Community Coalition for Social Justice
P.O. Box 160
Morgantown, West Virginia 26507-0160
ccsjwv@hotmail.com
www.geocities.com/ccsjwv/index.html

Update: 9 February 2005

I. CCSJ PROJECTS

Next Steering Committee Meeting to be announced. Please contact our secretary, Suzanne Gosden, at suzanne.gosden@mail.wvu.edu or our president, Tim Hairston, at questz1@adelphia.net if you have issues for the steering committee to consider.

County Commission

At the suggestion of Asel Kennedy, one of the county commissioners, we are submitting a request for county funds to sponsor a West Virginia Humanities Council History Alive! performer for Africana History Month in February 2006. Stay tuned!

City Council

We have submitted a request to the Morgantown City Council to continue our book project in FY 2006. This year, we asked for funding to support the purchase of books related to Native Americans, and the WVU Native American Studies Committee has promised assistance in developing a list of possible items to purchase.

County Human Rights Commission

We have learned that Kanawha and Fayette counties have county human rights commissions, and we are getting information on how they work. If you are interested in exploring this idea for Monongalia County, please contact Suzanne at suzanne.gosden@mail.wvu.edu, Barb Howe at barbara.howe@mail.wvu.edu, or Al Anderson at 328-5002. We would have to show a need for such a group, as well as a structure, how this would work with the state human rights commission, etc. - including how a government body would differ from a not-for-profit group like CCSJ.

Library Books Update

Mike Attfield is updating our library books/videos brochure to include the materials on economic justice that were purchased last year and the materials still being purchased by Clay-Battelle and Clinton District libraries under the Appalachian Community Fund grant. We have allocated $700 for this year, including $400 from the Appalachian Community Fund, to offer books to Head Start, PERC (Parents Resource Education Center, for parents of children with disabilities), and public schools this year, and will be starting to get that money spent soon.

Outreach

We will have a table at the Native American Studies Program event on March 1. See below for details of this event.

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. We use your money to purchase books for local schools, for instance. **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.

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 February 28. 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. MEMBER ORGANIZATION NEWS

Caritas House

Caritas House is sponsoring its annual "Sweets for the Sweet" on February 17 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. in the Erickson Alumni Center of WVU. Tickets are $10 each and can be ordered by calling 598-5111. The event includes a dessert competition, silent auction, live music, and door prizes, so, if you have a donation for the silent auction, you can also call 598-5111.

Caritas House "believes that all people have the right to live with dignity. As a community-based organization, we are called upon to help people affected by HIV/AIDS in our 25 county service area in North Central West Virginia."

National Organization for Women

The Morgantown Chapter of NOW has set its meeting schedule for the rest of the spring as follows, with all meetings at the **WVU Law School at 7 p.m.: February 10 (tonight - room 163)**, March 10, April 14, and May 12. Anyone interested in participating in the group this spring who has not become a member of NOW may get a form to print off at www.now.org/membership/member-print.html or join for on-line at www.now.org/member.html. You can renew membership at www.now.org/renew.html. Please include the Morgantown chapter code, which is WV0205. For information about the chapter, contact Jessi Kalvitis at hagdinvincible@yahoo.com.

Center for Black Culture and Research Africana History Month Events

February 12 - Jerry Wilkins Memorial Banquet, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc, Contact: Mitchell Fields at (703) 304-8319 or via e-mail at mfields@mix.wvu.edu , 6:30 p.m., Mountaineer Room, Mountainlair, WVU Arts & Entertainment event

February 16 - Slavery and the Making of America: a 4-part series on PBS, 9:00pm-11:00pm Local Adelphia Channel 8

February 17 -Center Urban Film Forum: **Flag Wars: African American Neighborhood Change**. (Film and discussion panel after film, Sponsored by: Division of Sociology and Anthropology and the Center for Women's Studies; WVU Business and Economics Bldg. Room 458 - 7:00 p.m.

February 20 - African Ensemble Concert - Tickets required, Contact the WVU Box Office – 293-7469 Feb. 20, 2005 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Lyell B. Clay Concert Theatre WVU College of Creative Arts

February 22 - Dr. Kwame Boateng: "US Diplomacy and West Africa: The Economic Community of West African States, and the Liberian and Sierra Leonian Crisis." Africana Studies Program Lecture Event , 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m., Business & Economics Building, RM 458

February 21-22 - West Virginia Law Review presents **"A Look at *Brown v. Board of Education* in West Virginia, Remembering the Past, Examining the Present and Preparing for the Future",** West Virginia University College of Law, Lugar Court Room

The following information comes from a press release prepared by*Seema Loynab, Executive Symposium Editor and Marcie McClintic, Editor in Chief* that appeared in the WVU Mountaineer Spirit on January 27. "Over a year ago, the West Virginia Legislature formed a Special Committee on Minority Issues to study civil rights, health, education, housing, economic development, employment, and juvenile and criminal jus tice systems in the state. Upon discovering disparities in practically every area examined, the Legislature passed a resolution calling upon all branches of state government to cooperate and encourage leaders of the state, county, and municipal governments to affirmatively address such disparities.

