EXPOSE INJUSTICE.
TEACH CHANGE.
RIGHT WRONG.
HEAL PAIN.
JOIN US.
DEAR FRIENDS,

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights continued my father’s unfinished labors for a more just and peaceful world through a multiplicity of worldwide endeavors in 2015. Our advocacy and litigation unit battled discrimination against Dominicans of Haitian descent, scored landmark victories for victims of femicide in Guatemala, freed prisoners of conscience in Swaziland and raised awareness about human rights in the United States. Our human rights education curriculum, reaching 3.2 million students worldwide, was launched in Canada, Guadeloupe, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Portugal—with teacher trainings reaching many educators. At two annual sustainable investing summits we partnered with more than 120 business leaders controlling assets of $5 to $7 trillion to embrace human rights in their investment decisions. Our Young Leaders network reached over 1,500 members in New York and Washington, D.C.

We persisted with these and many other global efforts to embrace those who carry forward the legacy of Robert Kennedy of which you can be justly proud.

Warmly,

Kerry Kennedy
President

NEARLY 50 YEARS AGO,

Robert Kennedy’s family and friends dedicated themselves to carrying on his unfinished work of standing with those who fight against oppression. Today, we are students and activists, lawyers and business leaders, teachers and advocates, all working towards a common goal: achieving Bobby’s dream of a more just and peaceful world.

OUR WORK

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights takes a holistic approach to creating change:

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
We train and educate current and future human rights defenders to build capacity from the ground up and prevent abuses before they occur.

ADVOCACY AND LITIGATION
Through our advocacy and litigation efforts, we create lasting change, harnessing the power of social movements and bringing the arm of the law to the defense of the vulnerable.

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
We engage the investment community in discussions focused on human rights and other environmental, societal and governance factors; ensuring their investments in businesses around the globe not only do well, but are also a force for good.

LEGACY
We inspire new generations to take action and create change by amplifying and celebrating activists, authors, journalists, and students whose work reflects Robert F. Kennedy’s legacy, including human rights, social justice and the power of individual action in the United States and around the world.

YOUNG LEADERS
We mobilize the next generation to champion human rights in their communities.

OUR IMPACT

ADVOCACY AND LITIGATION
Our advocates have partnered with over 40 courageous defenders in 30 countries around the world through 12 annual capacity building trainings, our experts reach 177 human rights defenders and 87 government and advocacy organizations.

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
We partnered with more than 120 business leaders controlling $5-7 trillion in assets to consider human rights in their investment decisions.

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
Our human rights education program has reached 16 countries and 3.2 million students worldwide. 200+ educators were reached through trainings in the U.S. alone.

YOUNG LEADERS
Young leaders counts 1,500+ members in NYC and a new chapter in Washington, D.C.
BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

In 2015, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights freed prisoners of conscience in Swaziland and partnered with activists from Chicago to Moscow to combat police brutality. Our Strategic Litigation Unit won landmark cases, protecting women in Guatemala from being murdered with impunity, and communities in the Dominican Republic and The Bahamas from illegal deportation and expulsion from their homelands. Our business and human rights program worked with the Department of Labor to release new guidance for investors considering the social impact of their investments. We launched our human rights education curriculum in Canada, France, Guadeloupe, Switzerland, Spain, and the United Kingdom, expanding its reach to 16 countries and more than 3.2 million students worldwide.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

ADVOCACY AND LITIGATION

Fought arbitrary deprivation of nationality from Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic:
- Through our work and persistent pressure, we were able to get the Dominican Republic government to commit to not engage in massive deportations and put stateless people back on a path to citizenship.
- We helped secure the release of $2 million in emergency UN funding after having engaged in a fact-finding mission to the Dominican Republic along the border with Haiti.

Training Institute
- Organized 12 activities and 5 side events.
- 177 human rights defenders and government agents trained.
- 87 organizations and government agencies involved.
- Representing 66 countries.

Fought discriminatory immigration policies in The Bahamas:
- We obtained protective measures for 200 people held in a migration detention center.
- We led a fact-finding mission to assess the impact of the immigration policies, particularly on Haitians and persons of Haitian Descent.
- We participated in the first ever Thematic Hearing about human rights in The Bahamas before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Freed Prisoners of Conscience in Africa’s last absolute monarchy:
- Journalist Bheki Makhubu and human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko – imprisoned for criticizing the judiciary in Swaziland – were released in June after the government bowed to the international pressure of our #SwaziJustice campaign.

Raised Attention on the Human Rights Situation in the United States:
- We organized hearings on Child Victims of Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, and on Police Killings.

