

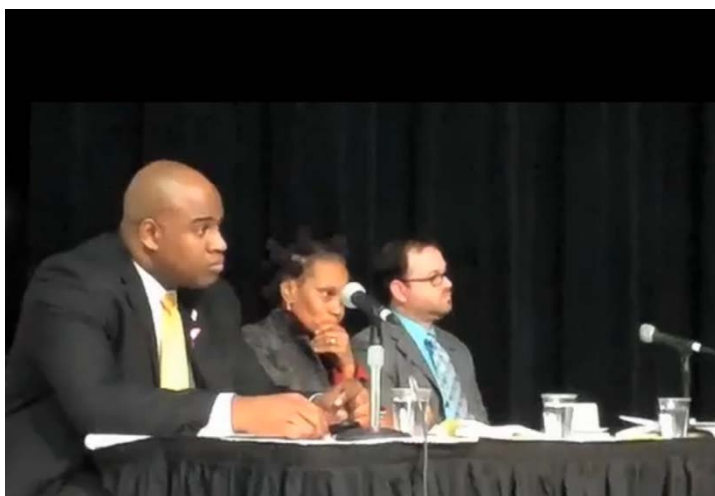
# Anti-Violence Focus of Faith Based Town Hall Meeting in Chester, PA

Posted by Eugene Schneeberg on October 19, 2011



Last night at I had the privilege of speaking on behalf of the Obama administration at Alumni Auditorium at Widener University. I was very impressed by level of commitment and passion shown by the residents of Chester, PA who turned out to discuss ways to keep their city safe for young people. The three hour Town Hall meeting hosted by Grace Community Resource and Empowerment Center focused on Youth Violence Prevention and how Faith and Community Based organizations can partner with Law Enforcement and the City to have a dramatic impact on reducing youth violence.

Those in attendance heard from a distinguished panel of Federal officials as well as local leaders including:



- Calvin Hodnett from the Community Oriented Policing Services Office at DOJ
- Ben O’Dell, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Dr. Bayard Taylor, Senior Pastor at Calvary Baptist Church
- Nicole Cogdell, Parent Advocate and Technical Advisor for “Brothers of Concern”
- Chester City Councilman John Linder
- Dr. Fatima Hafiz, Adjunct Professor Temple University.

The audience made up of largely of Christian and Muslim faith leaders as well as representatives from a “Brothers of Concern” a group of volunteer outreach workers, also heard from Mayor Wendell Butler as well as Robert Reed Executive Assistant US Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania who fielded questions from the audience about enforcement efforts.

The discussion centered largely around the work of the Chester Reentry Collaborative, and what more could be done to prevent youth violence and increase opportunity for young people as well as the role of fathers and parents as part of the solution.

[Learn more about the work that can be done in your community to help prevent youth violence.](#)

[Learn how you can help support and the President’s Fatherhood & Mentoring Initiative.](#)

[Learn more about how your community can strengthen its efforts around Prisoner Reentry.](#)