



"If we know, then we must fight for your life as though it were our own - which it is - and render impassable with our bodies the corridor to the gas chamber. For, if they come for you in the morning, they will be coming for us that night."

[-James Baldwin](#)

---

#### **What are we doing to build power?**

**National Black Worker Center Project Convening - Raleigh, NC**

**By BA Cockburn & Maurice Cook**

November 14, 2018 in Raleigh North Carolina, the NBWCP held its annual convening with representatives from seven worker centers from across the country: Baltimore, Bay Area, LA, New Orleans, North Carolina, Chicago, and DC. The convening centered around connecting to the other centers, telling our collective story, and building power. "It's not just about the local struggle but how we build a broader and more powerful movement."

It was an insightful two days, where discussions and workshops included an overview of black economic history insights, the dangers of a single story, story telling, working while Black videos, and the benefits and challenges to being a part of the national network. Steven Pitts, NBWCP's Board Chair, and Tanya Wallace Gobern, NBWCP's Executive Director, welcomed the group and set the tone for the convening – "What are we doing to build power? We are the embodiment of survival and winning. There is power in our union, there is power in the entire working class. Our north star is the national movement to change the world to build power as a collective."

This was not the usual gathering. Tanya had a very unique and meaningful introduction process. She randomly invited 8 to 10 attendees at a time to sit in a semi-circle at the front of the room. She asked each person to say their name and to tell the story of an ancestor's work experience or moment of pride - to share who your people are, which says something about who you are. For one, it was a dad who always paid his unions dues so when they went on strike, the family had food. For another, it was an enslaved great grandmother who held on

to her baby during a forced march at the end of the civil war; holding on meant that her child survived to grow up free and inspire a new generation.



To think about how we got to this moment in time and to remind ourselves of some key collective moments in the black economic history, we participated in a gallery walk. We walked around the room contemplating posters that depicted historical scenes such as Black Wall Street, Tulsa riots, and others. We talked about systems built in racism, public resources used to exploit people of color, strategy of wealth extraction, and cyclical issues and practices. The group brought up the need to remember positive key moments in history as a source of inspiration such as the 1892 New Orleans general strike, where the workers held strong against racism and gained most of their original demands. The group agreed that we need to celebrate ways that workers have overcome oppression. We want to remember that there has been a lot of pushback to force change throughout our history.

To frame the discussion around Black economic history, we watched Robert Reich's video, "*The Big Picture*." Robert Reich is an economist and his video depicts his views about the policies driving the U.S. economic wealth gap from the 1940's to today. It's his view of how we got into this mess. NBWCP challenged the group to see what was missing from the Black worker's point of view. The video's perspective was from a white male. Black people were left out. The role of racism in the economy was left out. Anything that predated the 1940's was left out.

So, how do we tell the Black economic story? What is the black workers' story? And, we need to be mindful of the danger of a single story. From the group, a theme came out of action and struggle, over and over again. Those in power tell one story but it's not the only story. It's just as important to tell the other story. By limiting the other story, we put people into boxes without realizing that we do. By being left out of the story, we are indoctrinated with antiblackness and it is hard to build solidarity. Black people are more than one story. Stereotypes develop when there is only one story. Repeating the myths robs people of their dignity. We need radical agitation – don't run away from those difficult conversations. Stereotypes are tools of power. People buy in and internalize the stereotypes. We need to create new stories that are positive. To build a national movement of black workers, a wide variety of stories will help people connect to the

movement. We have to win the hearts and minds of the masses to build our power.

So from the convening, a question rose: In 10 years from now, what is the impact that the BWWC will have on Washington DC? What is our big, audacious goal beyond supporting the economic survival of our people? How are we radically inspiring workers to imagine a world where we are in Power?

---

### **Ignite Talk - Making the Just City**

**By Mindy Fullilove**

In 2016, Dominic Moulden, Derek Hyra and I launched our IRL project, “Making the Just City: An Examination of Organizing for Equity and Health in Shaw and Orange, NJ,” a neighborhood-level study of gentrification.

