The Tennessee Human Rights Commission;
Metro Human Relations Commission;
Tennessee United for Human Rights;
and others

Present...

The Tennessee Celebration of

International Human Rights Day

Advancing Universal Freedom

Celebrating the 74th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

December 8, 2022
On October 24, 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations came into being as an intergovernmental organization, with the purpose of saving future generations from the devastation of international conflict.

United Nations representatives formally adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. The Declaration was drafted by representatives of all regions of the world and encompassed all legal traditions. It is the most universal human rights document in existence, delineating the thirty fundamental rights that form the basis for a democratic society.

Following this historic act, the Assembly called upon all Member Countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.”

Today, the Declaration is a living document that has been accepted as a contract between a government and its people throughout the world.

This year marks the 74th anniversary of the Declaration. Tennessee is celebrating with the theme: Advancing Universal Freedom.

In Tennessee, the Human Rights Day celebration has become a time to reflect and look to the future. During the event, we honor those who have given a lifetime of service to making human rights a reality, those who have given outstanding service to forward human rights and those who are picking up the torch and carrying it forward.
**Musical Selection**—Emily Palmer & Anana Kaye on vocals, and Irakli Gabriel on guitar

**Master of Ceremonies**—Muriel Nolen
Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

**Gubernatorial Proclamation** presented by—Veronica McGraw
Deputy Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

**Mayoral Proclamation** presented by—Maryam Abolfazli
Chair, Metro Human Relations Commission

**2022 Human Rights Rising Advocate Awardees**
~ Jacob Aparicio
~ Stephanie Kang

**Greetings**—Kevin McKellar
Secretary, United Nations Association Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter

**2022 Human Rights Outstanding Service Awardees**
~ Robin Derryberry
~ Rev. Dr. Earle J. Fisher
~ Dr. Allison Quintanilla Plattsmier

**Special Remarks**—Rev. Davie Tucker
Executive Director, Metro Human Relations Commission

**2022 Human Rights Lifetime Achievement Awardees**
~ A.J. Starling

**Discussion ~ Advancing Universal Freedom**
**Moderator**—Vonda McDaniel
**Panelists**—Dr. Earle Fisher & A.J. Starling

**Closing Remarks**—Muriel Nolen
Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

**Unity Prayer**—Rev. Brian Fesler
Pastor, Church of Scientology
Muriel Malone Nolen was appointed the Executive Director for the Tennessee Human Rights Commission in February 2022. Prior to joining THRC, she served as Assistant District Attorney General in Shelby County for 18 years. Mrs. Nolen is a trial lawyer by trade and has worked for various governmental and non-profit agencies throughout Tennessee such as Tennessee Attorney General’s Office, Memphis Area Legal Services, Hamilton County District Attorney General’s Office, and Southwest Tennessee Community College. Mrs. Nolen received her Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Memphis. She currently serves on the Board of Crime Stoppers of Memphis and Shelby County and the Executive Board of Ben F. Jones-National Bar Association and is the immediate past Regional Director of The National Black Prosecutors Association. Mrs. Nolen is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Rev. Davie Tucker Jr. is the Executive Director of the Metro Human Relations Commission. He is also the Pastor of Beech Creek Missionary Baptist Church and recently served as the Coordinator of Alumni Affairs for American Baptist College. He is the past president of the Interdenominational Ministers Fellowship, a member of the Nashville Baptist Ministers Conference and director of the Center for Equity, Change and Sustainability, and former Chair of the Metro Human Relations Commission. He is also the founder and chairperson of the Center for Imagination, Inc., an after school program focusing on at-risk youth.
Jacob Aparicio is the WeCity and Building Bridges program Coordinator at the Oasis Center. Originally from Connecticut, Jacob landed in Nashville through the Urban Leaders Fellowship program in 2018, where he created policy recommendations for the Tennessee State Board of Education. He has continued to improve school climate and dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline throughout Davidson County by equipping students and school staff with restorative practice alternatives, steadfastly amplifying youth voice, leading intergenerational dialogues that include students, school staff and parents.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought various inequities into sharp relief. Stephanie Kang is the inaugural Director of the Health Equity Bureau at Metro Public Health Department, where she is at the forefront of addressing these inequities to better the lives of the people of Nashville. Stephanie is a native Nashvillian who has dedicated her career to making the human right to health a reality rather than just an aspiration. During her doctoral studies, Stephanie also served as the Health Policy Director for U.S. Rep. Pramila Jayapal. She has also worked to increase access to healthcare in remote areas of Haiti.

