



MOTHERS

FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

MOTHERS AGAINST VIOLENCE 9TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 12-13, 2023



**HEAL.
RESTORE.
REBUILD.**



The Boston Globe
**TOP PLACES
TO WORK 2022**
MASSACHUSETTS

EMPOWERING THOSE WE SERVE

Proud Supporter of Mothers
for Justice & Equality

 (508) 468-6042  navigator@jri.org  www.jri.org



Leader in
Social Justice

JRI is strongly committed to providing an inclusive, diverse & welcoming environment for our employees and the people we serve.



MOTHERS AGAINST VIOLENCE 9TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

About

Welcome! We are honored to have you join us for this influential two-day event and to be part of this healing space.

Over the past eight years, the Mothers Against Violence Annual Conference has empowered women to move their pain into purpose - processing our collective trauma due to community violence and leading our communities toward peace.

We join together to listen and lift the voices of one another. This Conference provides training, mentoring, and, most importantly, support for women whose families have experienced trauma by loss and violence nationwide. Together we learn new skills, develop new relationships, and increase our capacity through workshops, networking, and more. We look to each other to be change-makers in our communities, expand the Mothers Against Violence network nationwide, and strengthen our efforts to fight for peace in our streets.

More than 600 individuals from across the country have attended the conferences. They have brought what they've learned to their homes and communities, touching thousands of lives.

Participating groups from across the country include:

Mother's Against Gang Violence - Atlanta, GA
Operation Recovery Inc. - Marietta, GA
Safer Foundation - Chicago, IL
There Is Always Hope @ Safer Foundation - Chicago, IL
Imani Dream Angel / Rincon - Chicago, IL
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church - Chicago, IL
Saving Ourselves - Chicago, IL
Tennessee Gamechangers United for Justice and Equality - Paris, TN
AMEC - Paris, TN
Mothers and Others for Justice - Branford, Hamden, New Haven, CT
Momma On a Mission, Inc. - Kansas City, MO
Mothers of Murdered Children - Phoenix, AZ
Where Do We Go From Here Inc - Jamaica, NY
Donovan Hines Foundation of Exuberance Co - Milwaukee, WI
Dr. Larry George CDC, Inc. - Mount Holly, NC

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO MOTHERS FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

Monalisa Smith



Dear Friends,

You will never know courage until courage is all you have! These are the words spoken by women traveling to Boston across the United States. They are “Mothers of Courage and Conviction.”

The Mothers Against Violence National Conference is more than just a conference; it is a place for those who have lost loved ones to senseless violence to come together. It is where we lift up one another and declare our shared commitment: Be the change and lead the change.

Across America, our black and brown youth are losing their lives to senseless street violence. Mothers, fathers, and siblings are left hopeless, trying to manage the pain of losing their loved one. We are seeing an increase in poverty, mental health illnesses, and gun violence in our neighborhoods, all fostering a continuation of loss of life in our neighborhoods.

Today, as a united front, we say, “It’s Not Okay” for children to live in fear, “It’s Not Okay” for a parent to bury their child prematurely, and “It’s Not Okay” for a child to be incarcerated.

Today, we take action; we are healing together, sharing best practices, and creating a network of courageous leaders. We are positioned to help change the storyline of our communities. We publicly denounce violence as an unacceptable way of life and loss in our neighborhoods; “It’s Not Okay!” Today, I commend you on your endurance, resilience, persistence, love, and strength.

Collectively, we have touched 200,000 lives across the United States. We have convened workshops, organized marches and rallies, and started foundations and organizations. Through our work together, mothers who lost children to violence received a space to heal; neighborhoods that lost hope received a sense of hope. Safe neighborhood parks were built to remember our children, which children are now using without fear.

I want to personally say “Thank you” and welcome to the 9th Annual Mothers Against Violence Conference. I hope you will heal, learn, share, and connect to mothers leading change across America.

Finally, none of this would be possible without the support from our partners and stakeholders. On behalf of all of us at MJE, I want to thank you for believing in us. Thank you for believing that we can do something impactful to improve the lives of our mothers, youth, and their families.

Mother to Mother, neighbor to neighbor, together we can change the story of our streets and heal in the process.

In Peace,

Monalisa Smith
Founder, President, & CEO
Mothers for Justice and Equality

LETTER FROM THE BOSTON MAYOR

Michelle Wu



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
Michelle Wu



Dear Friends,

I'm excited and grateful to welcome you to this year's Mothers for Justice and Equality Annual Conference.

