



## **Community Coalition for Social Justice Annual Report for October 1, 2021-September 30 2022**

- Monthly e-newsletters to 260 individuals and organizations about local and state-level social justice events, plus 2 snail mail recipients.
- Sponsored our Sixteenth Annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Day celebration as a virtual event via Zoom and Facebook Live, with a theme of “Respect” and financial support from the City of Morgantown.
  - Worked with the West Virginia University Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, especially Jascenna Haislet, the program coordinator and director, and Michelle Klishis, the professional technologist, to provide the digital platforms that allowed us to reach at least 135 via these virtual platforms. In addition, 115 people appeared as pre-recorded performers (7 community leaders with comments on respect; 98 students from Mylan Park, Cheat Lake, and North Elementary Schools; 9 WVU choir members; and Al Anderson as soloist), including performers. We also had attendees from outside the Morgantown area, including from Atlanta.
  - Worked with Barb Watkins, executive director of Main Street Morgantown, who advertised the event through her various social media contacts.
  - Marly Hazen Ynigues provided publicity through the NAACP and streamed the event on the NAACP Facebook page.
  - Mike Sharley, a CCSJ steering committee member, streamed the event on the CCSJ Facebook page.
  - Morgantown Mayor Jenny Selin welcomed people to the event.
  - Publicized the event to state and local officials, day care centers, neighborhood associations, faith communities, and local media.
  - Worked with the Morgantown-Kingwood Chapter of the NAACP for the fifth year, as Dr. Florita Montgomery gave a presentation on “Let’s Respect Dr. King’s Words With Actions.”
  - Featured local social justice advocates to provide their comments on our theme: Anitra Hamilton (Morgantown/Kingwood Branch NAACP president), Rabbi Joe Hample (Tree of Life Congregation, Morgantown), Brad Grimes J.D. (program coordinator of the WVU LGBTQ+ Center), Dr. Tim Nelms (Wild and Wonderful Humanists), Pete Giacobbi (vice-president of the Morgantown National Organization for Women), Marly Ynigues (Social Justice Chair of the Morgantown/Monongalia League of Women Voters), and Bonnie Brown (Coordinator of the Native American Studies Program at West Virginia University).
  - Included performances from choirs at Cheat Lake Elementary School (Mrs. Kimble and Mrs. Kennison, teachers), Mylan-Park Elementary School (Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Snyder, teachers), and North Elementary School (Jenn Mattern, teacher), the WVU Paul Robeson Mahalia Jackson Gospel Choir (Dr. Alton Merrell, director), and by Al Anderson.
- Received \$4000 from the FirstEnergy Foundation to support a “Read Aloud” program at the Shack Neighborhood House in Scotts Run on June 22nd and 23rd. Eight members of CCSJ read to seven classes of students in kindergarten through 6th grade. Our partners at the Shack (Shawnda Cook, Devon McDaniel, and Dawn Lipscomb) ordered the books so that each child received a copy of the book read to him or her. Several of the volunteers met with Melissa Workman, director of the WVU Nursery School, to learn more about reading to children, and she shared many ideas to keep children engaged. We also purchased seating for the children.
- Participated in the new West Virginia Coalition for Truth in History to address legislation introduced in the West Virginia House of Delegates and Senate that would stifle teaching divisive issues in our history and contributed

to an ad in the *Charleston Gazette*. This was a state-wide coalition that is now organizing as a 501 (c) (4) organization.

- Signed a petition from the Campaign for Our Shared Future, calling for a public meeting on the West Virginia Board of Education's proposed rules to implement SB 704, which would "put classroom materials under the microscope."
- The Morgantown Fraternal Order of Police challenged our right to be an intervenor in its lawsuit against the ordinance to establish a Civilian Police Review and Advisory Board, while the City of Morgantown supported our petition to intervene.
- Lobbied the Morgantown City Council:
  - Addressed the Morgantown City Council in person and via email to encourage appointments to the Civilian Police Review and Advisory Board and designated a new potential member to the board, assuming that CCSJ is one of the three community organizations entitled to endorse a member.
  - Supported the Morgantown Human Rights Commission's proposal to the Morgantown City Council to ban conversion therapy.
  - Supported the Morgantown Human Rights Commission request to the Morgantown City Council to rename October 12th as Indigenous People's Day.
- Had monthly Zoom meetings that sometimes included speakers about local organizations, like WVU Native American Studies Program and WVU LGBTQ+ Center.
- Presented a Zoom program by Joan Browning about her work as a Freedom Rider for our February meeting.
- Moderated a League of Women Voters-NAACP-CCSJ Zoom forum for candidates for the Monongalia County Board of Education on March 30th.
- Had a table at the "Considering Matthew Shepard" event at the WVU Canady Creative Arts Center on April 23rd.
- Held our annual meeting on September 18th as a Social Justice/Environmental Justice Fair at the Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park Amphitheatre with funding pending from FirstEnergy Foundation and participation from the following groups and individuals: Al Anderson, ACLU West Virginia, Appalachian Prison Book Project, Church of the Brethren, Eve Faulkes (Listening for Racial Understanding Project), First Presbyterian Church, Friends of Deckers Creek, Morgantown Human Rights Commission, Mon River Trails Conservancy, Morgantown Friends, Morgantown NOW, Morgantown-Kingwood Branch of the NAACP, Morgantown-Monongalia County League of Women Voters, PFLAG Fairmont, Poor People's Campaign, Rape and Domestic Violence Center, Results, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, WVU LGBTQ+ Center, WVU Native American Studies Program, and WVU Student Sierra Club.
- Had a table at the Morgantown Pride Block Parties on October 23rd and August 28th, both at the Farmers Market Pavilion.
- Had a table at the WVU Native American Studies Program Peace Tree Ceremony on September 18th.
- Continued our cooperation with the Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP with Barb Howe as chair of the branch's Community Coordination Committee.
- Maintain a web site at [www.ccsjwv.org](http://www.ccsjwv.org) and Facebook page at Community Coalition for Social Justice at Morgantown, WV.
- Updated our list of social justice books at the Morgantown and area public libraries.
- Began planning for our Seventeenth Annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Day event that will be held on January 16, 2023, with a theme of "Telling West Virginia Stories and Dreams." We hope to be back at the Metropolitan Theatre in 2023. Tentative participants are Charlene Marshall, Al Anderson, and Chris Haddox. The City of Morgantown has again allocated funding for this event.