

The Monthly Voice

January 2015 - ONE DC Newsletter

"I never intend to become adjusted to the tragic inequalities of the economic system which will take necessity from the masses to give luxury to the classes."

-Martin Luther King Jr.

Greetings from ONE DC, Friend

In a time where Dr. King's radical politics are consistently misrepresented as capitulation to the status quo it is inspiring to watch a new generation of organizers remember and practice Dr. King's unwavering commitment to protest. Dr. King taught active participation in civil disobedience was absolutely necessary in order to push the country towards racial and economic justice. He was deeply concerned for the poor and never missed an opportunity to challenge a system that denied people the ability to live with true dignity and respect. Dr. King understood true freedom for people of color included economic security.

Dr. King's message of racial and economic justice is still very much needed today. Over the last decade, the divide between the "haves" and "have nots" have become glaringly apparent in the District. We know the current crisis in the city has not been by happenstance and is directly connected to neoliberal policies. City officials continue to auction off public resources including public land, housing and shelters in exchange for very little. Councilmembers consistently choose to disinvest from social welfare programs while calling for more funding for the police, which has resulted in more surveillance and harassment of low-income communities of color specifically in the form of "jump-out" squads. In essence, the issues of over policing, poverty and displacement do not happen in a vacuum and inform each other. It is time for an intervention.

In response to the crisis, several community members, leaders and organizers have come together to create the People's Platform. The People's Platform is a comprehensive policy agenda that addresses structural inequities primarily affecting long-time, low-income residents of color.

The members and leadership of ONE DC are committed to continuing the tradition of disruptive protest to change the status quo. We are dedicated to seeing change and will not stop until the District becomes a truly equitable city.

Dominic T. Moulden, Resource Organizer

Towards a New Gentrification Mythology

By Jennifer Bryant, jbryant@onedconline.org

I studied English in college and I've always been fascinated by stories. In order to deconstruct gentrification, we first have to start by looking closely at the narratives we've built up around it.

One of my favorite quotes, and the epigraph to the novel I'm writing, is a quote from the Egyptian artist and writer Hassan Khan. He says: "Maybe we're all guilty of building our own mythologies." I love that quote because we're constantly creating myths to make sense of, and in many cases to justify, what's going on in the world around us.

I want to begin today by deconstructing the mythology of gentrification. There are many pieces to this puzzle but I want to zoom in on one recurring myth - and that is that gentrification is not a race issue but purely an economic issue. I want to explore this myth by lifting up a true story about a house on a tree lined street in Bloomingdale in Northwest, Washington, DC; and then I'll end by exploring alternatives to our current model of development.

I live in Congress Heights in Ward 8. Every time I'm walking up Alabama Avenue I pass the Jewish cemetery that sits on the side of the road not too far from the metro station. It's a visible reminder that this wasn't always a predominantly Black neighborhood. Congress Heights was established around 1890 when Arthur Randle purchased land in the area and laid out the streets. Restrictive covenants were attached to deeds, as they were in many parts of the city, to prohibit the sale of land or buildings to African-Americans. This is why, for many years, Congress Heights was predominantly white.

Restrictive covenants were around for generations until May of 1948 with the landmark Supreme Court case *Hurd v. Hodge*. This case, one of the most crucial housing policy cases in the nation's history, involved the issue of restrictive covenants in Bloomingdale right here in Washington, DC. The *Hurd* case is critical to understanding how race and class operate in DC, and ultimately to understanding how gentrification is a continuation of race-based housing policy.

[Read the full piece here](#)

