



A community-based newspaper serving the Puget Sound area since 1981



The Voice

March
2017
*Articles translated
into six languages*

The newspaper of Neighborhood House — visit our website at www.voice.seattlehousing.net

Seattle's Navigation Center to open this spring

By VOICE STAFF

The City's long-awaited Navigation Center will open this spring at the Pearl Warren Building, at 606 12th Ave South, in Seattle's International District. The center will be a 24-hour, low-barrier shelter designed to connect homeless individuals to services and transition them to permanent housing.

Modeled after San Francisco's Episcopal Community Services Navigation Center for the homeless, which is also a low barrier shelter, Seattle's Navigation Center will accept a broader range of individuals, including people with pets, partners, multiple possessions and the drug addicted.

Those who stay overnight won't be required to leave each morning, a common complaint made about other area shelters.



PHOTO BY NANCY GARDNER

Please see "Navigation" on Page 3

Basic services, including showers and laundry, along with health and housing resources will be offered in a new homeless shelter that will cater to clients with different needs.

Reminder: Move your clocks forward before going to bed March 11



Daylight saving time begins Sunday, March 12, so be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour before going to sleep.

Housing Choice Voucher waitlist lottery update

By SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) held a lottery for 3,500 places on a new waitlist for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, formerly known as Section 8.

The lottery ran from February 6 to February 24 and more than 21,500 completed registrations were received. These vouchers provide rental assistance for people with low incomes to rent homes owned by landlords in the private market.

After registration closed, a random computerized drawing was held to place 3,500 households on the new HCV waitlist. Letters will be mailed by March 31 notifying all registered households whether or not they received a place on the new waitlist. The letter will also tell those who were selected what their number in line is on the waitlist.

SHA will begin issuing vouchers in May to those selected. It will take two to three years to issue all 3,500 vouchers. People with low randomly assigned numbers will receive their vouchers sooner than people with higher numbers.

Each household on the new HCV waitlist will be sent application packets in the mail when it is their turn in line. Households will be screened for program eligibility at that time.

More information can be found online at seattlehousing.org/waitlist, or by calling 206-239-1674.

Celebrating Lunar New Year

Throughout the first quarter of 2017 folks have been celebrating the New Year, including at NewHolly, below. The Chinese calendar follows the Chinese zodiac, so each year is represented by one of the 12 signs of the Zodiac. This is the year of the rooster. Those born in the year of the rooster (2005, 1993, 1981, 1969, 1957, 1945, 1933, 1921) are observant, forthright and straightforward. Though sharp and practical, roosters like to dream, and make loyal and devoted friends. For more coverage, see Page 8



PHOTO BY SHURVON WRIGHT

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Health Notes

R A column devoted to your well-being

Four cancer screenings that can save women's lives

BY NEIGHBORCARE HEALTH

You may go to the doctor when you're feeling sick, but it's just as important to go when you're feeling well. That's when your doctor can focus on **preventive measures** to keep you healthy.

As you get older, your risk for cancer increases. But you can take steps to protect yourself. The best way to prevent cancer — or at least catch it early when it's easier to treat — is to be screened *before* you develop any symptoms.

For women, there are four very important cancer screenings. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend regular screenings for breast, cervical, colon and lung cancers. The US Preventive Services Task Force is a group of doctors and disease experts who make recommendations on how medical providers can help patients avoid or prevent diseases.

Breast Cancer—The best way to catch breast cancer early is to have a mammogram, which is an X-ray of the breast. Women with an average risk of breast cancer should get a mammogram every two years from 50 to 74 years old. Start talking to your medical provider at age 40 about your risk of cancer and whether you should start mammograms before age 50. If you have a high risk for breast cancer because of family history or other reasons, talk to your provider before age 40.

Cervical Cancer—Cancer of the cervix is the easiest of the female reproductive organ cancers to prevent. Two regular screenings test for cervical cancer. The Pap test looks for abnormal cells that might lead to cancer if left untreated. The USPSTF recommends that all women between the ages of 21 and 65 years old get a Pap test. The HPV test looks for the human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus that can change cells on the cervix and lead to cancer. Both tests are simple and can be performed in a

visit with your medical provider. Talk to your provider about when and how often you should have these tests.

Colorectal (Colon) Cancer—A screening test for colorectal cancer looks for abnormal growths on the colon or rectum (part of your intestines) that can turn into cancer. This test helps catch those abnormal growths early before cancer develops. Women (and men) should begin regular testing for colorectal cancer at age 50. If you have a high risk because of family history or have certain other conditions and diseases, your medical provider may recommend you begin regular screenings earlier.

Lung Cancer—According to the American Cancer Society, more people die each year of lung cancer than of colon, breast and prostate cancers combined. If you are between 55 and 80 years old, have a history of heavy smoking, and either smoke now or have quit smoking within the last 15 years, the USPSTF recommends a yearly lung cancer screening with a low-dose CT scan. An X-ray machine scans the body to show details of the lungs. Men who fit these descriptions should also consider lung cancer screening.

To get started with these preventive cancer screenings, make an appointment with your primary care medical provider. They can help you understand your risks for these cancers, when to start screenings, and how often to be tested. Your health care team at your medical clinic can also help you with referrals for screenings, if needed, and find out what your health insurance covers. These preventive screenings are usually free or low cost.

Neighborcare Health is the largest provider of primary medical and dental care in Seattle for low-income and uninsured families and individuals, serving our community for almost 50 years. More information is available at www.neighborcare.org.

RAC Meeting March 8

Violet Lavatai, membership and development coordinator of the Tenants Union of Washington State, will be guest speaker at Resident Action Council's (RAC) next meeting, Wednesday, March 8.

Lavatai, a native of southeast Seattle, has spent many years advocating for better jobs, homes and transportation for low-income families. Her discussion and Q&A period at 1:30 p.m. follows a light potluck lunch.

RAC meets the second Wednesday of each month in the Jefferson Terrace Community Room, 800 Jefferson St. Attendees receive free bus tickets and RAC will reimburse carpool driver's mileage.

