



## MLK DAY MOVEMENT MEET-UPS

### What's in this PDF packet

- 1. Discussion Guide, 6 pages** *make one copy*
  - Introduction
  - What you'll need
  - Suggested agenda
  - Tips on facilitation
  
- 2. Handouts for participants, 5 pages \*** *make enough copies for everyone*
  - Discussion questions
  - New Year's Resolution to Rebuild the Dream
  - Brief historical background
  - Fact sheet on race, inequality, and recession
  
- 3. Sign-in sheet, 1 page \*** *make enough copies so everyone can sign in*
  
- 4. A sign for your group photo, 1 page** *make one copy*

**\* NOTE: You should make *multiple copies* of the handouts and you may need multiple copies of the sign-in sheet.**

*"I have a dream... It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream."*  
– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., August, 1963

## Introduction

Thank you for organizing an **MLK Day Movement Meet-up** with Rebuild the Dream! Together, we will start the New Year right.

We have two goals for bringing people together for these meet-ups. We hope people can:

- 1) **Connect the legacy of Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement with our struggles today** for justice and an economy that works for all. What would Dr. King do today? And what can we do?
- 2) **Commit to making change in 2012** in their own lives, in their communities, and for the country.

*The first set of discussion questions and the video support the first goal. The second set of discussion questions and the "New Year's Resolution to Rebuild the Dream" support the second goal.*

January 13–22, people across the country will gather, reflect, and commit to rebuilding the American Dream and Dr. King's dream in 2012. We will honor Dr. King by ensuring the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement stays alive and vibrant in today's struggles for an economy that works for all.

This is our time to work together. We hope this meet-up guide will help you take a few steps to get closer to your dreams and to Dr. King's dream. The movement and the moment are in our hands.

## What You'll Need

- **Computer with speakers, to play the 4-minute video:**  
**Make sure your computer has speakers loud enough for everyone to hear.**  
You'll need an Internet connection to play the video (on YouTube). On Wednesday, January 11, we'll post the link to the video on our website. Please test it beforehand to make sure it works and is loud enough. (If you won't have Internet at the location for your meet-up, then we'll have a downloadable version of the video so that you could download the video to a laptop and bring it with you to the meet-up.)
- **Handouts, sign-in sheet and the sign for the photo:**  
Make enough copies of these for everyone. There is a **race and economy fact sheet** and **historical background** for the discussion on the Civil Rights Movement. For the discussion on personal, local, and national change, we have included a **pledge sheet** that each participant will sign and take home with them. The **sign-in sheet** is yours to keep, if your group wants to follow up in the future. Lastly, there is a **sign for group photos**.
- **Camera** for group photos!

## Preparing for the meet-up

### **Reserve a venue and think through logistics.**

- Make sure you've got a space reserved for your event. Libraries and community centers are great options -- but so is your living room!
- Once you've got the space lined up, think through what else you'll need to do to have a good event. Do you have enough chairs? Will you be serving food? Can you bring scrap paper and pens, in case people want to take notes?

### **Recruit people to attend.**

- Reach out to your friends, family, co-workers and anyone else who might be interested. Email is a good start, but it's not enough. The most tried-and-true way we know to get people out to events is to **pick up the phone and call them**. Facebook helps too!
- Also, (unless you marked your event private) we'll send an email to other Rebuild the Dream members in your area, so that will help too.

### **Review the presentation materials and this Discussion Guide.**

- Make sure you go over this Discussion Guide a few times to familiarize yourself with the content. We suggest you print it out and read through it.

## Suggested Agenda for the meet-up

Note: Some of you may have other ideas on what you want to do, and that's fine too! Feel free to modify this suggested agenda.

### Part I. Introductions and video

#### 1) Welcome (5 minutes)

- Introduce yourself and thank everyone for being there.
- Give an overview of the agenda so people know what to expect.
- Please encourage everyone to actively listen and participate.

