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The Voice

February
2008
Articles translated
into six languages

The newspaper of Neighborhood House

Making the MLK holiday a time to act

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a "day on" for activists

By CLAIRE MCDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

On Jan. 21, local and national celebrations of the life, teachings and deeds of Martin Luther King, Jr. took place. The spirit of this holiday, which proponents of MLK's message worked hard to establish, is "A Day On, Not a Day Off." Martin Luther King, Jr. frequently asked, "What are you doing for others?"

Seattle's King County has been officially renamed for Dr. King, whose image is represented on its new logo. In the county that bears his name, there were many opportunities to volunteer on this day of service and put his principles to work on this holiday that celebrated his birth.

Community service projects throughout Seattle and King County included City Year's Dress for Success, which helps low-income women get clothes they need for job interviews to promote self-confidence and independence; and helping a



PHOTO COURTESY MARCY BOWERS
Demonstrators march in Olympia during last year's Martin Luther King, Jr. event, organized by Solid Ground's Poverty Action. A similar march was held this year.

low-income preschool by disinfecting classroom toys, cleaning up and removing litter around the preschool, and organizing their storage space.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was one of the main

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新年快乐!

CHÚC MỪNG NĂM MỚI!

Happy Lunar New Year!

Primary election and party caucuses to be held this month

By VOICE STAFF

This month, registered voters in Washington state will have the opportunity to help select their party's nominee for the office of the President of the United States.

Washington's primary elections for the Democratic and Republican parties will be held Tuesday, Feb. 19. Caucuses for both parties will be held Saturday, Feb. 9.

This year, the Republican party will allocate 51 percent of its delegates from the results of the primary and 49 percent from caucus results.

The state Democratic party will allocate all of its delegates from caucus results.

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HUD funding bill passed by Congress, signed by president

By MARTHA GALVEZ
Seattle Housing Authority

On Dec. 26, after months of political conflict, President Bush signed the \$515 billion 2008 Consolidated Spending Act, which combined eleven separate appropriations bills into a single "omnibus" budget package.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill, which includes funding for the public housing and Section 8 voucher programs, was among the bills that were consolidated. The resulting HUD budget is set at \$37.6 billion. This is \$1.4 billion above 2007 and \$2 billion above what the president recommended.

The omnibus bill was created after Congress spent months struggling to negotiate individual spending bills for various

domestic program areas. Throughout the negotiations process, the White House repeatedly stated that President Bush would veto any bill that exceeded his own proposed budget.

The President made good on that threat in November, when he successfully vetoed the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill.

By mid-December, as it became clear that Congress was running short on time and lacked the bi-partisan support needed to override additional presidential vetoes, legislators moved to combine individual bills into the single, larger package.

The omnibus package has mixed results for housing programs. Overall, fiscal year 2008 funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) emerged relatively unscathed when compared to the deep cuts originally proposed

by President Bush.

Some program areas, such as the Section 8 tenant-based voucher program, saw modest increases in funding.

However, spending levels remain well below actual funding needs in several program areas. This is consistent with a 15-year downward trend in low-income housing funding.

The Section 8 tenant-based voucher program received enough funding to pay for all vouchers issued in fiscal year 2007, and for an additional 13,000 new vouchers targeted towards veterans, disabled adults and families with children at risk of entering the foster care system.

According to the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), vouchers have not seen an

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Digital television is coming

By SENIOR SERVICES

In 1954, NBC broadcast the first coast-to-coast color television program: college football's Tournament of Roses Parade. On February 18, 2009, the next advance in television is coming – digital TV.

Congress opted to move the country forward from the current broadcast standard, analog, to a new standard, digital.

Digital television provides a clearer picture, more programming and uses less airwaves.

Digital broadcasting will free up some of the nation's airwaves for firefighters and police to better communicate during emergencies.

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"When people don't believe in me, I just keep doing what I am doing until they begin to admire the effort and hopefully change their own lives."
— Angelica Gonzalez, a Heart of Oak scholarship recipient and student at Green River Community College.

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Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

King County Board of Health sets agenda to reduce new HIV infections

The King County Board of Health endorsed a strategy to reduce new HIV infections in King County by 25 percent by 2015. There are approximately 370 new HIV infections in King County each year, and the Board resolved to support a strategy that places the greatest emphasis on people at highest risk for HIV infection. The goal is to reduce new infections to 280 cases per year within seven years.

