

HOUSING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Educational Series
March 19, 2023 4 – 5PM

Hosted by:
St. George's Church Arlington
and
Virginia Diocesan Homes

SAINT GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL
ARLINGTON

VIRGINIA
DIOCESAN
HOMES

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AGENDA

- Hosts
- Overview of the series
- Opening poem
- Presentations
- Small Group Discussion
- Closing Discussion
- Closing reading

Protocol

- Presentations will be recorded and posted on St. G's website: <https://www.saintgeorgeschurch.org/>
- Please use the chat box for comments and questions

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HOSTS

Saint George's Episcopal Arlington 3

- Purpose: Growing in God's love to promote justice, healing and reconciliation
- Founded 1908
- An inclusive and vibrant community of varied ages and backgrounds
- Located near the Virginia Square Metro station in the center of Arlington

Virginia Diocesan Homes

- Purpose: to help congregations interested in redeveloping their properties for mission
- A nonprofit organization related to the Diocese of Virginia
- Founded in 1959
- 14 board members from across the Diocese
- Affiliated with 5 Senior Life Plan communities and 3 affordable housing properties

Paddy Cavanaugh, Seminarian

Nina Janopaul, President VDH and member Saint George's

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THIS SERIES

- March 5th – Introduction & Overview
- March 12th - Racial Disparities and Housing
- March 19th–Refugee & Immigrant Housing Issues–TODAY**
- March 26th - Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Housing Issues
- April 2nd – How is Government Addressing Housing Challenges
- April 9th– NO CLASS—HAPPY EASTER
- April 16th – Role of Advocacy and the Faith Community
- April 23rd - Faith Leadership Models

Pay attention...

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VIKRAM SETH

All you who sleep tonight
Far from the ones you love,
No hand to left or right
And emptiness above -

Know that you aren't alone
The whole world shares your
tears,
Some for two nights or one,
And some for all their years.

Pay attention

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PANEL

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Three amazing leaders who work with the
immigrant community

- Wendy Chan
- Janeth Valenzuela
- Evelyn Urrutia

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PANEL: WENDY CHAN

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- **Wendy Chan**, a parishioner at St. George's Episcopal Church of Arlington and co-founder of St. George's Refugee Ministry (externally known as NOVA Friends of Refugees), an interfaith community of 1,500+ individuals connected to support the integration of those seeking refuge in America. Chan also co-founded One Journey, a grassroots movement that uses storytelling, technology and cultural elements to help shift the narrative about refugees and mobilize individuals to take actions.
- Professionally, Chan is an executive at Accenture Federal Services. Chan specializes in public sector and nonprofit innovation and strategy and has over a decade of experience in designing and executing workforce development and DEI initiatives. She has received several awards for her work with nonprofits and she was featured in a business leadership case study by the University of VA Darden School of Business.
- Chan holds an M.B.A. from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, an M.A. in International Relations from Johns Hopkins University and a B.A. in Economics from the University of California at Berkeley. Chan is also a recipient of the Washington Business Journal's Minority Business Leaders Award and DC Mayor's MOAPIA Ajay Ojha Volunteer Service Award. She lives in Arlington, Virginia with her husband and two children.

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Housing & Social Justice

St. George's Episcopal Church

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WHO ARE WE

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Founded in 2017 by St. George's and Mt. Olivet during Syrian refugee crisis; Sustained by volunteers and supporters in both churches and beyond!

