January 26, 2022

Dear Members, Friends and Supporters of MCHR,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and general membership of MCHR, we extend a heart-felt welcome to MCHR’s 41st Annual Dinner!!! It is amazing that for 42 years MCHR has continued to be relevant and advance its mission to:

Promotes awareness of, commitment to, and advocacy for human rights and the environmental rights of planet Earth, through education, community organization, and action. MCHR opposes forces that suppress human dignity, freedom, and justice locally and around the world.

Throughout our 42 years of social justice work, MCHR has addressed major human rights issues both local and international. We have provided a platform for many distinguished scholars and activists throughout the country and the world to speak their truth and organized “Freedom Tours” to educate youth about the civil rights movement.

The past two years have been particularly challenging for us all amidst a global pandemic; as we all navigate our new normal and still push forward our human rights agendas. The fight for social justice never falters. We are still confronting so many social and political issues in our fight for social justice and economic equality that it can become overwhelming. We cannot lose faith. Along with the struggles, there have been many righteous wins and emerging leaders and heroic moments.

MCHR has been in the forefront of advocating for human rights with programming on racial and economic injustices, environmental stewardship, mental health awareness, and a strong press to preserve democracy in an era of voter’s suppression tactics, that threaten to move us backward. Our virtual presence rings just as thunderous as our physical programming ever did. We have spent a great deal partnering with amazing community organizations and allies to provide spotter trainings to aid in the fight to remedy voter’s suppression, held forums and roundtables on mental health awareness, set a rigorous human rights agenda for 2021 and beyond, and created spaces for immigrations rights and alternatives for policing candid conversations. Alongside this, we continued on our Virtual Youth Engagement Series (VYES) in preparation for our 2022 Freedom Tour.

In June of 2022, MCHR is preparing for our long-awaited Freedom Tour relaunch where we will take a group of high school students, from different races, national origins, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, and socio-economic backgrounds, along with adult mentors, on a bus trip to the Deep South to teach them about the civil rights movement where they will meet with those who were part of it. The trip is an eye opening and inspirational journey for the students, many of whom are unfamiliar with the sacrifices that were made in the fight for equal rights for African Americans and how young people were an instrumental part of the movement.
and played key leadership roles. We have a running campaign to raise $80,000 in funding to support this signature program and although it has been postponed in the past, due to covid, we are hopeful for 2022. MCHR is mindful of the importance of inspiring our youth to carry the torch as we strive for equal rights, compassion for others, and economic equality.

At this year’s Annual Dinner, we warmly welcome Detroit native keynote speaker, Attorney General Keith Ellison, Minnesota’s attorney general since January 2019. Mr. Ellison led the prosecution team that successfully convicted former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin of the murder of George Floyd. Prior to becoming Minnesota’s AG, Mr. Ellison served as the first Muslim in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2007 to 2019, and first African American representative from Minnesota. While in Congress, Mr. Ellison focused on consumer, worker, environmental, and civil and human rights protections for all. Mr. Ellison was also the Deputy Chair of the Democratic National Committee. We are so excited to have Mr. Ellison with us to offer insight into the current political and social environment and provide us with hope and inspiration.

At our Annual Dinner, we reflect on the events that transpired in the last year amidst a pandemic and are grateful for our ability to safely come together. The Annual Dinner is also a time to recognize and thank those human rights leaders who have made a difference as we work towards a peaceful world without poverty, prejudice, hate, and committed to environmental stewardship. This year’s honorees are:

Criminal Justice Activist Award - Michigan Liberation
Organization Activist Award - Detroit Will Breathe
Community Activist Award - Yusef Shakur
Special Lifetime Achievement Recognition - Dorothy Dewberry Aldridge

We truly appreciate your continued support and look forward to celebrating our passion for human rights and the environmental rights of the planet Earth.

In closing, remember the words of Dalai Lama:

“Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.”

Peace,

Cary S. McGehee – MCHR Board Chairperson

Chantelle S. Yancy – MCHR Executive Director