

# The Monthly Voice

March 2015 - ONE DC Newsletter

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*"The future of Civilization is still very much in the balance, and the very memory of alternative emancipatory visions to capitalism are becoming dimmer with each generation."*

– Murray Bookchin

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## Greetings from ONE DC, Friend

March is about recognizing that sustainability must come from below.

Sustainable growth comes from cooperative economics and cooperative solutions, in which human beings and nature live in balance. Creative destruction and condo-zilla type communities are not sustainable and will end up desecrating the natural and human environment. Instead, through our sharing of resources we enhance the ONLY type of economic system that is sustainable, namely a human scale economy. In March, we remember that low income and working class people are at the core of creating sustainable communities.

Join in sustaining ONE DC. Become a sustaining donor at [www.onedconline.org/sustainingdonor](http://www.onedconline.org/sustainingdonor).

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## ONE DC Organizes with Residents to Stop Displacement of 165 Families

Brookland Manor is a 535-unit affordable housing project that sits just up the street from the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station. The developer of the project is trying to demolish the current apartments and build luxury units in their place. If the current development plan is approved, it will result in the displacement of 165 families from their homes. ONE DC is working with the tenants to fight this demolition and save their community.

**On March 16, 2015 they won the first battle in that war when the Zoning Commission and the DC Office of Planning told the developer that his plan did not address the concerns of the current low-income residents.** This ruling was the result of months of work by low-income residents from around the District in places like Barry Farms and Congress heights.

Together with these residents, ONE DC has been applying constant pressure to City officials to change the way they think about affordable housing. In fact, just a couple months ago the Office of Planning lauded the proposed Brookland

Manor development as a positive step forward for the City and a sign of strong “economic development.” It took public shaming at oversight hearings and packing the zoning hearing with an organized and educated resident-led coalition to make them do the right thing.

**ONE DC and the tenants of Brookland Manor know that the fight has just begun and will continue to push for the right of their community as well as residents in low-income communities all over the District to continue to be safely housed and lead a life with dignity.**



*ONE DC members & Brookland Manor residents Ms. Johnson and Ms. Elliott celebrate the win at the Brookland Manor Zoning Hearing.*

## **A Student's Reflection on a ONE DC Walking Tour**

By Barbara Anne Kozee, [Worker Justice DC Alternative Spring Program](#)



Photo Credit: Fernanda Hernández

As we neared the end of our walking tour with Claire and stood on the corner of 7th and P St NE, I had a shocking realization: I go by the exact area that we had just been talking about for the past hour twice a week on my way to my job as a preschool tutor. I couldn't believe that all the observations that Claire had made about the very visual impacts of gentrification had never crossed my mind once as the G2 made its way toward my destination on Florida Ave.

I had never once thought about the contrast between the high-rise, luxury apartments that lined one side of the street while the other side consisted of run-down buildings with paint peeling off the sides. I'd never noticed the giant, empty lot of grass sitting right in the midst of these fancy apartments that the local DC government had repeatedly promised to turn into public housing and repeatedly failed to follow through with. Our tour with Claire opened my eyes to the very real impact that gentrification has had in our DC community.

**The pictures she showed us of what the neighborhood looked like only a few years before new housing and businesses moved in—a majority African American population and much more open space—provided evidence for a disturbing truth: the demographic that once lived in the neighborhood that we walked around is being increasingly displaced by people of higher socioeconomic status, mainly white.**

Our walking tour with Claire taught me to pay more attention to my surroundings

and to question. What has made this neighborhood this way? Is this just? And what can I do about it? Being a part of the DC community necessitates being aware of these pressing issues and actively doing our part to affect change. [ONE DC invites you to engage with them](#) in a conversation and community learning process about displacement and resistance in DC, and the potential for more equitable development.

*Barbara Anne Kozee is a sophomore at Georgetown University pursuing a Bachelor's of Science at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service with a focus on International Political Economy.*

[Join us on ONE DC's next Social Justice Walking Tour Saturday, April 4th!](#)

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## Upcoming Events

**2nd Annual Equitable Development Conference - "Sustainability From Below"**  
Thursday, March 26th - 9am-3pm  
GWU Marvin Center Grand Ballroom - 800 21st St NW

Come together for a lively panel discussion and debate with long-time DC residents, organizers, students, scholars, elected officials, and anyone else committed to creating living-wage work, truly affordable housing, and community and family wealth generation. Co-sponsored with The George Washington University.

