack of cooptation through concessions and the devastating drug epidemic, which had the political effects of chemical warfare, lead to the ultimate demise of the NUH. This demise revealed not only the machinations of the NUH's powerful network of adversaries but it also exposed the inexperience and the limited political education and training of its leaders.

Without a strong commitment to this indispensable process of education and training, the leaders were unable to develop a true understanding of the economic and political causes of homelessness. They therefore easily fell prey to empty concession promises and the politically crippling blow of the drug war. Also we learned that acquiring some housing concessions for a few families did not end the continuing growth of poverty and homelessness.

Many of the central leaders continued to organize throughout the country over the next two and a half decades to build a movement to end the conditions of poverty, homelessness, hunger and the lack of health care. Since the prolonged economic crisis beginning in 2008, *Continued on Page 21*

The National Union of the Homeless Then and Now Cont'd

the conditions of homelessness continued to worsen, which have given rise to important and new political efforts to reestablish the NUH. This has been greatly assisted by the current development of the new Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival.

The initial locals of the NUH began in California, the state with the most concentrated, long term homelessness as well as the most established and organized tent city communities. The concentrated organizing efforts in California involved members of the original NUH. Out of this organization sprung the efforts to re-establish the NUH nationwide. To date, there are unions in 15 areas of the country, including right here in Lancaster, mobilizing around such issues and local examples of the criminalization of homelessness as dismantled encampments and lost belongings, panhandling laws, social service sanctions, and the continued chemical warfare against our class.

Member Reflection: Stan Horwitz

Philadelphia Healthcare Rights Committee

As a new member of the Philadelphia HRC and Put People First! PA, I am writing this article to introduce myself and explain why I support Put People First! PA.

Thanks to my job, I have great medical insurance. When I was rushed to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital with a life-threatening condition several years ago, the only bill I had to pay was \$15 for the phone and television service. I received first-rate care by a superb team of doctors, nurses, and other support staff. I want the same for everyone else who is ill.



I first heard about Put People First! PA when I attended a rally last spring at Hahnemann University Hospital to protest its closure, where I was asked to fill out a form to join Put People First! PA. I attended that rally because my 88-year-old father was receiving treatment for cancer there. The closure of Hahnemann was extremely stressful. My father's last day of treatment there was the same day Hahnemann closed. A few days after I filled out that form, Candace Chewing invited me to attend a Philadelphia Healthcare Rights Committee (HRC) meeting. That was almost one year ago. I have been attending those Wednesday night meetings ever since then.

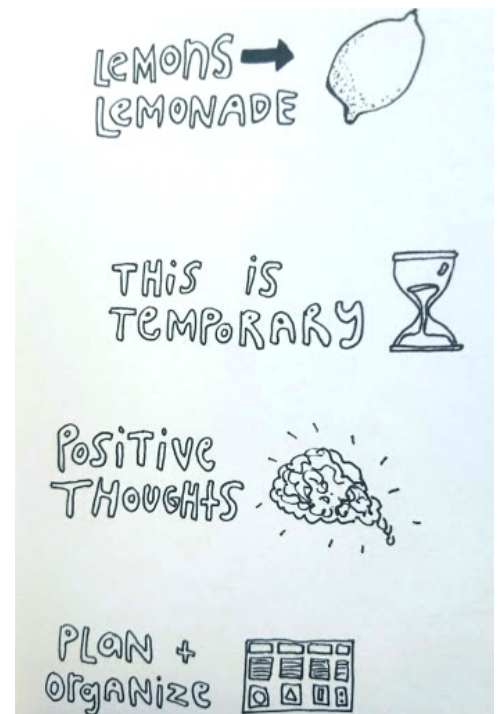
I am slowly increasing my involvement in the Philadelphia HRC. I believe our best chance of having a national Medicare for All system is to start a Medicare for All system in the individual states. That's why Our lobbying elected officials in Harrisburg that healthcare is a human right and that Medicare for All in Pennsylvania is so important. Because of my Ethical Humanism faith, I believe that each of us is diminished when other people don't get the healthcare they need. Without everyone having access to quality healthcare, we are all diminished, whether we know it or not.

