

Conferring on Homelessness

Beyond Housing

A National Conversation on Child Homelessness and Poverty

Are You In?

Every two years, hundreds of service providers, policymakers, and practitioners from across the United States come together in New York City for ICPH's biennial conference, Beyond Housing: A National Conversation on Child Homelessness and Poverty. They discuss, learn about, and share innovative programs, solutions, and policies aimed at addressing this crisis. At ICPH's 2014 conference, more than 450 people chose from among 40 interactive workshops and sessions, participated in in-depth discussions and networking opportunities, viewed the poignant images by photographer Craig Blankenhorn of children and families experiencing homelessness, and listened to three rousing keynote speeches.

ICPH president and CEO Ralph da Costa Nunez kicked off the conference with a keynote speech looking at the history of family poverty and homelessness, discussing the importance of the government safety net, and stating that the U.S. needs neither "big government" nor smaller government, but good government. According to Nunez, "Our job isn't to get homeless people off the street. It's to get homeless people on their feet."

Author, educator, and MSNBC host Melissa Harris-Perry gave a humorous yet powerful lunch keynote, noting that race is "strongly determinative" when it comes to suffering from poverty and pointing to structural barriers to success for many minorities. Addressing those barriers, according to Harris-Perry, requires political will.

Nikki Johnson-Huston, who recalled her journey from childhood homelessness to a successful career as an attorney, delivered the final keynote. She compared her path with that of her brother, who had to enter foster care as a child and ultimately passed away at an early age. Johnson-Huston emphasized that

her success was the result of both her grandmother's efforts and the social safety net.

Sessions and workshops delved into themes including approaches to education, skill building, employment, research, policy, and advocacy. Other sessions looked at the work of successful programs, collaborations among organizations, and effective program strategies. Intelligent discussions were plentiful, new connections were made, and countless ideas were shared at the 2014 conference. With the 2016 conference less than one year away and registration now open, this is the time to make your plans to attend. Are you in?

You are also invited to submit proposals for sessions, workshops, and panels at BeyondHousing.ICPHusa.org. Conference sessions should provide new ideas and address topics and themes within the field of family homelessness, as well as offer opportunities to build bridges between professionals from various backgrounds. Participants are encouraged to make sessions interactive and explore the issues from innovative points of view.

Beyond Housing 2016 is sure to leave attendees refreshed and inspired to continue their work in the fight against child poverty and homelessness.

"My first but not my last!"

"Thank you for the quality of presenters and information."

"I always look forward to the ICPH conference; it's a great learning experience." ■