The Voice

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The Voice, the newspaper of Neighborhood House, is published monthly with the support of Seattle Housing Authority. Neighborhood House helps diverse communities of people with limited resources attain their goals for self-sufficiency, financial independence and community building. The Voice contributes to that mission by providing low-income people, immigrants, refugees and other concerned parties with timely, relevant news. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, Neighborhood House or Seattle Housing Authority. We welcome articles and tips from the community and reserve the right to edit all submissions. The Voice is published online at www.nhwa.org and at www.seattlehousing.org.

Be Safe

What to do if you're a victim of a hate crime

BY JAKE HELLENKAMP
Project Coordinator

Everyone deserves to be safe and live free of harassment. Sadly, discriminatory harassment and hate crimes happen every day across the country and also here in our city.

The City of Seattle and state of Washington have numerous laws that protect people from discrimination, so it's important to know how to identify and report these incidents when they take place.

What exactly are discriminatory harassment and bias crimes?

The **Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR)** Anti-Bias Campaign website (www.seattle.gov/civilrights/civil-rights/anti-bias-campaign) describes discriminatory harassment as "behavior that interferes with your civil rights and is directed at you because of your race, religion, gender and/or gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, and more. It can include: threats, slurs or epithets, intimidation or coercion, violence or use of force, damaging or defacing property and cyberbullying."

The **Seattle Police Department (SPD)** Hate and Bias Crimes Unit (www.seattle.gov/police/need-help/hate-crimes-and-bias-crimes) will investigate if someone "causes physical injury to the victim or another person, causes physical damage to or destroys the property of the victim or another person, or makes threats that causes a person or group to have reasonable fear of harm to their person or property."

What should you do if you (or someone you know) are the victim of discriminatory harassment? Call SOCR at 206-233-7100 or fill out an anonymous complaint at www.seattle.gov/civilrights/file-complaint.



What should you do if you (or someone you know) are the victim of a bias crime?

If the incident is happening now, or just happened, call SPD at 911 immediately. If the incident has already occurred, the immediate danger is over and there are no injuries, call 206-625-5011.

What can we all do to fight discrimination and bias?

- Be a good example for others by treating everyone with respect.
- Organize a training in your workplace, neighborhood or your child's school to educate others about how to respond to harassment and hate crimes.
- Show support and kindness for others that have been a victim of these incidents.
- Talk to people who seem different from you. You may have more in common than you think.
- Reject stereotypes and ask questions instead of making assumptions.
- Speak up when you see injustice.

Please share this information with others and be kind to each other. If you would like any information about our work on community safety and crime prevention, contact Seattle Neighborhood Group at 206-323-9666 or info@sngi.org.

The mission of Seattle Neighborhood Group is to prevent crime and build community through partnerships with residents, businesses, law enforcement and other organizations. Contact Jake at 206-323-7094 or jake@sngi.org.

Senior Lunch

with Seattle Mayor Ed Murray

You're invited for a conversation with Seattle Mayor Ed Murray on how the City can work with YOU to ensure that Seattle stays age-friendly and welcoming for all older adults.

Date: Tuesday, March 14

Time: 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Where: NewHolly Gathering Hall
7054 32nd Avenue South, Seattle

Who: Adults age 55 and over



11:15 a.m. Doors open

11:30 a.m. Lunch

Somali & Vietnamese interpretation will be provided.

If you speak a language other than what is listed above and need an interpreter, or you need an accommodation or accessibility information, contact Phillippia Goldsmith, Seattle Housing Authority, at Phillippia.Goldsmith@seattlehousing.org or 206-723-1725 by Thursday, March 9.



Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day gives residents a chance to rally for change in Olympia

By KRISTIN O'DONNELL
SHA resident

More than 650 supporters of affordable housing from 47 of Washington state's 49 legislative districts filled the Capitol's steps Feb. 2 for the 2017 Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day rally. Low income housing residents, residents of shelters, the homeless and other advocates and allies joined forces and chanted, "housing is a human right."

The Resident Leadership Development Team (RLDT) carried a van full of residents from all over Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) properties. Other residents arrived by carpools and public transit.

Aubria Boynton, an SHA resident from Tri-Court said, "I learned a lot. Bills and budget asks are different, and both are important in getting what you want done. Legislators are really happy to hear from constituents. I'm very interested in getting the ban on income discrimination passed and Dmitri, who taught the workshop I attended in Olympia, has been in touch with me to let me know what's happening with the bill."

Resident Action Council (RAC) President Lee Suitor said, "The rally on the north



PHOTO COURTESY OF WLIHA

steps of the Capitol building is always an event! Our district was fortunate in being given the opportunity to interview two representatives. We were able to impress upon them the issues that are most important for us. Join us next year. Tell your legislators, directly, face-to-face, what you want them to fight for."

Alouise Urness, organizer for Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, which coordinates the lobby day said, "It's so important to have people who have first-hand experience with low-income housing come to speak with their legislators. SHA's RAC and RLDT did great work in getting the word out and getting SHA residents to

Olympia to speak out for housing."

When asked about the value of residents speaking with legislators, Lisa Wolters, SHA's Director of Intergovernmental Relations, said, "It is an important time to share your experience about what affordable housing means to you. Lawmakers are interested in hearing your stories and it's the personal stories that they remember."

Nicole Macri, Representative from the 43rd district in north Seattle and a keynote speaker at the rally, has introduced legislation which extends the Housing Trust Fund and would make it permanent. This is important because investments in the Housing Trust Fund happen through the capital budget process and the funds are allocated on a competitive basis to build and preserve affordable homes.

Homes built by the Housing Trust Fund remain affordable for at least 40 years, and provide homes for families, seniors, veterans, immigrants, people with disabilities, farmworkers and more.

Please see "Rally" on Page 6

'Your voices, stories and phone calls can make a difference,' SHA director tells residents

By NANCY GARDNER
The Voice editor

Those who attended the Resident Action Council (RAC) meeting Feb. 8 had a chance to learn tips on how they can be their own best advocates when it comes to asking congress to pay attention to their needs.

Lisa Wolters, Director of Intergovernmental Relations for Seattle Housing Authority, (SHA) discussed key housing-related legislative issues that could impact SHA residents as the new administration sets budget amounts for government-assisted programs.

SHA's budget, which falls under the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill, may see changes under President Trump, Wolters said.

