



**DREAM ON**

*with*

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**Action Steps & Resources**



# DREAM ON

## Action Steps & Resources

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# ACTION STEPS

*If you would like to take action to help revitalize the American Dream, we offer a range of action steps below, including educational resources, creative activities and opportunities to volunteer and organize in your community.*

## LIGHTS!

*Shed light on the endangered American Dream by learning more about it*

### **ASK YOUR CHURCH GROUP, LABOR UNION, LIBRARY, NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OR TEACHERS TO SCREEN DREAM ON**

Invite experts, elected officials and affected communities to address the audience. For further information about coordinating a screening event, email [pppinfo@pppdocs.com](mailto:pppinfo@pppdocs.com). Refer to the DREAM ON Screening Toolkit at <http://pppdocs.com/dreamon.html> for tips on planning, facilitating and publicizing the event.

### **HOST A STUDY GROUP ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM**

Assign each member a topic from DREAM ON to research using our Resources section. During each study session, screen the related clip from the film and have the designated member present

potential solutions to the problems raised by the film. Consider inviting a speaker from a local organization each week to share its work and to build connections within your community.

### **EDUCATE YOURSELF AND OTHERS**

Many people feel the economic system is too large and complex to change. Use and share these tools to improve your understanding of the forces that have undermined the American Dream and the policies that might be effective in restoring it. *\*The organizations listed below reflect a broad political spectrum, and their appearance here does not constitute an endorsement of their policies or perspectives. We encourage you to conduct your own background research to make sure your goals are aligned with the missions of the organizations before getting involved.*



🚩 Chasing the Dream: Poverty & Opportunity in America is WNET's multi-platform public media initiative, including news reports and a documentary, which aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of poverty on American society: <http://chasingthedream-project.org/about/>

🚩 The Economic Policy Institute's State of Working America provides charts, fact sheets and other data on living standards: <http://www.stateofworkingamerica.org/> Their overview on how income inequality was created, and how it can be fixed, is one easy entry point to understanding the problem: <http://inequality.is/>

🚩 Find campaigns dedicated to ending poverty, as well as other news and resources, at Spotlight on Poverty: <http://spotlightonpoverty.org/resources/campaigns-on-poverty/>

🚩 In a series of short videos, Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor and Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, explains current economics topics in layman's terms: <http://robertreich.org/>

🚩 Richard D. Wolff, Professor of Economics Emeritus, University of Massachusetts, explains why the U.S. became more unequal starting in the 1970s in this animated video: <http://rootsofhealthinequity.org/how-class-works.php>

🚩 Tune in to Talk Poverty Radio, a project of the Center for American Progress, to hear untold stories from some of the forty-five million Americans living below the poverty line: <http://talkpoverty.org/>

- ▶ The Institute for Policy Studies provides the basics on wealth and income inequality for the general public at this portal: <http://inequality.org/>
- ▶ The Center for Popular Economics hosts workshops to demystify the economy and put the tools of economics into the hands of those working for social justice: <http://www.populareconomics.org/resources/>
- ▶ Dollars & Sense challenges mainstream media accounts of how the U.S. economy works by publishing popularly written, critical articles: <http://www.dollarsandsense.org/>
- ▶ Against the common perception, a group of conservatives is making the case that conservative policies can address poverty: <http://www.caricaturechallenge.info/>. For more on a bipartisan approach, please see the consensus plan to reduce poverty and restore the American Dream prepared by the Brookings Institution and American Enterprise Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2015/12/aei-brookings-poverty-and-opportunity>
- ▶ For those who could use a little levity to enhance their understanding of the current state of the American Dream, show this clip of the comedian George Carlin as he famously explains the American Dream in a few minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acLW1vFO-2Q>
- ▶ An anonymous individual by the name of Politizane created this viral video based on research from economists. It helped millions understand inequality in clear terms: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPK-KQnijnsM>



# CAMERA

*Tell your own story about the pursuit of the American Dream*

## DO A FAMILY ORAL HISTORY

Interview your grandparents, parents, siblings, children or grandchildren about their definitions of the American Dream. Then, share the interviews with family members and discuss how the dream has changed, or not, for each generation. Talk about the meaning of the American Dream for more disadvantaged Americans.

