

Youth Seeking Justice Now

A Southern Regional Conference on the Progressive Reform of the Criminal Justice System

February 16-18, North Carolina State University

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of this event is to bring young people together in an accessible forum to gain direct action organizing skills, to share knowledge on the issues of criminal justice reform, and to formally strategize together as North Carolinians and residents of the south to establish a plan through which we can implement and progress together for real change.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Childcare: African American Culture Center, Witherspoon

Transportation:

From Peace College: Every half-hour on the hour

From Hotel: Every half-hour

From YMCA: Every half-hour

From UNC Chapel Hill: Every hour on the half

To UNC Chapel Hill: Every hour, exact times arranged after concert

Creative Space: Available all day Saturday in Witherspoon, Main Floor

Chill-Out Space: For those who need space after an intense session in Nelson 2406

Tabling: Nelson Hall, Main Floor

Emergency Phone #: 919-218-4056

SCHEDULE

Friday

7-9 PM **Optional Caucus Meetings**
Location: Witherspoon

Saturday

8:30-9:30 AM **Conference Registration**
Location: Nelson Hall, Main Floor Entry

9:30-10:30 AM **Opening Plenary: Panel Discussion**
Location: Nelson Auditorium
Thelma Clark, mother of Eddie Hatcher
Eddie Hatcher: Live Call in from Central Prison
Pam Africa, MOVE Organization, International Concerned Family
and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal
Kwame Cannon, Jubilee 2000
Willena Cannon, Jubilee 2000

10:45-12 PM **Skills Workshop Session I: Strategy** **Location: 3210, 4210**
Treston Faulkner, Student Labor Action Project Coordinator (USSA/JwJ)
Erica Smiley, National Womyn's Student Coalition Chair, USSA
Running campaigns requires a strong sense of goals, allies, clear targets, and creative targets, and creative tactics that demonstrate our united power in grassroots organizing. Thus, it is imperative that we have a solid grasp on how to strategize successful campaigns by winning consistent, concrete victories, and building our organizations and progressive institutions at the same time. This session is taken from the Grass-Roots Organizing Weekend (G.R.O.W.) training developed by the Midwest Academy and the United States Student Association (U.S.S.A.).

12:15-1:30 PM **Skills Workshop Session II: Coalitions** **Location: 3210, 4210**
Treston Faulkner, Student Labor Action Project Coordinator (USSA/JwJ)
Erica Smiley, National Womyn's Student Coalition Chair, USSA
When working on issues as broad and encompassing as the progressive reform of the criminal justice system, it's important to know how to unite with other organizations around common goals. Coalition work is vital and often necessary before widespread victories are one. This session is also taken from the Grass-Roots Organizing Weekend (G.R.O.W.) training developed by the Midwest Academy and the United States Student Association (U.S.S.A.).

1:30-2:30 PM **Lunch Provided** **Location: Witherspoon**
Youth Caucus

2:30-3:20 PM **Issue Workshop Session I** **Location: Nelson Hall**

Entry Level
+ Intermediate
* Advanced Discussion

Prisons 101 #
Bryan Proffitt, Reciprocity and Pari Zutshi, Prison Moratorium Project
Location: 1120
Learn the basics of about the Prison Industrial Complex, and how the overall system has been growing and perpetuating discrimination against young people and people of color. If this is your first experience with organizing against criminal "injustice" this is the workshop for you!

Racial Profiling in the Education System +
Michelle Cotton, Organization Coming
Location: 1130

Have you ever wondered why the percentage of people of color in the criminal justice system directly correlates with the percentage of people of color in college? How often do young people who are tracked into lower level programs or recurring suspension end up victims of the criminal justice system? What usually are the causes of these suspensions? Parents and students alike, find out how to recognize the initial signs of educational tracking and racial profiling in the school system.

Mandatory Minimum Sentencing +
Gus Smith
Location: 1140

Come and learn how these laws and others like it force poor people of color to serve longer sentences, while letting the large prison industry profit off of human capital. Hear from someone with first hand experience, and share your own as well.

Who is a Criminal? : The science of defining a criminal *
Doug Taylor, Black Radical Congress
Location: 1150

Many opponents of the work we often do around the criminal justice system is simply a promotion of "criminal" behavior. Attend this workshop to engage in an in depth conversation and thorough analysis of how society defines a criminal, and how this definition makes some people criminals not by their behavior, but by their mere existence.

Rural Organizing +
Naomi Swinton, Grassroots Leadership
Location: 1212

Are you a resident of the rural south, and struggling to understand the various ways to organize people there? This workshop is designed to discuss issues specific to rural communities, and how to work with and address the communities there.

Between Us: Relations between young people in the movement #
Malcolm Goff, PACE and Ari Leichtman, Prison Creative Arts Project
Location: 2402

Come and participate in this free-floating discussion about how young people relate to each other within social justice movements. Discuss the dichotomy between college and middle/high school students, as well as students and non-students. Address issues of marginalization within our own group, and propose realistic solutions.

Jubilee 2000: Direct Action in North Carolina +
Willena Cannon, Jubilee 2000
Location: 2405

Anxious for Sunday's strategy sessions? Discover an already existing network of people working towards prison reform, and determine how you and your organization can tap into it. From Greensboro to Wilmington, former prisoners, prison family and others directly affected by prison injustice are lining up to create direct change! This workshop is headed up by Willena Canon, mother of Kwame Canon, who was recently released after being held unjustly in a North Carolina facility.