Here in Boston, we are working to make Boston the best place in the country to raise a family. And there is nothing more foundational to that work than creating safe communities, investing in healing, and addressing root causes to prevent violence before it happens.

As Mayor, and as a mom, I feel the urgency of this work deeply. The strength of our City lies in our people—in our community and connection to one another. Each life we lose to violence is a collective loss, one that ripples far beyond the home, school, or block where the violence takes place. So the work to repair and prevent its harm—to make our communities whole again—must also be done together.

On behalf of our City, our families, and all those devoted to ending the painful cycles that prevent peace and prosperity from taking root: Thank you. Thank you for coming together to restore trust, rebuild connection, protect our young people, and empower women everywhere to build the world we all deserve.

Wishing you all strength and inspiration in this year's conference.

In solidarity,

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

LETTER FROM THE BOSTON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Boston University Office of the President

Kenneth W. Freeman
President Ad Interim
One Silber Way
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-353-2200 F 617-353-3278



October 2023

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Boston University, welcome to our campus as you convene for the Mothers for Justice and Equality Annual Conference. We long for the day when you might conclude that you have accomplished your mission. Yet we realize that there is much work to be done to end violence in our communities. Your organization's imaginative and collaborative approach is needed and exemplary. We are mindful that many of your members have lost loved ones to violence and are determined to spare others heartbreak and loss.

We are honored to host you. Over 100 years ago, Boston University's third president described BU as an institution "in the heart of the city, in the service of the city." We share with you a commitment to partnership in strengthening our communities and deepening our connections to one another.

Best wishes for an engaging and productive conference. Thank you for your tireless efforts to build a safer and stronger tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth W. Freeman".

Kenneth W. Freeman
President Ad Interim



WHO WE ARE

Mothers for Justice and Equality (MJE) aims to end neighborhood violence by empowering mothers and youth to challenge the normalization of violence.

We believe Mothers are fierce and nurturing protectors; when given proper tools, they can channel their energy to build neighborhoods where playgrounds are safe and sidewalks are non-threatening.

Since 2010, MJE's trauma-informed services have supported the academic, workforce development, health, and wellness needs of those impacted by community violence, including single mothers, youth, and their families.

To ensure our children a promising future, they must have the support of the entire community. MJE has the vision of a world in which it is never normal or acceptable for children to be murdered. We believe that change will occur as the internalized expectations of what is acceptable in our neighborhoods change. Mothers are influential changemakers in our communities, and when given the right tools, they become advocates for transformation.

Violence in our communities does not just impact direct victims. Our population is struggling with the impact of trauma due to community violence, homicide, domestic violence, and related issues. Grieving mothers, siblings, and families are often left behind. Studies have shown that this target population faces challenges in all aspects of life due to the impact of trauma and grief.

We serve Individuals & Families primarily in Roxbury, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, & Hyde Park, Massachusetts, who are:

- 1) Facing racial inequities
- 2) Endangered by community violence
- 3) Unemployed or at risk for job loss
- 4) Living in poverty
- 5) Homeless/risk of homelessness
- 6) Recent/Undocumented Immigrants
- 7) ESL Speakers
- 8) Struggling with physical & mental health
- 9) Young parents
- 10) Opportunity Youth
- 11) Formerly Incarcerated community members (returning citizens)

By reclaiming the identity of our communities, we restore a sense of hope and purpose.

CONFERENCE AGENDA - DAY ONE

Thursday, Oct 12, 2023

Master of Ceremonies – Amanda Merricks

8:15 AM – 8:50 AM
Breakfast begins
Exhibit Hall Opens
Networking

9:00 AM – 9:10 AM
Welcome and Opening Remarks
Amanda Merricks, MC

9:10 AM – 9:20 AM
Welcome and Opening Remarks
Cyntoria Grant, MJE Board Member

9:20 AM – 9:50 AM
Remarks
Monalisa Smith, President & CEO of MJE
MJE Highlight Video

9:50 AM – 10:00 AM
Amanda Merricks directs to breakout rooms

10:00 AM – 10:45 AM
Breakout Room Workshops

Healing through the Arts
Arielle Romain
Director of Health Equity at Mothers for Justice & Equality

Mental Health and Multicultural Understanding
Hannah A. Martinez
Master's Clinician at Roxbury Multi-Service Center

Youth in Society
Danielle Smith, M.S.Ed
Program Director at Boston Public Health Commission