"The fifty-year anniversary of the *Brown* I and II decisions marks an important occasion for the state's only law school to host a scholarly forum on issues of racial equality in the mountain state. In celebration of the *Brown* decisions and Black History Month, the WEST VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW will host a Symposium on February 21-22, 2005 at the WVU College of Law entitled, "A Look at *Brown v. Board of Education* in West Virginia: Remembering the Past, Examining the Present, and Preparing for the Future."

"As the title suggests, the Symposium will address West Virginia's unique history, examine the current status of equality within the state, and offer recommendations for further action. This two-day event will engage national and state speakers in a series of lectures and panels discussing racial disparities in the areas of education, healthcare, criminal/juvenile system, and employment/economic development. Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., Executive Director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice and Jesse Climenko Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, will serve as the keynote speaker and deliver the Edward G. Donley Memorial Lecture.

"Additionally, the West Virginia University's President's Office for Social Justice will host a 'Fireside Chat,' on Monday evening, February 21, 2005 in the Vandalia Lounge of the Mountainlair to discuss the social effects of the *Brown* decision in West Virginia. This story-telling gathering is a special tribute to those who experienced the *Brown* decisions first-hand in West Virginia.

All events are free and open to the public. Attorneys attending will receive 11.4 hours of free CLE credit and may register at the door or email: tammy.thompson@mail.wvu.edu. For additional information on these events, please contact the West Virginia Law Review at (304) 293-2301, WVLREV@mail.wvu.edu, or visit www.wvu.edu/~law/lr/wvalrev.htm.

February 24 - "Segregation and Integration of High School Sports in West Virginia"- Keynote speech by David Wiggins, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Mountainlair Ballrooms

Center for Women's Studies

The Center for Women's Studies is sponsoring a series of events in March for Women's History Month. The first ones will be:

March 2 - Standing Alone in Mecca: An American Woman's Struggle for the Soul of Islam - a program by Morgantown native, journalist, and author Asra Nomani that will be at the Garlow House next to the Morgantown Public Library on Spruce Street. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. with a book-signing to follow. This is part of her Muslim Women's Freedom Tour.

March 7 - Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice - video on Ida B. Wells (1862-1931), a newspaper editor and journalist who was a leader in the American anti-lynching crusade. Dr. Katherine Bankole, director of the WVU Center for Black Culture and Research, will introduce the video and lead the discussion afterwards.

IV. LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL NEWS

FEM Sponsors Vagina Monologues

FEM (Female Equality Movement) is producing the *Vagina Monologues* in February 25th and 27th in G24 Eiesland Hall at WVU. The productions will start at 7:30 p.m. on the 25th and at 2 p.m. on the 27th. For further information, please call Roxana Bailey at 304-293-4255 ext. 24126 and leave a message for the number of tickets you need and the date of the performance or email rbailey5@mix.wvu.edu**.** Or, if you are on campus, come to one the FEM booth in the Mountainlair on February 16th, 17th, 23rd, or 24th from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. It is best to reserve tickets in advance, but you can pay at the door. Cash or checks only.

Morgantown ACLU Patriot Act-Free Petition Drive Update

The Morgantown ACLU is still working on this petition drive. Liam Honecker, vice president for the local ACLU chapter, is in charge of this effort now. Anyone who would like to volunteer to serve on this committee should contact him at liamsegg@verizon.net, but anyone can still contact Leah Rye at squamishforever@yahoo.com with questions or requests for petitions. Leah reports that the group is geting very close to its goal of 20,000 signatures and hopes to take the petition to City Council in the near future. Only residents of the City of Morgantown are eligible to sign these petitions, and the preference is for permanent residents of the city.

Amnesty International in Morgantown

The Morgantown chapter of Amnesty International meets every third Tuesday at 4:00 at varying locations. In February, the meeting will be in the lobby of the WVU Downtown Campus Library. Last semester, Amnesty International WVU organized several letter writing campaigns for a prisoner of conscience in Vietnam, Father Ly. The group sent signed petitions with hundreds of signatures from WVU students and faculty in addition to about two hundred letters to both Vietnamese and American officials involved in the case. This month, there is news that Father Ly will be released under a general amnesty! For further information about this group, please contact Katie Silvester at ksilvest@mix.wvu.edu.

Native American Studies Program 4th Annual Elder-in-Residence Program

For further information about the events below, please contact Bonnie Brown at 304-292-1617

The WVU Native American Studies Program welcomes its 4th Annual Elder-in-Residence, Chief Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper, Turtle Clan, Onondaga Nation, Haudenosaunee, Six Nations, Iroquois Confederacy.

On March 1 at 7:00 p.m., he will be part of a panel presentation on Native American perspectives and experiences with environmental problems, "Healing the Earth, Healing Her People." It takes place in the Gluck Theater at the WVU Mountainlair. Other panelists include award-winning human rights advocate Tim Brown (Wut tun nee), Delaware/Mohawk, and Dr. Carol Markstrom, who has studied the effects of the uranium mining disaster in Navajo Country. It is free and open to the public. More than a dozen area local groups are expected to display their informational materials in the theater lobby and attend the panel presentation.

