

Bios for MVFHR Board of Directors

Jennifer Bishop-Jenkins

Jennifer Bishop-Jenkins' sister Nancy Bishop Langert was shot to death along with her husband, Richard Langert, and their unborn child in suburban Chicago in 1990. Their killer was 16 years old at the time and a local politician running for re-election proposed lowering the age of death penalty eligibility in Illinois to 16 to "honor your sister."

Jennifer vowed to oppose him publicly if her sister's murder was used as the rationale for this proposal. "Nancy loved children and this is not what she would have wanted," she says. Since that time she has worked to end the death penalty both in Illinois and nationwide.

She serves on the board of the Illinois Coalition Against the Death Penalty, is the state president for the Million Mom March /Brady Campaign and volunteers with the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. She was a featured speaker on the steps of the U.S. Capital for the Halt the Assault Million Mom March on Mother's Day 2004. She has testified before the Illinois Governor's Commission on Capital Punishment and in death penalty clemency hearings before the Illinois Prisoner Review Board. She has spoken before state legislative committees and the Chicago City Council on issues of gun violence, crime prevention, and criminal justice reform.

She appeared in the documentary on the death penalty, "Too Flawed To Fix" and was profiled in a Chicago Tribune Magazine cover story. Her story and abolition work are included in the book *Don't Kill In Our Names* by Rachel King. Jennifer, who first visited Illinois' death row in 1994, is on a mercy committee for former death row inmate Renaldo Hudson. She wrote the foreword for the recently published book of prisoners' essays on personal responsibility and transformation entitled *Lockdown Prison Heart*.

Jennifer and her sister, Jeanne Bishop, were co-recipients of the Brigid Award given by Concern Worldwide in recognition of their reconciliation work. She has taught high school and college for more than 20 years and has received several outstanding teacher awards. She is the Assistant Principal for Academics at St. Scholastica Academy in Chicago.