## DESIGN A “SAFETY NET” FOR YOUR FAMILY

If you could not make ends meet and lost your home, what would your safety net look like? What can we do to make a stronger safety net for all Americans?

## SHARE YOUR OWN STORY

The Center for Community Change offers an online tool where people can share their personal stories of struggle. The aim of “Our Stories, Our Power” is to empower storytellers to advocate for every American to have enough—not just to survive but to thrive: <http://ourstoriesourpower.org/>

## CREATE EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS FOR OTHERS

- ❏ If you are a writer or artist, consider applying for an Economic Hardship Reporting grant to write stories and produce art that highlights the struggles of low-income communities around the country: <http://economichardship.org/>

- ❏ If you are in the communications field, refer to the Center for Community Change’s toolkit on how to communicate effectively about poverty: <http://www.community-change.org/real-power/focus/poverty-message-research-tool-kit/>
- ❏ The Opportunity Agenda is a social justice communications lab that shapes compelling narratives and messages to advance the impact of social justice organizations: [https://opportunityagenda.org/our\\_initiatives](https://opportunityagenda.org/our_initiatives)
- ❏ If you feel the best way to communicate about serious issues is through humor, consider teaming up with the Yes Lab, whose mission is to help progressive organizations and activists design and carry out creative actions to gain media attention and impact public debate on critical political, social and environmental issues: <http://yeslab.org/>



# ACTION!

*Take the next steps to  
revitalize the American Dream*

**We feature a few organizations by issue below. Please see the Resources section for additional organizations that welcome your participation.**

## ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS

Find basic services, donate goods or volunteer time to assist those in need near you.

✊ If you are hungry or would like to donate goods or coordinate a food drive in your neighborhood, find your local food bank by entering your zip code at Feeding America: <http://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank/>

✊ If you are in need of temporary housing or would like to volunteer to help others who do not have a home, use this directory to find your nearest homeless shelter: <http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/>

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Defend homeowners against foreclosure and take action to address the continuing housing crisis in the U.S.

✊ The Home Defenders League and Occupy Our Homes offer petitions, letters and steps to protect homeowners from wrongful eviction: <http://www.homedefendersleague.org/action> and <http://occupyourhomes.org/resources/>

✊ Invite members of the Homeless Speakers Bureau to talk to your community during Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week through the National Coalition for the Homeless: <http://nationalhomeless.org/taking-action/>

✊ For an illustrated step-by-step explanation of the sub-prime mortgage crisis, see: [http://www.alternet.org/story/102672/financial\\_meltdown\\_101](http://www.alternet.org/story/102672/financial_meltdown_101)

## DISPEL MYTHS ABOUT RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

✊ The U.S. Department of Labor: A raise in the minimum wage does not hurt the economy or small businesses: <http://www.dol.gov/minwage/mythbuster.htm>

✊ The National Employment Law Project: A raise in the minimum wage does not result in job loss: <http://www.raisetheminimum-wage.com/pages/job-loss>

✊ The University of California at Berkeley Labor Center: A raise in the minimum wage would cut costs for the public: <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/the-high-public-cost-of-low-wages/>

## START OR JOIN AN EFFORT TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- ✊ Fight for 15 provides 15 steps to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour: <http://fightfor15.org/>. Start a 15 Now chapter and use their tools for \$15 an hour now: <https://15now.org/>
- ✊ Start your own worker-justice campaign with these resources from Interfaith Worker Justice: <http://www.iwj.org/resources>
- ✊ Use the Smartphone apps and other resources to find and patronize businesses that provide better pay and working conditions for their employees at Food Chain Workers Alliance: [http://foodchainworkers.org/?page\\_id=2660](http://foodchainworkers.org/?page_id=2660)

## EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

- ✊ If you are uninsured or know someone who needs healthcare services, visit Single Stop USA, a site that connects people to the resources they need: <http://singlestopusa.org/>
- ✊ If you are interested in trying to expand Medicaid at the state level, the National Association of Community Health Centers provides this comprehensive list of resources: <http://www.nachc.com/MedicaidExpansion.cfm>

## IMPROVE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

- ✊ Learn more about the differences between public schools and private charter schools funded by public dollars.



