



## 9/17/15: Poloncarz Appoints Members of Poverty Committee

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**Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz (at podium) is flanked by members of the Poverty Committee as he announces the group's formation on Thursday. The seven-member volunteer committee will be active in the community and will advise Erie County government on measures to reduce poverty and its causes. Committee members pictured from L-R: Rev. Frank Cerny, Committee Chair Rev. Kinzer Pointer, Dr. Henry Louis Taylor, Dr. Yvonne S. Minor-Ragan, and Marlies Wesolowski. First Deputy Commissioner of the Erie County Department of Social Services Marie Cannon is at right. Not pictured: committee members Anna Falicov, Esq. and Dr. Myron Glick, M.D.**



*Volunteer Committee is Key Component of Initiatives for a Stronger Community;  
Will Advise on Poverty Reduction Measures*

**ERIE COUNTY, NY**— Today, Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz was joined by staff from various county departments and community members to announce the appointees of the re-established Welfare Advisory Board, which will function as a Poverty Committee to advise Erie County on how to reduce poverty. Poloncarz called for the establishment of the Committee earlier this year as part of his health and human services plan, [Initiatives for a Stronger Community](#) .

“Although numerous indicators show that the County as a whole is better off than it was a few short years ago, our community cannot truly be prosperous if a significant portion of our community is unable to take advantage of these opportunities. Poverty reduction deserves sustained attention from Erie County government, and will require collaboration between County government and anti-poverty advocates and organizations,” **said Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz.** “I am proud to announce the establishment of the Poverty Committee, which will give a formal mechanism for County government to receive input from community leaders who work every day to help members of our community achieve self-sufficiency. Working together as a community we can lift all boats as our community’s economic tide rises.”

Although the Poverty Committee will be staffed and supported by the Department of Social Services, it will be engaged with all County departments that work with individuals in or at-risk of poverty. The Poverty Committee will advise Erie County government on measures to reduce poverty and its causes, including access to employment opportunities, high cost of safe and secure housing, substance abuse, mental illness, discrimination, and disability.

The Erie County Charter directs that the Board, which had been inactive for many years, be made up of seven members. Today, Poloncarz introduced the members along with the Chairperson of the Board, Rev. Kinzer Pointer.

“In Galatians 6:2 the Scriptures direct us to ‘Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.’ I commend County Executive Poloncarz in that he recognizes that we do indeed have responsibilities to each other. Re-establishing this important Committee to ask and seek answers to reducing poverty is our responsibility to our fellow citizens. This is vital work in returning the entire region to better days, and I am pleased to join this effort,” **said Rev. Kinzer Pointer.**

Rev. Pointer, a native son of Buffalo and graduate of Canisius College, is the pastor of Agape Fellowship Baptist Church.

For more information: <http://grumbuffalo.org/about-us/meet-the-staff>

**The other new appointees are:**

**Dr. Henry Louis Taylor** – Dr. Taylor is the Founding Director of the Center for Urban Studies at the University at Buffalo. His research focuses on understanding distressed urban neighborhoods, the redevelopment of shrinking cities, as well as issues of social isolation, racial justice and class facing people of color.

For more information: <http://ap.buffalo.edu/People/faculty/departement-of-urban-and-regional-planning-faculty.host.html/content/shared/ap/students-faculty-alumni/faculty/Taylor.detail.html>



**Anna Falicov, Esq.** – Ms. Falicov has focused her law practice and activism on representing and advocating for working people. She is the Chairperson of the Coalition for Economic Justice, an organization that works on issues of equitable economic development and workers' rights.

For more information: <http://cpjglaborlaw.com/people/anna-falicov-esq/>

**Dr. Myron Glick, M.D.** – Dr. Glick is the Chief Medical Officer of Jericho Road Community Health Center, which provides a culturally sensitive medical home, especially for refugee and low-income community members, facilitating wellness and self-sufficiency by addressing health, education, economic and spiritual barriers.

For more information:

<http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/commencement/speaker/2015.html>

**Rev. Frank Cerny** – Rev. Cerny is the Board Chair of the Rural Outreach Center in East Aurora, which provides a centralized facility where those in need in rural areas of Erie County can receive acute assistance when dealing with sudden traumatic events, along with empowerment and training programs to elevate their status.

For more information: <http://theroc.co/directors/>

**Dr. Yvonne S. Minor-Ragan** – Dr. Minor-Ragan currently serves as the President of Buffalo Promise Neighborhood, a public/private partnership seeking to improve academic performance at the neighborhood's three schools while revitalizing the surrounding community.

For more information: <http://www.buffalopromiseneighborhood.org/category/Our-Team/43.html>

**Marlies A. Wesolowski** – Ms. Wesolowski has been the Executive Director of the Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center, a multi-faceted human service organization, since 2001. She previously served as a Buffalo School Board President.

For more information: <http://www.urbanctr.org/administration.html>