"This is the most interesting time I've ever been in my job because every day the news is surprising and changing," Wolters said. "We're in a waiting stage right now and we haven't heard what changes will be made to public housing."

President Trump has nominated former presidential candidate and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson to be the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and if elected, Carson will oversee public housing programs.

Residents have become understandably concerned that public assistance programs and social services will get cut by President Trump, whose campaign promises included cutting 'unnecessary' government programs.

Wolters advised residents to share their stories with our elected officials about what access to living in public housing has meant to them.



Lisa Wolters

"U.S. Sen. Patty Murray sometimes shares your stories while she's speaking to the senate, so if you're inclined to use your voice or write letters, it can make a difference," Wolters said.

Wolters advised residents to visit www.congress.gov to get information about federal bills, what stage they might be in, and how elected officials voted.

The Washington Low Income Housing Alliance site, www.wliha.org, also offers resources including a bill and budget tracker for the current state legislative session.

If you'd like to help educate others about the importance of public housing, Wolters invites residents to send in their comments and stories to her at lisa.wolters@seattlehousing.org.

Between 2005 and 2014, Wolters was SHA's Director of Housing Advocacy & Rental Assistance Programs, where she led operations for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Navigation

Continued from Page 1

The Pearl Warren Building currently serves as an overnight shelter for up to six dozen men. Located on the same block as Neighborhood House's Central office, it is surrounded by businesses, with the exception of Seattle Housing Authority's Leschi House, located several hundred yards away.

Additionally, a new Navigation Team, comprised of outreach workers paired with specially trained Seattle Police Department (SPD) personnel will work to connect unsheltered people to housing and critical resources, while helping address pervasive challenges around the issue of homelessness in Seattle. While the Navigation Center is being completed, the City will set up temporary sites to provide similar services.

"To best serve those living unsheltered in our community, our services must recognize the individuals currently left outside of our current system," said Mayor Ed Murray.

"Some of our most vulnerable face mental health and addiction challenges, or have other individualized needs, such as partners, pets or possessions, that the Navigation Center is designed to address."

A planned dormitory-style living facility that provides shower, bathroom, and laundry facilities, as well as meals and a place to store their belongings, Seattle's Navigation Center will be open 24/7 and welcomes pets, couples, and individuals currently struggling with addiction, though no drug use will be allowed on-site. Once fully open, the Navigation Center will serve up to 75 individuals at one time.

The City's Human Services Department (HSD) has contracted with the Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC) to operate the center and offer supportive services and case management to quickly transition clients into housing. They also will work

with clients needing healthcare, including substance abuse treatment and mental health services. Operation Sack Lunch will provide food and meals on site.

To accommodate the specialized functions of the center, the City must make modifications to the building including: safety improvement, expanding shower and bathing facilities, and updating the space to allow pets, couples and storage for belongings.

While the renovations of the center are underway, HSD and DESC will setup temporary sites that will provide services similar to those that will be available at the Navigation Center. This includes assessments and referrals for housing, mental and physical health services.

Navigation Teams will be staffed by contracted outreach workers and SPD personnel who have advanced certification in crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques.

The purpose of the team approach is to bring more people inside and create faster resolutions of hazardous situations. They will begin working with unsheltered individuals who have urgent and acute unmet needs, including people who relocated from the I-5 East Duwamish Greenbelt. This new team will be the primary access point for people to be served by the Navigation Center.

"The Navigation Team will work with people living with the most severe challenges, such as ongoing opiate addiction or mental health issues," said Mayor Murray. "This population of people living unsheltered are too often found in dire circumstances, in unauthorized encampments where they are more vulnerable to serious criminal activity. Our outreach must focus on these specific challenges to achieve the goal of moving people living unsheltered into stable, permanent housing and helping them get back on their feet."



VOICE FILE PHOTO

Metro and its partners invest about \$7.7 million for all bus routes system-wide between midnight and 5 a.m. This proposal increases that total by \$730,000, with \$500,000 from the City of Seattle.

Late night bus service to expand in September

By VOICE STAFF

King County Executive Dow Constantine and Seattle Mayor Ed Murray announced legislation last month to expand and improve late-night bus service in the City of Seattle.

The proposal, which Executive Constantine will submit to the King County Council, meets demand for transit from late-night and early-morning workers, as well as those traveling off-hours to the airport and enjoying nightlife.

Late-night Metro ridership increased 20 percent in the last five years. This proposal more than doubles the City of Seattle's investment in late-night bus service, through the City's voter-approved Seattle Transportation Benefit District.

Metro and the Seattle Department of Transportation developed the late-night service expansion package after a public outreach process last year that drew more than 4,500 responses and identified better late-night transit options for:

- Workers in jobs with late-night or early-morning work shifts such as health care and many segments of the service industry.
- Travelers and workers heading to and from downtown to Sea-Tac Airport after 1 a.m.
- Low-income and vulnerable populations.
- People enjoying Seattle's nightlife, including music and arts venues.

"Giving people affordable, reliable, and convenient transportation choices is key to Seattle's top two priorities – equity and sustainability," Mayor Ed Murray said. "This is particularly important for working families and people of color who are hit disproportionately by the increasing cost of transportation, which is nearly \$10,000 a year on average."

Metro currently has about 40 routes with some level of late-night service, including three Night Owl routes that loop through some Seattle neighborhoods between 2:15 a.m. and 4:30 a.m. and operate only during those hours. The City of Seattle fully funds the Night Owl routes.

The proposal invests about 11,000 annual service hours, 8,800 of which are funded by the City of Seattle, and replaces current Night Owl routes 82, 83 and 84 by adding late-night trips to existing all-day routes.

"We live in a fast-growing region, and late-night mobility is critical for nightshift workers to support their families, for travelers on early-morning flights, and for those out enjoying Seattle's arts and music scene," Constantine said. "Metro's partnership with the City of Seattle makes our late-night transit network easier to use and more accessible for everyone at all hours."