Robin Derryberry is the owner of Derryberry Public Relations. She is a native Chattanoogan and proud alumna of The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Robin was honored as one of Chattanooga’s “Women of Distinction” and served as a member of the UTC Chancellor’s Roundtable as well as chair of the PR Committee for the Chattanooga Rotary Club. She also served as co-chair of the Leadership Committee for the Mayor’s Women’s Council. She is the immediate past chair of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. The Partnership for Families, Children and Adults honored her as the 2015 “Outstanding Partner,” an honor that traditionally has been given to businesses and corporations. In what she terms “...a bleak year in pageant history,” she was named ‘Miss Chattanooga’ and ‘Miss Congeniality’ at the Miss Tennessee Pageant, which was the first — and last — time she entered any sort of pageant. Each year, Derryberry PR commits significant time to Chattanooga’s non-profits as a way of giving back to help others.
Outstanding Service Awards

A Movement and Ministerial leader at the forefront of social justice and Black liberation efforts in Memphis, TN, and beyond, Earle J. Fisher obtained his Master of Divinity Degree in May 2008 from Memphis Theological Seminary and is ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Missionary Baptist Denominations. In 2018 Rev. Fisher earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Communication from the University of Memphis and currently serves as Senior Pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. As a community organizer, Dr. Fisher co-organized the Memphis Grassroots Organizations Coalition in August of 2015. Spearheading initiatives in criminal justice reform, media accountability, the removal of confederate monuments, and voter empowerment, Dr. Fisher formed #UPTheVote901 in November of 2017 to “give more political power to more people” and “increase voter turnout in Memphis and Shelby County.” He is the 2019-2020 Henry Logan Starks Fellow at Memphis Theological Seminary and the 2020 Political Science Research Fellow at the University of Memphis teaching and studying Political Theology and Radical Black Politics. Most of Dr. Fisher's work focuses on the African American Religious Rhetoric, Contemporary Rhetorical Theory, Black Liberation Theology, and the prophetic persona of Albert Cleage, Jr.

