



## An Opportunity for You to Solve Poverty in Your Community

We have some exciting news. The Shared Humanity Project will be hosting 10 poverty forums in the next few years - throughout the country and maybe in your town.

The first will be the [Greater Washington Poverty Forum](#), to be held on April 20 at Friends Meeting of Washington. The purpose of the forum is to create working groups that will effectively address poverty in your community.

Forum participants will listen to a panel of speakers who have faced economic hardship. The panel will help participants ground their activities and plans in lived experience. Participants will then join a sector-specific [working group](#) to develop and implement solutions that are informed by the National Plan to End Poverty.

## Why have a Forum?

It has been nearly **60 years** since we launched a war on poverty in the U.S., and yet income insecurity remains a fact of life for more than **75 million Americans**. In every state – every region – the tragic and fatal effects of this poverty touch us all: from exorbitant public expenditures to growing social unrest to the lost human potential. Still, poverty and the struggles of our neighbors does not receive the attention it requires in our national consciousness.

### That is where you step in.

It's time for an approach that does not rely heavily on government but instead calls on each of us to get involved. It calls on each of us to lean in to our humanity, to act as if our own children or parents are struggling each day simply to survive.

The truth of it is that we have plenty of resources to solve this; it is just

making a commitment to solving the issues. That is what this forum – and your joining a working group – will foster.

## At the Event

You will hear from several people living in poverty or who have risen out of poverty. They will share what works and does not work, giving us first-hand experience and understanding.

We will then break into ten working groups, where you will connect with your peers and get to work. Each group will represent one of ten sectors:

**Business**  
**Civic Association**  
**Educational Institution**  
**Faith Community**  
**Government Agency**

**Health Care Provider**  
**Individual**  
**Lived Experience**  
**Nonprofit Organization**  
**Philanthropic Organization**

We will provide guidance and support so each working group has clear direction to focus on cultivating positive economic change in the region.

## Am I obligated beyond the forum?

Think not about what this might take away from your schedule; think instead about what you might be able to give to your neighbors: a real gift - your time and energy.

Being in a working group is at least a one-year commitment, and there are many ways for your group to work together. We will suggest meeting virtually once a quarter, resulting in a year-end summit that will reconvene all the working groups.

**How do I know if I am capable of being an effective working group member?**

1. Do you think it might be good to try something new for your neighbors, for your region?
2. Do you want to be part of that?
3. Do you have at least five hours a month to give?
4. If yes to the above, you can be a member of a working group - and you can help

create the type of positive change the region truly needs.

Email me at [markbergel@sharedhumanityproject.org](mailto:markbergel@sharedhumanityproject.org) if

- You are interested in participating in The Greater Washington Poverty Forum;
- You can suggest someone who would be interested in participating in the Forum;
- You would like The Shared Humanity Project to bring a Forum to your community; or,
- You would like more information.

I look forward to hearing from you.



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**National Plan to  
End Poverty**

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