The City's investment includes:

- Two additional late-night round trips on the following routes: 3, 5, 11, 70, serving neighborhoods such as Capitol Hill, Central Area, Eastlake, Fremont, Green Lake, Phinney Ridge, Queen Anne, and University District. Other routes already provide late-night service to areas such as South Seattle and West Seattle.
- Additional late-night service on routes 65 and 67 serving Northeast Seattle areas such as Lake City, Seattle Children's Hospital, and Northgate for the first time.
- Cross-town (non-downtown) connections through added service on routes 44 and 48, creating a grid pattern that expands late-night bus travel options without having to go through downtown and diversifying travel options to, from, and through the University District.

Metro will add 2,000 service hours, which include:

- Additional late-night service at about 2 a.m. on Route 120 serving Delridge, White Center and Burien.
- Hourly all-night service on the Rapid-Ride C, D and E Lines, which currently operate all night but with less than hourly frequencies.
- Extend Route 124 from Tukwila to Sea-Tac Airport after 1 a.m., increasing transit options for travelers and workers.
- Added time to allow bus drivers adequate restroom breaks.

Community Notes

Executive Constantine announces protective services for immigrants and refugees

By KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE

As fear grows in King County's immigrant and refugee community, King County Executive Dow Constantine announced last month a plan to provide rapid response services, including a legal defense fund that will help residents navigate the naturalization process and support for community organizations on the frontlines of immigrant rights and education.

The proposed one-time \$750,000 funding would also help ensure that immigrants and refugees know their rights if they are approached by a federal agent or are the victim of a hate crime. King County will also ensure that all of its key facilities are prepared to help those at risk and welcoming to all residents.

"People in our community are afraid – afraid for their human rights, their families, and their safety," said Executive Constantine. "Our message to the White House, the country, and the rest of the world is clear: We proudly uphold the fundamental American promise that we are – and will be – a nation of hope, freedom, and opportunity for all."

Executive Constantine announced that so far 65 local elected officials have signed a pledge affirming that King County is a welcoming community for all.

King County will also ensure all its facilities are ready, safe and equipped to assist immigrants and refugees starting with signs in multiple languages that let everyone know that "All Are Welcome Here."

The new King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission – which will act as a hub for immigrant and refugee services and align efforts by governments and nonprofits – will be staffed and operational later this year. But given the immediate need for services, Executive Constantine and the County Council plan to expedite funding and ramp up critical activities sooner with an ordinance.

The County Council approved funding for the permanent commission in the 2017-2018 budget that was proposed by Executive Constantine. A task force of community leaders recommended creating the permanent commission in a July 2016 report.

King County has been working on this strategy announced today with organizations that were part of the the Immigrant and Refugee Task Force and other organizations, including Greater Church Council of Seattle, OneAmerica, Colectivo Legal Del Pueblo, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Somali Health Board, Para Los Niños, Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition, Refugee Women's Alliance and El Centro de la Raza.

Cambodian New Year Celebration

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PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL MAGGS / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

About The Voice

The Voice is a monthly newspaper published by Neighborhood House with financial support from Seattle Housing Authority. The Voice is developed and edited by Neighborhood House with help from Seattle Housing residents and staff. It strives to provide a forum for objective news and information of interest to low-income people and those living in Seattle Housing Authority communities.

If you'd like to submit an article, or if you have a question about anything you've read in this publication, please contact Editor Nancy Gardner at 206-461-8430, ext. 2051 or by email at nancyg@nhwa.org.

All submissions are subject to editing for accuracy, style and length.

NextGen Views & Voices



Jonathan Luong



Editor's note: The Voice periodically features guest columns by local residents who are just beginning their college careers. They'll be sharing what their paths in higher education look and feel like, and what they're learning, planning for and dreaming about during this very important time. If you're an SHA resident and want to contribute to The Voice, contact Editor Nancy Gardner.

As a high school senior applying to college, there was one thing that I was certain of—I had to go to college somewhere other than here.

For 18 years, I had been absolutely blessed to live in the Pacific Northwest. But as I looked ahead to the next chapter of my life, I was determined to seek out some new scenery from which new opportunities would hopefully come. Unfortunately, as acceptance letters came in and financial aid award letters did not, I found myself facing the reality that I had been trying to avoid.

Throughout my senior year, I had been dreaming of attending school in sunny Los Angeles and becoming a student in the University of Southern California's prestigious physical therapy program. Instead, I was going to the University of Washington (UW). The safe choice; the boring choice.

But after my first two quarters spent at the UW, I realized why this mindset was flawed. To think of the UW as a 'boring choice' was to fail to understand why so many people have chosen it. There are so many different opportunities to advance ourselves professionally and become engaged in the community!

“I have been able to meet students and faculty that share personal interest with me, creating small communities for me to be a part of—something that is especially crucial at a large school like the UW.”

In fall quarter alone, I became involved with the Husky Running Club, the Vietnamese Student Association, and the Center for Obesity Research. Through each of these activities, I have been able to meet students and faculty that share personal interests with me, creating small communities for me to be a part of—something that is especially crucial at a large school like the UW.

Even with my first two quarters of college finished, I am sometimes overcome with the sense that there is still so much novelty surrounding my life. Living on my own, making new friends, and the extraordinary amount of independence that I now have is something that I am still grappling with.

Jonathan Luong, a former intern for The Voice, is working toward a bachelor's degree in public health at the University of Washington.

The goals that I created for myself this quarter are very much reflective of how I felt that college was going to be like in the beginning of the year, fast paced, no second-guessing, and very little time to dwell on problems, because there would always be others on the horizon.

During my time in college so far, I have certainly experienced these feelings to a certain extent. However, I now understand the importance of not feeling so pressured to constantly be looking towards the next thing. Taking time to self-reflect and relax is so essential for one's mental and physical health, especially considering the stresses that college can bring.

When I was a high school senior, I thought college would keep me forever chained down. But my first two quarters at the university have revealed that this simply wasn't true.

To begin with, I believe our true learning experiences in life are not purely limited to college, although college does provide one with some unique opportunities. As college students, we shouldn't attempt to merely graduate, but rather let our interests guide us to the next place in our studies and possibly, our careers.

Secondly, I finally realized how truly lucky I am to live in Seattle! Befriending students from outside the area has made me realize what I had been taking for granted my whole life—the rich culture and communities that I have yet to explore right in the Puget Sound.