Our model is to be the tide that lifts up all boats

- Reach beyond walls of our churches
- Do not provide deep, wrap around services to a single/ few families (e.g., refugee family sponsorship)
- Build a strong network to support existing refugee-helping communities

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WHAT WE DO

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COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS (Nationwide)

Organize 1J events across the country to showcase refugee talents and contributions through music, dance, food, stories, and technology



RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT (DMV)

Provide selected resettlement support to DMV newcomer families to help them integrate and thrive



ADVOCACY & NETWORK BUILDING (DMV)

Build a virtual network of 1,500 members connected to advocate for and support refugees in Greater DMV area

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HOW WE WORK: NOVA FOR

- Education/ESL Tuition Assistance
- Housing & Rental Assistance
- Employment/Career Mentorship
- Essential Goods Distribution
- Legal Assistance & Healthcare Connections
- Entrepreneurial Support

Members of the Pihcintu Multicultural Choir

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HOUSING CHALLENGES FACED BY REFUGEE COMMUNITY

- Short-term emergency needs vs. long term affordable housing
- Large family size vs. Fair Housing Act occupancy standard
- Access to public transportation
- Lack of credit history and stable income

"We hope this movement will remind everyone that we are on one journey of humanity together."

- One Journey Festival Co-founder
Wendy Chan

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HOW TO TAKE ACTION?



Consider renting to refugee families
In demand are independent units (i.e., own entrance and bathroom) near public transportation and landlord willing to waive credit check; Connect with RAs to offer housing



Join NOVA FOR Google Group
Join this 1,500-member strong network to be in the know of local refugee news and ways to support. See Kenn Speicher or Wendy Chan for info.



Attend One Journey Festival
See QR code to get your free tickets from Eventbrite today!



Volunteer for One Journey Festival
250+ volunteers are needed to make this event possible! See Sonya to sign up today.

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OUR FLAGSHIP EVENT: ONE JOURNEY FESTIVAL

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, June 24, 2023, 11-6pm, Washington National Cathedral

 <p>CELEBRITY SPEAKERS <i>José Andrés, Ger Duany, interfaith leaders, among others</i></p>	 <p>MUSIC AND DANCE <i>Live performances and workshops in Bhangra, belly dancing, and more</i></p>	 <p>TECHNOLOGY <i>Virtual reality film and live refugee conversations via immersive video</i></p>	 <p>FOOD <i>15 local ethnic food trucks owned by refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs</i></p>
 <p>GLOBAL MARKETPLACE <i>Art and social enterprises showcased by local artisans and business owners</i></p>	 <p>KIDS AREA <i>Storytime, Kids Passport, Welcome Message & Crafts</i></p>	 <p>STORYTELLING <i>Prominent refugee speakers to use storytelling power to shift perceptions</i></p>	 <p>TAKE ACTION TENT <i>30+ NGOs sharing information and local volunteer opportunities</i></p>

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PANEL: JANETH VALENZUELA

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- **Janeth Valenzuela** is a Parent Leader and Community Advocate. She has been working with immigrant parents for 25 years, 16 of those years in the schools. Her goal has been to enable the voices of people not usually heard in public forums. She was a founder of Arlington Schools Hispanic Parent Network (ASHPA) in 2016 when she was a parent at Carlin Springs School. When her son moved on to Kenmore Middle School, the group started expanding, and today includes Latino Parents county-wide. During the pandemic, the group pivoted to organizing weekly food distribution, rent support, mental health education and sign-ups for vaccines.
- Janeth has led ASHPA as it reached out to include Mongolian and Arabic speakers. “We are like cultural brokers, she says. We’ll keep doing the work until we get the immigrant community ahead.”

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PANEL: EVELIN URRUTIA

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- **Evelin Urrutia, Tenants and Workers United (TWU)**, Evelin first joined TWU as a member of its youth program. She later became the lead youth organizer. Through the efforts of her cohort of young leaders, Alexandria City HS hired a bilingual counselor for the student body and implemented Individual Career and Academic Plans to help all students in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) be college ready. She also piloted the Community Organizing and Education for Democracy (COED) program. COED graduates are currently enrolled in college, traveling the world and looking for ways to contribute to their community through their education and career.
- After 12 years as the lead organizer for TWU youth, in 2016 she became the Executive Director of TWU. As a member of the directly impacted community TWU serves, Evelin fully understands the people she works with and the issues facing low-income immigrant communities of color in Northern Virginia. Evelin lives in Prince William County, has two sons and a daughter, and studied Business Management at Northern Virginia Community College.