#### 2) Introductions (10 minutes)

Kick off the meet-up with a round of **warm-up questions**. Ask people to take **30 seconds each** to share:

- What's your name?
- Why did you come today?
- What are your hopes for building an inclusive, people-powered movement in 2012?

#### 3) Play the video (4 minutes)

Encourage people to write down questions or comments that come up while they're watching. Those questions and comments can help shape the discussion later. Pre-loading the video is recommended, so you don't have to wait for buffer times to play back.

### Part II. Discussion: Linking the Civil Rights Movement with today's movements (20 minutes)

#### 1) Pass out copies of

- **the Race, Inequality, and Recession fact sheet and**
- **the Discussion Questions.**

#### 2) Read this aloud:

"We will break up into pairs and talk about a couple of questions so we can reflect on how the legacy of Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement are relevant today. How we can build more powerful and inclusive movements in 2012?"

"Now, choose a partner and discuss questions 1a and 1b. Spend four minutes on each question. Take turns talking, two minutes each. I will keep time, and tell you when it's time to switch."

**3) Break people into pairs to answer the questions together. Discussion should take about 8 minutes total (4 minutes per question). Keep time, and let everyone know when they should switch, and when they should move to the next question.**

**4) Bring everyone back together as a single, large group.** Take 10 minutes and ask people to share insights or thoughts that came up. If you have a small enough group, you could simply go around and ask everyone to share brief thoughts, perhaps one minute each. For larger groups, you may only have time to call on a few people to share.

### **Part III. Three levels of change in 2012 (25 minutes)**

**1) Make sure everyone has a copy of**

- **the New Year Resolution to Rebuild the Dream in 2012, and**
- **the Discussion Questions.**

**2) Read this aloud:**

“We can all make positive change happen at three levels: *personally* in our own lives and families, *locally* in our communities, and *nationally*. We will talk about a few questions to help each of us think about change that’s possible in 2012.”

“Now, choose a partner and let’s break up into pairs and talk about questions 2a, 2b, and 2c. Spend 4 minutes on each question. Take turns talking, 2 minutes each. I will keep time, and tell you when it’s time to switch.”

**3) Break people into pairs to answer the questions together. Discussion should take about 12-15 minutes total (4 minutes per question). Keep time, and let everyone know when they should switch, and when they should move to the next question.**

**4) Before bringing everyone back to a large group, ask participants to take a few minutes to write their personal, local, and national commitments and sign their personal pledge.** (The New Year’s Resolution, included in this packet). Participants will take these pledges home with them.

**5) Bring everyone back together as a single, large group.** Take 10 minutes and ask people to share a commitment they made or an insight they had. If you have a small enough group, you could simply go around and have people share, one minute each. For larger groups, you may only have time to call on a few people to share.

## Part IV. Pledge to Rebuild the Dream, and Group photo!

1) **Read the New Year's Resolution out loud (it will make a difference if you read it out loud).**

**“A New Year's Resolution to Rebuild the Dream:** In the tradition of Dr. King, I pledge to take action for economic justice in 2012. I will make positive changes in my life, my community, and my country. With this pledge, I join many others across America. Together, we will make America a place where it's safe to dream again.”

2) **Ask everyone to sign their pledges.** The pledges are theirs to keep!

3) **Next Steps?** You're almost done! If your group would like to take any next steps together, take a moment to discuss how you will do that. Rebuild the Dream will have more activities in the near future!

Give thanks to everyone for attending. Offer any closing reflections and appreciations, especially for anyone who volunteered and helped to make your meet-up a success.

4) **Please take group photos!** Hold up the sign that says “Let's Rebuild the Dream in 2012!” or even better, get creative and make your own sign!

**Email the photos to us at [organizing@rebuildthedream.com](mailto:organizing@rebuildthedream.com). We'll post them on our website!**

## Tips for hosting an effective meet-up

Meet-ups are most effective when they are as interactive as possible, and participants are engaged in active discussions AND active listening.