Media Training
Ernie Corrigan
Founder and President of
Corrigan Communications

What is Public Policy and Why Does it Matter?
Merryl Eaton, Director of Advocacy & Education for Christian Community Action

10:45 AM – 10:55 AM
Mayor Michelle Wu of Boston arrives
Meet & Greet

10:55 AM – 11:00 AM
Monalisa Smith Introduces Mayor Wu

11:00 AM – 11:20 AM
Mayor Wu receives Courage & Conviction Award

11:20 AM – 11:30 AM
Break, Mayor Wu Meet & Greet

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Lunch

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM
Keynote Speaker
Rev. Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D Min

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM
Mothers of Courage & Conviction Awards
Presented by Monalisa Smith

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM
Fireside Chat with Awardees
Moderated by Sabrina A. Correia
New England Market Manager/VP Corporate Responsibility, JP Morgan Chase & CO

1:30 PM – 1:35 PM
5 Minute Break

1:35 PM – 2:15 PM
GAME TIME: Engaging Men and Fathers in Child Welfare
George Akwasi-Oduro Boakye-Yiadom Sr.
Marketing & Operations Associate at Fathers Uplift

Vicente Sanabria
Senior Therapeutic and Recovery Coach at Fathers Uplift

2:15 PM – 2:20 PM
5 Minute Break

2:20 PM – 3:20 PM
Planetary Interactive Workshop – Resource Mapping
The Reverend Dr. Larry D. George
Ph.D. Professor of Biblical Literature

3:20 PM – 3:55 PM
Highlights/Reflections of the day
Amanda Merricks

4:00 PM
Guests to Boston Foundation for Dinner

5:00 PM
Dinner

7:00 PM
National Guests to Hotel

CONFERENCE AGENDA - DAY TWO

Friday, Oct 13, 2023

Master of Ceremonies - Amanda Merricks

8:15 AM - 8:50 AM
Breakfast begins
Exhibit Hall Opens
Networking

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM
Welcome and Opening Remarks
Amanda Merricks, MC

9:15 AM - 9:45 AM
Fireside Chat with Monalisa Smith
Moderated by Renée Omoladé
Board Chair

9:45 AM - 11:30 AM
Planetary Training - Suicide and Gun Violence Prevention
Donald Osgood, Program Director at Boston Public Health Community Healing Response Network

Mark Scott, Director of the Division of Violence Prevention at the Boston Public Health Community Healing Response Network

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Lunch

12:00 PM - 12:05 PM
Amanda Merricks Introduces
Monalisa Smith for Panel Discussion

12:05 PM - 1:30 PM
Moving Your Vision Forward - Mother's Panel Discussion and Q&A
Sherry Nolan, Tekesia Shields, Robin David, Monique Willis
Moderated by Monalisa Smith

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM
Closing Remarks/Call to Action
Monalisa Smith

2:00 PM
National Guests depart to airport



“I come back to the conference every year to be more motivated, with fresh ideas. I want to do more to help my community and continue to be a voice for safer gun laws. I want to speak to students about the importance of education and to share that we believe in and love them.”

- Milagros Burgos



“I serve a community of women who are not aware of this cycle of pain that we are living in which causes us to be emotionally unbalanced. I teach women how to do self-awareness checks. Coming to the conference has helped strengthen me to continue to do this work.”

-Robin F. David

“These conferences have helped me to connect with other mothers who have experienced loss and I have learned how to turn my own pain into purpose and power. I have a renewed sense of meaning to accomplish personal and professional goals for our justice-seeking movement to provide healing and wholeness for me and others who have experienced a traumatic loss.”

**- Rev. Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge
D Min.**



FIRESIDE CHAT

WITH THE 2023 COURAGE & CONVICTION AWARDEES

Moderated by:



Sabrina Correia

Vice President of Public Engagement
and Corporate Responsibility for New
England at JPMorgan Chase
Boston, MA



**Milagros Burgos &
Rafael Burgos**

Founders of Imani Dream
Angel / Rincon
Chicago, IL



Lois Jones-Myles

Founder of the "There's Always
Hope" program at Safer Foundation
Chicago, IL

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MOTHERS
FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

FIRESIDE CHAT

W/ Monalisa Smith
Founder, President, CEO, of
Mothers for Justice and Equality

MOTHERS AGAINST VIOLENCE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
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**BUILDING A
SUSTAINABLE
NON-PROFIT
MOVEMENT**



Moderator
Renée Omoladé
Director of Boston
Community Hub Schools
MJE Board Chair

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MOTHERS
FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

