

Winter 2022

THE ADVOCATE

Official Newsletter of The Dan Allen Center for Social Justice



**2021 DAN ALLEN
CENTER FOR SOCIAL
JUSTICE AWARDS**

**CHARITY AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE**

SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

BOARD MEMBERS

WORK WITH US

DACSJ 2021 AWARDS

This is the seventh year during which the Dan Allen Center for Social Justice has conveyed recognition to special people and organizations, all addressing the many injustices in our world. We began this year with hope and new beginnings. The previous year proved to be challenging- and the COVID pandemic was not the sole factor in creating the conditions through which the human condition has worsened. Poverty, racial bias, environmental degradation, food insecurity, health care access and the perpetuation of self-centered ideologies all continued to ensure that injustice

remains part of our reality. Hope could be easily dashed, given what was expected in the new year and what transpired and what issues remain. Yet, the people and organizations recognized this year by the DACSJ represent the dedication to compassion and “right the wrongs.” These people and organizations provide hope in that they decided to “give a damn” and take on what many viewed as a hopeless cause, making the world a more just place.

For the second year, the DACSJ has decided to recognize people in a safe way. No annual in-person recognition event will be held for 2021. We all miss gathering each year to recognize people in our community for their good work. Equally we miss rekindling and creating ties with those with the common cause of social justice. Though we cannot meet face to face does not mean we cannot celebrate the importance of the work people have done for the cause. It does not mean that we cannot rekindle or establish relationships based on the mission of insuring the “unconditional positive regard for all.” We have to work harder to do so during a pandemic, but it can be done. We have to listen harder, overcome the barriers of “safe distance” communication and look for new ways to carry out the much-needed efforts. To establish a fairer world, we need to push our relatives, friends, neighbors and public officials to overcome the myopic and self-serving views of the world.

DACSJ Award Recipients

DAN ALLEN CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARD

This award reflects significant advancement of social justice and is our highest award. The 2021 Dan Allen Center for Social Justice Award goes to **Carlisha Williams Bradley**.

Ms. Williams Bradley is a member of Oklahoma State Board of Education. Of the current board members, she is only appointee who has ever worked as a classroom teacher. She took a stand against an emergency Board rule that restricted teaching some of the basic foundations of social justice in schools; she knew that without understanding and addressing past injustices we cannot achieve justice today. She was the only Board member to vote against the emergency rule that eliminates teaching history that might cause any students to feel “discomfort,” “guilt,” “anguish,” or “any other psychological distress” because of their race or gender. The rule blatantly intimidates teachers from addressing important events in U.S. and Oklahoma history, such as the Trail of Tears, slavery, race and anti-immigrant laws, and the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

***Dan Allen Award
for Social Justice
Past Winners***

2014- FATHER BILL SKEEHAN

2015- CONNIE CRONLEY

2016- CARMELITA SKEETER

2017- SHERYL SIDDIQUE

2018- DREW DIAMOND

2019- REV CHRIS MOORE

2020- VERNON AME CHURCH

Ms. Williams Bradley said, “With this legislation, with these rules, we’re robbing students of the opportunity to have a high-quality education, to think critically about the world around us, and to build a more just society.”

With a career in education, she serves as the Executive Director of Impact Tulsa. Ms. Williams Bradley has held leadership roles as an educator, administrator, superintendent, and nonprofit leader showcasing her expertise in designing focused strategies, providing innovative learning opportunities for students, developing leaders, and maintaining strong community and organizational partnerships.

DAN ALLEN CENTER LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Dan Allen Center Leadership Award recognizes businesses, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, foundations, and other institutions who significantly support social justice.