For years, we have each been aware of the gentrification of specific neighborhoods in key American cities: Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant in New York, Shaw in Washington DC, Downtown in Los Angeles, and Five Points in Denver. In some cities, like Hoboken, NJ, it had been going on long enough that we have seen its slow but inexorable transformation from a factory city to a bedroom community housing financiers who work on Wall Street. In other places gentrification was just beginning and we wondered what might be done to prevent the seemingly inevitable displacement of people and the annihilation of local culture. It was this neighborhood-level view of gentrification that inspired our study.

Soon after we started, however, a slew of reports emerged that made it clear that not only was the process of gentrification was affecting cities everywhere: Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Durham, Charlotte, Atlanta, Miami, New Orleans, Chicago, Oklahoma City, Minneapolis, Houston, San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, and Portland. In fact, the National Low-Income Housing Coalition 2017 report noted that there was no state in which a person working fulltime at minimum wage could afford a two-bedroom apartment at the fair market rate.



Barry Farm, SE



Encampment in Houston, TX

In 2017, a graph from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development showed the vast gap in available, affordable and adequate for people making less than 110% of area median income, with the gap widening at the lowest income levels. What are people doing? One solution is pay more of one's income in rent. Between 2001 and 2015, the percent of low-income households shelling out half or more of their gross earnings towards rent rose from 34 percent to 43 percent. With such high housing cost burdens, millions of low-income people are struggling to provide their families with essentials such as food, medicine, heat and educational resources. Though many criticize the method HUD uses for its point in time estimates of people who are homeless, the agency's data suggests in 2017 there were 600,000 homeless people, including many young children.

We realized that what we were thinking of as a "neighborhood problem" was, in fact, a national housing crisis, which would require a national solution. At the level of national housing policy, we are in a difficult situation. As noted in the *Atlantic* in 2017, Federal housing policy transfers lots of money to rich homeowners, a bit less to middle-class homeowners, and practically nothing to poor renters. Half of all poor American families who rent spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing costs. In May, rental income as a share of GDP hit an all-time high.

Meanwhile, in 2015, the federal government spent \$71 billion on the MID, and households earning more than \$100,000 receive almost 90 percent of the benefits. Since the value of the deduction rises as the cost of one's mortgage increases, the policy essentially pays upper-middle-class and rich households to buy larger and more expensive homes. At the same time, because national housing policy's benefits don't accumulate as much to renters, it makes it harder for poor renters to join the class of homeowners.

At the same time, we know that we are caught in the legacy of McCarthy-era efforts of the real estate lobby to ensure that housing is created only by the "free market," thus protecting us from the "Communist" influence of public funding for housing. That rhetoric continues to this day, preventing the building of new public housing, and undermining the care of existing public housing stock. Like most scholars, we expected the data to challenge one or more of our hypotheses. Instead, the data have shown us that gentrification is not a neighborhood problem, it is a symptom of the growing national housing crisis. The implications for health are dire.

---

#### **ONE DC Member Appreciation Event - December 8th**

The member appreciation Event is our annual end-of-year event to celebrate the wins, actions, and accomplishments of our members, donors, supporters, and volunteers. This year we will celebrate the member appreciation event on Saturday, **December 8 from 3pm-6pm at the Thurgood Marshall Academy** ( 2427 Martin Luther King, Jr Ave SE). It will be followed by a community after party featuring some of the most talented local artists at the **Black Workers & Wellness Center from 6pm- 9pm** (2500 Martin Luther King, Jr Ave SE).

[Click here to RSVP](#)

ONE DC  
**MEMBER  
APPRECIATION** 2018

DECEMBER 8, 3PM-6PM  
THURGOOD MARSHALL ACADEMY  
2427 MARTIN LUTHER KING AVE SE

Join us for a celebration of our members, donors,  
supporters, volunteers, and accomplishments!

