Community Coalition for Social Justice
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Update: 5 March 2004

I. CCSJ PROJECTS

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, May 4, 7 p.m. Place to be announced. Please contact Barb Howe at barbara.howe@mail.wvu.edu if you have issues for the steering committee to consider.

Spring Networking Meeting set for April 14th -6:30 p.m. - Public Safety Building

Our second annual spring networking meeting is set for Wednesday, April 14th, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the training room of the Public Safety Building at the corner of Spruce and Walnut streets. The goal of this meeting is to promote networking among local groups who share our interests so that we can identify common goals and potential strategies to address our concerns. Last year's meeting led to inviting Rick Wilson of the American Friends Service Committee as the speaker for our CCSJ annual meeting.

We look forward to seeing you there! In advance, please feel free to share your ideas with Tim Hairston at questz1@adelphia.net.

Economic Justice Update

The Mon-Preston Labor Council is encouraging all its locals to join as individual members. We look forward to including them in our list of member organizations soon!

At least one of the state gubernatorial candidates is talking about the need to focus state economic development support toward projects that pay a self-sufficient wage and benefits. The state American Association of University Women is going to be sponsoring a forum for all these candidates in South Charleston in later this spring, and is going to ask them about this issue, since women are so often in jobs that do not pay a self-sufficient wage. CCSJ cannot endorse candidates, but economic development is always a very important issue in our elections.

Tim Hairston will announce the next economic justice committee meeting, so please contact him at questz1@adelphia.net.

II. PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES AND IDEAS!

If you have not yet done so, please send your dues so that we have the resources to continue our work. **Dues are $5 for individuals and $25 for organizations**. Youth under the age of 18 are free. Please send your checks, payable to CCSJ, to PO Box 160, Morgantown, WV 26507-0160.

Please send your web site suggestions to Mike Attfield at attfield@labyrinth.net. You will soon be able to see all our past Updates on our web site.

Please contact any of the steering committee members to volunteer to help and to share your suggestions for our work or e-mail us at ccsjwv@hotmail.com.

Deadline for items to include in next Update will be March 31. Please send items to share with our membership to

ccsjwv@hotmail.com.

If we can support your event or your issues in some way, please let us know, especially if you represent a member organization. We want to be a true coalition that unites groups and individuals interested in social justice, so please let us know how we can help and please send us information about your group to publicize to our membership.

III. NEWS OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

WVU-ACE/WVEA

WVU-ACE/WVEA are sponsoring a trip to the legislature on March 11th. The area representative meeting will be March 16th. For further information, contact WVU-ACE at 598-3900.

Morgantown NOW

NOW and FEM (Female Equality Movement) is organizing to attend the **march for Women's Lives** in Washington, D.C., on Sunday, April 25th. If you'd like information about going with the Morgantown group, please contact choicemarch@hotmail.com. Bus transportation will be $40/person, and buses will leave the WVU Coliseum at 6:00 a.m. If you are unable to go but would like to provide financial support for someone else to attend, please also email choicemarch@hotmail.com. There are people who want to attend but who cannot afford the bus fee.

WVU Center for Women's Studies

Dr. Bei Wu, assistant professor of community medicine, will present a Fireside Chat on **"Cross-cultural Comparison of the Sociodemographic Profiles and Contributory Behavior of the Oldest in the U.S. and China"** on March 10th at 3:30 p.m. in the Mountainlair Mountaineer Room. Dr. Wu's study revealed that U.S. respondents provided a greater range of contributions to anyone in the informal network of family, friends/neighbors. In terms of differences in types of contributions, acts of a "socio-emotional" nature were among the most frequently provided in the U.S. sample, while the more frequently provided contributions in the Chinese sample related to practical or "instrumental" assistance. Sociodemographic differences between the samples, such as living arrangement, marital status, religious practices, and group affiliation, may account for some differences in patterns of contributory behaviors between the two study samples. This presentation is free and open to the public.

IV. UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Civil Rights Program Features CCSJ Member - March 8

Joan Browning of Ronceverte, a CCSJ member, will be featured on a West Virginia Public Radio program on Monday, March 8th, at 8 p.m. The program is called "Deep in Our Hearts," after a book of the same name that includes the stories of nine white women in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Four of the women in the book - Joan, Constance Curry, Penny Patch, and Elaine Delott Baker - are featured in the program.

Celebration of the Life of West Virginia's First African-American Attorney-March 9

The West Virginia Supreme Court, Mountain State Bar Association, Minority Lawyers section of the West Virginia Bar, NAACP, and others are putting on a celebration of the life and work of J. R. Clifford, Esq., our state's first African-American attorney, and important civil rights pioneer. It is in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Clifford won an equal rights in education case for West Virginians in 1898, a

case with implications far beyond our state's borders.