3:30-4:20 PM

Issue Workshop Session II

Location: Nelson Hall

Entry Level
+ Intermediate
* Advanced Discussion

Religious Responsibility to the Movement +
Chris Horne, Saturn Drive Baptist Church Youth Group (Nashville, TN) and Rev. Tanyia Rawls, Unity Fellowship Church (Charlotte, NC)
Location: 1120

One of the largest institutions in the South is religion- predominantly Protestant Christian but not to exclude Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and other world religions and atheists. Therefore, to combat this emerging prison industrial complex it will have to be understood, emphasized and mobilized. Unfortunately/fortunately, many of these larger religious traditions are fundamentalist and conservative in belief. This can be a blessing but only if the dialogue is opened for progressive thought to enter the old school faith based groups. Come see how to address the reform and abolition of the current criminal justice system from a religious standpoint!

Youth, Art, Activism #

Ari Leichtman, Prison Creative Arts Projects (Ann Arbor, MI)

Location: 1130

See how art is a direct form of activism in this interactive workshop. Discuss how art can be used as a form of rehabilitation and teaching, making transition back into society somewhat easier. Learn about roles that youth can play in this growing aspect of the movement, art and activism.

War on Drugs +

Mike Gelacak, Former Vice-Chair of the United States Sentencing Commission

Shawn Heller, Students for Sensible Drug Policy

Location: 1140

Well over half of the prisoners in federal and state prisons are there because of nonviolent drug convictions. It is now common knowledge that our own federal government initiated some of this traffic. Come find out the details from someone who was employed by one of the major federal agencies during the implementation of the "war".

Juvenile Justice #

Thomas Loflin, Ilona Advisory Board (Durham, NC)

Location: 1150

Ever get the feeling that you don't have all of the information? Find out what the laws are governing the juvenile justice system, and learn your rights as a student and a parent in public schools. Learn the signs of tracking and how to keep yourself or your child out of the juvenile justice system.

Private Prisons and the Corporations that fund them +

Judy Greene, Independent Researcher

Location: 1212

Just when you thought prison warehousing was as bad as it could get, today's market elite insists on making a profit off of it. Now, the already exploited prison labor force faces cutbacks to basic necessities and protection in order to provide the most cost efficient prisons in town. Worse, these prison investors are directly tied to other institutions and corporate entities. They're even in our public schools and on our college campuses! Get the details on the major corporate investors in the private corrections industry, and discover if there is a prison investor near you!

Prisons, Students and Labor +

Treston Faulkner, Student Labor Action Project (USSA/JwJ)

Location: 2210

Many students running campaigns have found difficulty fighting private prison investing corporations on campus without disrupting and possibly hurting ongoing labor struggles. Share your experiences in this workshop, and learn ways of addressing this in a way positive to both criminal justice reform and the labor movement.

4:30-5:20 PM

Issue Workshop Session III

Location: Nelson Hall

Entry Level

+ Intermediate

* Advanced Discussion

Capital Punishment and the New Abolition Movement +

John Johnson, Campaign to End the Death Penalty

Location: 1120

Isn't it curious how those who call for the death penalty tend to be the same ones calling for the de-funding of the public school system, the elimination of affirmative action policies, and anti-choice (pro-"life") measures? Find out how you can do more to fight the death penalty before and after prisoners are sentenced to die. Learn the basic trends, and see how you can stop the death penalty not only by advocating for those on death row, but by defending those being targeted as early as the first grade.

A Student or a Prisoner: Educational Tracking #

Malcolm Goff, PACE

Location: 1130

Are you planning to go to college? You might want to pay specific attention to this workshop. Recent trends in state legislation have begun leaning towards the establishment of non-diploma high school tracking. This means that some students will graduate from high school with a certificate, but will not be eligible to attend a state college or university, ... and we all know who those students will be. Come find out more about these recent additions to standardized testing and barriers to higher education.

Free Mumia: Political Prisoners #

Aaron Jacobson, Amnesty International

Jonathan Perry, Amnesty International

Location: 1140

Free Mumia! Rounding the final curves in Mumia's appeal process, it is imperative that we organize now stronger than ever for his fair trial and release. But this battle is not just about Mumia. This call to action is on behalf of all political prisoners being held in the country. Get the latest information and find out what you can do next to help!

Privatization in Brunswick County, NC +

Naomi Swinton, Grassroots Leadership

Location: 1150

Are you concerned about how private prisons may be affecting your local community? Are you a resident of or near Brunswick County, North Carolina? This workshop will go over all of the implications of a potential facility possibly to be built in Brunswick County, and what you can do to stop it!

Before and After Prison +

Phylis Utley, Project Empower

Location: 1212

Come and find out the effects that prisons have on the lives of individual people. Put a face on the masses that are warehoused there from year to year. Cover topics such as voter disenfranchisement and basic re-entry into society. Talk directly to former inmates, and see up close the damage our criminal "justice" system is doing, and then discuss what to do about it!

Alternatives to the Prison Industrial Complex *

Judy Greene, Independent Researcher

Location: 2210

The most common argument heard from mainstream non-reform minded people usually comes in the simple question, "well, what are we supposed to do with this 'criminals?'" This workshop is designed to discuss and even brainstorm new alternatives to warehousing people in prisons. Better prepare yourself to persuade others by bettering your arguments in this workshop.

5:30-7 PM

Dinner (Optional Caucuses)

Location: Witherspoon

Hands on Artwork by Malcolm Goff

6:30 PM

Doors Open for Speaker and Concert

Location: McKimmon

7:00 PM

Opening Statements: Dr. Narcoste, Vice-Provost of Diversity & African American Affairs at North Carolina State University

7:10 PM

Introduction of Speaker

7:15 PM

The Message from Kemba Smith

8:00 PM

Open Mic and Freestyle Session

9:15 PM

Right is Right: A Hip Hop Drama

10:00 PM

Black Lung, Hip Hop Entertainment