### Tips:

- **Do break up into pairs or small groups.** The most meaningful conversations happen when there are only two or three people talking together. It's also much easier for shy people to contribute. The goal of these events is to let **everyone** feel that they have a stake in building the movement.
- **Do establish ground rules** to make sure people's opinions are respected. As a facilitator, you can come up with some basic ground rules and spend a minute or two to ask participants to add to the ground rules. Some common and effective ground rules are: one person speaking at a time, active listening, no assumed expertise in the room, and agreeing to disagree.
- **Do pay attention to group dynamics.** If you find that the same people are taking over the discussion, and there are some quiet people in the room unwilling to share their opinions, you can encourage them to talk by slowly walking to their side of the room, and gently asking them to speak and making eye contact.
- **Do arrange the chairs in the room to encourage group discussions.** Horseshoes or circles allow you and the participants to be able to make eye contact with everyone. If you are facilitating a large meet-up, consider arranging chairs in multiple small circles.
- **Do recognize it when the conversation is getting off topic**, and try to gear it back to the original question, or go to the next question if the topic has been exhausted.

**Please take notes, and give us feedback!** You are a leader in your community, and we want to do as much as we can to support you. What were some common questions that emerged in your discussions? What did people want to do the most? We will be sending around a feedback form, so please make sure you capture those moments!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*(Share your answers in pairs, 2 minutes per person, 4 minutes total per question)*

### The Civil Rights Movement & Today's Movements

**1a)** In the video, we saw photos from different marches and protests organized by LGBT, immigrant and human rights activists, and many others. Although these movements came after the Civil Rights Movement, many activists still cite the protests in the 60s as their inspiration. **Of all the movements that came after the Civil Rights Movement, which ones have you participated in? What draws you to them?**

- Keep in mind: When people think of “movements”, they think of large protests, marches, and campaigns done over a long period of time. The Civil Rights Movement involved thousands of leaders and millions of everyday people. It’s important to remember that small actions together build large movements.

**1b)** In recent years, MLK Day has become a day where people provide short-term community service to under-served communities. While these services are well intentioned, they don’t necessarily address systemic causes of poverty and exclusion. **What are some meaningful ways we can learn about and address systemic causes of poverty?**

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### Three Levels of Change in 2012

**2a) At the personal level:** What is one positive change that you will make in your own life, big or small, so that you can be more effective at making a difference in the lives of others in 2012? Who do you need to tell about the change you want to make in your personal life?

**2b) At the community level:** Think about your local community. What is one issue in your local community that you care deeply about? What will you do in 2012 to deepen your commitment and make a positive difference on this issue?

- There may be many issues that you care about. For this exercise, pick one of them.
- We all define our “local community” differently. You may need to take a minute to think about who is in yours.

**2c) At the national level:** This will be a big election year. How will you get involved in the elections in 2012, whether around the presidential election or your local member of Congress?

- Our democracy is troubled, and it’s hard not to be cynical. It’s important to be honest with ourselves about how frustrating politics can be these days. At the same time, let us consider how our democracy depends on people staying involved and staying engaged.
- It’s okay if there are other ways you want to take action at the national level, or if you’re more interested in a local or statewide election, instead of a federal one.



# A New Year's Resolution to Rebuild the Dream in 2012

*In the tradition of Dr. King, I pledge to take action for economic justice in 2012. I will make positive changes in my life, my community, and my country. With this pledge, I join many others across America. Together, we will make America a place where it's safe to dream again.*

**I will make a change in my personal life, so that I can help make a difference in the lives of others in 2012:**

**I will make a difference in my local community:**

**I will help rebuild the dream at the national level:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Please take this home with you as a memento, and to remind yourself of the commitments you made!*

## History of the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. King, and Resurrection City

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in 1929 to a family deeply rooted in the African American Baptist Church. Both his father and his maternal grandfather were Baptist ministers, and also leaders in the local NAACP chapter in Atlanta, GA. Dr. King was exposed to social and economic justice work very early on through his family, and while he first resisted his family heritage rooted in Christianity, he came to accept his religious calling at Morehouse College.