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Tenants and Workers United



For over 35 years, we have organized the most impacted communities so people can become change agents in their own lives. We are a grassroots membership-based organization.

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We organize:

- Women
- Youth
- Workers
- Immigrants



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Mobile home communities

- 8 mobile home communities in Fairfax County
- 1,700+ families, 80% are Latinx
- Unique opportunities for homeownership for low-income families

Problems

- Large out of state companies buying land
- Unhealthy, and unsafe conditions
- Land owners unresponsive to community
- Abusive and exploitative treatment
- Tenants' rights violations



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We organize our communities by

- Hosting listening sessions
- Focusing on community-identified needs
- Hosting one-on-ones
- Hosting community meetings
- Building relationships
- Leadership development trainings



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Mobilizing

Telling our stories to officials and the public



Services

- Food
- Diapers
- School supplies
- Connecting people with rent assistance, legal support, and more



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Making A Difference

- January - June 2022: Helped **~73 families** in Fairfax County access **rental assistance** and **avoid eviction**
- Referred **100+ residents** to the Legal Aid Justice Center and Legal Services of Northern Virginia for **legal support**
- Secured over **\$250,000.00** from Fairfax County government for **home improvements and safety repairs** at Harmony Place mobile home community
- Worked to get Fairfax County to offer **\$8.5 million** to help Harmony Place mobile home residents and a nonprofit organization **purchase their community** (ultimately it was sold to an out-of-state company)



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Challenges

State level:

- Short window (60 days) for additional offers on the sale of land
- Communities do not get Right of First Refusal

Local level:

- Lack of transparency
- Lack of adequate funding
- No proactive approaches - only reactive responses



Local Campaign Demands

1. Increase committed funding for preserving or replacing affordable housing by an additional ~\$30 million, to total \$60 million
2. Allocate a significant amount of that funding for mobile home park acquisition by community members with support from community partners and other stakeholders
3. Increasing by threefold (to total \$650,000) the funding allocated for mobile home owners to make health and safety repairs and improvements, utilizing both federal and county funding



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How you can help

- Become a member
- Make a donation or become a monthly donor
- Sign up for our emails
- Follow TWU on social media
- Tell a friend about our work
- Sign our petition urging Fairfax County to invest in deeply affordable housing



www.TENANTSANDWORKERS.org



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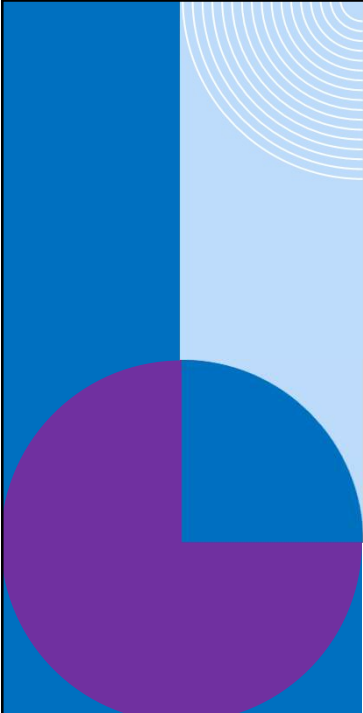
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tell about it.

Question:
What surprised or challenged you in the presentations about refugee and immigrant housing challenges?

*Click the invitation to join a small group
Introduce yourself to your group
Facilitators will take notes
When prompted, click to return to main group*

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CLOSING THOUGHTS

- Feedback from discussion groups
- Next week's class:
 - **Seniors and Persons with Disabilities: What challenges have they faced?**
 - Same Zoom link
 - Closing reading

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CLOSING READING

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me,
I was sick and you visited me,
I was in prison and you came to me.'

Matthew 25: 35 - 36

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <https://www.saintgeorgeschurch.org/refugee-ministry>
- <https://www.onejourneyfestival.org/>
- <https://www.arlnow.com/2021/04/29/arlington-group-helps-latino-immigrant-communities-overcome-obstacles-to-vaccines/>
- www.TenantsAndWorkers.org

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