WITH **FOOD & LIVE MUSIC**

FOLLOWED BY A  
**COMMUNITY  
CELEBRATION**

6 PM - 9 PM

BLACK WORKERS  
AND WELLNESS  
CENTER

AT THE **BWWC**

2500 MARTIN  
LUTHER KING  
JR AVE SE

FEATURING:

**RSVP:**

- RAS LIDJ & DEEP BAND

TO  
ONEDCONLINE.ORG/APPRECIATION2018  
ORGANIZER@ONEDCONLINE.ORG  
(202) 232-2915

- BE STEADWELL

- BWWC CHORUS

- DRUMMERS

- BLACK JOY EXPERIENCE

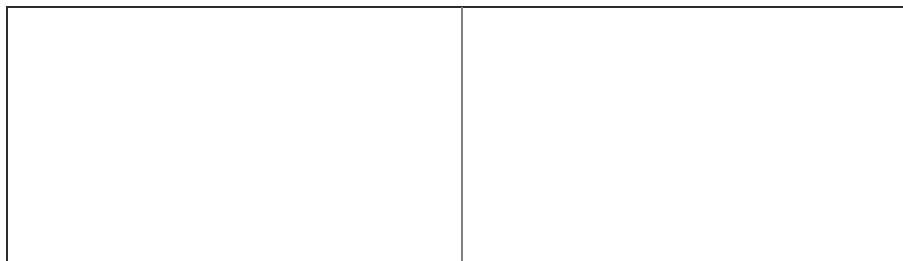


---

**A Right to City: The Past & The Future of Urban Equity**

**By Samir Meghelli**

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum hosted a one-day symposium, “A Right to the City: The Past & Future of Urban Equity,” that brought together scholars and organizers from around the country, including ONE DC’s Dominic Moulden and Rosemary Ndubuizu. The symposium featured panel conversations about such topics as “From Urban Renewal to Gentrification: Planning, Housing, & Neighborhood Change,” “Neighborhood Power: Organizing in the Aftermath of Civil Rights,” and “Facing the Future: Working Toward Equity in Our Cities.” The keynote conversation featured Dr. Scott Kurashige, author of “The Fifty-Year Rebellion: How the U.S. Political Crisis Began in Detroit” and co-author (with Grace Lee Boggs) of “The Next American Revolution: Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century.”





The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum hosted the symposium in conjunction with its recently opened “A Right to the City” exhibition, which features ONE DC’s work and will be open until April 21, 2020. The museum is also home to the archives of ONE DC—which documents the work and activities of the organization dating from when it was Manna CDC—and those archives are being made available to the public for research and study.

---

### **ONE DC Creative Reconstruction: A Period of Collective Learning, Healing and Transformation - Update**

**By Nawal Rajeh**

ONE DC's Shared Leadership Team is continuing our Creative Reconstruction work with energy, gratitude, and support. We have heard from many members and partner organizations about the importance and need for all of us involved in this work to take time to reflect and look inward. During the past few months, we have done internal political education in racialized capitalism and in participatory democracy. We have also engaged in healing and wellness activities to help us take inventory of our own wellness as individuals, and as group. As we move forward, we are working with a Coordinating Team to plan a set of trainings for 2019, to make a road map of both where we've been and where we are going, and creating a plan for opening up this process to more of our membership. There will be an update about our current Creative Reconstruction work at our [Annual Membership Meeting](#) on December 8, 2018.