PANEL

MOVING YOUR VISION FORWARD MOTHER'S PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A

Moderated by



Monalisa Smith

Founder, President, CEO,
Mothers for Justice and
Equality
Boston, MA



Sherry Nolan

Founder of Saving Ourselves
Chicago, IL



Tekesia Shields

Founder of Mother's
Against Gang Violence
Atlanta, GA



Monique Willis

Founder / CEO
Momma On a Mission, Inc.
Kansas City, MO



Robin David

Speaker, Healing Coach, Author
Nashville, TN

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WORKSHOPS

Mental Health and Multicultural Understanding

Facilitator: Hannah Martinez, Master's Clinician - Roxbury Multi-Service Center

This workshop discusses the multicultural perspective of mental illness, which fills the need for specific and beneficial aspects of multicultural counseling. Mental illness is not one-size-fits-all. A person's culture, which includes their race, ethnic tribe, values, and life experiences, molds their view and management of mental illness in a significant way. For example, the trauma from the vestiges of slavery, Jim Crow and segregation (Lindsey, 2015), and countless other traumas continue to take their toll on an individual's emotional well-being and psychological stability. The workshop examines the shared value systems among the African, Asian, Haitian, and Hispanic immigrants and the African American and Native American sub-cultures. We will discuss specific differences among them and appropriate methods of approach for effective therapeutic treatment.

Media Training

Facilitator: Ernie Corrigan, Founder and President of Corrigan Communications

With the increased role of technology in modern social movements, the media is everpresent and ever-changing. Sharing your story in a public forum is invaluable to invoke change, and our goal is to transform you into an effective communicator. Knowing when and how to interact with the media and being in control while sharing your message is imperative to a successful media presence. We will discuss the importance of delivering your message to the media effectively and the privacy and path of information that follows.

Healing through the Arts

Facilitator: Arielle Romain, Director of Health Equity - Mothers for Justice and Equality

Healing through the Arts is a program that started at Mothers for Justice and Equality as a way for clients to create various art forms while safely discussing feelings surrounding trauma. At MJE, projects have included creating Trees of Life, Inspiration Stones, and journaling. This workshop will focus on Inspiration Stones - participants will write words that come to mind when they hear "healing" on their stones and are welcome to share and discuss their thoughts.

What is Public Policy and Why Does it Matter?

Facilitator: Merryl Eaton, Director of Advocacy & Education for Christian Community Action, Hamden, CT

What do solutions to gun violence, the lack of affordable housing, and growing inequities in our schools and health care have in common? It's the need for concerted, organized efforts to implement changes in public policy. Members of Mothers and Others for Justice (MOFJ), a New Haven, Connecticut, grassroots advocacy group, will guide you through the ABC of how to talk so that your elected officials will listen. Topics will include how and when to contact your elected officials, how to track bills, and what makes for a compelling story and coalition building. MOFJ will share their newest campaign, "All We Have Left is Crumbs."

WORKSHOPS

Resource Mapping - Interactive Workshops

**Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Larry D. George, Ph.D,
Resource Mapping for Two-Part Interactive
Workshops, Mount Holly, NC**

Utilizing AI technology itself within the interactive workshops will be advantageous. AI chatbots can assist with registration, answer participants' queries, and provide real-time updates. Live transcription and translation services can also be integrated, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility. The resource mapping for the Mothers for Justice and Equality (MJE) workshop incorporates AI resources to maximize its impact. By harnessing the power of AI technology, this interactive workshop will enhance business strategies, foster inclusivity, empower individuals, promote financial literacy, facilitate nonprofit integration, optimize small businesses and real estate ventures, and ensure efficient workshop operations. By embracing AI-powered solutions, black authors can create a transformative and impactful experience for all participants.

Youth in Society

**Facilitator: Danielle Smith, M.S.Ed, Program
Director - Boston Public Health Commission**

Youth and Society is an interactive workshop providing participants with tools and skills to support inner-city youth holistically. This workshop will focus on trauma-informed care, creating safe spaces for youth, and providing them with tools to develop healthy habits and lifestyles. We will use Maslow's Hierarchy of needs as a foundation of the workshop.

Suicide and Gun Violence Prevention

**Facilitators: Mark Scott, Director of the
Division of Violence Prevention, & Donald M.
Osgood Sr. Program Director at the Boston
Public Health Community Healing
Response Network**

In this workshop, field experts will discuss suicide and gun violence prevention, reviewing how to recognize signs of suicide, how to help someone with access to a firearm who might be experiencing mental health crises, and current advocacy and legislation around this topic. The workshop will also include a panel discussion from those impacted by gun violence.

