

THE GREATER TRENTON AREA CHAPTER

OF THE CAMPAIGN TO END THE NEW JIM CROW

SPOKEN WORD, RAP, POETRY & ESSAY CONTEST

Social justice includes compassionate ministry, which many people define as “to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and provide a cup of cold water to one in need.” Yet if our response to the needs of others ends there, is this justice?

Social justice always takes the next step to ask the question, “why is the person(s) hungry, naked and in need of water, and how can we bring healing and restoration to the broken system that is contributing to this injustice?”

The Campaign to End the New Jim Crow (CENJC) has asked these questions and is committed to sharing the answers they have found. **CENJC’s** purpose is to spread awareness of mass incarceration and the racism ingrained in the criminal justice system of our country. A minimally constrained criminal justice system continues to fuel mass incarceration today. A gratuitous War on Drugs drives this system that targets and traps primarily African Americans branded as “criminals,” even individuals without a criminal record, into a permanent undercaste. African Americans and whites use drugs at roughly the same rates, but African Americans are incarcerated for drug offenses at a rate 10 times greater than that of whites.

CENJC grew out of a response to reading Michelle Alexander’s book *The New Jim Crow*. The group continues to pursue new ways to raise awareness of the broken system and to push for change. It is through this research, study, truth-finding and truth-telling that justice can be achieved!

Our organization is calling on public high school students of Trenton, Ewing, Lawrenceville and Hamilton to read and view several well researched articles and podcasts and to respond to them by writing an original work of Spoken Word, Rap, Poetry or an Essay on the theme of **Advancing Justice**. Students who start now to help in the work of spreading facts and raising awareness will be laying the foundation for their formation into the strong, informed leaders so needed for justice work in the future.

First prize is \$200. Second prize is \$100. Third prize is \$50. Honorable Mentions will receive Certificates of Recognition. You, your teacher or clergy leader, and your parents will be recognized at our Chapter Meeting in March 2019.

RULES

1. The original work of Spoken Word, Rap, or Poetry length is 125 words minimum -250 words maximum. Essay length is 250 to 350 words. Manuscripts must be double spaced. Use Cambria style and 14 size font.
2. The top of the first page requires your full name, first name, then last; your email address; phone number, school name, (optional-church/mosque/temple name if applicable). Teacher or youth leader/clergy name. **EVERY PAGE REQUIRES YOUR FULL NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS.**

3. The last page requires your personal note that you read and viewed the required material and that your written work is original, and no one else's. Then sign your name.
4. TITLE on first page is **ADVANCING JUSTICE**.
5. Send a printed copy, by the deadline of 11/30/18, to:
Campaign To End The New Jim Crow (Contest)
P.O. Box 1281
Trenton, NJ 08607 by 11/30/18.
6. If you have any questions or concerns at all, send an email to Advancing.justice@msn.com.
7. View and read any 4 of the 6 podcasts/written articles provided below:

(1) Learn how the government created segregation and poverty in inner cities
<https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>

(2) <http://www.ecclesio.com/2014/03/violent-innocence-in-racial-profiling-and-incarceration-in-the-united-states-michael-granzen/>

(3) Chapter 3 The Color of Justice (The New Jim Crow by Michele Alexander)
<https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/The%20Color%20of%20Justice.pdf>

(4) <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2014/a-conversation-with-michelle-alexander>

(5) School to Prison Pipeline <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/10/stanching-the-school-to-prison-pipeline/544976/>

(6) A Presumption of Guilt (Bryan Stevenson)
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/07/13/presumption-of-guilt/>

CENJC CONTEST GUIDELINES.....BE ORIGINAL. Be as original as possible as you respond to what you've learned. Grab us right from the start and hold us and keep us reading. **Add a story or two and use strong images of sight, sound, touch, or inner feelings. Aim to affect a listener's imagination and understanding....**Whether yours or another's, a story adds a personal face to the case we make, the need to advance justice. It makes the issue come alive as a shared experience for the reader.

Make it clear that you're interested in our topic, **Advancing Justice**, and that you've read/listened to the articles on racial justice we have provided. Freely share from them what the world needs to know and understand...And tell us — without a lot of big words and jargon — what you think about the justice that's been denied in the past and continues to be denied today, about your own learning regarding racial justice, and in what directions the work of advancing justice needs to go. And maybe even **WHY**.

Have someone else read your rap, essay, poem or spoken word piece....This is editing. Spellcheck is great, but take the next step: Have someone look over your work to check for misspellings. They can find punctuation mistakes or long, clunky sentences. Read your work out loud to yourself. We hope you will be reading it to our group in March 2019! Good luck! **The deadline is November 30.** No extensions.