“I’m certain that the training and the whole experience will help me take my organization’s work to a higher level of international advocacy”

TRAINING INSTITUTE PARTICIPANT FROM MEXICO

Won landmark case for victims of femicide in Guatemala:
- In December, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a landmark ruling in a case we brought regarding the disappearance and murder of 19-year old Claudia Isabel Velázquez Pan in 2005.
- The Court ordered Guatemala to adopt a series of measures that will address structural discrimination and violence against women in the country.

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Over the past year, Congress has engaged in a serious debate about how to reform the federal criminal justice system. As a down payment on this reform, a bipartisan group of 11 senators, including Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Grassley (R-IA) and Ranking Member Leahy (D-VT), introduced “The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act.” As a result of work by the bill cosponsors, Senators Booker (D-NJ) and Durbin (D-IL), this landmark legislation includes three provisions that would assist young people incarcerated in the federal system. All of these reforms have been supported by the Juvenile Justice Collaborative, which also worked with Senator Booker to improve the specific provision on juvenile records sealing.

The three juvenile justice reforms proposed by the bill include:

Sealing and expungement of non-violent federal juvenile records:
This provision would allow individuals to seek sealing and expungement of non-violent federal juvenile records upon petition to the court. The Collaborative and its partners successfully worked with Senator Booker’s staff to support and improve this provision of the bill.

Judicial review of juvenile sentences:
This provision would allow inmates in the federal system who were sentenced as juveniles to seek a sentence modification via judicial review after serving at least twenty years of their sentence.

Prohibition on the use of solitary confinement:
This provision would prohibit solitary confinement, as required by Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) standards, for young people held in federal juvenile facilities. This provision, pulled from Senator Booker’s standalone bill, “MERCY Act,” arose in part from a meeting in April 2015 that the Collaborative set up between Senator Booker’s staff and justice-impacted youth affiliated with the Juvenile Justice Collaborative, which also worked with Senator Booker to improve the specific provision on juvenile records sealing. The three juvenile justice reforms proposed by the bill include:

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The Collaborative will push for passage of this Senate legislation, as well as inclusion of the youth provisions in House legislation that are under development. Despite the relatively small number of youth in the federal justice system, it is critical to include juvenile justice reform provisions in this important federal justice system reform bill as a way to recognize the pressing need for youth justice reform.

“I learned a ton more about the great work you are doing at Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights. It was both eye-opening and humbling. Awesome conference!”
– COMPASS CONFERENCE ATTENDEE
“It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped.”

—ROBERT F. KENNEDY

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LEGACY

Robert F. Kennedy Book and Journalism Awards:
Book Award Winner:
The Crusades of Cesar Chavez by Miriam Pawel

Journalism Award Winners:
• HIGH SCHOOL BROADCAST: “Our Cameras, Our Stories,” John Alpert and Team, Downtown Community Television Center, New York
• INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION: “Qatar’s World Cup,” Jeremy Schaap, Beein Gim, Andy Tennant, Michael Baltierra, and Tim Horgan, ESPN E:60

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award Recipient:
Natalia Taubina, Russia

Ripple of Hope Award Recipients:
• Robert Altman
• Marisela Vardnynyn
• Tim Cook
• The Honorable John Lewis

• NEW MEDIA: “Firestone and the Warlord,” T. Christian Miller and Jonathan Jones, ProPublica and PBS Frontline
• RADIO: “Boled In: When the Punishment No Longer Fits the Crime,” Carrie Johnson, Marisela Pernalos, and Beth Donovan, NPR News
• DOMESTIC PHOTOGRAPH: “California’s Dust Bowl,” Michael Robinson Chavez, The Los Angeles Times
• INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPH: “Ebola: A Desperate Struggle,” Carrie Johnson, Marisa Peñalosa, and Beth Donovan, NPR News
• INTERNATIONAL PRINT WINNER: “Product of Mexico,” Richard Marosi and Don Bartletti, The Los Angeles Times
• DOMESTIC PRINT WINNER: “Product of Mexico,” Richard Marosi and Don Bartletti, The Los Angeles Times
• INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION: “Solitary Nation,” Daniel Edge, PBS Frontline and WGBH
• INTERNATIONAL PRINT: “Cruel and Unusual,” Julie K. Brown, Miami Herald
• DOMESTIC PRINT: “Cruel and Unusual,” Julie K. Brown, Miami Herald
• INTERNATIONAL PRINT WINNER: “Product of Mexico,” Richard Marosi and Don Bartletti, The Los Angeles Times

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“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

—ROBERT F. KENNEDY
“Those with the courage to enter the moral conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the globe.”

—ROBERT F. KENNEDY