GAME TIME: Engaging Men & Fathers in Child Welfare

**Facilitators: George Akwasi-Oduro Boakye-
Yiadom Sr., & Vicente Sanabria,
Fathers Uplift**

For decades, stigma, toxic narratives, and outdated gender role expectations have hampered service providers and child welfare agencies in building meaningful, long-term relationships with fathers and father figures. The research is clear that children do better when they have a positive male role model in their lives. This is the mission of Fathers' Uplift: providing fathers with the services they need to reach their parenting goals. In this workshop, we will share many of the approaches and attitudes that have enabled us to build buy-in and enthusiastic engagement with fathers in ways that strengthen families and center the needs of children.

COURAGE & CONVICTION AWARDEES

FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

Alexandria Imani was born a miracle baby on March 16, 1996, to Mr. and Mrs. Burgos. After a miscarriage, Mrs. Burgos was told she couldn't have children, but Alexandria and her younger brother were miracles. Mrs. Burgos told Alexandria she had a big role: to be a big sister. She held that role until her untimely death by gun violence on October 19, 2014. Mr. and Mrs. Burgos describe their daughter as one who loved life and whose smile lit up a room. She loved baking, the summer, the beach, basketball, holidays, and family time. She was always helping others, with a passion for working with children and dreaming of becoming a social worker.

Milagros & Rafael Burgos
Imani Dream Angel / Rincon, Chicago, IL



As they live each day in her heartfelt absence, they've turned tragedy into purpose by starting Imani Dream Angel, which brings awareness to prevent gun violence and advocates for safer gun legislation. Not only do they provide resources to help families in a critical time of need, but they join peace marches, peace circles, therapy sessions and meet political officials to share their stories. Mr. and Mrs. Burgos want to prevent other families from going through the tragic absence of a child.

Lois Jones Myles
Safer Foundation, Chicago, IL



Lois Jones Myles was born and reared in Mississippi and currently resides in Chicago. Lois has been a Supportive Service Specialist at Safer Foundation for over 20 years, assisting individuals with criminal records with any issues or barriers preventing them from employment. Lois holds a Master of Science and Bachelor of Science from Chicago State University. Lois is a Certified Anger Management Specialist II (Fellow Member of NAMA National Anger Management Association), Member of IACJ (Illinois Association for Criminal Justice), Advanced Clinical Trainer, Department of Children and Family Services Mandated Reporter, Certified National Institute of Health, State of IL Teacher License (K-12), Certified Deputy Registrar for Board of Elections, Domestic Violence Counselor, Board of Director Striving for Justice Ministries, Adult Mental Health First Aid USA, and a member of Mothers For Justice & Equality. Lois is recently widowed, surviving her late husband, Randy, and has three children, Lekesha, Kewane, and Guss Jr.

COURAGE & CONVICTION AWARDEES

FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston



Michelle Wu is the Mayor of Boston. She is a daughter of immigrants, Boston Public Schools mom to two boys, MBTA commuter, and fierce believer that we can solve our deepest challenges through building community. As Mayor, Michelle is working in coalition to deliver bold, systemic change and make Boston a city for everyone.

Mayor Wu has been a voice for accessibility, transparency, and community engagement in city leadership. First elected to the Boston City Council in November 2013 at the age of 28, Wu is the first Asian-American woman to serve on the Council. In January 2016, she was elected President of the City Council by her colleagues in a unanimous vote, becoming the first woman of color to serve as Council President.

CONFERENCE MEMBERS & SPEAKERS

Host



Monalisa Smith
Founder, President, CEO,
Mothers for Justice
and Equality
Boston, MA

Monalisa founded Mothers for Justice and Equality (MJE) following the loss of her nephew to neighborhood violence. She gathered fellow mothers, many of whom were also suffering the loss of a child to violence, to share their concerns about the gross amount of violence against children within their neighborhoods. With the goal to educate and empower like-minded individuals and families, Monalisa founded the nonprofit in 2010. She continues to advocate for those struggling and strives to create new programs to help further the cause of ending neighborhood violence and keeping our streets safe.

