

An Expert Spoke at Temple Sinai On: “Poverty: Our Crisis and Our Response”



OUR TOWN

Lou Singer - Penfield

10:49 p.m. EDT October 12, 2015



"We have a community that has developed in a way that has really, really been exceptional in the way it has concentrated where poor people can live." That is one of the dramatic statements made by Edward Doherty during his presentation at Temple Sinai on Penfield Road, titled, "Poverty: Our Crisis and Our Response."

He spoke to a packed house on the evening of Wednesday, October 7th that was sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women and a large number of religious and community organizations. Mr. Doherty is a retired VP of Community Programs at the Rochester Area Community Foundation and he was the primary researcher and author of Rochester's "Poverty Report." He holds a Bachelor's degree from St. John Fisher and a Master's in Public Administration from SUNY Brockport.

He gave the audience an overview of the complexity of poverty and how it affects the lives of people in terms of education, health, family support, housing, community services and much more. He went on to give us four options to help solve the dramatic problems of our schools:

- Take the poverty out of our schools, since all data correlates poor education with poverty.
- Take the schools out of poverty, since 40% poverty in our schools makes it almost impossible to have effective education.
- Find a dramatic, new way to educate our children. This would involve a major investment.
- Keep doing the same thing and expect something different. This remark resulted in some murmuring among the audience.

Mr. Doherty ended the presentation by explaining the objectives of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative and one of its goals: to reduce poverty by 50% in 15 years. He said, "The Anti-Poverty Initiative set up a roadmap based on three critical factors:

1. Understand structural racism.

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2. Address poverty-induced trauma.
3. Build and support community-level efforts.” This includes increased media attention which will build awareness and commitment, organize more meetings like the one at Temple Sinai, have more conversations on the issues of race and support the ongoing efforts to reduce poverty.

Vancy Boyer, Co-President of the local National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Rochester Section, said, “With so many of our community living in poverty, we wanted to educate ourselves and others about the needs and what we can do to address the problem.”



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Mr. Doherty said: "Rochester is now the ONLY city of comparable size where more than half of its children live in poverty." (Photo: LOU SINGER)

Anyone interested in joining the above organization of Jewish Women, please contact nmchodak@aol.com.

