

New Human Rights Institute Report on Birmingham, Alabama Human Rights Dialogue and Efforts to Promote and Protect Human Rights in Cities Across the United States

Contact: Human Rights Institute, Greta Moseson;
212.854.3138; gmoses@law.columbia.edu

New York, NY (October 1, 2015) – The Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute is pleased to announce the release of a new report, *[Bringing Human Rights Home: The Birmingham Mayor's Office Human Rights Dialogue](#)*, developed in collaboration with the Office of Birmingham Mayor William Bell.

The report, part of the Institute's project to foster human rights promotion and protection at the local level, highlights the instrumental role of mayors in advancing human rights within the United States.

"Birmingham exemplifies the idea that human rights start close to home. Human rights offer a positive vision for change that can help our city and others shape effective solutions that ensure dignity, well-being, and equality for all," Mayor Bell stated.

Bringing Human Rights Home distills a human rights dialogue convened by Birmingham Mayor's Office on March 6, 2015. The dialogue was an outgrowth of the Mayor's previous engagement with the human rights treaty reporting process at the United Nations, and coincided with the second Universal Periodic Review of the United States at the U.N., as well as the 50th anniversary of the Bloody Sunday March from Selma to Montgomery that precipitated passage of the Voting Rights Act.

The report connects the themes that emerged from the dialogue with core international human rights principles and offers recommendations for mayors to integrate human rights standards and strategies into their everyday work.

Risa Kaufman, executive director of the Institute, and JoAnn Kamuf Ward, Associate Director of the Institute's Human Rights in the U.S. Project, traveled to Birmingham to participate in the March 6th dialogue, along with Glory Nwaugbala '16, Daniel Pedraza '16, Benjamin Setel '16, and Audrey Son'15, students in the Human Rights Clinic during the 2014-15 academic year.

JoAnn Kamuf Ward drafted the report and presented it alongside Mayor Bell at the 2015 annual meeting of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies on September 28, 2015. The report is intended as a resource for government agencies and officials interested in using human rights principles to promote equality, opportunity, and dignity at the local level.