I am fortunate to have so many connections here that I can still be part of, from being a leader for my Vietnamese Boy Scout Group to helping write articles like this one, for *The Voice*. These responsibilities have taught me leadership, initiative and resourcefulness, all of which have come in handy in college. I've learned that our experiences help build upon one another and shape who we become. We should savor and value every one of them, each chance we get.

Looking toward the future, I plan to continue my studies as a public health major as I work towards my dream of becoming a Doctor of Physical Therapy.

And I have one more goal: I hope to be a reporter for the *UW Daily* come spring quarter—a step up for this former intern for *The Voice*.

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Email: learningcenterseattle@gmail.com

Learning Center Seattle is an Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement program.
For more information about other programs, please see the Reconnect to Opportunity website at www.reopp.org/

Guest column: the dangers posed by the new administration's executive orders

BY REZA PEDRAM
Special to The Voice



Reza Pedram

February 1 marks the first anniversary of my family's arrival in the United States, and more specifically, here in Seattle. I immigrated to the United States from Afghanistan with my wife and four young children. Back in Afghanistan, I worked on behalf of the United States Government for six years as a project manager in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In my role at USAID, I represented the U.S. government and its interests by working closely with local Afghanistan governments to implement good governance and promote democracy.

Immigration to the United States was not a choice for me. Working on behalf of the U.S. government for six years required that I communicate with local communities, interact with government employees, represent USAID in media, and travel to different parts of Afghanistan to survey the U.S. government's programs. All of these roles made me a high-profile target.

Withdrawal of U.S.-allied forces in 2014 marked a tangible decline in safety and security in Afghanistan, especially for those who have represented the U.S. government there since 9/11. I received numerous personal threats from anti-government groups, including threats of assassination, the kidnapping of my children, and direct harm to my family. All of this was due to the fact that I worked for the U.S. government. In 2015, as these threats escalated, I realized that Afghanistan was no longer safe for me and my family and so we began the process of immigrating to the United States.

I chose to move to Washington state, as I believed it would be family-friendly and diverse, with seemingly little prejudice toward immigrants. I came to Washington

with hopes of using my education (I hold two master's degrees: one in political science from OSCE academy in Kyrgyzstan and the other in psychotherapy from IBAM University in India) and professional experiences to find a rewarding career, and to raise my family in a safe, welcoming community.

During my first days in Seattle, the diversity of the population and the comfort and confidence of the immigrants who I met affirmed these hopes. I thought, "Washington state not only has immigrants, but Muslim immigrants who hold public office!" As a Muslim immigrant, this was a good sign for me.

Despite these largely public, positive signs of the progressiveness of the culture here, I was soon reminded that seemingly smaller, less-public assumptions about race and religion would reveal that our accepting culture still has a long way to go.

Late last year, I experienced blatant discrimination, most likely based on my name (my given first name is Mohammad) and appearance—having come from the Middle East, I resemble the stereotypical Muslim,

Please see "Prejudice" on Page 8

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



FREE TAX HELP!

If you make less than \$64,000, United Way of King County will help you prepare and file your taxes for free. Now through April 20, 2017, we'll have free tax experts at 27 locations, ready to help you maximize your refund. No appointment is needed.

If you don't need in-person tax help, simply visit MyFreeTaxes.com where you can quickly and easily file your taxes online for free.

What to bring

- Social Security card/ITIN letters for everyone on the return (required)
- Photo ID (required)
- All tax statements (W-2 form, 1099 form, SSA-1099 form, etc.) (required)
- Health insurance forms 1095-A, 1095-B, or 1095-C (required)
- Bank account number and routing number (recommended)
- A copy of last year's tax return (recommended)

Note: If you are filing with your spouse, you both must be present to e-file.

We can also help you sign up for healthcare, public benefits, ORCA Lift and the new myRA savings account.

Si gana menos de \$64,000, United Way de King County lo ayudará a preparar y registrar sus impuestos de forma gratuita. Desde ahora hasta el 20 de abril de 2017, tendremos expertos en impuestos en veintiséis ubicaciones, listos para ayudarlo de manera gratuita a maximizar su reembolso. No necesita tener una cita.

Si no necesita ayuda en persona con sus impuestos, simplemente visite MyFreeTaxes.com, donde puede registrar sus impuestos en línea gratuitamente de forma fácil y rápida.

Kumuha ng librang tulong sa buwis mula sa isang ekspertong nagsasalita ng Tagalog.

从讲中文的专家处获得免费税务帮助。

Được trợ giúp thuế miễn phí từ chuyên gia nói tiếng Việt.

Бесплатная помощь русскоязычного специалиста по вопросам налогообложения.

አማርኛ ከሚናገሩ ልዩ ባለሙያ ነጻ የታክስ አሰራር እርዳታ ያግኙ።



LEARN MORE TODAY:

FreeTaxExperts.org OR CALL 211

Dozens of religious groups converge in Olympia for Interfaith Advocacy Day

BY BRENDA KAY NETH
SHA resident

The Faith Action Network (FAN) hosted Interfaith Advocacy Day in Olympia on Feb. 9, bringing together at least 70 different religious groups from around the state.

Several hundred gathered in The United Churches of Olympia sanctuary to hear speeches by religious leaders, including Rev. Tammy Stampfli, Bishop Kirby Unti, Rev. Eliana Maxim, and Aneelah Afzali. Sen. Bob Hasagewa (D) of the 11th district addressed the mental health system, and urged listeners to rally for the creation of new revenue to support social services.

Presenter Max Patashnik, of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, discussed issues that impact Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) and the Aged, Disabled or Blind (ADB) programs. Patashnik emphasized that outreach in one's own faith community would help to create more advocacy and thus more funding for these services.

After the workshops, a press conference was held in which Rep. Derek Stanford



Aneelah Afzali, executive director of the Muslim Association of Puget Sound-American Muslim Empowerment Network, discusses how to stop Islamophobia.

PHOTO BY BRENDA KAY NETH

(D) and Sen. Guy Palumbo (D), both from the 1st district, discussed HB 1956, and SB 5308 which prohibit the state from sharing information about a person's religion.