Master of Ceremonies



Amanda Merricks
Chair of The Federal Special
Emphasis Program Coalition
Boston, MA

Amanda Merricks is a lifelong Boston, MA, resident and has been heavily involved in the community for the past 30 years. She is the Chair of The Federal Special Emphasis Program Coalition and a Life Member of Blacks In Government Greater Boston Chapter as the 2nd Executive Vice President, Membership Chair, and the Health and Wellness coordinator for Region 1. She is also one of the producers/partners for the Stand Up Comedy Series, producing comedy shows throughout New England and worldwide. Amanda has been the Master of Ceremony for the Franklin Park Coalition 5K Turkey Trot since 2017-present. Amanda's strong religious belief moved her to become involved in various church programs, and has made it her personal goal to pass out gloves, hats, and blankets to the homeless.

Speaker



Mark Scott
Director of the Division of
Violence Prevention, Boston
Public Health Community
Healing Response Network
Boston, MA

Mark Scott has dedicated years to serving the community through his organizational, compassion, and leadership skills. He has been highly active in his community, serving leadership roles at the Codman Square Health Center, White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Additionally, he served in the U.S. Air Force. Mark currently operates as the Director of the Division of Violence Prevention at the Boston Public Health Commission, President of the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, Associate Pastor of the Azusa Christian Community, and a chaplain at Boston Medical Center. Lastly, Mark is married with four children and three grandchildren.

Donald Maurice Osgood, Sr. was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. At Street Safe Boston, he worked with the "proven risk" teens who caused violence in Boston. Donald has also worked for the City of Boston Trauma Response Team through BCYF and the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. As Survivor Support Coordinator, Donald assisted families in the first 24 to 72 hours of homicides. One sentence summarizes him as "Servant of the people." Donald now works for the Boston Public Health Commission, Division of Violence Prevention. As the Program Director for NTT Network, he guides the entire network to provide and connect communities with tools and resources for healing.

Merryl Eaton is the Director of Advocacy and Education for Christian Community Action in New Haven. She has over thirty years of experience as a community organizer, engaging people of color to advocate for system changes in public policy. She provides leadership, technical assistance, and project management to Mothers and Others for Justice, a grassroots advocacy group. Key areas of interest include Connecticut's lack of affordable housing, healthcare reform, and voter turnout. Merryl's passions are organizing the state-wide legislative campaign to eliminate the "benefit cliff," which happens when a rise in household income results in a disproportionate reduction in household income, and building power in New Haven to fight for housing justice. She is a proud Parent Leadership Training Institute facilitator and has helped more than 300 people become change agents in diverse communities throughout Connecticut.

The Reverend Dr. Larry D. George, Ph.D., has over 27 years of academic graduate teaching in the New Testament, the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible), and general theological and religious studies. He is the CEO/President of George Educational Consulting Services, Inc., focusing on proofreading, editing, publishing, and effective and efficient academic processes toward academic and business excellence. Additionally, Dr. George has two non-profit organizations, Dr. Larry George Ministries and CDC, Inc., which focus on Adult Day Care, At-Risk Youth, and Environmental Justice. Enthusiastically, he seeks to make a significant impact in people's lives. Dr. George's hobbies include reading, writing, stock market investing, stamp collecting, swimming, technology, dominos, chess, math, and science.

Speaker



Donald M. Osgood Sr.
Program Director, Boston
Public Health Community
Healing Response Network
Boston, MA

Speaker



Merryl Eaton
Director of Advocacy &
Education, Christian
Community Action
Hamden, CT

Speaker



**Reverend Dr. Larry D.
George, Ph.D. Professor
of Biblical Literature**
Dr. Larry George CDC, Inc.
Mount Holly, NC

Speaker



Hannah A. Martinez
Master's Clinician,
Roxbury Multi-Service Center
Boston, MA

Hannah is the Master's Clinician for Roxbury Multi-Service Center. She is the recipient of a Boston City Council Award for an exemplary community mental health outreach provider to the diverse population of inner-city Boston. Ms. Martinez received her first degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and her graduate degree in Counseling and Public Health from Tufts University. A native of Ghana, Hannah focuses on Post-Traumatic Stress experience and culture.

Speaker



Danielle Smith, M.S.Ed
Program Director, Boston
Public Health Commission
Boston, MA

Danielle Smith is a Program Director at the Boston Public Health Commission with fifteen years of experience ensuring that all students have access to quality education and resources to achieve quality lives. Danielle believes there is a need to create an outlet for young people to understand their purpose and value, a space where dreams become possible and options become available so that our young people can act on their dreams. Danielle holds a Master's in Education from Wheelock College of Education and enjoys traveling and spending time with family when not on a mission to build the next generation of leaders.

