

A background image showing a pile of broken, colorful crayons in various shades like red, blue, yellow, and green, scattered on a white surface.

Broken Crayons

----STILL COLOR----



4TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

**FAMILIES HEALING TOGETHER
FROM THE IMPACT OF GUN VIOLENCE
AND TRAUMATIC GRIEF**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2025
5:30-8:30 PM | East Orange, NJ**

www.hearmycriesnj.org



PROGRAM

OPEN EXPRESSIONS

Audience time to share (2-3 minutes each)

POEM

Jackie James

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY

Monique Brown

GUEST SPEAKER

Janet Murphy

GUEST SPEAKER

Theresa Watford

DINNER

SNIPPET OF PEELING BACK THE MASK

Lydia Peart

SONG SELECTION

Tracey Carter

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Cassandra Love

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Hear My Cries & The Caleb Love Foundation

CLOSING

Felicia "Lisa" James

POEM

TEARS BEHIND THE SMILE

SOME PEOPLE SUFFER IN SILENCE
THEY TRY TO SUPPRESS ALL THE TURMOIL AND VIOLENCE
SOME DON'T KNOW THAT IT'S TRAUMA
AND CHALK IT UP TO ANOTHER DAY'S DRAMA

WE TRY TO WALK BY FAITH
AS WE SING AMAZING GRACE
ALL THE WHILE MASKING
A CONFUSED SMILE ON OUR FACE

RESOURCES ARE THERE
JUST BEYOND OUR REACH
MOST DON'T KNOW ABOUT
BECAUSE OTHERS DON'T SHARE OR SPEAK

SO WE CONTINUE TO WAKE UP
WALKING IN OUR CONDITION FOR MILES
WITH NO ONE EVER SEEING
THE TEARS BEHIND THE SMILE

WRITTEN BY JACKIE A. JAMES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

BROKEN CRAYONS STILL COLOR 4th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM





Monique Brown is a resident of Somerset, NJ. She has a daughter, Jasmin, and a son, Troy, who was killed by gun violence in 2003. Since her son's passing, Monique has dedicated a great part of her life to helping at risk youth and their families find ways of resolving conflict in a non-violent manner. She has partnered with other mothers to support and offer hope to those who have been impacted by the devastating effects of gun violence. Monique always finds herself working in areas to serve and assist those in need.

She currently works as a Community Engagement Coordinator with the LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) program in Elizabeth, NJ. LEAD is an arrest diversion program that works with individuals who have opioid use disorder, mental health issues and/or homeless.



Janet Murphy, Founder of Parents of Murdered Children Grief Support Group, is the mother of a murdered child! On March 25, 2006, Murphy's son Marquis was taken away tragically and violently. She found herself in a tailspin that she didn't know how to stop. The GRIEF was beyond understanding. With the support of family and friends, she faced the challenge to live; live through a healing experience.

Accepting her grief, allowed her "broken heart" to heal. A passion started growing inside her spirit. Out of that healing experience, POMCGSG was born. It is a "heart-safe" opportunity that Murphy provides parents and families living with the grief of their son or daughter being violently murdered. She knows the importance of LISTENING to others with an open ear, open mind and compassionate heart! Janet has two adult daughters and one granddaughter



Theresa Watford

Born and raised in New Jersey, Theresa is the oldest of two children and a devoted mother of four, two daughters and two sons. She has endured the heartbreaking loss of her oldest son and only nephew to gun violence, as well as her youngest daughter to SID. Through faith and resilience, Theresa continues to honor their memory while offering strength and compassion to others on their healing journey.



Tracy Carter

I've been singing since I was a young girl in church, and my love for God has always guided me. I'm a proud mother of two beautiful children and a wonderful grandson.

As a member of Unity Women's Empowerment, I'm grateful to be part of a community that uplifts and inspires. The theme "Broken Crayons Still Color" truly speaks to my life, because I've faced heartbreak over the past few years, but God has turned my brokenness into breakthroughs.

Dr. Lydia Peart is a lifelong resident of Newark, New Jersey — a proud mother, grandmother, and dedicated community leader. A recent widow, Dr. Peart continues to exemplify strength, resilience, and purpose through her work as an educator, CEO, and advocate for positive change.

As the Founder and CEO of LP Consulting Services, Dr. Peart has been instrumental in securing substantial funding for numerous non-profit organizations throughout Newark and its neighboring communities. Her firm's commitment to empowering grassroots initiatives has helped countless organizations expand their reach and deepen their impact.

Dr. Peart also serves as Grant Manager for Hear My Cries, where she partners with founder Lisa James to advance the organization's mission of providing safe spaces and supportive services for at-risk youth and families affected by gun and community violence.



Rev. Cassandra Scott-Love, MA, LPC, LCADC, ACS, CAMF is a dynamic preacher, teacher, and empowerment coach who believes she was “created by God to be a solution, not a problem.” She serves as Assistant Pastor at Bethel New Life Community Outreach Church in East Orange, NJ, alongside her husband of 44 years, Rev. Charles F. Love. A licensed professional counselor and clinical director, Pastor Love has over 25 years in human services and leads RESET Ministries, helping believers build a relationship—not religion—with Christ. She is also Founder and CEO of C-Luv-N-Me Enterprises and a founding board member of the Caleb Love Foundation.



A passionate mentor, community activist, and award recipient, Pastor Love lives by Psalm 107:20: “He sent His word and healed me.”

Felicia “Lisa” James is the founder of Hear My Cries, a nonprofit and documentary rooted in Newark, New Jersey. In 2016, she was shot as an innocent bystander, leaving her a quadriplegic. In 2019, her only child, Avent, was tragically taken by gun violence.

Through these life-changing experiences, Felicia transformed her pain into purpose. Hear My Cries became a safe space for families, survivors, and communities to share their stories, find strength, and heal together. Through her nonprofit, documentary, and events, she honors loved ones, raises awareness about the impact of gun violence, and inspires hope and resilience.



A Message of Hope

To every parent, sibling, and friend impacted by gun violence or loss of a loved one: you are not alone. The pain is heavy, but God hears your cries — every tear, every sleepless night, every silent prayer. He will give you strength, one day at a time.

Together, we can turn pain into purpose, heartbreak into healing, and memories into movement. We may be broken, but we still color — because love never dies.

HONOREES



**SHONDA
HARPER**



**ALANA
PURKET**



**IRENE
HOLLIS**



**RENEE
WILSON**



**VANESSA
MAYNOR**



**YLANDA
SAMPSON**