- ✊ The Network for Public Education, an advocacy group whose mission is to protect, promote and strengthen public schools for current and future generations of students, has a toolkit to help organize your community to defend the public education system: <http://www.networkforpubliceducation.org/npe-tool-kit/>
- ✊ The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the public charter-school movement: <http://www.publiccharters.org/get-the-facts/>
- ✊ The National Education Policy Center debunks myths about charter schools in this report: <http://nepc.colorado.edu/think-tank/review-separating-fact-and-fiction>



## END MASS INCARCERATION

- ✊ Rather than imprisoning people, Critical Resistance believes providing basic necessities and ending inequality are what make us safe. See their toolkit as a starting point to curb mass incarceration and prison privatization: <http://criticalresistance.org/resources/the-abolitionist-toolkit/>
- ✊ The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) is dedicated to advancing and protecting rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Use their toolkit to educate others about criminal justice reform: <https://ccrjustice.org/home/get-involved/tools-resources>
- ✊ The Marshall Project is a nonprofit news organization that focuses on the American criminal justice system, featuring investigative reports as well as voices from inside the justice system: <https://www.themarshallproject.org>
- ✊ The Sentencing Project works for a fair and effective U.S. criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policy, addressing unjust racial disparities and practices, and advocating for alternatives to incarceration: <http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/index.cfm>



and shift the conversation around immigrants, identity and citizenship in a changing America: <http://www.defineamerican.com/>. #EmergingUS is a digital magazine launched by *The Los Angeles Times* to tell stories and explore questions at the intersection of race, immigration and identity: <http://www.emergingus.com/>

- ✊ The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) works to defend and preserve individual rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the U.S., which apply to every person, regardless of immigration status: <https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights>
- ✊ The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) envisions a society in which all people are treated fairly and humanely and provides this set of community education materials including “Know Your Rights”: <https://www.nilc.org/communityed.html>

## REFORM THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

- ✊ Journalist and filmmaker José Antonio Vargas spearheads two new projects about immigration: Define American is a media and culture organization that uses the power of stories to transcend politics

## COMPARE THE WHITE HOUSE FACT SHEET ON IMMIGRATION WITH FAIR'S POSITION BELOW

- ✊ The White House produced this Fact Sheet to show how immigration will help the economy and benefit all workers: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/immigration/economy> and this infographic: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/share/immigration-economic-benefits>
- ✊ The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) is a national, nonprofit, public-interest membership organization of concerned citizens who share a common belief that excessive immigration harms American workers, taxpayers and our most vulnerable citizens. FAIR provides a toolkit with fact sheets and instructions on how to join a local chapter to limit immigration to the U.S.: [http://www.fairus.org/action/activist\\_toolkit\\_2015](http://www.fairus.org/action/activist_toolkit_2015)

## PROVIDE A SECURE RETIREMENT FOR ALL AMERICANS

- ✊ The Community Advocacy Network of the Alliance of Retired Americans encourages the senior population to become more active to secure a dignified retirement for all Americans. They provide a “how-to” packet at <http://retiredamericans.org/members/community-advocacy-network>
- ✊ Learn about how pensions work with the Pension Toolkit, developed by the National Institute on Retirement Security, the National Retired Teachers' Association (NRTA) and AARP's Educator Community: [http://www.nirsonline.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=831&Itemid=202](http://www.nirsonline.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=831&Itemid=202)