The 2021 Leadership award is bestowed upon **Tulsa City-County Health Department** for the agency’s public health efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and is accepted by Bruce Dart, PhD, Executive Director. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the THD has been a strong advocate of science- based public health policies despite strong pressure from political and economic interests to do otherwise. Those policies foster the notion of the common good; if we are all healthy each one of member of the community benefits. Under the leadership of Dr. Dart, the THD worked tirelessly to monitor and react to the ebb and flow of the pandemic. When COVID-19 vaccines became available, the staff of THD put out a massive effort to make the vaccine available to all. Employees worked long hours with the complex logistics of the vaccine roll-out, holding large scale vaccination clinics, all while providing critical data analysis and policy recommendation on how best to respond the ever-changing face

of the Pandemic. Their on-going fight doubtlessly saved thousands of lives and improved the well-being of even more.

Since its establishment in 1950, the Tulsa Health Department serves as the primary public health agency to more than 600,000 Tulsa County residents, including 13 municipalities and four unincorporated areas. THD's mission is to improve the health and well-being of all Tulsa County residents, in order to make Tulsa County the healthiest county in the country. Good public health is a basic human right. THD has worked hard to fight for this right.

"Community spirit runs deep here, and our residents take pride in taking care of each other. The same spirit to care and protect is found at the Tulsa Health Department, where we put the needs of the community first."

Dan Allen Center Leadership Award Past Winners

**2014- JAN FIGART,
COMMUNITY SERVICE COUNCIL**

2015- HILLE FOUNDATION

**2016- PHILLIPS THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY**

**2017- 100 BLACK
MEN/WOMEN TULSA**

2018- MEN OF POWER

**2019- TULSA EQUALITY
CENTER**

DAN ALLEN CENTER PROJECT AWARD

Dan Allen Center of Social Justice Project Award recognizes individuals and organizations in the Tulsa area that have a project that furthers social justice.

For the 2021 Social Justice Project Award recipient is **Rose Washington-Jones**. As chief executive of the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation (TEDC), she was instrumental in bringing the Oasis Grocery Store to North Tulsa; a project that was 10 years in the making. Now North Tulsa finally has a supermarket, and it is the first black-owned grocery store in decades. Under her stewardship, TEDC developed the Shops on North Peoria, where Oasis is located. TEDC has helped many small businesses open in Tulsa, with a focus on entrepreneurship and black-owned businesses.

Rose Washington-Jones has been involved in banking and higher education in Mississippi, and community and government relations at the University of Southern California. She moved from Los Angeles to Tulsa in 2001 and has said that her

***Dan Allen Center
Project Award
Past Winners***

**2014- EASTERN OK AREA
FOOD BANK**

2015- YWCA

2016- CAMP ANYTOWN

2017- POCKET FULL OF HOPE

2018- POETIC JUSTICE

2019- MANNA MEALS

**2020- OKLAHOMANS DECIDE
HEALTHCARE**

affiliations with the Metropolitan Tulsa Urban League, Greenwood Chamber of Commerce, and Tulsa Regional Chamber established in her a desire to connect and improve the people and businesses of the region.

Rose: "My career has been built around being a champion for the unlikely winner and pushing for the under-resourced to gain fair access."



DAN ALLEN CENTER NEWS MEDIA AWARD

The Dan Allen Center of Social Justice Media Award recognizes individuals and/or media organizations on their coverage of key social justice issues.

The 2021 Media Award recipient is **Randy Krehbiel**. Along with other journalistic assignments, he has dedicated years researching the details of racial terrorism in Tulsa. Since reporting on the Tulsa Riot Commission in 1999, he has focused on the historic context of many race-related issues in Tulsa today. His 2019 book, *Tulsa 1921: Reporting a Massacre*, is a well-cited play-by-play of the events leading up to the massacre and the aftermath. He provided in-depth reporting on the nature of the longstanding distrust and anger in the hunt for Tulsa Race Massacre graves. The extensive reporting on the one-hundred-year anniversary of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre provided background on how, in many people's views, Tulsa today has not reconciled with its history of injustice. His approach is fact based while recognizing the deep-seated attachments people place to the issues. In an environment where the journalism discipline is continually challenged, his Tulsa World reporting and

independent writing are a much-needed contribution to the informed discourse essential for democracy.