After he became a pastor in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954, Dr. King joined other religious leaders to protest the arrest of Rosa Parks by organizing a year-long bus boycott. The boycott eventually led to the Supreme Court ruling that bus segregation was unconstitutional. In 1957, he co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and coordinated civil rights activities, and in 1963, organized the Birmingham Campaign to protest for civil rights. In the same year, he gave his legendary “I Have A Dream” speech at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom to a crowd of over 200,000 people, calling for equality for people of all races and religions.

Massive protests formed a movement that fought for desegregation, economic and political equality. The protests led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Voting Rights Act of 1965, the first bills that protected the rights of people of color. Dr. King also spoke out against the Vietnam War, and in 1967, he formed the Poor People’s Campaign to fight for economic justice for all, with the goal to strengthen the federal government’s anti-poverty policies. While Dr. King mobilized the African American Christian base, he also formed alliances with domestic labor groups and international anti-colonial struggles.

After Dr. King’s assassination in 1968, other SCLC leaders carried on the Poor People’s campaign. They secured 15 acres of land in Washington, DC, and over 2,800 people camped out in Resurrection City, managed by Reverend Jesse Jackson. On June 19, 1968, over 50,000 marched to the Lincoln Memorial, where the March on Washington had taken place, to demand a living wage for every employable citizen. Resurrection City was eventually disbanded by the police, but it seems it returned in a new form in 2011!

The Civil Rights Movement was a truly extraordinary time that involved thousands of leaders and millions of everyday people. Decades after the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act, communities of color, LGBT, immigrants, and many other organizers continue to fight for justice and opportunity for all.

### Sources:

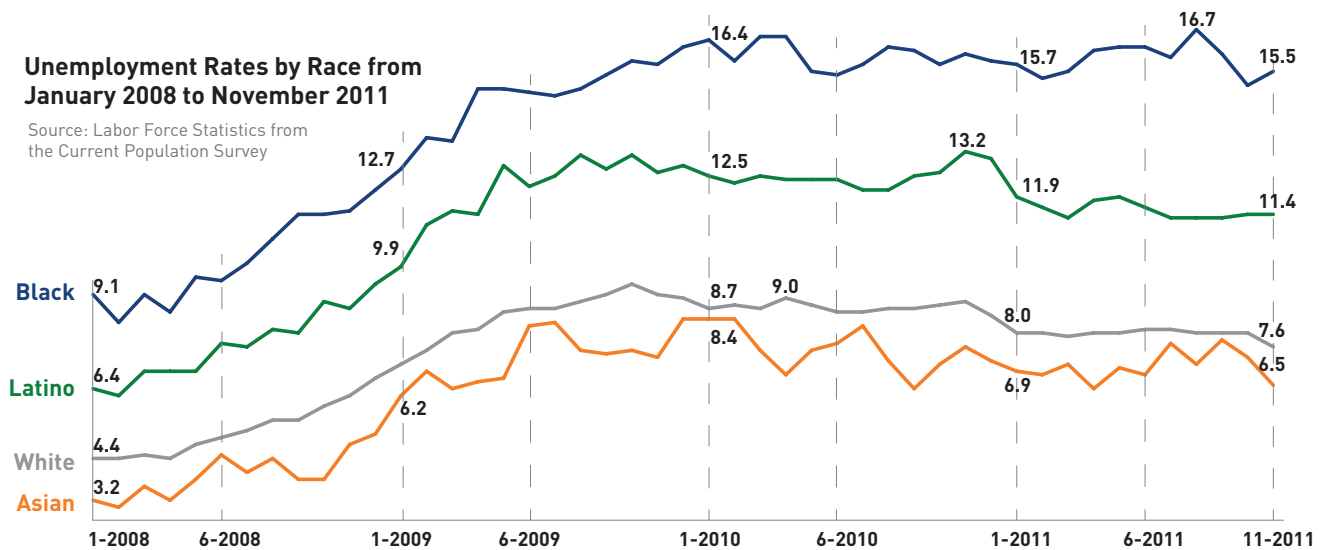
1. “King, Martin Luther, Jr. (1929-1968)” King Online Encyclopedia. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. [http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc\\_martin\\_luther\\_king\\_jr\\_biography/](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_martin_luther_king_jr_biography/)
2. Kelly, John. “Before Occupy DC, there was Resurrection City.” The Washington Post. December 2, 2011. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/before-occupy-dc-there-was-resurrection-city/2011/12/01/gIQAoNqcPO\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/before-occupy-dc-there-was-resurrection-city/2011/12/01/gIQAoNqcPO_story.html)