- ✊ The National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare offers ten ways to get involved in protecting these programs that are essential to retirement security: <http://www.ncpssm.org/TakeAction/GetInvolved/10WaystoGetInvolved>

## REDUCE THE INFLUENCE OF MONEY IN POLITICS

- ✊ Sixteen states and over 700 cities and municipalities have passed resolutions to overturn the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision. Move To Amend is one organization calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that states “corporations are not people, and money is not speech” with this how-to community toolkit: <https://movetoamend.org/toolkit/local-organizing-build-national-movement>
- ✊ Public Citizen is part of a large coalition of national organizations pressuring the President to sign an executive order that requires federal contractors who do business with the government to disclose their political spending. Sign the petition along with over 1,000,000 other Americans at: <http://www.citizen.org/disclosure-petition>





- Over 155 organizations nationwide have joined forces for Democracy Awakening, a mass mobilization of concerned voters to take place in Washington, DC, in April 2016, to demand an end to the corruption of the American political system: <http://democracyawakening.org/>
- Find out who is funding politicians at the Center for Responsive Politics, the nation's premier research group tracking money in politics and its effect on our elections and public policy: <http://www.opensecrets.org/resources/learn/>

## CHANGE THE TAX SYSTEM

Compare and contrast the tax policies supported by the following organizations to see which offers a better plan to stimulate upward mobility.

- A leading voice for Wall Street accountability, Americans for Financial Reform is a coalition of over 200 organizations formed in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis to lay the foundation for a strong, stable and ethical financial system: <http://ourfinancialsecurity.org/>
- Formed in 1985 at the request of President Ronald Reagan, Americans for Tax Reform advocates for a national, single-rate, flat tax and opposes all tax increases: <http://www.atr.org/>

## GET INVOLVED IN ELECTORAL POLITICS

- ✊ Most of the organizations listed here and in the Resources section offer opportunities to petition elected officials to adopt policies that support low- and middle-income families. Use this tool provided by Common Cause and the Sunlight Foundation to find your elected officials, bills they have introduced, committees on which they serve, and political contributions they have received: [http://act.commoncause.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sunlight\\_advocacy\\_list\\_page](http://act.commoncause.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sunlight_advocacy_list_page)

## NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

In recent years, in response to the scale, persistence and increasing frequency of global economic crises, locally-based economic initiatives—such as land trusts, worker-owned cooperatives, and local food systems—have sprung up in cities nationwide.

- ✊ The Democracy Collaborative's Community Wealth site offers a wealth of information about these local institutions: <http://community-wealth.org/about>
- ✊ The New Economy Coalition is a network of organizations that is imagining and building a future where people, communities, and ecosystems thrive by placing power in the hands of people. Visit and join the coalition here: <http://neweconomy.net/members>

## ENGAGE IN ACTIVISM

Many of the organizations featured here offer opportunities to join others in public protest to amplify voices, gain the attention of the media and elected officials, create networks of solidarity, and encourage other community members to get involved.



# RESOURCES

*Think tanks are not just for policy wonks. Many provide regular analyses of current economics news written in accessible language. Sign up for their newsletters to stay informed about the issues in the headlines that affect our daily lives. Compare and contrast their recommended policies and pathways to decreasing income inequality and increasing social mobility.*

## LIBERAL THINK TANKS

**The American Constitution Society (ACS)** works to shape debate on important legal and constitutional issues to improve the lives of all people by developing high-impact ideas, building networks and countering the activist conservative legal movement: <http://www.acslaw.org/>

**The Brookings Institution** is a nonprofit public policy organization that conducts independent research to strengthen democracy, foster the economic and social well-being of all Americans, and secure a more open, safe and cooperative international system: <http://www.brookings.edu/>

**The Center for American Progress** is an independent nonpartisan policy institute dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans through bold, progressive ideas: <https://www.americanprogress.org>

**The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)** promotes democratic debate by conducting professional research and education on social and economic issues so the public knows what is at stake in major policy battles: <http://cepr.net/>