Speaker



Ernie Corrigan
Founder and President of
Corrigan Communications
Boston, MA

Ernie Corrigan is the owner and president of Corrigan Communications, begun in 1995, after serving as the Director of External Affairs and Vice President at Citizens Bank. He was a newspaper journalist for 15 years, finishing his journalism career when he became press secretary for several high-profile campaigns, including the unsuccessful campaign to elect Francis X. Bellotti as governor in 1990. Throughout his public relations career, Mr. Corrigan has always tried to focus on "the story" that speaks to his client's strengths while advancing their narrative, particularly when it is misunderstood or misrepresented. He taught public relations and writing at Emmanuel College for seven years.

Vicente Sanabria was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY and Puerto Rico. Having a Bachelor of Science in Human Services from New Hampshire College and a Master of Science in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University Vicente has over 30 years working in the field of substance abuse prevention and treatment and is a Senior Adjunct on those topics at Cambridge College. His work involved leading coalitions in Lawrence, Somerville, and Central MA to decrease underage drinking, non-fatal opioid overdoses, and gang redirection projects. He has also run HIV/AIDS groups at the Middlesex House of Correction and taught Drug Alcohol Education classes for first time offenders found guilty for driving under the influence of alcohol.

George, a native of Accra, Ghana, has a strong connection to his African origins, cultural background, and Ghanaian ancestry. In his youth, George relocated to the United States and spent his formative years in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He pursued higher education at Seton Hill University, earning a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Early Childhood Development.

Arielle is the Director of the Health Equity and Community Wellness Program at Mothers for Justice and Equality, which helps single mothers who are survivors of trauma transition from instability to stability. She comes from a lineage of strong women who tackle every hardship head-on, which inspired her to join MJE's team. Arielle truly understands what it takes to be an advocate for her community. She's worked at multiple community organizations, which pushes her to work hard and support her team to provide efficient and effective support to MJE community members. Arielle understands that communal support stabilizes communities, something she has always felt is essential for improving the areas she serves.

Speaker



Vicente Sanabria
Senior Therapeutic and
Recovery Coach,
Fathers Uplift
Boston, MA

Speaker



**George Akwasi-Oduro
Boakye-Yiadom Sr.**
Marketing & Operations
Associate, Fathers Uplift
Boston, MA

Speaker



Arielle Romain
Director of Health Equity &
Wellness, Mothers for Justice
and Equality
Boston, MA

Speaker



Robin David

Speaker, Healing Coach, Author
Nashville, TN

Robin F. David is a renowned speaker, healing coach, and best-selling author. As a distinguished radio podcast executive, she brings her voice to many. As the visionary behind "The Healing Gathering" women's circle, which she founded in 2015, Robin has continuously championed the cause of empowerment and healing. In tribute to her youngest son, she established the Golden Foundation, aiming to fortify communities around the globe. The foundation's mission? To nurture greater self-love and self-acceptance within families, making homes sanctuaries of understanding and acceptance.

Speaker



Sherry Nolan

Founder of
Saving Ourselves
Chicago, IL

Sherry Nolen is a dedicated advocate, founder, and community leader committed to eradicating violence and providing essential resources to communities of color. Tragedy struck her life on July 7, 2021, when she experienced the heart-wrenching loss of her beloved son to gun violence. This devastating event catalyzed her determination to create a safer world for all, sparing other families the pain she endured. Drawing from training in Trauma-Informed Care and personal experience, Sherry founded "Saving Ourselves," which works diligently to share her knowledge and advocates for greater awareness and support systems that address the unique needs of grieving mothers and families. Her journey from a grieving mother to a beacon of hope and action inspires all who aspire to create a safer, more compassionate world. Sherry's life story is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the transformative power of advocacy and community engagement.

Speaker



Tekesia Shields

Founder of Mother's Against
Gang Violence
Atlanta, GA

Ms. Shields is a mother of four wonderful sons and a grandmother of one. She worked for over 12 years as a case manager for the Center for Black Women's Wellness, educating mothers on the importance of prenatal care and infant mortality prevention. She decided to start an organization called Mothers Against Gang Violence (MAGV) due to the trials of raising her own sons. Ms. Shields received services and education that she felt a need to share with the community, which may save the lives of many youths today. She is now a Credible Messenger of GA, where she partners with OAA, Freedom Is a Choice, to mentor youth, help encourage families, and assist with re-entry from incarceration. Ms. Shields is a full-time gun violence prevention worker for the Cure Violence Atlanta Team and hopes to open MAGV Technical re-entry educational and resource center for the formerly incarcerated and juvenile intervention.

