

Join us!!

You can help end poverty.

Join us in our efforts to document human rights abuses of people struggling to meet their basic needs in the Capital Region of NY. There are many ways you can support our efforts:

Share your story.

Have your economic human rights been violated? Document this abuse, today, with one of our volunteers. These stories will be collected and turned into a report for the Capital Region. Then, they will be sent to the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign to support efforts to end poverty nationwide. If you cannot share your story today, please contact us at (518) 892-6697, and we'll come to you.

Come to a meeting.

Our Knowledge, Our Power meets from 12:30 – 3 PM, the second Saturday of every month, at the Women's Building (373 Central Ave.) in Albany. Join us as we fight for the rights of people struggling to meet their basic needs in the Capital Region. Free food and childcare is provided at each meeting.

Make a donation.

Our Knowledge, Our Power is 100% volunteer run, and we operate on a \$4000/year budget. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to support our work, please contact Virginia at Virginia@populartechnology.org or (518) 892-6697.

**OUR KNOWLEDGE, OUR POWER:
SURVIVING WELFARE**
PO Box 1613
Troy, NY 12181
Address Correction Required

**Our Knowledge, Our
Power: Surviving Welfare**

Your Economic Human Rights

STAND UP
SPEAK OUT
TO MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

National Truth Commission:
shining a light on **poverty** in the **usa**
www.economichumanrights.org

Did You Know?

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948) expresses the rights due to every human being – including food, housing, health care, and living wage jobs and, to claim these, the right to communication. These rights include:

Article 19: Freedom of Expression

Article 23: The right to jobs at a living wage and just conditions of work

Article 25(1): The right to well-being of a person and his/her family, including food, clothing, housing, health care and necessary social services

Article 25(2): Protection of mothers and children, regardless of birth status

Article 26: Right to education

Our Knowledge, Our Power

Our Knowledge, Our Power draws on values of respect, local expertise, grassroots process and true democracy to make real, meaningful change in the terribly unfair and exploitative system of public assistance in New York State, which keeps people dependent and poor.

We try to counteract the alienation and lack of respect that public assistance "beneficiaries" often encounter by sharing information and resources to bridge the gap between public assistance recipients and workers/politicians/the general public.

PO Box 1613 Troy, NY 12181
(518) 892-6697 virginia@populartechnology.org

The Right to a Living Wage

The federal minimum wage will be \$7.25/hour in July 2009. A worker earning minimum wage at 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year will earn \$15,080 – enough to lift a single person above the poverty level, and a single parent with one child just \$192 above the poverty line, leaving all other families still below the poverty line.

Minimum wage laws do not apply to domestic or agricultural workers (nor to those on public assistance, who are rarely lifted above the poverty line by their benefits).

What's wrong?

The minimum wage is not a living wage. Poverty guidelines do not take into account housing costs, transportation, childcare or health care.

Solutions:

U.S. must enact into law a living wage as the right of every worker. Living Wages must be included in any international trade agreements, past, present, or future.

The Right to Health

The US is the only industrialized country, out of 29 countries, without some form of universal health care.

Of all nations, the US ranks 37th in overall health system performance, 55th in fairness of expenditure and 28th in health outcomes. 47 million Americans do not have any health insurance, and an additional 30 million are underinsured.

Medical bills are the number one cause of personal bankruptcy in the US.

What's wrong?

Health care is treated as a commodity instead of as a right.

Solutions:

Remove the profit motive from health care.
Treat health care as a fundamental human right.

The Right to Housing

Between 2.3 and 3.5 million Americans are homeless each year. Millions more live with other families or in housing that is inadequate for their family size.

Currently there are more vacant units of housing than there are homeless people.

What's wrong?

Funding for public housing, Section 8, homelessness prevention and low-income homeowner support has been cut. Many Americans are forced to live in housing situations that don't meet their basic needs, are unsafe or unhealthy.

Solutions:

Stop relying on the private housing market. Develop fully funded government program of regulations and direct provision of housing.

The Right to Education

The US has the most inequitable education system in the industrialized world. The primary source of education funding is local property taxes; therefore, rich school districts can outspend low-income districts, increasing inequities.

NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act) hasn't addressed these economically based educational inequities and, in fact, has pushed us more toward private, for-profit activities in public education.

What's wrong?

Access to education at all levels is largely determined by income. Cuts in public funding as well as corporate take-over of school systems means that education for the full development of the person is being undermined.

Solutions:

Establish right to free universal quality education as a national priority. Make public higher education free to all students.