

# RACIAL JUSTICE



Since the death of Michael Brown the St Louis area has become the epicenter of the ongoing struggle for racial equality in America, and NCJW strives to be part of the solution through a mix of education, service and advocacy. Viewing public policy through a racial justice lens informs our work on issues of pay equity, education, healthcare and reproductive choice, among others.

## *Education is key to understanding racial inequity and white privilege.*

NCJW hosted the Mother to Mother program for African American mothers to share the concerns they have raising their children in today's world. Study groups on the book "The New Jim Crow" expanded participants' awareness of unequal law enforcement. Witnessing Whiteness groups dug deep into the subtle culture of white entitlement. New sessions are on tap for Spring.

## *Economic Disadvantages*

**Healing Hearts Bank** provides low-interest micro-loans to help financially disadvantaged women with short-term needs like a car, a work wardrobe or even capital to start a small business. Borrowers learn financial management and establish a positive credit history as they repay their obligation.

## *Adequate Education*

Kids are far less likely to miss school when they have appropriate clothing and supplies. Back to School! Store outfits 1200 students each year with new clothing, shoes, coats, backpacks and school supplies. Kids Community Closets make the same items available for ad hoc assistance on site at 23 schools across the St Louis area.

## *Job Readiness*

Project Renewal brings groups of women (referred by various social service agencies) to the NCJW office and ReSale Shop for an afternoon of pampering, complimentary shopping and workshops on job-readiness topics, all designed to support their successful entry into the work force.

## *Voting Rights*

The poor, immigrants and communities of color are the most likely to lack the state-issued photo ID now required to vote in Missouri. Helping individuals obtain the supporting documents and special ID is an NCJW priority, as well as holding the state accountable to their promise of covering the costs involved. NCJW is also part of a coalition working to overturn the new ID requirement through the federal courts.

## *Reproductive Choice*

Access to affordable birth control (ideally long-acting reversible methods, or LARCs) allow women to delay childbearing until they are ready, maybe after completing their education or establishing a secure job. That single step can go a long way to ending the cycle of poverty. NCJW works with Planned Parenthood and the Contraceptive Choice Center to make those services-and others-available, regardless of ability to pay.

## *Mass Incarceration*

Work for reduced sentences for those currently imprisoned for non-violent drug crimes. Assist with the re-integration of formerly-incarcerated women, including expungement and "ban the box" efforts.



## What to Do Next:

### **Advocacy:**

Protest the federal appointment of individuals with racist tendencies and backgrounds to the President's cabinet.

Lobby for funding the school funding formula in Missouri.

Lobby against de-funding Planned Parenthood.

Lobby for gun control measures.

### **Community Service:**

Join NCJW for our **Back to School! Store, Healing Hearts Bank, and Project Renewal!**



National Council of Jewish Women  
St. Louis Section