On March 2 at 7:30 p.m., Chief Lyons will give his public lecture in G24 Eiesland Hall on the downtown WVU campus. A noted author, artist, professor, environmentalist and leader among Native peoples, Chief Lyons has much to say about the importance of seeking peace in the 21st Century and about preserving the earth for "seven generations" to come. We expect a packed auditorium, so guests are urged to arrive early to help guarantee seating. This event is also free and open to the public.

Children's Day at the Legislature

The Coalition for West Virginia's Children and Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia are sponsoring a Public Policy Forum on Children's Issues on February 15th at the Charleston House Holiday Inn and Children's Day at the Legislature on February 16th. For more information, please contact Team for WV Children at 523-9587, ext. 316 or email connie@teamwv.org.

Women's Day at the Legislature

Women's Day at the Legislature will be Thursday, March 3, starting with a legislative breakfast at 7:30 a.m. The theme this year is "Rosie the Riveter: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." For information and a registration form, please go to www.wvdhhr.org/women/day_at_the_legislature.htm or call the commission at 558-0070.

Economic Justice - Rick Wilson

Rick Wilson of the American Friends Service Committee's West Virginia Economic Justice Project sent a long e-newsletter in December that has many items of interest about his work over the past year or more. If you'd like to get on his email list, contact him at RWilson@afsc.org.

As you may know, West Virginia Community Voices published a self-sufficiency study for West Virginia in 2002 that set out how much it takes to live in each county of the state. Through Rick's efforts, the state legislature passed HB 4411 last spring that requires the Governor's Workforce Investment Division to "calculate and publish the Self Sufficiency Standard (SSS) for WV every two years beginning in Nov. 2004." This fits nicely with a February 8, 2005, National Public Radio story about a state legislator in Montana, who wants to "tax retail businesses on gross receipts in excess of $20 million, unless they pay their employees at least $22,000 a year. The measure is aimed at 'big box' retailers such as Wal-Mart and Costco." His idea is that employees who make less than this are too dependent on public services that cost the tax-payers money. Workers who make a self-sufficient wage are less likely to need so many services.

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Thanks to Lisa Diehl of West Virginia Women Work! for the following information:

"BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS TO STOP COLLECTING DATA ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

ACTION NEEDED!

“Contact your Representative and Senators on this important issue. Ask them to join their colleagues in sending a letter to the Bureau of Labor Statistics blocking the discontinuation of data collection on women's employment.

“To obtain the contact information for your Representative and Senators, visit www.congress.org or call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. Any email correspondence should include your complete postal address. Sending postal mail is not advised.

“On November 5th, the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced that it plans to eliminate the collection of data on women's employment through its Current Employment Statistics Survey (CES). This data will no longer be available after July 2005.

“The CES provides an important and timely source of data on the status of women in the workplace. The CES is administered monthly to around 283,000 employers, and collects data on employment, hours, and earnings of workers. The CES also includes a separate set of data on women workers, which is the most reliable source of data on women's employment in the United States. Research organizations rely on the women worker data from the CES to inform a great deal of their analysis on women's status in the workplace.

“A bipartisan coalition of federal legislators led by Reps. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) are asking their fellow members of Congress to sign on to a letter to the Commissioner of the BLS. When contacting your members of Congress, please ask them to sign on to this important letter.

“It is imperative that the BLS and Congress hear from the women's community on this important issue. CES data is the best and most reliable source of data on women's employment, particularly for measuring month-to-month changes in employment. Without this data, we will no longer have a clear picture of how women are faring in the workplace.

BACKGROUND

“In November 2004 the BLS announced plans to revise the way it administers the CES. Included in its proposal was the discontinuation of data collection women workers. The BLS cites several reasons for its decision to stop collecting this data. The BLS claims that it will reduce the amount of time it takes for employers to complete and submit the survey. Yet, the BLS also reports that just 15% of survey respondents submit their reports via mail or fax. The majority of data compiled for the CES is gathered through automated collection methods. In addition, the BLS claims that similar data can be found through the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS).However, CPS data is collected from households, not employers, and therefore is not reliable as a tool to measure the status of women in the workplace.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

“ To view and download the draft letter to your legislators, go to
www.womenwork.org/issues/ltr_congress_BLS_jan05.doc

“To view the letter to be sent by members of Congress to the BLS Commissioner, go to
www.womenwork.org/issues/ltr_commissioner_BLS_jan05.doc
“To view a recent Institute for Women's Policy Research briefing paper that utilized CES data, go to
www.iwpr.org/pdf/B245.pdf

“To view the Institute for Women's Policy Research position on the issue,go to www.iwpr.org/pdf/IWPRStatementonBLS.pdf

“FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Katherine Reilly, Policy Director; Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment, 1625 K St. NW Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20006, or email kreilly@womenwork.org.

CCSJ Steering Committee 2004-2005

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