HB 1956 and SB 5308 prohibit a state agency from providing or disclosing to federal authorities personal information regarding the religious affiliation of any individual that is requested for the purpose of

compiling a database of individuals based solely on religious affiliation.

"We are not going to stand by silently and watch the scapegoating of an entire religious community. We can't let that happen," said Rep. Stanford. He added that while he didn't know how long it would take for the bills to become law, discussions are being held "on both sides of the aisle."

Rally

Continued from Page 3

"Hearing from folks around the state who are personally impacted by low-income housing really makes a difference," said Macri. "We have many challenges this session, especially funding K-12 education – we don't want affordable housing to get lost. We need voices to be heard. Hearing from someone who can say, 'I live in your district and I have a Section 8 Voucher, but I can't find an apartment that I can afford,' keeps funds for housing on the legislature's agenda."

Key housing issues in our legislature this year include:

- Renewing and making permanent the Housing Trust Fund, which pays for affordable housing.
- Requiring landlords to give more notice when a tenant is asked to move.
- Creating a state-wide ban on income discrimination in housing, which would mean that landlords won't be able to refuse to rent to tenants with Housing Choice Vouchers, formerly known as Section 8.

Other issues of importance include:

- Breakfast After the Bell – a new meal program in public schools.
- Continuing funding for programs that serve the most vulnerable, such as: Housing and Essential Needs, Medicaid; Aged, Blind or Disabled Program, State Food Assistance Program, Basic Food, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.
- Expanding preschool programs.
- Creating a new Department of Children, Youth and Families.

Information on the above issues can be obtained from the following sources:

- Washington Low Income Housing Alliance: <http://wliha.org> or 206-442-9455
- Children's Alliance: <https://www.childrensalliance.org/> or 206-324-0340
- Poverty Action Network: <http://povertyaction.org> or 206-694-6794

Share your story with legislators and let them know what you want right now. There's a free Legislative Hotline phone number: 1-800-562-6000.

If you don't know who your representatives are, hotline operators will help you. Call now. Call often. And be on the bus for Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in 2018.



Please recycle



TRANSLATIONS

TRANSLATED ARTICLES FROM THE VOICE

Preparacion GRATUITA de los impuestos con United Way /By Jonny Fernandez

Este año tendremos mas tiempo para preparar los impuestos- Martes Abril 18, si necesita ayuda es GRATIS con United Way of King County.

Visita uno de las 27 lugares de United Way para obtener ayuda para presentar impuestos. Busca <https://www.uwkc.org/need-help/tax-help/> para encontrar el lugar mas cercano a tí. UWKC ofrecerá ayuda gratuita hasta el 20 de abril.

Tambien puede hacerlo en línea en My-FreeTaxes.com en su casa por su cuenta o en uno de los lugares de auto-preparación asistida, donde alguien estará disponible para ayudarle con sus preguntas - GRATIS para cualquier persona que gana menos de \$ 64,000 por año. Algunas declaraciones de impuestos pueden ser demasiado complicadas para que los voluntarios ayuden, como los que obtuvieron ingresos en otros estados.

Que traer con usted:

Sus tarjetas de Seguro Social / números de identificación de impuestos individuales (ITINs) y fechas de nacimiento para todos los que aparecerán en la declaración.

Identificación con foto

Todas las declaraciones de impuestos, como formularios W-2 (de todos sus empleadores), 1099 formularios (intereses, dividendos, desempleo), SSA-1099 formas (Seguro Social y / o ingresos de jubilación).

Formularios de Seguro Médico 1095-A (requerido), 1095-B (requerido si está disponible), o 1095-C (requerido si está disponible).

Si usted está reportando impuestos conjuntamente con su esposo/a, ambos deben estar presentes en el archivo electrónico.

También se recomienda que traiga su número de cuenta bancaria y número de ruta y una copia de la declaración de impuestos del año pasado.

ታክስ ሪተርን ብናጻ ኬስርሑ ንዝደልዩ ዩናይትድ ወይ ዝገብሮ ሓገዝ/By Habte Negash

አብዚ ዓመት እዚ ታክስ ሪተርን ኪስርሑ ዝግባእ ናይ መወዳእታ ግዜ ሰሉስ 18 ሚያዝያ እዩ። ዝምልከተኩም ታክስ ሪተርን ኣብ እዋኑ ብናጻ ከተስርሑም እንተደሊኹም ዩናይትድ ወይ ዚበሃል ኣብ ኪንግ ካውንቲ ዝርከብ ትካል ሓገዝ ኪገብር ተዳልዩ ኣሎ።

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አብዚ ዝስዕብ ወብሳይት ብምክፋት My-FreeTaxes.com ኣብ ዝኸኹም ኮነ ኣብ ካልእ ቦታ ብምጻጎን ታክስ ሪተርን ንምስራሕ ዜድሊ ሓገዝ ክትረኽቡ ትኸእሉ ኢኹም። እዚ ሓገዝ እዚ ዓመታዊ ኣትዊታቶም \$64,000 ወይ ካብኡ ንታሕቲ ንዝኾነ ብናጻ ዝውሃብ እዩ። ሓደ ሓደ ናይ ታክስ ሪተርን ሕሳብ፡ ንኣብነት ኣብ ካልእ ካብ ዋሽንግቶን ስተይት ወጻኢ ዝተርኸበ ኣታዊ እንትኾይኑ ግና ካብ ዓቕሚ

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ታክስ ሪተርን ንምስራሕ ዜድሊ መረጋገጺ እዚ ዝስዕብ እዩ ፡

+ ኣብቲ ታክስ ሪተርን ናይ ዝጥቀስ ነፍሲ ወከፍ ሰብ ናይ ሶሻል ሰኢኩሪቲ ካርድን ዓመተ ልደትን፡

+ስእሊ ዘለዎ ወረቀት መንነት (Photo ID)፡

+ዓመታዊ ኣታዊታት ዝሕብሩ መረጋገጺ ታት ንኣብነት W-2 form, 1099 form, SSA-1099፡ ወለድ፡ ናይ ካብ ብርክታት ዝርከን ኣታዊ ወይ ዲቪደንድ፡ ክይሰራሕካ ዝሃበካ ክፍሊት ወይ ኣኒምፕሎይመንት፡ ከምኡውን ከም ሶሻል ሰኢኩሪትን ጥርታን ዝኣመሰልሱ ኣታዊታት መረጋገጺ ምቕራብ የድሊ፡