**The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)** seeks to improve the lives of low-income people by developing and advocating for federal, state and local policies to strengthen families and create pathways to education and work: <http://www.clasp.org/>

**The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)** is a nonpartisan research and policy institute that pursues state and federal policies designed to reduce poverty and inequality and restore fiscal responsibility in equitable and effective ways: <http://www.cbpp.org/>



## CONSERVATIVE THINK TANKS

**The American Enterprise Institute** is an independent, nonpartisan research institute committed to expanding individual liberty and opportunity by strengthening the foundations of a free society: limited government, competitive private enterprise, vital cultural and political institutions, and vigilant national defense: <https://www.aei.org/>

**The Cato Institute** is a libertarian public policy organization dedicated to the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets and peace. To learn about their projects in healthcare, education, and other areas, visit <http://www.cato.org/projects>

**The Heritage Foundation** is a research and educational institute whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values and a strong national defense. Learn about their approach to poverty and inequality here: <http://www.heritage.org/issues/poverty-and-inequality>

**The Hoover Institution at Stanford University** is a public policy think tank promoting the principles of individual, economic and political freedom. To sign up for their news analyses, visit <http://www.hoover.org/get-involved>

**The Economic Policy Institute** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan institute whose mission is to inform and empower individuals to seek solutions that ensure broadly shared prosperity and opportunity: <https://www.americanprogress.org>

**The Institute for Policy Studies** is a community of public scholars and organizers linking peace, justice and the environment in the U.S. and globally to promote true democracy and challenge concentrated wealth, corporate influence and military power: <http://www.ips-dc.org/>

**The Urban Institute** tries to open minds, shape decisions and offer recommendations through economic and social research to expand opportunities for all people, reduce hardship among the most vulnerable, and strengthen the fiscal health of governments and effectiveness of public policies: <http://www.urban.org/>

# ANTI-POVERTY ORGANIZATIONS

**The American Political Science Association's Task Force on Inequality and Democracy** published a report on the impact of inequality on democracy and governance as well as college-level syllabi to provoke discussion and debate: <http://www.apsanet.org/PUBLICATIONS/Reports/Task-Force-on-Inequality-and-American-Democracy>

**The Aspen Institute's Economic Opportunities Program** works closely with community organizations, community colleges, local governments, employers and financial institutions to help lower-income Americans succeed in today's economy through workforce training and education, micro-enterprise development, and financial services and asset building: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/economic-opportunities>

**The Coalition on Human Needs (CHN)** is an alliance of national organizations working together to promote public policies that address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations: <http://www.chn.org>



Part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, **Community Action Partnership** is a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening, promoting, representing and serving its network of member Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to assure that the issues of poverty are effectively presented and addressed: <http://www.communityactionpartnership.com/>

**The Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC)** is a civil-rights policy organization convened by major civil rights, civil liberties and anti-poverty groups to connect advocates with social scientists working on race and poverty issues and to promote a research-based advocacy strategy on structural inequality issues: [www.prrac.org](http://www.prrac.org)

# FAITH-BASED SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

**The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)** is a Quaker organization that promotes peace and justice as a practical expression of faith in action: <http://afsc.org/>

**Catholic Charities USA** is a national organization serving poor and vulnerable persons and families by offering support to 164 member agencies, providing disaster relief and promoting poverty reduction through research and legislative reform: <https://catholiccharitiesusa.org/>

**Franciscan Action Network** is a grassroots organization amplifying the justice efforts of Franciscans nationwide, following the movement that endures from St. Francis of Assisi and his call for compassion for the poor and all creation over 800 years ago: <http://franciscanaction.org/>

**PICO** is a national network of faith-based community organizations working to create innovative solutions to improve healthcare access, public schools, neighborhood safety, affordable housing and democracy: [www.piconetwork.org](http://www.piconetwork.org)

