

# The Monthly Voice

October 2014 - ONE DC Newsletter

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*“As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation -- either to react with bitterness or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.”*

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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## Greetings from ONE DC, Friend

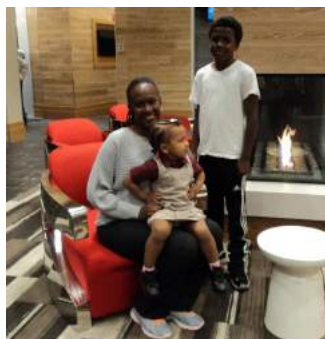
### October is a month of healing.

In October, members of the People’s Platform Alliance came together to remember the thousands of residents forced to leave the District. We gathered for a peace vigil to call attention to the increasing loss of affordable housing in the District. **Together, we heal. And together, we build a movement.**



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## Displaced Kelsey Gardens Residents Return to Shaw



September 2014, the first six families moved into the new Jefferson Marketplace apartment complex, an 8-story high rise, built on the site of their former homes. 54 families were displaced from their garden style apartments, Kelsey Gardens, eight years ago and saw their homes bulldozed to make way for the new development.

The Kelsey Gardens Tenant Association won a landmark settlement that guaranteed the former tenants the absolute right to return to the new building and required the owners to make 54 units available to low income renters for the next 50 years. ONE DC has worked with the tenants and the Jefferson Apartment Group to ensure that

as many of the families that choose to return are able to move into the new building.

Ronnie Harris was the first Kelsey Gardens tenant to move into the new building at the end of August. She shared her feelings: **“It felt great to finally be able to move back, it was really hard not being able to see my family as often as I’d like. My family still lived in Shaw and now after 8 LONG years, we can see more of each other.”** While the 8-story, 281 unit building is quite different from a garden style apartment, Harris says, “Kelsey Gardens 1510 #2b of 13 years will be missed, but I’m loving 1550 Jefferson right now!”

Cheryl Jordan is excited about her return to the Shaw neighborhood saying **“I love my new apartment, but the building with so many people will take some getting used to.”**

Some of the seniors who lived in Kelsey Gardens unfortunately have passed away waiting for the new building to be built. Others moved to other parts of DC and Maryland and have not stayed in touch with the Tenants Association and may not realize they have the right to return. Shirley Williams a Board member of the Kelsey Gardens Tenant Association remarked, **“I never felt comfortable in the apartment I moved to, I really missed my neighborhood. It’s great to be back and I’m loving my apartment.”**



Less than half of the original 54 families plan to move into Jefferson Marketplace. The remaining units will be filled by other Section 8 voucher holders through a lottery process. ONE DC with the Kelsey Gardens Tenant Association continue to work with the property owners, Jefferson Apartment Group, to ensure that low-income families are selected to fill the remainder of the affordable dwelling units.

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## **And We Are Not Yet Moved: The Ferguson Decisions**

**By Ben Kabuye**

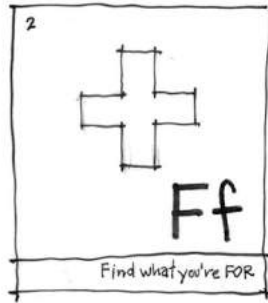
The air isn’t different in St. Louis, but you breathe differently in the show-me-state. It is the tension riding the air after a Black boy’s body breathed its last. Michael Brown’s spirit animates the streets and even the empty night air surrounding United Church of Christ. The Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI) has answered the call from Ferguson, MO. [Black Lives Matter](#), at least to the bodies huddled in the shelter offered by Pastor Starsky Wilson.

[Read more about Ben's experience in Ferguson, MO here](#)

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## **The Second Element of Urban Restoration: Find What You’re FOR**

**By Dr. Mindy Fullilove**



The world is full of problems, and we can help to make it a better place by tackling these problems. But what is that we want to see instead? It's easy to say "No!" to problems – like No Smoking, No Dumping, No Police Brutality. But if people are not going to smoke or dump or hurt others, what are they supposed to do? We need to think about this – to find what we are FOR -- before we start our work.

It is good to imagine what teens should be doing with their time instead of smoking? Perhaps if they're busy playing music, they won't pick up the habit and avoid a lifetime of addiction. Similarly, where should people put various kinds of garbage? How does garbage affect the places where it gets dumped? How are we going to manage that so that the world can be safe and beautiful for all? And finally, we want police to treat people with respect but what does that look like? By thinking about these questions we can identify what we are FOR – that is will lead to create the campaigns and projects to make great cities in which to live.

## Building a Youth Movement

ONE DC joins with [By Peaceful Means](#) to kickstart a youth-led organizing movement around displacement in DC.

**When:** Thursday, October 30th, 4:30-6:30PM

**Where:** Sankofa Cafe, 2715 Georgia Ave, NW

*By Peaceful Means Presents*

**DC Youth Rising Fall Kick-Off Event**

**October 30th**  
**4:30-6:30 PM**

Come hear from organizers and activists working for justice and equity in our city

To learn more about DC Youth Rising and By Peaceful Means visit [bypeacefulmeans.org](http://bypeacefulmeans.org) or email [info@bypeacefulmeans.org](mailto:info@bypeacefulmeans.org).