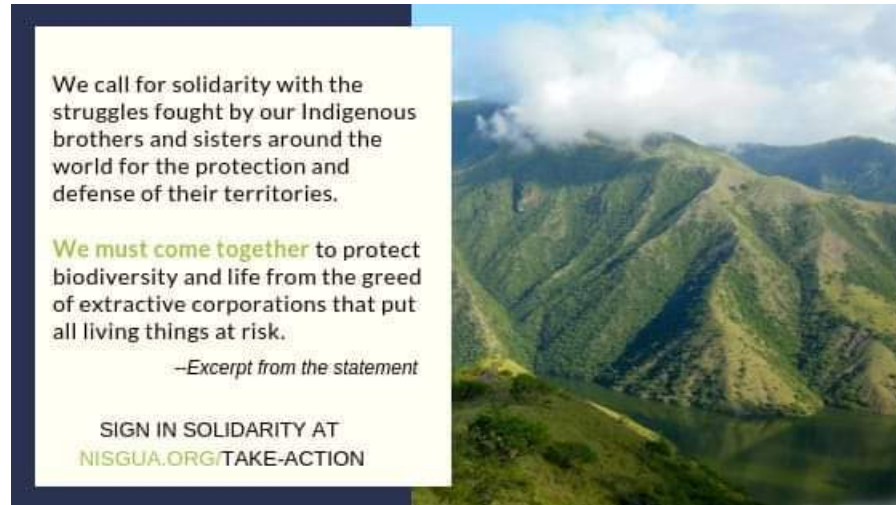
---

### **The Guatemalan Social Movements**

**By Clara Lincoln**

We sat on Fausto Sánchez’s front porch, my French comrade and I, listening to Fausto update us on his recent meetings and his concerns about safety. In turn, we told him about the situation of the four political prisoners we had just visited in prison. We sat on plastic chairs on his concrete balcony as his daughter played in the hammock in front of us and ate rambotanes—also known as liche-- a red, hairy fruit with a sweet core that looks a little like an eyeball. Fausto’s eyes dart between us, the road, his daughter, and back to the road. His house overlooks the main road leading into a cluster of 35 indigenous Maya Mam communities in western Guatemala. He’s in a perfect position to see

everyone who comes in and out of the communities. As we talk, he involuntarily turns his head and looks through the holes in his fence whenever a car or motorcycle passes.



[Click here to learn more about NISGUA](#)

Fausto is a community leader in the municipality of San Pablo in the western department of San Marcos, Guatemala. For nine years, he has been involved in the struggle to protect this territory against a proposed hydroelectric dam where the three rivers that run through the communities converge. The company who wants to build the dam has not conducted the legally required community consultations of the indigenous people who would be affected by the project. In the US, I usually think of the word “territory” as possessive—not necessarily a liberatory perspective on land. But here, it means something like the land that gives life to a people. And it’s constantly under threat.

I had the opportunity to serve transnational movements for liberation as a human rights accompanier with NISGUA, the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala. As a DC native, I couldn’t help but relate my experiences there to the struggles I’ve been a part of here. Displacement is pervasive in this global moment— from communities of color in DC to poor people fleeing their countries and facing violence at the border. The patterns are similar in rural Guatemala and urban US. Poor people who have their roots and communities in a geographical space are run off—by the military, by police brutality, or by rising rents—and the economic elites act like the land was theirs all along.

The owners of mega projects in Guatemala, huge-scale extractive industries like mines and electricity-producing dams, are usually Canadian, US or European transnational corporations. These corporations use a variety of strategies to repress the human rights defenders trying to protect their land. Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, which Guatemala has ratified, states that indigenous people have the right to free, prior and informed consent about megaprojects that affect their land. Officially this also applies to Afrolatinx groups, who in Guatemala largely identify and are seen as indigenous. However, these rights are rarely protected. There are many documented cases in which the military and private police forcefully displaced people from their homes, sometimes using sexual violence and other tactics historically used in Guatemala’s internal armed conflict (or “dirty war”). And activists are criminalized and even murdered for their involvement in struggles to protect

their rights.

---

## Workers Rights Clinic - The Washington Lawyers' Committee

The Washington Lawyers' Committee offers free legal advice on Employment matters for law-wage workers. They offer clinics in different locations of the district and on different times to accommodate different schedules.

