

# International Human Rights Day celebrates its 74th anniversary this year | Opinion

---

TN [tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2022/12/06/international-human-rights-day-celebrates-its-74th-anniversary/69703289007](https://tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2022/12/06/international-human-rights-day-celebrates-its-74th-anniversary/69703289007)

## Every year, the Tennessee Human Rights Commission honors the work of state residents who advocate and fight for the human rights of fellow citizens.

---

Muriel Nolen

Guest Columnist

Dec. 10 is International Human Rights Day. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations on Dec. 10, 1948.

The UDHR, its preamble and 30 articles represent the universal recognition that basic rights and fundamental freedoms are inherent to all human beings, inalienable and equally applicable to everyone, and that every one of us is born free and equal in dignity and rights.

The UDHR strengthened the human rights movement and was the first time in history the United Nations outlined universal civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights for all human beings.

Tennesseans celebrate International Human Rights Day on Dec. 8 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the Nashville Church of Scientology Community Hall. This year's theme is "Advancing Universal Freedom."

Each year human rights advocates around the world celebrate in December for International Human Rights Day. Individuals are honored with awards for their commitment to advancing human rights:

- Former Tennessee Human Rights Commissioner A.J. Starling, for his advocacy for labor and worker's rights and will receive the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award.
- Former Tennessee Human Rights Commission Chair, Robin Derryberry, the 2022 Outstanding Service Award along with Rev. Earle Fisher, the senior pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church in Memphis and founder of #UPTheVote901, and Dr. Allison Quintanilla Plattsmier, the Executive Director of the Edgehill Neighborhood Partnership.
- The 2022 Rising Advocate Award: Jacob Aparicio, the Building Bridges and WE City Program Coordinator for the Oasis Center and Dr. Stephanie Kang, the bureau director of health equity for the Metro Public Health Department.

In honor of Human Rights Day, Eleanor Roosevelt stated, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seek equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

The 2022 awardees are living examples of concerted citizen action. This year we celebrate advancements in universal freedoms and renew our commitments to continue the journey.

Join us on December 8, 2022. Registration and additional information on this event and human rights can be found at [tnuhr.org](http://tnuhr.org).

*Muriel Nolen is executive director of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission.*