Community Advocate & Financial Coach Sabrina Antoine Correia is the Vice President of Public Engagement and Corporate Responsibility for New England at JPMorgan Chase. She builds and nurtures authentic relationships with key stakeholders in this role to drive positive, lasting, community-centered impact. She helps advance the firm's racial equity work by supporting Black and Latino communities with access to tools and resources that help them improve their economic opportunities and build wealth. The driving force behind Sabrina's career is building strategic partnerships that solve big problems. She has over 15 years of experience in community work and financial services— helping to improve economic disparities and life outcomes for underresourced groups in disadvantaged communities.

Rev. Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D Min. is a high-energy Narrative Leadership Coach, Certified Professional Chaplain, author, educator, and conference leader. Drawing upon 35-plus years of pastoral leadership, Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge has a ministry style that is bold, transparent, authentic, anointed, and liberating! She is the Executive Director of the non-profit Tennessee Game Changers United for Justice and Equality and the proud pastor of Brown Chapel AME Church in Union City, TN. Additionally, Dr. Dowdy-Dandridge is a proud Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. member of the American Counseling Association, the Tennessee Association of Pastoral Therapists, and a pre-licensed Clinical Pastoral Therapist. She is finely married to Rev. Dr. John Dandridge, and together they have six children, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Monique Willis is the Founder/CEO of Momma On a Mission, Inc. (MOM.). Monique founded MOM (Kansas City, MO) in 2014 after losing her only child, Alonzo Thomas IV, to senseless violence on April 5th of that same year (no arrests to date). Alonzo was only 20 years old. In 2011, Alonzo welcomed his daughter, Zoey, into the world, and in 2014, Alonzo's namesake was born just days after MOM was incorporated. Alonzo never got a chance to meet his son. Since Alonzo's homicide, Monique has devoted herself to maintaining her son's legacy and bringing awareness to unsolved homicides. In 2019, Mothers for Justice & Equality awarded Monique the Lily A. Estes Community Justice Award. Monique is a contributing author of Grief Diaries, Project Cold Case and Survivors, and The Forgotten Victims of Murder & Suspicious Deaths.

Speaker



Sabrina Correia
Vice President of Public Engagement and Corporate Responsibility for New England at JPMorgan Chase
Boston, MA

Speaker



Rev. Dr. Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, D Min.
Tennessee Gamechangers
United for Justice and Equality
Paris, TN

Speaker



Monique Willis
Founder / CEO,
Momma On a Mission, Inc.
Kansas City, MO

Speaker



Renée Omolade
Director of Boston
Community Hub Schools
Boston, MA

Renée is the Director of Boston Community Hub Schools. She focuses on Liberatory Education and aims to organize the assets and resources of school communities to improve the academic achievement of talented Boston Public School scholars. A South End native, Dorchester resident, and Boston Latin School alumna, Renée earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a double minor in Africana Studies and Gender & Women's Studies from Emmanuel College and is a candidate for her Master's in Public Policy at Northeastern University



Speaker



Cyntoria Grant
Associate Director, Public
School Partnership Harvard
Public Affairs &
Communications,
Harvard University
Boston, MA

Cyntoria is the Associate Director, Public School Partnership Harvard Public Affairs & Communications for Harvard University. She holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership from Ashford University, a Graduate Certificate in Health and Nonprofit Management from Suffolk University, and a BA from Eastern Nazarene College.



THANK YOU

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Mattapan Community Health Center ***Congratulates***



MOTHERS
FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

***"Mothers for Justice and Equality"
On Their 9th Annual
Mothers Against Violence
National Conference***



***We are committed to our Partnership and
the work we do collectively through the
Mattapan Neighborhood Trauma Team to
support families impacted by trauma.
Together we can and do make a difference.***

1575 Blue Hill Avenue
Mattapan, MA 02126



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At JPMorgan Chase we're making a difference in the communities where we live and work by supporting the neighborhoods, businesses, programs and ideas that are moving our communities forward.

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MOTHERS

FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY





Mother to Mother, Neighbor to Neighbor, together we can change the story of our streets.

-Monalisa Smith
Founder, President, & CEO of Mothers for Justice and Equality

Mission Statement

The mission of MJE is to end neighborhood violence by empowering mothers and youth to challenge the normalization of violence and become effective catalysts for change in their homes, schools, and communities. We engage mothers, youth, & families by providing targeted support, educational opportunities, and the opportunity to advocate for peace as a community.

Contact Us

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