+ከምኡውን 1095-A, 1095-B, or 1095-C ዝኣመሰል ናይ ሄልዝ ኢንሹራንስ ፎርምታት- (እንተህልዩኩም)፡

+ሰብ ኣይን ሰብይትን ታክስ ሪተርን ብኣባር ኬስርሑም እንተደልዩም ድማ ክልቲኦም ብ ኣካል ኪርከቡ የድሊ።

ናይ ባንክ ሕሳብ ቁጽርን ናይ ዝሓለፈ ዓመት ናይ ታክስ ሪተርን መረጋገጺ ወርቃቅቲ ቅዳሕ ምምጻእ ድማ ሓጋዚ እዩ።

Бесплатная помощь в оформлении налогов/ By Irina Vodonos

В этом году у нас немного больше времени, чем обычно, чтобы оформить налоговые декларации: последний срок отправки документов – вторник, 18 апреля. Не откладывайте – получите бесплатную помощь по оформлению налогов в благотворительной организации Юнайтед Уэй (United Way of King County).

Помощь будет оказываться в 27 пунктах. Ближайшую точку можно найти на сайте <https://www.uwkc.org/need-help/tax-help/>. Услуги United Way по оформлению налогов будут предоставляться до 20 апреля.

Налоговые декларации можно заполнить через сайт MyFreeTaxes.com либо самостоятельно, дома, либо в компьютерном классе, где помощники-волонтеры смогут ответить на ваши вопросы. Оформление налогов через этот сайт бесплатно для тех, чей годовой доход не превышает 64 000 долларов. Волонтеры не гарантируют, что смогут помочь людям в особых ситуациях, например, тем, кто получал доход в других штатах.

При себе нужно иметь следующую информацию и документы:

- Карточки социального страхования или индивидуальные налоговые номера (ITIN) и даты рождения всех членов семьи, которые будут указаны в декларации
 - Удостоверение личности с фотографией
 - Все налоговые документы, например, формы W-2 (от всех работодателей), 1099 (проценты, дивиденды, пособие по безработице), SSA-1099 (социальная или иная пенсия)
 - Документы, касающиеся медицинской страховки: 1095-A (обязательно), 1095-B (если есть) или 1095-C (если есть)
 - Если вы оформляете налоги совместно с супругом (супругой), вы должны прийти вдвоем
- Рекомендуется также принести с собой номер вашего банковского счета, код банка (routing number) и копию прошлогодней налоговой декларации.

ታክስ ወይም የቀረጥ ግብር ለማስፈራት በዩናይትድ ዌይ ያለ ምንም ክፍያ ድጋፍ ያገኛሉ።/By Abdu Gobeni

በዝህ አመት ታክስ ለማስፈራት ትንሽ ረዘም ያለ ግዜ አለን-እስከ ማክሰኞ ሚያዝያ 18 ድረስ። ወዲያውኑ በፍጥነት ታክስ ወይም የቀረጥ ግብር ማስፈራት ከፈለጉ በኪንግ ካውንቲ ዩናይትድ ዌይ በኩል የነጻ አገልግሎት ማግኘት ይችላሉ። ታክስ ወይም የቀረጥ ግብር ለማስፈራት ከዝህ በታች ያለውን ሊንክ ወይም ማደያዎ በመጫን ካሉት 27 የዩናይት ዌይ አድራሻዎች ወስጥ ለእርሶ ቅርብ በሆነው በአንዱ ድጋፍ ማግኘት ይችላሉ።[//www.uwkc.org/need-help/tax-help/](https://www.uwkc.org/need-help/tax-help/) ኪንግ ካውንቲ ዩናይትድ ዌይ እስከ ሚያዝያ 20 ድረስ የነጻ አገልግሎት ይሰጣል።

በ MyFreeTaxes.com ድረገጽ ላይ በቤትዎ ወስጥ በራስዎ ወይንም ጥያቄዎን ሊመልስ የሚችል ሰው ባለበት ቦታ በአመት ከ64,000 ዶላር በታች የሚያገኙ ከሆነ ያለምንም ክፍያ ድጋፍ ያገኛሉ። አንዳንድ ታክስ ሪተርን ወይም የቀረጥ ግብር ወስብስብ ልሆን ይችላል። በተለይ በሌላ እስቴት ወይም ክፍለሀገር ወስጥ ሰርተው ገቢ ያገኙ ከሆኑ።

ይዛችሁ የምትመጡት:

- የሶሻል ሰኢኩሪት ካርድ ወይንም የማህበራዊ ደህንነት ካርድ ልፍሮት ይገባል/ የግለሰብ የታክስ መለያ ቁጥር (ITINs) እና በታክስ ሪተርን ላይ የተጠቀሱ ሰዎች የትወልድ ቀን መረጃ ይዛችኋል መምጣት አለባችሁ።
- መታወቂያ
- ሁሉም የታክስ ወረቀቶች እንዴ W-2 ፎርም (ከሁሉም ቀጣር ድርጅት) 1099 ፎርም (ወለድ፤ ድርሻ፤ የስራ አጥነት), SSA-1099 ፎርም (የሶሻል ሰኢኩሪት እና ወይም የጡረታ ገቢ)።
- የጤና እንሹራንስ ፎርም 1095-A (ያስፈልጋል)፤ 1095-B (ከአለዎት ያስፈልጋል)፤ ወይንም 1095-C (ከአለዎት ያስፈልጋል)።
- ከባላቤትዎ ጋር የሚያሰሩ ከሆኑ ሁለታችሁም በአካል መገኘት አለባችሁ። ያለፈውን አመት የታክስ ሪተርን ኮፒ እና የባንክ አካወት ቁጥርና ራወትንግ ቁጥር ይዛችሁ ብትመጡ ይመከራል።

Giúp Khai Thuế Miễn Phí Từ cơ quan United Way/By Long Luu

Trong năm nay, chúng ta có thêm chút giờ - cho đến ngày Thứ Ba , 18 Tháng 4- để khai thuế. Nếu quý vị không thích lần lựa và cần sự giúp đỡ, thì có sẵn việc giúp đỡ miễn phí từ cơ quan United Way quận King.