Dr. Allison Quintanilla Plattsmier has twelve years of experience in the nonprofit sector and has collectively raised approximately $4.5 million for over 50 organizations. Her most notable roles include Executive Director of Amputee Blade Runners (ABR), Associate Director of Programs and Development for the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee (TAMT), Community Investment Manager for NeedLink Nashville, Executive Director of the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature Foundation (TISL), and Executive Director of the Jordan Thomas Foundation. She currently serves as Executive Director of Edgehill Neighborhood Partnership and runs her own nonprofit consulting firm, AQP Consulting. She is also a contributing faculty member for the Institute of Nonprofit Leadership and Community Development’s Nonprofit University. Allison is a vocal advocate for gender parity, closing the wage gap, and ending the motherhood penalty. With accolades such as AFP’s Outstanding Young Fundraising Professional, Nashville’s Top 30 Under 30, NBJ’s 40 Under 40, Diversity MBA’s Top 100 Under 50 Executive Leaders, 2021 National Latino Leader, and 2022 Women Who Rock Nashville Social Justice Award, Dr. Quintanilla Plattsmier is a true emerging leader in the Middle Tennessee community.
A.J. Starling has established himself as a well-known face and a powerful voice for Tennessee’s working families. From his earliest days as a bus driver in Nashville, to his ascension to the top ranks of Tennessee’s labor leadership, his commitment to the fight for economic and racial equality is unmatched. His passionate dedication to his work as a public servant in his community has resulted in a lasting impact that will be felt for generations. Mr. Starling’s career in the Labor Movement began in 1971 with the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1235 in Nashville, Tennessee, as a bus operator. He was later elected to the Union Executive Board and eventually Recording Secretary of Local 1235, where he served for 12 years. While he was a bus operator, Mr. Starling received recognition as Operator of the Year, Perfect Attendance Award and Safe Driving Award for 18 years. He also received an award that was named in his and his supervisor’s (Frank Brooks) honor. The Brooks-Starling Award is given annually to the operator who has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Before leaving as an operator, Mr. Starling worked in numerous political campaigns with the Tennessee AFL-CIO and the National AFL-CIO. The Tennessee AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations] Labor Council represents approximately 37 international unions, 273 different local unions and affiliations with a membership of over 60,000 Tennesseans. In 1988, Mr. Starling was selected by Tennessee AFL-CIO President Jim Neeley to serve as Labor Coordinator in the Technical Assistance Program, where he worked with the Tennessee Department of Labor in the Dislocated Workers Unit, assisting hundreds of people secure training and re-employment. Within 2 years, Mr. Starling was promoted to Director of the Technical Assistance Program, where he planned and supervised all phases and operations. Under his leadership, program staff doubled and the annual budget grew to almost a half million dollars. Mr. Starling was named Director of Political Affairs in 2003, and currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the Tennessee AFL-CIO. He’s also the TN AFL-CIO’s Chief Lobbyist and has spent many years building relationships with legislators at the Capitol. He is active in community and political activities, including membership on the Workforce Investment Board (WIA#9), State of Tennessee Tax Structure Study Commission, Red Cross Board, State President of the Asa Phillip Randolph Institute, Chairman of the Nashville Election Commission, Trustee of Westwood Baptist Church, longtime committee member for the MLK Day march and convocation, and was formerly a commissioner with the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. He was highlighted during Black History Month in 2022 by the National AFL-CIO with a profile for leaders who are currently active making Black History across the labor movement.
Advancing Universal Freedom

Panel Members:

Rev. Dr. Earle J. Fisher, 2022 Outstanding Service Award Recipient
Mr. A.J. Starling, 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Moderator:

Vonda McDaniel joined the United Rubber Workers (URW) in 1992 at the Bridgestone-Firestone Lavergne Plant, where she has worked for the last 26 years. Shortly after joining the Union, she became a Shop Steward which began her Union journey. In 1995, URW merged with the United Steelworkers (USW), opening up new opportunities for her as a young activist. Vonda was trained in the USW’s Women of Steel initiative, which equipped her with vital tools to become a leader in her Union and community. She went on to become a trainer in the program herself. After 10 years as a local Union Pension and Insurance Representative, Vonda was elected President of the Central Labor Council of Nashville and Middle Tennessee in 2013. Growing up in Nashville, Vonda’s activism continues to be shaped by the influence of the church she grew up in. First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill was an early center of student organizing during the civil rights movement. There she learned how ordinary people can make extraordinary change. In this moment when the sanitation strikes of TN workers are being re-examined, Vonda understands that intention collaboration at the intersections of labor, civil rights, faith and student activism can bring us closer to the promise of equality for all and build real power for transformative change. Vonda was recently appointed to the TN State Workforce Investment Board and serves as ViceChair of the Board for the Music City Center. Vonda is a CoChair of the State Fed/CLC Advisory Committee. In October 2017, she was elected as a Vice President to the national AFL-CIO Executive Council.
Diane Nash emerged from the sit-in movement in Nashville, Tennessee and became one of the most esteemed student leaders and organizers of the time.