**The Union for Reform Judaism** supports nearly 900 congregations in their efforts to enrich and energize worship, deepen Jewish learning, pursue social justice, nurture strong leaders, and expand community, in the synagogue and beyond. The URJ believes Judaism must meet people where they are today to thrive tomorrow: <https://www.urj.org/>

**The Unitarian Universalist Association** Social Justice groups use grassroots community organizing, interfaith state, national and corporate advocacy, and protest marches and vigils to honor the interconnectedness of life and to promote economic, environmental, racial, immigrant, LGBT and reproductive justice: <http://www.uua.org/justice>

## CHILD ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

**The Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count** program provides state legislators, public officials and child advocates with reliable data, policy recommendations and tools to advance sound policies that benefit children and families: <http://www.aecf.org/work/kids-count/>

**The Children's Defense Fund** provides a strong, effective and independent voice for the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves, paying particular attention to the needs of poor children, children of color and

those with disabilities. The CDF educates the nation about the needs of children, encouraging preventive investments before children get sick, drop out of school, get into trouble or suffer family breakdown: <http://www.childrensdefense.org/take-action/>

**The Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness** is an independent nonprofit public policy analysis and research organization focused on illuminating the complex issue of family homelessness to inform public policy and help families transition out of homelessness: <http://www.icphusa.org/>

**The National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University** is one of the nation's leading centers dedicated to promoting the economic security, health and well-being of America's low-income families and children. Their Data Tools include budgets, calculators and trackers to determine how much families are earning and what policies and programs are in place in every state to help struggling families meet their basic needs: <http://www.nccp.org/tools/>

## HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS ORGANIZATIONS

**The American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness and Poverty** is committed to educating the bar and the public about homelessness and poverty and getting the legal community and advocates to assist those in need: [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public\\_services/homelessness\\_poverty.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/homelessness_poverty.html)





**The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty** is the only national legal group dedicated to ending and preventing homelessness. They use the power of the law to put homeless children back in school, win new affordable housing resources, overturn laws that criminalize homelessness and protect renters: <http://www.nlchp.org/homeless>

**The National Low-Income Housing Coalition** offers a resource library to strengthen advocacy work at the local level: <http://nlihc.org/library>

## LABOR AND MINIMUM WAGE ORGANIZATIONS

**The National Alliance of HUD Tenants** preserves and improves affordable housing, protects tenants' rights, develops tenant empowerment, promotes resident control and ownership, improves the quality of life in HUD-assisted housing and makes HUD accountable to its constituents: <http://saveourhomes.org/>

**The National Community Reinvestment Coalition** and its grassroots member organizations create opportunities for people to build wealth and champion fairness in banking, housing and business development. The NCRC provides tools and resources for organizations and policymakers seeking to understand how financial services impact communities nationwide here: <http://www.ncrc.org/resources>

**The National Fair Housing Alliance** helps victims of housing discrimination know their housing rights and how to pursue redress: <http://www.nationalfairhousing.org/>

**Business for a Fair Minimum Wage** is a national network of business owners and executives who believe a fair minimum wage makes good business sense: <http://www.businessforafairminimumwage.org/>

**Interfaith Worker Justice** mobilizes people of faith and work advocates in support of economic justice and worker rights through a network of over 70 organizations: <http://www.iwj.org/>

**Labor Notes** is a media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the "movement" back in the labor movement. Its magazine, website, books, conferences and workshops promote organizing, aggressive strategies to fight concessions and alliances with workers' centers and unions: <http://www.labornotes.org/>

**The Main Street Alliance** provides small businesses with a voice on the most pressing public policy issues across the nation; they support raising the minimum wage: <http://www.mainstreetalliance.org>

**The National Employment Law Project** fights for policies to create good jobs, expand access to work and strengthen protection and support for low-wage workers and the unemployed: <http://www.nelp.org/>

**Small Business Majority** is a national small-business advocacy organization, founded and run by small-business owners to focus on solving the biggest problems facing small businesses today: <http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/>