Randy: "As I'm reading all these newspapers and the documents and all that, you come to understand that these people had 1000 indignities inflicted on them every day, It wasn't like the bad guys are over here and the good guys are over here, either racist or not racist. Almost everybody was racist, it was just a matter of how they expressed it."

Dan Allen Center News Media Award Past Winners

2014- MR. JOE WORLEY,
TULSA WORLD

2016- GINNIE GRAHAM,
TULSAWORLD

2018- TULSA VOICE

2015- THE OKLAHOMA
EAGLE

2017- KWGS RADIO

2019- THE FRONTIER

2020- THE BLACK WALL
STREET TIMES

DAN ALLEN SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE ARTS AWARD

Dan Allen Center of Social Justice has created a new award category this year. Through music, poetry, performance, visual presentation and other means of artistic expression, the message of justice can reach to soul of a community. Consequently, the DACSJ has created the Social Justice in the Arts Award. The 2021 Social Justice in the Arts Award recipient is **Deborah Hunter**.

Ms. Hunter has a very celebrated career as social worker, library resource person, poet, performer, and playwright. She has given riveting poetry readings at the DACSJ annual events. In the past year she premiered her play, "Porches," at the Tulsa Equality Center. The play was a masterpiece statement using art to convey themes of resilience, community pride, and Black sisterhood. The production of the work fused dance, video, music, and poetry all reflecting the complex dimensions of social justice. The creativity of the piece gave the audience a deeper understanding of the African American experience in Tulsa and in the rest of the country. The DACSJ considers her a pillar in the pantheon of Tulsa artists who carry on the message of social justice.

Deborah: "As I've said many times before, everyone has a story, and you can't hate people once you know their stories. I try to tell those stories - as often as possible to as many people who will watch and listen."

DAN ALLEN CENTER LOCAL CHAMPION AWARD

The Dan Allen Center for Social Justice Local Champion Award acknowledges organizations or individuals helping to foster a community culture that values social justice.

The 2021 recipient of the Local Champion Award is **Tulsa Food Not Bombs**. Food Not Bombs is an all-volunteer movement that recovers food that would otherwise be discarded and shares free vegan and vegetarian meals with the hungry. The organization considers itself not to be a charity, but dedicated to direct action through mutual aid.

Throughout 2021, the group held weekly sharing events with those without permanent housing. During a severe winter weather event in early 2021, TFNB declared an area with a large unhoused population an emergency zone. TFNB coordinated hot meals and weather appropriate supplies for the community in this area for some time prior to the freezing weather and used that social capital to organize donations and distribution of warming supplies, hot meals, snacks, and drinks. Tulsa authorities got involved and shut down the emergency zone due to “fire safety concerns” and the inhabitants had to leave. TFNB coordinated with Tulsa Housing Solutions, local hotels, and other shelters to provide indoor lodging for as many people as would accept. They were compassionate with those who were not comfortable taking the assistance, and members of the organization stayed to monitor the belongings left behind by those who did find temporary housing. Like Dan Allen and those working with him in the fight for social justice, Tulsa Food Not Bombs is a learning organization taking bold and innovative measures to address issues recognizing what works and what does not.

Quote: “We believe in direct action mutual aid, solidarity not charity and that food is a right, not a privilege.”

Dan Allen Center Local Champion Award Past Winners

2014- DAVID BLATT,
OKLAHOMA POLICY
INSTITUTE

2015- WELCOME TABLE,
TULSA

2016- WE THE PEOPLE
OKLAHOMA

2017- NEW SANCTUARY
TULSA

2018 ROSA HERNANDEZ

2019 DR TIFFANY CRUTCHER

2020- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
INTERVENTION SERVICES, INC.
(DVIS)

DAN ALLEN CENTER PRESIDENT'S AWARD

In past years, the DACSJ has recognized individuals who have provided special services to the organization. The President's Award is bestowed for distinguished service to DACSJ and advancing social justice.