Hãy đến 1 trong 27 địa điểm của United Way để được giúp khai thuế. Hãy truy tìm bằng cách vào trang mạng <https://www.uwkc.org/need-help/> để tìm địa điểm gần nơi quý vị. UWKC sẽ cung cấp giúp đỡ miễn phí cho đến ngày 20 tháng 4.

Có thể tự khai thuế ở nhà, qua mạng MyFreeTaxes.com, hoặc ở một trong những địa điểm có người giúp đỡ giải thích các câu hỏi về thuế cho quý vị - miễn phí dành cho người kiếm được dưới \$64,000 một năm. Số cuộc khai thuế có thể hơi phức tạp cho những thiện nguyện viên giúp đỡ quý vị, ví dụ như người có lợi tức từ những tiểu

bang khác.

Giấy tờ cần mang theo

•Quý vị phải có thẻ An Sinh Xã Hội/ hoặc số nhận dạng khai thuế (ITINx và ngày tháng năm sinh của mọi người

•Giấy Chứng Minh có hình

•Các chứng từ khai thuế, như mẫu W-2 (từ các sở làm) mẫu 1099 (lợi tức, thất nghiệp), mẫu SSA-1099 (chứng từ tiền An Sinh Xã Hội/tiền hưu bổng)

•Giấy bảo hiểm sức khỏe- mẫu 1095-A (cần phải có) mẫu 1095-B(cần phải có hoặc mẫu 1095-C.

•Nếu khai chung, thì người phối ngẫu phải có mặt lúc khai thuế theo hệ thống điện tử.

•Cũng khuyến khích quý vị nên mang theo giấy ngân hàng với chứng từ tương mục – số nhận dạng ngân hàng, và hồ sơ khai thuế trong năm trước.

United Way oo ididnka caawineysa cashuur-celis lacag la'aan ah/By Mahamoud Gaayte

Sanadka wxeynu haysanaa waqti intii hore waxyar ka badan ilaa iyo April 18keeda – si eynu u xeraysano cashuuraha. Hadii aad u baahantahay caawimaad dib u dhacna qa cabsiqabto United Way of King County ayaa adeeg lacag la'aan ah kuula diyaar ah.

Booqo 27ka goobood mid ka mid ah. Ka baar <https://www.uwkc.org/need-help/tax-help>. UWKC waa idiin diyaar ila April 20keeda.

Ka xerayso barta internetka My-FreeTaxes.com keligaa ama tag goobaha adeega iskaa u diyaarsiga ah hadaad caawimaad fudud u baahantahay iyo qof su'aalahaaga ka jawaaba- adeegani waa u lacag la'aan qofkasta oo sameeya \$64,000 sandkii. Cashuur diyaarinta qaarkeed laga yaabaa in ey ku adkaato

caawimayaasha, sida qofkii gobol kale kasoo shaqeeyey.

Maxaa lagaaga baahanyahay:

- Kaadhka Social security ama waxaa loo yaqaan ITIN, iyo dhalashada qof kasta oo kamid ah dadka aad ku xeraysanysid
 - Kaadh aqoonsi
 - Waraaqaha cashuurta sida W2, 1099, SSA-1099(social security dadka qaata iyo hawlgabka)
 - Caymiska caafimaadka 1095-A, (muhim) 1095-B (hadii aad haysatid), 1095-C (muhiim)
 - Hadii aad tihiin lamaane wada xeraysanaya, waa inaad wada socotaan.
- Waxaa kaloo haboon in aad la timaadiid xisaabta bangigaaga iyo waraaqihii cashuurta sanadkii hore.

OUR COMMUNITIES

STORIES FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Pictorial: Lunar New Year festivities at SHA

BY VOICE STAFF

Hundreds of Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) residents celebrated East Asian Lunar New Year parties in January and February. At NewHolly, more than 400 people gathered Jan. 29 for the Vietnamese New Year. Beacon Tower residents celebrated Feb. 2.

Close to 100 residents gathered to celebrate Lunar New Year at High Point and Rainier Vista on Saturday, Feb. 4. The festivities included singing, a Lion Dance, traditional New Year's greetings, modern dance performances, musical performances, a fashion show, food and karaoke.

Many SHA and Neighborhood House staff and community members made these events possible, including SHA Economic Opportunity Specialist Thu Thai Duong, Community Builders Asmeret Habte, Andy Chan and Phillippia Goldsmith, High Point resident and community volunteer Deborah Vandermar, Family Center staff and others.

In late March and early April, members of Southeast Asia and South Asian communities, including Cambodians, Thai and Burmese, will hold their own festivities.



THOMAS UEMOTO FOR AREVE STUDIO



THOMAS UEMOTO FOR AREVE STUDIO



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRI PHAM



PHOTO BY CHUNG PING LAM



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRI PHAM

Prejudice

Continued from Page 5

complete with olive skin and dark features. It was a strong reminder that even in such a seemingly open, diverse and welcoming community, there is still covert prejudice against Middle Easterners and Muslims.

Vetting and bans are already happening every day in these small ways—we have enough work to do on our own individual biases. Political policies that condone prejudice and bias (which is what the President's recent executive order regarding immigration stands to do) only promote further divisiveness and pave the road for further

discrimination against faith, language or racial minorities.

In a country like the United States which is, in fact, an immigrant land, discrimination against refugees and immigrants is inherently contrary to the American values that have been in practice for centuries. Controlling terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism is a valid effort that is strongly supported by the majority of Muslims living here in the United States, but vague policies that do not reflect the true threats of terrorism only encourage discrimination against Muslims.

In my opinion, the immigration ban proposed by President Trump will be a good excuse for rogue terrorist groups to

blame America for being anti-Muslim and persuade radical Muslims to perform terroristic attacks against U.S. national interests all around the world. It will disrupt the life of many people whose families are not in the United States. All we can do is to do civil protest and ask the Trump administration to reconsider such decrees.

Pedram is an Aging & Disability Case Manager with Neighborhood House.