A public seminar and reception will be held at the WVU College of Law on Tuesday, March 9, from 4 to 6 pm. According to Cathy McConnell, who provided the information about this event, “I would like to see the room overflow with people, it's such a great opportunity to get reinvigorated about justice issues in our state and our community, and to celebrate the power of one dedicated person to change history for the better.”

WVU Forum on “The Passion of the Christ” - March 10

WVU’s Program for Religious Studies is hosting a panel discussion on Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” at 7 p.m. in the Mountainlair Gluck Theater. The panelists will be Dr. Ted Vehse, religious studies lecturer as moderator; Rabbi David Feder, Tree of Life Congregation; Rev. Donald X. Higgs, St. John University Parish; and Religious Studies faculty members Dr. Daniel Borsay and Dr. Aaron Gale. This program is free and open to the public.

Social Work Month Events from WVU Division of Social Work - All free and open to public

“Making Ends Meet: West Virginia Community Voices” - exhibit through April 3: Dr. Neal Newfield, associate professor of social work at WVU, is presenting an exhibit of his photographs at the WVU Creative Arts Center Paul Mesaros Gallery through April 3rd as part of the celebration of Social Work Month.

“Defending Our Lives” - March 24: Dr. Susan Newfield will host Stacey Kabat, co-director of Academy award winner short subject documentary, "Defending Our Lives". Ms. Kabat is also a member of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. This meeting will take place in room 3084 of the Health Sciences Center.

“Neglected People." Stacey Kabat and Stan Grossfeld.- March 25: Lecture and discussion in G24 Eiesland Hall at 7 p.m. A reception will follow.

Mom’s Turn to Learn Day - March 29

The WVU Council for Women’s Concerns will be sponsoring the 3rd Mom’s Turn to Learn Day on Monday, March 29th at the Morgantown Mall. This is an opportunity for women to women to learn about opportunities at WVU to continue their education. Watch for further publicity as plans develop and please encourage your co-workers, neighbors, and friends to attend. Marshall University will have similar activities that day, and we hope, so will those at other state colleges. The West Virginia branch of the American Association of University Women is supporting this event this year, so there will also be events in Charleston, Lewisburg, and Huntington.

V. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Social Support in Late Life: Families of Origin and Families of Choice

Mindi Spencer, a doctoral student at West Virginia University, is conducting a study on the diverse people from whom LGBTs aged 45+ find social support. This study is pending expedited review from the West Virginia University Institutional Review Board, but we wanted to make you aware of it as soon as possible. In the United States alone, the number of older gay men and lesbian women has been estimated to range between 1.75 to 3.5 million. Older LGBTs may not have the same experience with aging in society as same-aged heterosexuals, and one mechanism through which older adults might age successfully is through the use of social support networks.

The social networks of older LGBTs are important because for these individuals, social support may directly influence positive self-identity and successful aging. Close family members are identified as the primary providers of support in most studies of social networks. LGBTs differ because the people in their lives-their families-may not by related to them by blood. The proposed work is innovative in that it acknowledges that limiting the definition of familial support to biological relatives, or families of origin, excludes the potentially powerful influence of non-biological family on the physical and psychological well-being of older adults.

People who are interested in this study can contact Mindi and request the research packet. This packet can be mailed to any address and contains consent forms, the survey (which takes approximately one hour to complete), and a postage-paid envelope for returning materials. Alternatively, the survey can be completed and submitted on-line at ="http://www.socialsupportsurvey.com/"MACROBUTTONHtmlResAnchorwww.SocialSupportSurvey.com. At no time are the participants required to meet or talk with anyone and all of the information will be kept confidential.

To date, most studies of aging LGBTs have focused on dispelling myths; this study intends to provide a non-heterosexist examination of the role that social support plays for the aging individual. Assisting with this project will be invaluable to understanding the experience of aging in today's diverse and changing society.

For more information: Please leave a toll-free message at 1-866-535-3343, ext. 31680 or e-mail Mindi at ="mailto:mspencer@hsc.wvu.edu"MACROBUTTONHtmlResAnchormspencer@hsc.wvu.edu. You can also write Mindi at the WVU Department of Psychology, P.O. Box 6040, Morgantown, WV 26506. This study has been approved by the West Virginia University Institutional Review Board (HS# 15637).

CCSJ Steering Committee *2003-2004*

Tim Hairston (Monongalia-Preston Labor Council AFL-CIO), President. President. Al Anderson, Vice President. Barb Howe (WVU Center for Women's Studies), Secretary. Gregory Wagner, Treasurer. Mike Attfield. Judy Cohen. Lourdes Cottingham (Equality for All Americans). Suzanne Gosden. Kris Hash. Jacqueline Moseley. Shelly Barrick Parsons (Presbyterian campus ministry). Michael Sharley. Deb Strouse (WV Center for Dispute Resolution).