



Press Release

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Black Reproductive Justice Activists Convene for a National Strategy Summit in Washington, DC

(Washington, DC) – More than 40 Black women Reproductive Justice activists will gather in Washington, DC at the fhi360 Conference Center, 1825 Connecticut Avenue NW from September 25-29 for five days of strategic planning as part of the first Annual Strategic Communications for Policy Change Summit.

Dorothy Roberts, acclaimed scholar on race, gender and the law, will deliver the opening keynote address on “Black Women and Reproductive Health: Where We’ve Been, Where We Are Today, and Where We Are Going.” Her scholarly work includes the groundbreaking book on Black women and bodily autonomy, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*,

Other guest speakers at the Summit include:

- Byllye Y. Avery – Founder, Black Women’s Health Imperative
- Carmen Berkley – Director, Civil, Human and Women’s Rights Division, AFL-CIO
- Glynda C, Carr – Co-founder, Higher Heights
- Michele L. Jawando – Vice President, Legal Progress, Center for American Progress

*“We are all excited about this policy convening of Black Reproductive Justice activists,” said **Marcela Howell**, founder and strategic director of **In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda**. “Our goal this weekend is to develop a policy agenda and strategy that will enhance the reproductive lives and well-being of Black women and girls across the country”*

The Summit, sponsored by **In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda** brings together the staff, board members and volunteers of its five organizational partners: Black Women for Wellness, Black Women’s Health Imperative, New Voices for Reproductive Justice, SisterLove, Inc., and SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW.

*“Over the next year, **In Our Own Voice** will work with our organizational partners to outreach to Black women leaders, policymakers and voters to mobilize support for these important reproductive rights and health issues,” Howell added.*

In Our Own Voice is a national policy organization focused on mobilizing the voices of Black women in support of abortion rights and access, contraceptive equity, and comprehensive sex education. As a Reproductive Justice organization, ***In Our Own Voice*** centers its work on reproductive health issues from a human rights perspective, incorporating the intersections of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and gender identity with the situational impacts of economics, politics and culture that make up the lived experiences of Black women in this country.

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All the speakers, executive directors, board members and other Reproductive Justice activists are available for interviews. To schedule an interview, contact Marcela Howell at 202.8413292 (cell) or Michelle Batchelor 773.343.0407 (cell).