

# SPLC Announces New Campaign, Poverty Is Not a Line, During Poverty Awareness Month

---

 [splcenter.org/presscenter/poverty-awareness-month-campaign](https://splcenter.org/presscenter/poverty-awareness-month-campaign)

CEO Bryan Fair Featured on the Organization's 'Apathy Is Not an Option' Podcast

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** — In recognition of Poverty Awareness Month, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) announces a new campaign, *Poverty Is Not a Line*. The campaign seeks to reshape the narrative about poverty to expose misinformation about what it means to live in poverty and to empower communities to resolve systematic issues that cause poverty.

As part of the campaign launch, SPLC's interim President and CEO Bryan Fair joined the organization's podcast, *Apathy Is Not an Option*, to discuss the campaign as well as his own personal story and reflections on growing up in poverty.

"When I think about poverty, what I think about is how I grew up," said **Bryan Fair, interim president and CEO, SPLC**. "We would have so many people who were living on the margins, who were poor, who couldn't afford housing, who had food insecurity, who couldn't pay utilities. Mine was one of those families that was constantly moving just ahead of overdue rent or not being able to provide enough food for a month, relying on public assistance, which was inadequate. Literally, each month, my family was running out of food, not being able to pay utilities in the wintertime."



Watch on YouTube

In the video: Poverty is “the result of many failed systems,” says SPLC interim President and CEO Bryan Fair. “Failed systems, discrimination, exploitation. ... Poverty is really a global issue.” (SPLC)

Poverty cannot be defined by a single line, nor a metric of income to fulfill necessities like food, water and shelter. It is instead a complex condition shaped and reinforced by structural injustice and the deprivation of rights and resources. The experience of poverty varies by location, concentration and access.

Addressing poverty is a top priority for the SPLC, consistent with its strategic focus on reducing economic injustice. The “Poverty Is Not a Line” campaign will be a fact-driven initiative to expose poverty as a human condition characterized by the sustained deprivation of the resources, choices and power necessary to support an adequate standard of living for all.

“It would be much later in my career that I would begin to see that poverty was really not a line, that one can’t define poverty in that way,” **Fair continued.** “Poverty instead is a result of many failed systems, discrimination, exploitation, and that poverty is really a global issue and not just a domestic issue and certainly not just a local issue in the South or in Columbus, where I grew up.

“It’s an issue in every part of our country. It’s a global issue where many people, billions of people in the world, experience poverty, circumstances of poverty because of the lack

of employment opportunities, the lack of educational opportunities, because of discrimination, by race, by gender because of failed governmental policies. And I've come to know, in my adult life, that we could do much more about the systemic conditions of poverty across the globe, and we could do much more in this country if we had the will to do so."

The full podcast interview is available here.

###

### **About the Southern Poverty Law Center**

The Southern Poverty Law Center is a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements and advance the human rights of all people. For more information, visit [www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org).