**SANKOFA**  
Video Books & Cafe  
2714 Georgia Ave \*across from Howard University

Free to attend—but please support your taste buds and our gracious host, Sankofa, by enjoying their delicious and healthy coffees, smoothies and food!

**Guests include:**  
activists  
filmmakers  
poets and  
hip-hop artists

[Click here for more info](#)

**ONE DC Partners with Movement Matters**

By [David Haiman](#)

Organizing and movement building are difficult work. We confront power. We go against the system. We name things most people would rather ignore. To do this work requires courage and often invites hurt. This hurt is expanded when we don't have the skills and knowledge to do the work well, when our organizations don't support us in the right ways, and when our allies treat us like enemies.



[Movement Matters](#) works with groups like ONE DC, ROC-DC, DC Jobs with Justice, LEDC, and MLOV to help make them better, more effective organizations. We work with organizers to help them build their values, vision, and skills, to navigate the organizing world. We do this to build a stronger movement for justice, for better outcomes for our communities. But we also do this to try to cut back on this hurt. To make our organizations places of transformation and healing, in addition to being places of accountability and struggle.

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## Practicing Mindfulness for Individual & Social Transformation



The mindfulness retreats for people of color and social justice activists in Baltimore this past August were a great success. So much so that folks want to continue meeting to practice together and build communities of support. The first follow-up meeting for POC happened on September 7th and the follow-up for social justice activists happened on September 28th in Baltimore at St. Wenceslaus Church.

We will continue to meet monthly, at times in the DC area, to practice sitting and walking meditation and sharing about mindfulness practices in the spaces we move through daily.

For more information contact [socialhealthconcepts@gmail.com](mailto:socialhealthconcepts@gmail.com) or visit:

[Baltimore and Beyond: bridging mindfulness and justice for peace](#)  
[Baltimore & Beyond: mindfulness community for POC](#)

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## ONE DC in the News

### [An Organizer's Work is Never Done](#)

By Jodi Weinberger, Shelterforce

ONE DC's staff envisioned a job-training program that would not be a battle with the residents who need it the most, as D.C.'s most vulnerable residents have come to know such programs to often be. They envisioned a new model where organizers, and in turn, the community, had power along with the employer.

But this was a harder nut to crack, and as the job-training program comes to a close and ONE DC reflects on the last year, Moulden describes the overall feeling he's left with: "We wouldn't want to do it again if we had to do it this way." As organizers, ONE DC reached over 3,000 people to apply for the job-training program.

[Read the full article here](#)

### [The Cooperative Solution](#)

**By ONE DC's Jessica Gordon Nembhard for Shelterforce**

Cooperative businesses are also stable, community-based business anchors: Cooperative businesses have higher survival rates than traditional corporations and small businesses after the first year of startup and after five years in business. In addition, evidence shows that cooperatives successfully address the effects of crises and survive crises better than other types of enterprises.

From the employment angle, cooperatives, especially worker cooperatives, create not just jobs, but high-quality jobs. They tend to lead their industries in wage levels and benefits. In addition, as owners of the business, worker-owners share in the surplus (or profits) of the enterprise. Many worker cooperatives provide annual dividends to worker-owners, which increase the compensation level and also symbolize the member's ownership. They enable their owners to not only generate income, but accumulate assets—equity in the cooperative—promoting economic independence.

[Read the full article here](#)

[Sign up for Shelterforce Weekly](#)

### **ONE DC Featured on Panel at Georgetown University**

ONE DC Organizers Quitel Andrews and Claire Cook spoke on a panel hosted by Georgetown University's Department of Sociology about the changing demographics in Washington, DC.

[Read more here](#)

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### **ONE DC Organizers Attend DCJwJ Leadership & Skills Training**

ONE DC staff Marybeth Onyeukwu and Claire Cook attend DC Jobs with Justice Leadership & Organizing Training in Lanham, MD, where they gained skills and tools for better campaign strategy, holding 1-on-1's, power analysis, agitation, and coalition building.



## ONE Bit of Good News

Our very own Jessica Gordon Nembhard, PhD, has been awarded the Oni Award at this year's International Black Women's Congress.

*"The Oni Award symbolizes the essence of all that is good in African People. The word ONI is taken from the Ife culture of Nigeria. It represents a spiritual force that protects the people. A recipient of the Oni Award has been identified as someone who protects, defends and enhances the general well-being of African people. A recipient of the ONI is diligent, persistent and uncompromising. We like to think of her as our unsung heroine."*

Jessica, we are so grateful for your energy and investment in our ONE DC Community.

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Do you want to be a writer or editor for the *Monthly Voice*? Email [organizer@onedconline.org](mailto:organizer@onedconline.org)

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