Why I Became A Sustaining Donor

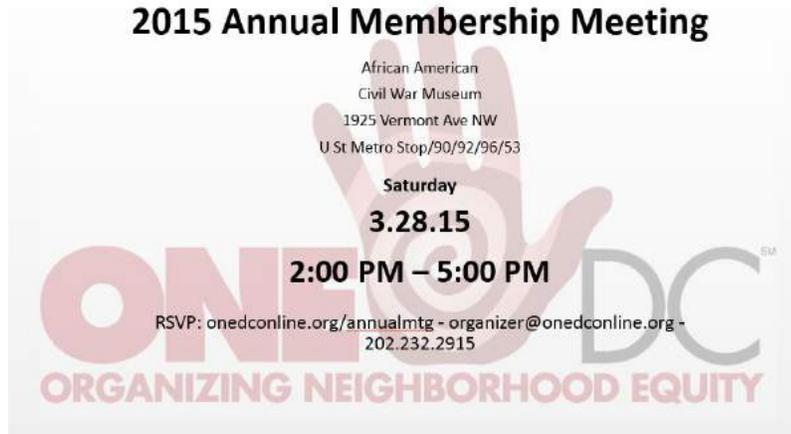
By Caitlin Cocilova, ONE DC member

I became a sustaining donor because, although I am not always active in ONE DC projects, I follow and want to continually support ONE DC's work. As a newer member to the DC community, I learned of ONE DC from friends and had the chance to meet Nkechi Feaster and visit the office about a year and a half ago. I appreciate the open leadership model ONE DC follows, its commitment to remaining rooted in reflecting the desires of community members, and its willingness to be honest and blunt about the economic disparities in the District. I support and respect ONE DC because its organizers are often able to better articulate and frame thoughts I have about local and national issues based on their deep connections and passions, such as the lack of affordable housing and gentrification, the Black Lives Matter movement, and ridding of jump outs in

our communities.

[Sustain the movement by committing as little as \\$5 a month to ONE DC](#)

RSVP Today for the 2015 Annual Membership Meeting



[RSVP Here](#)

Join the planning committee! Our next meeting will be **Thursday, February 5 at 6PM.**

For more info, email Claire at ccook@onedconline.org

Breaking Down LITC!

[Mount Vernon Plaza](#) resident and tenant leader Quitel Andrews and ONE DC organizer Marybeth Onyeukwu featured on [Empower DC](#)'s weekly radio show to break down how Low Income Tax Credits (LITC) work (or don't), and how MVP tenants have resisted displacement. Hosted by public housing organizer Schyla Pondexter-Moore.

[Listen to the radio segment here](#)

Empower DC hosts a one-hour radio show on WPFW 89.3, [Taking Action](#), every Tuesday at 1:00 pm

Upcoming Events

Nonviolent Direct Action Training for People of Color

Wednesday, February 4

Facilitated by Rosa Lozano and Noor

[Visit the Washington Peace Center DC Skillshare for more info](#) or email Darakshan Raja darakshan@washingtonpeacecenter.org

Equitable Development in DC: Sustainability from Below

Thursday, March 26

Second annual equitable development conference co-sponsored with the

George Washington University will bring together residents of neighborhoods throughout Washington, DC, organizers, students, scholars, elected officials, and others who are engaged in efforts to create more living-wage jobs, affordable housing, and other opportunities for wealth accumulation for residents of traditionally underserved communities, many of which are experiencing rapid gentrification and displacement.

[Click here for more info](#)

Free Legal Advice Clinic

Saturday, February 14 - 10AM - 12PM

Bread for the City OR Bread for the City, SE
1525 7th Street NW 1640 Good Hope Road SE

[Click here for more info on free legal clinics in DC](#)

ONE DC Seeking Spring Admin & Organizing Interns

ONE DC is seeking creative and dynamic individuals with a genuine interest in getting on-the-ground experience with community organizing around economic & racial justice issues, as well as a strong desire to learn, grow, and contribute to social change and community-building campaigns.

We are currently seeking interns to support our on-going campaigns and administrative work.

- Help recruit and develop relationships with ONE DC members by conducting outreach via phone banking, one-on-one visits, and neighborhood door-knocking throughout the District.
- Research economic and racial justice issues and legislation related to the Black Workers Center, People's Platform, Right to Income, or Right to Housing campaigns.
- Assist with facilitation and planning of ONE DC organizational and campaign events and popular education workshops
- Track organizing and outreach efforts through data entry into Nation Builder contact database.
- Update ONE DC database (Nation Builder) to track membership, donations, and attendance at events.
- Assist with communications through social media, email blasts, and website updates

To apply, please email organizer@onedconline.org with a resume and cover letter. Include how you heard about ONE DC and why you are interested in joining us.

[Click here for full descriptions](#)

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Do you want to be a writer or editor for the *Monthly Voice*? Email
organizer@onedconline.org

ONE DC · 614 S Street Northwest, Carriage House in Rear, Washington, DC 20001, United States
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