

About

THE OPPORTUNITY AGENDA

The Opportunity Agenda launched in 2006 with the mission of building the national will to expand opportunity in America. Focused on moving hearts, minds, and policy over time, the organization works with social justice groups, leaders, and movements to advance solutions that expand opportunity for everyone. Through active partnerships, The Opportunity Agenda synthesizes and translates research on barriers to opportunity and corresponding solutions; uses communications and media to understand and influence public opinion; and identifies and advocates for policies that improve people's lives.

To achieve our mission, we focus on racial equity, immigration, economic opportunity, reproductive health and rights, and African-American men and boys.



To produce 21st century communicators who can move hearts and minds on social justice issues, The Opportunity Agenda convenes an annual Communications Institute. Through the Institute, we provide four days of intensive communications training to a diverse group of 15 Fellows who are emerging media spokespersons. They include advocates, faith leaders, policymakers, and others. In the year following training, we place Institute Fellows in a variety of media, from print to broadcast to online, as both on-the-job training and to help shape the

public dialogue. By 2015, more than 100 diverse Fellows from across the

country will have graduated from the Institute.



COMMUNICATIONS and

MEDIA TRAINING



In addition to the Institute, The Opportunity Agenda conducts dozens of communications trainings across the country each year, focused primarily on discussing tough issues like race, poverty, and criminal justice in ways that will move key audiences. Trainings include "Strategic Communications 101" intensives for more advanced spokespersons, convenings on opinion and media research, and strategy sessions for movement leaders to develop shared narratives and collective storytelling. By 2015, we will have trained more than 30,000 social justice leaders.

"...In some states, redirecting the money could have a racially discriminatory effect, said Alan Jenkins, the executive director of the Opportunity Agenda, which supports homeownership, because in some cities black homeowners disproportionately lost their homes, Mr. Jenkins said.

'If you dump all of these funds into the general coffers, the African-American homeowners are not going to benefit in any real way because they represent such a small percentage of the larger state,' Mr. Jenkins said."

- "Needy States Use Housing Aid Cash to Plug Budgets" The New York Times, May 15, 2012



Opportunity for Black Men and Boys:

Public Opinion, Media Depictions, and Media Consumption







Moving hearts and minds on opportunity demands a rigorous understanding of Americans' thoughts and feelings—public opinion—on topics such as equal opportunity or the role of government, as well as a clear understanding about the coverage of these topics in the media. Armed with this insight, welltrained communicators can deliver compelling and persuasive messages and storytelling that persuades and activates new audiences and stakeholders.

The Opportunity Agenda regularly conducts a range of media and public opinion research on the topics that define opportunity. We distribute our findings broadly through reports with actionable recommendations, briefings, and translated into messaging guidance and talking points that spokespeople need in order to respond in a 24-hour news-cycle. To ensure that their voices reach the public, each year we place leaders who demonstrate the greatest fluency directly in newspapers, in blogs, and on television, cumulatively reaching tens of millions of Americans.

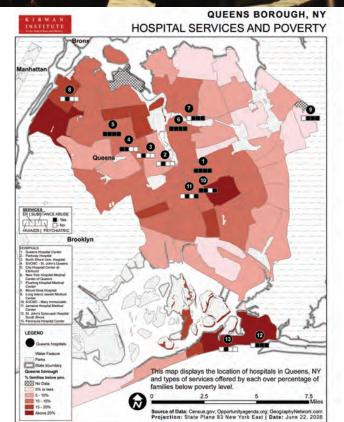


Artistic and cultural activities such as theater, television, visual arts, music, and film convey human stories and values, and can be more successful at building public support for new ideas than traditional forms of organizing and advocacy. Through our work at the intersection of social justice, arts, and media, The Opportunity Agenda works to generate culture change. We do this by elevating and amplifying some of our generation's most significant and creative storytellers.



A highlight of our work is Creative Change, an annual retreat for leading artists, entertainment industry leaders, cultural organizers, advocates, and philanthropists dedicated to social change to share their ideas and incubate them in collaboration. The four-day retreat, hosted in inspiring locales such as Santa Fe, Telluride, and Sundance, is a mix of engaging conversations, small group work, participant presentations, and open space. By 2015, the retreat will have more than 400 alumni.







Modern obstacles to greater and more equal opportunity are more complex and, often, less visible than in past generations. They require innovative, forward-looking solutions, as well as intentional efforts to engage policymakers and opinion leaders.

The Opportunity Agenda advances policy solutions on issues that include equal opportunity, commonsense immigration laws, homeownership, and criminal justice. By identifying the policy ideas with the greatest potential for impact and translating them into clear language that highlights the tangible changes they could make in people's lives, we are building a powerful constituency for opportunity. Since our founding, we have crafted or informed policies benefitting millions of Americans that also serve as important models for the future.

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To highlight our work and to honor innovative leaders who are expanding opportunity for all Americans through media and creative expression, The Opportunity Agenda hosts the annual Creative Change Awards each spring in New York City. Honorees have included media commentators and social justice luminaries like Anita Hill, Maria Hinojosa, Jose Antonio Vargas, and Suzanne Malveaux. Past events have featured creative presentations by leading artist-activists like Rha Goddess, Cassandra Medley, and Gan Golan.

Opportunity is

SECURITY

MOBILITY

VOICE

REDEMPTION

EQUALITY

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HUMAN RIGHTS



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