



## People-Powered Victories for a Stronger Washtenaw

*WeROC's lasting victories, won by united community leaders in grassroots campaigns in the recent past*

- **"Banning the Box"** Changed job applications in 5 key County municipalities, to "ban the box" asking about conviction history to help ex-offenders re-enter life in the community.
- **"Bus to the Clinics"**: Achieved agreement with U of M transportation officials to coordinate U of M and AAATA transportation networks to simplify patient access to Domino Farms' medical campus.
- **Resisting "7th Hour Fees"**: Ensured Ann Arbor Public Schools found ways to avoid charging families for important classes for all youth.
- **Keeping kids in school**: Won commitments from members of the School Boards of the 3 urban school districts to measurably reduce unnecessary expulsions and suspensions (in alliance with Student Advocacy Center), and to focus on Restorative Practices rather than punishment.
- **AAATA millage**: Organized volunteers for targeted door to door campaigning for the 2014 ballot initiative to increase bus service in eastern Washtenaw (in alliance with Huron Valley Area Labor Federation).
- **Organizer Training**: A number of WeROC members have attended National Leadership Training by the Gamaliel Foundation. We also partner with MOSES in Detroit for local organizing training of WeROC and community members.
- **Health Equity Action Team**: Launched in 2017 in response to urgent concerns voiced by local clergy and county mental health worker unions.
  - Built grassroots support for the County-wide Mental Health and Public Safety millage.
  - Created a focused community voice at follow-on community meetings about how to most effectively spend the new money.
  - Established regular meetings with County Community Mental Health director staff to support the community-identified needs
  - Sponsored and held a webinar in May of 2022 about the Trauma and Oppression of Black Men and Boys.
  - Currently exploring ways to support the mental health of our youth following the impact of COVID shutdowns, gun violence and trauma.
- **Voting Rights Action Team**:
  - Is a solid partner with several community coalitions to educate and mobilize voters in regard to national, state and local elections.
  - Collaborated with Voters Not Politicians to engage faith and social justice communities to support the Promote the Vote 2022 constitutional amendment initiative for voting rights.

- Sponsored and executed a webinar about down ballot voting in anticipation of 2022 elections.
- Co-sponsored two candidate forums with ICPJ.

**Justice Matters Action Team:**

- Collaborated with MOSES in Detroit to hold Town Halls in 2020 elections focused on the Prosecutor/District Attorney candidates from Washtenaw and 3 other counties. Purpose was to secure public commitments from County Prosecutor/District Attorney candidates to reduce the use of cash bail and implement restorative justice and equity in sentencing.
  - Sponsored and held a webinar in May of 2022, highlighting the Washtenaw County Public Defender Delphia Simpson and how her office works for equity in criminal justice.
  - Opposes ALPR (Automated License Plate Reader Systems) proposed by Ypsilanti Township Trustees and the sheriff's office.
  - Gave a presentation to the Ypsilanti Police Advisory Committee opposing traffic stops for insurance only. Police Chief Tony DeGiusti sent an email to all his staff saying "don't do this". We expect a county-wide recommendation from the Sheriff's Office to stop this practice and will plan to reach out to other Police Departments depending on what happens.
- **Other Community Collaboration: Emerging grassroots organizing allies:**
    - **Ypsi NICE (Neighbors Improving Community Engagement)** is a new organization of residents in Ypsilanti Township, especially some of the neighborhoods hit hardest by long-time social and economic inequities. The group formed the YTown ARPA Committee, intent on involving community voices in decision making for spending \$9 million in federal COVID relief (ARPA) funding. WeROC is also working with Ypsi NICE leaders and others to raise concerns about the overall community benefit of installing a broad network of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras throughout Ypsilanti Township including parts of the city of Ypsilanti. There are grave concerns about the protection of data and the protection of privacy for Washtenaw County Residents.
    - **Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice** is a community organization focused on issues of equity and social justice in Washtenaw County. WeROC has collaborated with ICPJ most recently on candidate forums with special focus on racial inequities in criminal justice within our judicial system.
    - **Student Advocacy Center** and WeROC have had a long standing relationship around matters of expulsion and restorative practice and support for mental health services around COVID and gun violence in our communities.
    - **Huron Valley Area Labor Federation** and WeROC have collaborated on various community issues over several years and will continue to do so.
  - **WeROC Issues Month: May 2022 4 Virtual Sessions on Community Issues**
    - May 3: Who Killed the King? Challenges of Black Men and Boys in America
    - May 12: Voting Down-Ballot Elections: Why it Matters
    - May 18: Advancing Equity Through the Public Defender's Office
    - May 24: School Expulsions
    - Go to our website [werocmi.org](http://werocmi.org) to view these videos