

Communications Training for Domestic Human Rights Advocates

With support from The Overbrook Foundation, The Libra Foundation, and the US Human Rights Fund, The Opportunity Agenda is helping organize and host four two-day communications workshops in fall 2008. The events, to be held in Chicago (Sept. 12-13), Atlanta (Sept. 19-20), Los Angeles (Oct. 3-4), and New York City (Oct. 24-25), will bring together leading human rights organizations.

Trainings will be led by staff from The Opportunity Agenda (Alan Jenkins, Julie Rowe, Tony Stephens), Breakthrough (Heidi Boisvert, Chrissy Spivey), and Witness (Sam Gregory, Matisse Bustos). Cathy McElrath Renna, a leading progressive communications consultant, will lead sessions on media training.

The first day of each workshop will be dedicated to the latest public opinion research on Americans' views on human rights, framing and messaging strategies, and hands-on media training. On the second day, participants will focus on issues such as citizen video journalism, multimedia design, new media platforms, and other interactive forms of communications. Special attention will be paid to issues that include right to health care, racial justice, immigration, and due process.

Grantees of the US Human Rights Fund, The Libra Foundation, and The Overbrook Foundation are invited for early registration by **July 10**, after which a general invitation for social justice organizations and leaders will be announced. We ask that all participants make a commitment for the full two-day workshop, and places are available for forty participants in each event. There is no fee. For more information, or to hold your spot, please contact Tony Stephens, Communications Associate, at tstephens@opportunityagenda.org.

These workshops are a part of The Opportunity Agenda's *Human Rights at Home* project, which works with key human rights and social justice organizations and leaders to develop and implement an overarching communications strategy designed to build the constituency for opportunity and human rights in the U.S. As part of this multi-year initiative, The Opportunity Agenda aspires to develop: greater capacity within the domestic human rights community to communicate a shared, effective message; measurably better media coverage that shifts the public debate; and more sophisticated advocacy efforts, especially for those groups and leaders using the human rights frame in their work. Taken together, these activities will broaden public understanding and support for human rights in the United States.