

Additional Thoughts on Poverty and Additional Discussion Questions
March 2013
(from Gloria Caldwell)

The League of Women Voters works to "secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all, to promote social and economic justice," and in today's harsh economic environment, many Tulsans have fallen out of the middle class into the new poor -- due to an illness, home foreclosure and/or job loss.

- In our town, more than 87,000 people in Tulsa County and 73,000 in the City of Tulsa live in poverty, and
- In our town, eighty percent of Tulsa Public Schools students qualify for free or reduced cost lunch and
- In our state, while the Congress is cutting assistance budgets, our legislature, in turn, is slashing funds for basic needs -- food, education, healthcare, and the nonprofits who serve the poor are overwhelmed.

If any of the candidates for last November's election spoke about children being hungry, the ill-housed, without access to medical services, poor educational opportunities and who don't have, and can't afford, dependable transportation, I didn't hear it. Who is speaking out for the poor?

Where does public policy enter the picture for our most vulnerable citizens?

1. What do the OK Policy charts and snapshot of Oklahoma today tell us about poverty?
2. Is there anything in them that stands out as outrageous or unbelievable?
3. Is there anything in them that sets your hair on fire?