### Wednesday Clinic in Shaw (NW)

Every Wednesday evening, **6:00pm to 9:00pm**

Sign-up between **5:00pm-7:00pm**, first come, first serve

Bread for the City NW

1525 7th St NW, Washington, DC 20001

### Friday Clinic in SE

1st and 3rd Friday of the month, **12:30pm to 3:30pm**, By appointment only.

Call 202-319-1000 x138 to make an appointment

ONE DC Black Workers & Wellness Center

2500 Martin Luther King Jr Ave, SE Washington, DC 20032


### Saturday Clinic in SE

Last Saturday of each month, **10:00am to 1:00pm**

sign-up between **9:45am-11:00am**, first come, first serve

Bread for the City SE

1540 Good Hope Rd, SE Washington, DC 20020



**WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE**  
**FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS**

### Workers Rights Clinic

Free Legal Advice on Employment Matters  
for Low-Wage Workers

**WEDNESDAY CLINIC (NW)**  
-Every Wednesday evening, **6pm-9pm**  
-Sign-up between **5pm-7pm**, first come, first served  
-Bread for the City NW  
-1525 7th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

**FRIDAY CLINIC (SE)**  
-1st and 3rd Friday of the month, **12pm-3:30pm**. By appointment only  
-Call 202-319-1000 x138 to make an appointment  
-ONE DC Black Workers' Center  
-2500 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20020

**SATURDAY CLINIC (SE)**  
-Last Saturday of each month, **10am-1pm**  
-Sign-up between **9:45am-11am**, first come, first served  
-Bread for the City SE  
-1540 Good Hope Rd. SE, Washington, DC 20020

**Problems we help with**  
-Unpaid Wages/Overtime  
-Discrimination  
-Sexual Harassment  
-Illegal termination  
-Many more!

**Contact us:**  
Phone: 202-319-1000  
E-mail: [clinic@washlaw.org](mailto:clinic@washlaw.org)

The Clinic operates on a reduced schedule in **August**. Contact us for an updated schedule

**Come get free legal advice about employment related issues**  
Interpreters available upon request

---

### Upcoming Events

#### National Reentry Network Fundraiser

Thursday, December 6 - 6:00pm to 9:00pm

Josephine Butler Parks Center 2437 15th Street NW



The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens, Third Annual Fundraiser and Awards Celebration will recognize unflagging leadership and advocacy from members of our community.

[Click here for more information](#)

**ONE DC Happy Hour Fundraiser at Madam's Organ  
Thursday, December 13 - 5:00pm to 9:00pm**

Madam's Organ 12461 18th St NW

Come out to support ONE DC's work at a fun and lively night at Madam's Organ \$1 from every drink or food item sold during the happy hour benefits ONE DC.

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

---

**ONE Bit of Good News - Luci Murphy ONE DC member**

ONE DC member and Director of our Black Workers and Wellness Center Chorus, Luci Murphy, was awarded the Culture Award by DC Jobs with Justice, this November at their annual I'll Be There Awards. **Luci** is a native of D.C. where she is a vocalist and a long time community activist.



Luci has been performing since her childhood in the 1950s. To reach the members of our diverse human family, she sings in ten languages: English, Spanish, French, Creole, Portuguese, Zulu, Arabic, Hebrew, Cherokee, and ki-Swahili. She draws on the folkloric traditions and musical idioms of all these cultures, as well as her own roots in Spirituals, Blues and Jazz. (excerpt from DCjwj) Luci is pictured above with Elizabeth Falcon, Executive Director of DC Jobs with Justice.

---

[You can find online editions of the Monthly Voice here.](#)

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

**Become a  
ONE DC  
Member**

**Donate  
to the  
Movement**

**Become a  
Sustaining  
Donor**

**Volunteer  
Your  
Skills**



ONE DC · 614 S Street Northwest, Carriage House in Rear, Washington, DC 20001, United States  
This email was sent to [organizer@onedconline.org](mailto:organizer@onedconline.org). To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).  
You can also keep up with ONE DC on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

Created with [NationBuilder](#), the essential toolkit for leaders.