Arts & Culture



BUT HOW WILL WE PAY FOR IT? March 10, 2020, NIJMIE

We pay for it every day with our lives // We pay for it in anxiety, sleeplessness and depression // We'll pay for it by taking back what was stolen from us // We pay for it sitting in debtor's prison // We pay for it with GoFundMe // We'll pay for it by shutting down the war machine // We pay for it rationing insulin // We pay for it with a pile of pulled teeth // We'll pay for it by eliminating the parasitic profiteers // We pay for it in funerals // We pay for it in tears // We'll pay for it by shutting down the streets, taking over the hospitals, crashing the stock market // We pay for it in gravestones and waiting rooms // We pay for it in overdoses // We'll pay for it by liquidation and expropriation // We'll pay for it in revolution



Top right counter-clockwise: Banners by Pittsburgh HRC at 2019 Membership Assembly (MA); Vermont Workers Center Poster; PPC:NCMR Children's Art; 2019 MA Screen Print; Mural in Venezuela; "How to survive Isolation" illustration of tips by PPF-PA member Richard, previously incarcerated at SCI Fayette.



In Memory Of Ms. Penny

by Denyne Pollard

Mon Valley Healthcare Rights Committee

This is Denyne with news of the sudden passing of Ms Penny Lynch from the Mon Valley Healthcare Rights Committee on November 24th, 2019.

Ms. Penny most generously hosted a meeting for our Put People First! PA Organizing School in her yard this past July 2019. She also made amazing dishes to share for the launch of our Mon Valley Healthcare Rights Committee opening event.

She wore her red PPF-PA shirt proudly. Penny will surely be missed.

In Memory Of Brett

by Katrina Raser, Harrisburg

Thursday, March 12 was a day like any other. People went about their lives. The sun was shining. The earth continued to spin on its axis. But I didn't notice those things. The only thing I remember is that on that particular day, Brett Majorowicz died in the early hours of the morning.

On Wednesday, I went to see him one last time. I told him about the state of the world.



I told him that I loved him and I would miss him. I sat with him for about an hour. I believe he was listening quietly, as he always has.

Brett was a warrior till the very end. He fought relentlessly for all of us. He deeply understood the need for community and for our human rights. His concerns were first and foremost the well-being of those around him. He was always busy with some project or another and it seemed to always be in the service of a friend or neighbor. In the end, I think he took better care of us than he did himself.

Brett struggled in life. He struggled to be healthy. He struggled to get by. He struggled with anger at the unfairness and inequity of the world. Brett believed that the end is the end. He didn't believe in an afterlife or reincarnation. For his sake, I hope that it's true. I hope his struggle is finally over for good.

When I think of Brett I will always remember his love of books, music, and the arts. He had a thirst for the written word that I have never seen before. He always had a quotation and some profound wisdom for any conversation. But at the same time he was deeply humble and knew when people just needed companionable silence. People like him seem few and far between. I feel lucky to have known him and to call him my friend. Brett, I will love you and miss you forever and I promise to keep fighting for you. Rest in power.

Save the date!

On June 20, 2020, join thousands of Pennsylvanians from across the state at the Mass Poor People's Assembly and Moral March on Washington. This will be the largest digital gathering of poor and low-wealth people, moral and religious leaders, advocates, and people of conscience in this nation's history! A global pandemic is exposing even more the already existing crisis of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. On June 20, the 140 million poor and low-wealth people across this nation will be heard!

Poor People's Campaign

A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

MASS POOR PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY & MORAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON IS GOING DIGITAL

On **June 20th**, we will hold the largest **digital and social media gathering** of poor and low wealth people, moral and religious leaders, advocates, and people of conscience in this nation's history. A global pandemic is exposing even more the already existing crisis of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. **On June 20, the 140 million poor and low-wealth people across this nation will be heard!**

**REPAIRERS
OF THE BREACH**

KAIROS
THE CENTER FOR
RELIGIOUS, RIGHTS,
AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

**IN THE MIDST OF CHANGING TIMES,
OUR MOVEMENT CONTINUES...**

...because we won't be silent anymore.

...because everybody has a right to live.

...because poor and low wealth people will suffer most in this crisis.

*...because our demands must remain front
and center in this critical election year.*



Stay in touch!

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