Born to a middle-class Catholic family in Chicago, Nash didn’t truly understand what segregation was until she enrolled in Fisk University. When she got to Nashville, “I started feeling very confined and really resented it. Everytime I obeyed a segregation rule, I felt like I was somehow agreeing I was too inferior to go through the front door or to use the facility that the ordinary public would use.” She began searching for an organization that was fighting segregation and discovered the nonviolence workshops that Rev. James Lawson was holding a few blocks from campus. There, Nash “got a really good, excellent education in nonviolence and how to practice it” and became an unwavering believer in nonviolence as a way of life. During sit-ins in Nashville in the spring of 1960, Nash and other members of the Nashville Student Movement also sought to negotiate with restaurant owners to desegregate the lunch counters. A boycott of downtown stores by Black Nashville residents helped bring the white owners to the table. When owners admitted that they were afraid of a boycott by white customers if they desegregated, the Nashville group took them seriously. Nash and others recruited “some middle-aged white ladies who were very dignified-looking” who agreed to sit at the newly desegregated lunch counters for three weeks. “When you regard your opponent as a human being instead of somebody to fight,” Nash explained, “you can really work out problems.” The action staved off a boycott by white customers, and one of the restaurant owners even became an ally of the Nashville Student Movement’s desegregation campaign. Nash was one of the founding members of SNCC, and few were more militant than she. On February 6, 1961, Nash and fellow SNCC leaders Ruby Doris Smith, Charles Sherrod, and Charles Jones sat-in in Rock Hill, South Carolina to support the “Rock Hill Nine,” nine students jailed after a lunch counter sit-in. Like the nine, all four refused bail. The SNCC activists believed that paying fines would only support the wrongness and injustice of their arrests. When violence stopped the first Freedom Ride in Alabama not long after, Diane Nash was insistent that the rides continue. “The students have decided that we can’t let violence overcome,” she told movement leader Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, “We are coming into Birmingham to continue the Freedom Ride.” She later led all the rides from Birmingham to Jackson in 1961. That July, Nash was arrested for conducting nonviolent workshops for black youth in Jackson. Nash told the judge she would serve the entirety of her two-year sentence. By that point, she had married Nashville movement colleague, James Bevel, and was pregnant with their first child. Nash served ten days on a contempt of court charge, but the judge never pursued the longer sentence. “I think they just decided it was likely to be more trouble than they had banked on.” A fieldworker, strategist, and organizer, Nash went on to help organize the 1963 Birmingham desegregation campaign and worked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and SCLC during the Selma Voting Rights Campaign.
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**Article 1.** All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

**Article 2.** Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

**Article 3.** Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

**Article 4.** No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

**Article 5.** No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

**Article 6.** Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

**Article 7.** All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

**Article 8.** Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

**Article 9.** No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

**Article 10.** Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

**Article 11.** (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

**Article 12.** No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

**Article 13.** (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

**Article 14.** (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 15.** (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

**Article 16.** (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

**Article 17.** (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.
Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.
Acknowledgements

Event Chair
Rev. Brian Fesler, *Church of Scientology*

Planning Committee Members
Julie Brinker, *Church of Scientology*
Lynn Cothren, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*
Barbara Gunn-Lartey, *Metro Human Relations Commission*
Muriel Nolen, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*
Emily Marie Palmer, *Amnesty International, Nashville Chapter*
Jai Starling, *Tennessee Human Rights Commission*
Sondrea Tolbert, *Scarritt Bennett Center*
Rev. Davie Tucker, Jr., *Metro Human Relations Commission*
Rev. Kelli X, *Scarritt Bennett Center*

Venue
Thank you to the Church of Scientology for being gracious hosts this year.

Musical Selections
Thank you to Emily Palmer, Anana Kaye, and Irakli Gabriel for opening our event. Thank you as well to Steven Gary Schlussel for providing music during our reception.

Awards
Thank you to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission for providing the awards.

Refreshments
Thank you to MHRC and the Inka Trailer for wonderful refreshments.

Program Booklet
Thank you to the Church of Scientology for program design and printing.

Next Year
If your organization would like to participate in the planning for next year’s event, please contact the Chair at info@tnuhr.org.

More Information
Visit www.tnuhr.org, join our mailing list and see:
- The full Universal *Declaration* of Human Rights
- Educational *videos* and videos of *award winners*
- A resource *directory* of Tennessee human rights organizations
- Information about *past and upcoming events*
- And more!