## RACE, INEQUALITY AND RECESSION

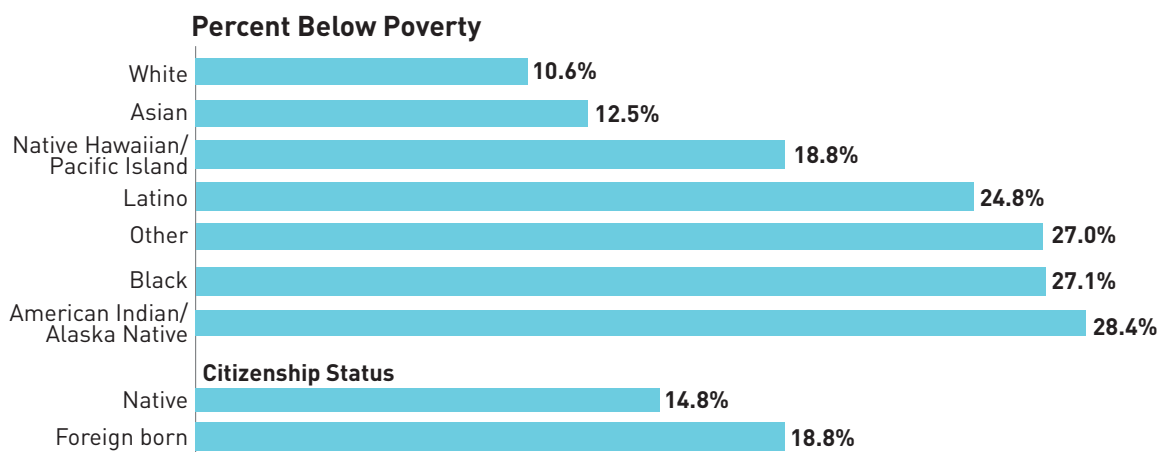
**WHILE ALL AMERICANS WORRY ABOUT ECONOMIC INSECURITY DURING THIS CRISIS**, its most damaging effects have been unevenly distributed. People of color are unemployed, in poverty and homeless at rates much higher than whites. Even before the recession, many communities of color experienced rates of unemployment that were higher than white unemployment at the peak of the recession. And when the recession hit, these disparities grew even larger. People of color and immigrants are more likely to work in low-income jobs and their families are more likely to be poor. In hard times like these, communities of color also have less to fall back because of longstanding wealth disparities that have been exacerbated by the foreclosure crisis.

### Poverty and Unemployment

People of color have long been relegated to precarious, low-wage jobs—or no work—at disproportionate rates. Black, Latino, American Indian and many Asian communities face barriers to employment, including discrimination in hires and promotions, unfair criminal background checks and the lack of protections for immigrant workers.



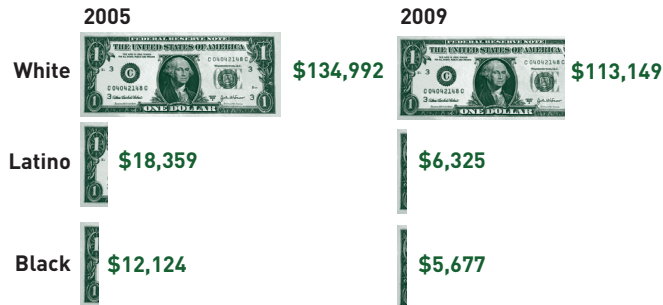
*Example: NYC Restaurants--The Restaurant Opportunity Center (ROC), which organizes restaurant workers, found that the median wage among white restaurant workers is almost \$4 per hour higher than the median wage among restaurant workers of color. ROC documented that people of color are frequently segregated into the lowest-paying industry segments and the lowest-paying positions within these segments. ROC's research has shown that in New York, white applicants for restaurant jobs were twice as likely (54.5%) to receive a job offer as a person of color, even when applicants of color were had the same or higher qualifications for the job.*