The 2021 President's Award recipient is **Dr. Karen Gray**. Karen has had a distinguished career as a social worker and educator. Karen's scholarship addressed poverty and poverty alleviation, providing insights into practice. Although Dr. Gray retired in 2018 from the University of Oklahoma, her work continues as an advocate and activist in the cause of social justice. She was instrumental in establishing ACTION (Allied Communities of Tulsa Inspiring Our Neighborhoods) a Tulsa affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), in which the DACSJ is an institutional member.

Working as a DACSJ institutional representative, Karen worked with ACTION efforts to address issues such as student loan debt, criminal justice reform, public education, housing and immigration. She helped state legislators formulate laws strengthening the civil rights of those often overlooked. She was active in ACTION's recent efforts to address the pandemic related spike in evictions of renters from their homes as well how governmental entities spend Federal pandemic relief funds. Karen carries on the Dan Allen "give a damn for your fellow human" spirit.

Dan Allen Center President's Award Past Winners

**2015 KEITH HUCKABAY &
RANDY KINDY**

2016 ANN PATTON

2017 CAROL FALLETTI

2018 ANN SUBLETT

2019 DR. ROBERT W. BLOCK

2020- LINDA NICHOLSON

**GIVE A
DAMN**

Charity and Social Justice

Americans gave a record 471 billion dollars to charities in 2020. Tulsans pride themselves on giving to those in need as reflected by over 25 million dollars donated to Tulsa United Way. Charity is not enough to achieve justice. But in the words of Martin Luther King, "Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice, which make philanthropy necessary." The late Desmond Tutu stated "There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in." As well intended as it may be, charity is but a band aid responding the consequences of injustice. Charity without a focus on social justice only treats the symptoms of institutional failure. Social justice promotes social change in institutions or political structures. Charity responds to immediate needs. Charity is a short-term response to the immediate. Justice responds by providing long-term solutions. The symptoms no doubt need treating. But without fixing the causes of injustice, the symptoms will only persist, if not continue to get worse.

In the last part of the last century, Dan Allen's work addressed the immediate needs while it also sought out long term solutions. There are many stories of Dan, in his special way, dismissing those who wanted simply throw money towards symptoms without addressing the problem. Fast forward to 2021 a group of faith based and secular institutions in Tulsa have bonded together in ACTION (Allied Communities of Tulsa Inspiring Our Neighborhoods). Through member institutions (in including the DACSJ), it teaches the practice of public engagement and activism to Tulsans who seek change the status quo of injustice.

There is considerable push back on those who pursue social justice. Some leaders have stated the social justice movements resembles "some of the heresies that we find in church history." Others have called attention to social justice as a "new religion that is on the wrong side of history." If one takes on honest view of history, being on the wrong side of injustice should be embraced. The real heresies are that many "established" institutions choose to ignore, downplay or, even worse, endorse injustice. History is littered with governmental entities and institutions ignoring and/or justifying injustice. Without challenging the world that creates the conditions which generate the need for charity, the goals to achieve justice fails. One does not have to look far to find religious and secular organizations who recognize the need for change. History is also filled with the stories of religious and secular groups across the ideological and theological spectrum who have come together to fight for social justice. Overcoming push back, that particular tradition is alive today.

DACSJ Sponsored Activities

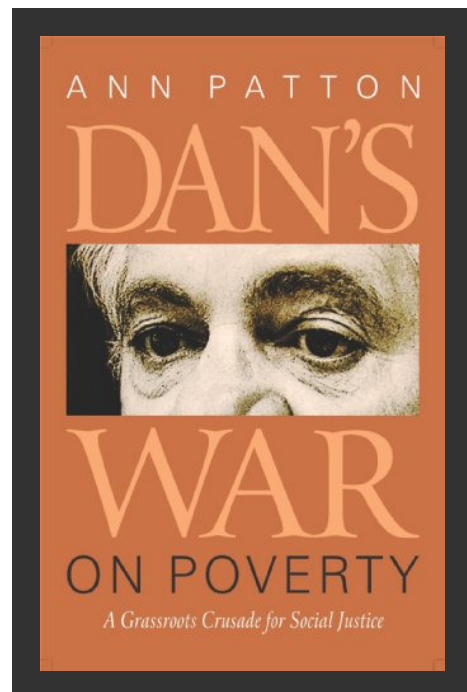
Dan Allen once served the conscience of the community that was blind to the injustice in Tulsa in the late 20th century. He proved that by working together, we can all bridge the divides that separate us and open our eyes to ways of making the community a more just place. Injustice persists. Dan's work continues to inspire those fostering social justice today, and the Center carries on his legacy. To achieve its mission, the Center creates awareness of social justice in a variety of ways.