**Worker Centers**, such as the Coalition of Im-mokalee Workers (CIW) who won better wages and working conditions for tomato workers through a four-year national boycott of Taco Bell, are community-based organizations that provide service, advocacy and organizing support to low-wage workers who are not part of traditional labor unions: <http://www.epi.org/publication/bp159/>

**Working America**, a community of the AFL-CIO, is an organization of three million members fighting for good jobs, affordable health care and education, retirement security, corporate accountability and a real democracy by door-to-door organizing and providing research and tools to make life better for working people: <http://www.workingamerica.org/>

**The United Workers Congress** is a strategic alliance of workers that are either by law or by practice excluded from the right to organize in the U.S. but who are organizing for better working conditions through networks nationwide: <http://www.unitedworkerscongress.org/>

## HEALTHCARE REFORM ORGANIZATIONS

To find out how the effort to expand Medicaid and its benefits is doing nationally, visit **Families USA**, which has been monitoring the movement here: <http://familiesusa.org/product/momentum-medicaid-expansion>

**The National Association of Community Health Care Centers** serves as a unified voice for the 9,000 community health centers providing affordable healthcare for over 23 million people nationwide: <http://nachc.com/resources-helpful-links.cfm>

**The Physicians for a National Healthcare Program** offers a set of tools, including how to write to the press, lobby elected officials, and organize for a national single-payer healthcare program: <http://www.pnhp.org/action/activism>

## EDUCATION REFORM ORGANIZATIONS

**The Center for Education Reform** is trying to accelerate the growth of the education reform movement in ways that make available to families new and meaningful choices in their children's education: <https://www.edreform.com>

**The Center for Public Education** is a one-stop shop for clear, concise and trusted information about public education. To read the research on charter schools, as well as information on standardized testing, teacher performance, college



access and more, visit: <http://www.centerfor-publiceducation.org/FunctionalNav-Menu/Top-Right-Nav-2/The-public>

**The Progressive** magazine's Progressive Education Fellows are uncovering the stories behind the defunding of public schools that is fueling the growth of large, charter-school chains, including a video series by cartoonist Mark Fiore: [http://progressive.org/news/2015/11/188410/shake-those-charter-chains?mc\\_cid=6917c97d7e&mc\\_eid=91e5e4c4bd](http://progressive.org/news/2015/11/188410/shake-those-charter-chains?mc_cid=6917c97d7e&mc_eid=91e5e4c4bd)

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM ORGANIZATIONS

**#BlackLivesMatter** is a call to action in response to anti-Black racism: <http://blacklivesmatter.com/getinvolved/>

**The Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law** is a nonpartisan law and policy institute that seeks to improve systems of democracy and justice through research and innovative policies, including ending mass incarceration: <https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ending-mass-incarceration>

**The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to reduce society's reliance on incarceration as a solution to social problems: <http://www.cjcj.org/about.html>

**The Drug Policy Alliance** is the nation's leading organization promoting sensible drug policies that are grounded in science, compassion, health and human rights to roll back the excesses of the War on Drugs and its damaging consequences, especially on the young and communities of color: <http://www.drugpolicy.org/>

**Families Against Mandatory Minimums** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for smart sentencing laws that are fair, reduce incarceration rates and protect public safety: <http://famm.org/>

**The Justice Policy Institute** is a national nonprofit organization whose research identifies programs and policies that change the conversation around justice reform: <http://www.justicepolicy.org/index.html>

**Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP)** is an international nonprofit organization of criminal justice professionals who are speaking out about the failure of the War on Drugs and existing drug policies: <http://www.leap.cc/>

**Mothers of Incarcerated Sons** is a nonprofit group formed by the mother of an incarcerated son in 2001 to offer support to parents whose children are in the prison system: <http://www.mothersofinmates.org/>



### **The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund**

is the nation's premier legal organization fighting for racial justice through litigation, advocacy and public education to expand democracy and achieve racial justice for all Americans: <http://www.naacpldf.org/>