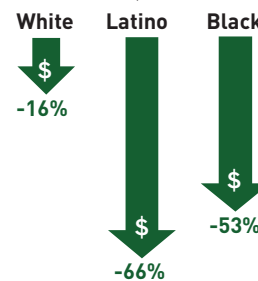
## Wealth

While racial disparities in poverty and unemployment are important measures of inequity, wealth is perhaps a more significant measure. Wealth is the value of everything a person or family owns, minus any debts. Wealth includes the value of things like savings, stocks, retirement accounts, cars and homes. Wealth is important because it provides short-term and intergenerational stability for families. In the recession, for instance, when historic numbers of people are out of work, having a savings account can mean the difference between staying housed and becoming homeless. For families, wealth means there's something to pass on to children, to use to pay for college tuition, and it creates the possibility of upward mobility.

Median Net Worth of Households, 2005 and 2009 (in 2009 dollars)



Percent Change in Median Net Worth of Households, 2005 and 2009

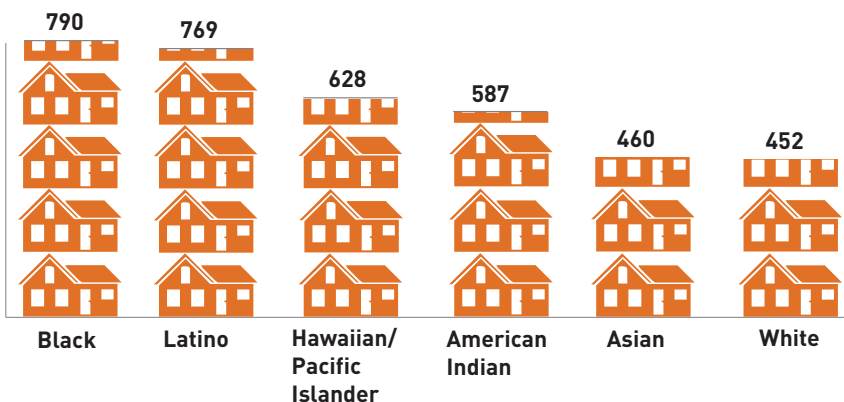


Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of Survey of Income and Program Participation data.

## Housing and Foreclosure

One of the main reasons that the racial wealth gap has grown so much during the recession is that people of color are more likely to have their wealth invested in their homes. So, when the foreclosure crisis hit, communities of color lost that wealth. And the homes of people of color were more likely to be foreclosed on.

People of Color More Likely to Lose Their Homes: 2007-2009 foreclosures per 10,000 loans to owner-occupants



Source: Center for Responsible Lending report, Foreclosures by Race and Ethnicity: The Demographics of a Crisis, June 18, 2010; data collected by the federal government under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) and data compiled by a private company, Lender Processing Services (LPS).

The cumulative effects of historic and current housing discrimination— including restrictive racial covenants, redlining and neighborhood segregation—left people of color with less equity and access to credit, and made them vulnerable to disproportionate rates of predatory lending and foreclosure. Communities of color were saddled with predatory subprime loans at significantly higher rates than whites. Many were sold subprime loans when they could have qualified for prime loans. The foreclosure epidemic has plagued communities of color and caused a loss of wealth that will have lasting generational effects.

Most wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small group on the top of the economy. **But the most striking disparities in wealth are not ONLY between the 1% and the rest, but ALSO between white people and people of color.** The racial wealth gap has been enormous for all of American history. But it has never been larger than today. The median wealth of a white family is now at least 20 times higher than that of a black family and 18 times that of a Latino family.



**LET'S**

**REBUILD**

**THE DREAM**



**AM**

**IN 2012!**