The DACSJ Dan the sponsored publication and distributes the landmark book: [Dan's War on Poverty: A Grassroots Crusade for Social Justice](#). This book tells the remarkable story of Father Dan Allen, those he inspired, and their fight for social justice for the poorest of the poor. This story traces the evolution of a social revolution in an American city. The Center continues to sponsor discussion groups, speakers to discuss the book and its implications in the twenty-first century.

The DACSJ sponsors an [Annual Awards Event](#) to recognize individuals and organizations for their social justice contributions. The past two years award the event has been put on hold due to the COVID Pandemic. The event not only

highlights the good that people and organizations are doing but also provides great opportunities for groups and individuals to network for the purpose of making Tulsa a better place. We look forward to when the climate is more conducive for large in person events. The Center still recognizes the good work being done in our community and looks forward to doing that in person in the future.

Several years ago, the Center sponsored a community wide [discussion of the gradual re-segregation of schools in Tulsa](#), an often-ignored trend that is reversing the gains since the days of forced segregation. A capacity crowd engaged in a discussion with community leaders, educators and researchers related to the implications of the decreasing diversity in our public schools. The discussion is ongoing.





New Sanctuary Network Tulsa, the Dan Allen Center for Social Justice and the Woody Guthrie Center sponsored a community sing along, “All They Will Call Them is Deportees: Signing for Justice.” Local artists lead the singing much in the tradition of Woody Guthrie, Phil Ochs, Pete Seeger and other social justice singers/songwriters. The songs all addressed what immigrants and asylum seekers face under current US policies of deportation, incarceration, separation of families, and the detention of children.

Understanding the arts as being unique means of communication the message of justice, the Center produced a play, “Shades of White”, on the large stage with a message of tolerance and acceptance.

The Center brought Dan Karslake, an award-winning American film director and producer to Tulsa. He led a post screening discussion of his film, “Every Three Seconds” which tells the unforgettable stories of five regular folks—a boy, a college student, a thirty-something, and two seniors—whose lives went from ordinary to extraordinary based on one simple decision, to engage with the world in fighting hunger and poverty. Dan visited local schools during his visit talking about how anyone can make a difference in addressing what seems to be unsurmountable social problems.

In partnership with the Woody Guthrie Center, the center presented the Tulsa production of “The Innocents”, a performance art piece exploring the legal, ethical, and moral aspects of wrongful conviction. The creators and performers, Dr. John Lane, Professor of Percussion at Sam Houston State University and Allen Ott, Percussionist Cincinnati Symphony, hosted student workshops relate to “The Innocents” and the use of the arts to express social justice messages.

There are many challenges facing us on how we come together in person. We will continue to find ways to do things in a safe way. Your ideas are always welcome. Stay tuned!

Dan Allen Center for Social Justice Board Members



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LOOKING FOR KINDRED SPIRITS

The Dan Allen Center for Social Justice is a small non-profit organization. We actively pursue contributions, and while small financial contributions to help defray some of the cost of on-going efforts of the organization, the most important contribution we can receive is community input. We want *your* ideas and time. We engage in a number of projects each year that focus on the organization's mission: to advocate and education on behalf of social justice. If you would like to join us in our work or have ideas for a project please contact Ed Rossman at 918-619-7505 or ejrossmans@yahoo.com.