**Safer Foundation** is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit providers of services for people with criminal records to help them secure and maintain jobs: <http://www.saferfoundation.org/>

**The Stanford Justice Advocacy Project** (formerly the Three Strikes Project) represents individuals who are serving unjust prison sentences for minor crimes, helps them re-enter their communities, and advocates for a more fair and effective criminal justice system: <https://law.stanford.edu/stanford-justice-advocacy-project/>

**The Vera Institute for Justice** combines expertise in research, demonstration projects and technical assistance to help leaders in government and civil society improve the systems people rely on for justice and safety: <http://www.vera.org/>

## IMMIGRATION REFORM ORGANIZATIONS

**iAmerica** provides information on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) legislation: <http://iamerica.org/>

**National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights** works to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of immigration status: <http://www.nnirr.org/drupal/get-involved/training>

**No More Deaths** is a coalition of organizations based in southern Arizona to stop the deaths of migrants in the desert and achieve a set of Faith-Based Principles for Immigration Reform: <http://forms.nomoredeaths.org/about-no-more-deaths/faith-based-principles-for-immigration-reform/>

**The ONWARD Project** features a collection of films and articles about immigration today and can be used in discussion settings: <http://www.onwardproject.net/LandingPage.html>

# RETIREMENT SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS

**The Alliance for Retired Americans** is a nationwide grassroots organization with more than 4.3 million members that seeks to ensure social and economic justice and full civil rights for all citizens so that they may enjoy dignity, personal and family fulfillment and security. The Alliance is working to protect Social Security and Medicare: <http://retiredamericans.org/>

**The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations** is a coalition of nonprofit organizations that serve older Americans and is dedicated to strengthening the well-being of America's older population: <http://www.lcao.org/>

**The Pension Rights Center** is a nonprofit consumer organization committed to protecting and promoting the retirement security of American workers, retirees, and their families: <http://www.pensionrights.org/take-action>

**Social Security Works** advocates for protecting and improving the economic security of disadvantaged and at-risk populations by expanding the Social Security system. See their fact sheets, polls, and talking points at <http://www.socialsecurityworks.org/resources>

# CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ORGANIZATIONS

Parts of the 1965 Voting Rights Act have been dismantled in some states, making it more difficult to vote now than fifty years ago. Get involved in strengthening voting rights, among other methods of expanding democratic access to the political system, with **Common Cause** at <http://www.commoncause.org/issues/>

Follow the lead of Tallahassee, Florida, and a growing number of cities nationwide that are passing anti-corruption acts with this toolkit from **RepresentUS**: <https://represent.us/action/pass-a-local-anti-corruption-act/>

Public financing of elections can reduce the influence of big money in campaign financing. **USPIRG** is working toward small-donor incentive programs, along with other campaigns to return democracy to the people, at <http://uspirg.org/issues/usp/democracy-people>

# PUBLIC OPINION POLLING ORGANIZATIONS

**Pew Research Center Fact Tank** is a non-partisan, non-advocacy, real-time platform dedicated to finding news in the numbers from public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis, and other data-driven social science research: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/22/the-many-ways-to-measure-economic-inequality/>

**The Pew Economic Mobility Project** provides comprehensive data on social mobility and shows how the financial well-being of American families relates to short-term financial stability and longer-term economic mobility: <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/archived-projects/economic-mobility-project>

**The U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS)** provides vital information on a yearly basis about our nation and its people that helps determine how more than \$400 billion in federal and state funds are distributed each year: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

# BOOKS

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## **Bill Moyers series on the American Dream:**

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/american-dream/>

## **NPR Series on the American Dream:**

<http://www.npr.org/series/153503213/american-dreams-lost-and-found>

**The Poverty Tour with Tavis Smiley:** <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissmiley/features/poverty-tour/>

**Reading Capital, Volume I, with David Harvey,** Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York:  
<http://davidharvey.org/reading-capital/>

# FILMS

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<http://www.michaelmoore.com/movies/capitalism-a-love-story>

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