[RSVP Here](#)

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**ONE DC + Solidarity Economy DC Fundraiser: Coop Learning Journey to NYC**  
Thursday, March 26th - 6pm-9pm  
Impact Hub - 419 7th St NW, Suite 200

A group of DC organizers and citizen artists have come together to find ways to build a [solidarity economy in DC](#)—one that is democratic, participatory, equitable, and just.

We have a lot of learning to do, and one of the ways we're doing that is through trips to groups in other cities who have created interesting and powerful models —like worker cooperatives and participatory budgeting. We're planning a visit to NYC in April to do just that. Some organizers will pay their way, and others will require stipends to cover travel and lodging costs. If you can, please chip in to support the organizing work required to transform our economy!

[RSVP for the fundraiser on Facebook](#) or email [allison@impacthubdc.com](mailto:allison@impacthubdc.com).

*Interested in starting your own worker cooperative in DC? Want to join us on the Learning Journey? Email Jennifer at [jbryant@onedconline.org](mailto:jbryant@onedconline.org)*

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**Annual Membership Meeting**  
Saturday, March 28th - 2pm - 5pm

[RSVP Here](#)

Annual [membership dues](#) are used to build a people's movement funded by the people.

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**Ward 4 Candidate's Forum on Housing, Jobs and Development**  
**Thursday, April 2nd 7PM - 9PM**  
**Kingsbury Center - 5000 14th St NW**

In the upcoming Ward 4 Special Election on April 28th, we'll elect a successor to fill the seat vacated by Mayor Bowser. Elections are when candidates and leaders listen hardest to us - this is a big opportunity to make sure that whoever is elected will be a champion for progressive change in our city.

[Click here for more info and to RSVP](#)

[You can also RSVP on Facebook](#)

*Sponsored by: Jews United for Justice, Kennedy Street Development Association, Ward 4 Thrives, DC for Democracy, Fair Budget Coalition, Working Families, DC Jobs with Justice, Restaurant Opportunities Center, ONE DC, Latino Economic Development Center, Bread for the City and So Others Might Eat.*

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**People's Platform Members Learn from Congo Youth Organizers**

**By Brook Hill**



Ben Kabamba, Coordinator for the Youth for a New Society and Administrator for FILIMBI, and Maurice Carney from [Friends of the Congo](#) attended the March [People's Platform Meeting](#). They spoke to those in attendance about their efforts to prevent current President Joseph Kabila from altering the Constitution of the Democratic

Republic of the Congo to allow him to remaining in power past the expiration of his second term in December 2016. **The story he told was one of extreme oppression, violence, and corruption that while more intense than some struggles faced by working people and people of color today in the United States was nevertheless eerily familiar.**

The Youth for a New Society and FILIMBI represent a coalition of youth organizations and university students in the Congo. From January 19th to the 22nd the group took part in widespread street demonstrations to protest President Kabila's efforts to prolong his stay in power. Their goal was to occupy the Senate in the capitol city. Kabamba described how the protesters were met with violence by the authorities. Many of his fellow protestors were injured or killed. He told us that he had actually been arrested at one point and thought that he would be killed, but was lucky to have been released unharmed, unlike so many others. Kabamba said that protesting in the face of danger and violence was frightening, but it also reminded him how important victory was and motivated him to continue.

When members asked how the coalition was able to get people to continue demonstrating Kabamba said that **many people had awakened to their oppressed circumstances. Now that they were awake their desire to be free of oppression was greater than their fear of death.** Kabamba has been traveling around the United States and other parts of the work to raise awareness and support for his movement. He also talked about how he had been following the #BlackLivesMatter protests, which he found inspiring as we in attendance found his story of struggle. Fight the power, peace.

[Support Congolese youth and the #Telema Movement!](#)

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## ONE Bit of Good News



ONE DC & Solidarity Economy DC members travel on their first Coop Learning Journey to Red Emma's Bookstore in Baltimore. To support or join us on our next journey to NYC, email Jennifer at [jbryant@onedconline.org](mailto:jbryant@onedconline.org)

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