"HIV continues to infect hundreds of people in King County every year, causing human suffering and premature death," said Julia Patterson, King County Councilmember and Board of Health Chair. "The Board of Health is committed to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS, and with our action today, I feel confident that fewer individuals will have to endure the pain and distress that HIV and AIDS causes."

The HIV/AIDS Committee's recommendations and the strategic plan focus on two main goals:

- Identify new HIV cases community-wide and decrease risky behaviors. As many as 15-25 percent of people infected with HIV in King County do not know they are infected. Research shows that when people know they are HIV positive, they tend to reduce risky behaviors, which helps to prevent the spread of the disease to others, as well as initiate life-saving treatment.

- Reduce HIV transmission across the county by promoting safer sex and drug use behaviors in highest risk communities, as well as early treatment for infected people, which may reduce infectiousness and prolong their lives.

"People in our community at highest risk for contracting HIV include men who have sex with men, injection drug users, and foreign-born blacks," said Dr. David Fleming, Director and Health Officer for Public Health - Seattle and King County. "The recommendations made and strategic plan approved by the Board today focus on these higher risk groups in order to be more effective in curbing the epidemic across the

community."

The strategic plan was developed with the support of the Board of Health HIV/AIDS Committee, which includes Dr. George Counts, and Seattle City Council members Tom Rasmussen and Sally Clark. As part of the committee's work, a wide range of community stakeholders were interviewed, as was Public Health's HIV/AIDS Program staff. As a result of their work, the committee developed recommendations for HIV prevention, which were incorporated into the plan.

"The Board of Health is taking a stand to combat HIV infections, and through this new plan our efforts are renewed and strengthened," said Dr. Counts, Chair of the HIV/AIDS Committee. "Reducing new HIV infections by 25 percent by 2015 will be challenging, but it's essential work to bring this epidemic under control."

"The continuing rate of HIV transmission is not acceptable," said Seattle City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen. "We have the knowledge to prevent the spread of HIV and we need to challenge ourselves and set goals to find better ways to reduce new infections. Today, the Board of Health has made a commitment to prevent new cases of what is still a devastating disease."

"With the advent of new treatment options, more people are living with HIV," said Seattle Councilmember Sally Clark. "But with hope has also come complacency and a return to riskier behavior. The strategy endorsed by the Board today will reinvigorate HIV prevention work community-wide, and remind people that HIV and AIDS continue to be a health crisis."

As of June 2007, 6,188 King County residents were reported living with HIV or AIDS. This figure does not include undiagnosed or unreported infections.

Eighty-six percent of reported cases in King County are men who have sex with men, intravenous drug users, or foreign-born blacks.

For more information on HIV and AIDS, visit www.metrokc.gov/health/apu.

HUD funding

Continued from front page

increase since 2002.

The public housing capitol and operating funds were also increased over 2007 levels, but these programs still remain under-funded compared to actual program costs.

According to estimates by HUD and NAHRO, the public housing capitol fund has a shortfall of approximately \$1.1 billion, while the operating fund is approximately \$875 million short of actual program costs.

Individual housing authorities will

receive approximately 86 percent of total operating cost needs.

In spite of these longstanding shortfalls, the appropriations process spared housing programs deeper cuts proposed in the President's budget.

Washington Senator Patty Murray, who sits on the Appropriations Committee and is the chair of the subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, was a vocal advocate for protecting housing funding during the contentious budget process.

Martha Galvez works part time for SHA as a housing policy analyst.

Help in a hurry for victims of domestic violence

By SHA STAFF

"If you are being abused, you are not alone. You can get help. No one deserves to be threatened, assaulted or stalked. You have the right to be safe." So reads the main page of www.protectionorder.com, the Web page for a Seattle organization that provides information about obtaining protective orders against abusers.

Women between 18 and 59 years of age are the main victims of domestic violence, which affects all racial, ethnic and income groups in our community. Victims seeking services at City of Seattle-funded agencies tend to have very low or low incomes.

For victims and their children who live in poverty, leaving an abusive relationship can be very challenging if the victim is economically dependent on her batterer.

The American Bar Association provides the following definition of domestic violence:

"Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior that one intimate partner or spouse exerts over another as a means of control. Domestic violence may include physical violence, coercion, threats, intimidation, isolation and emotional, sexual or economic abuse."

Perpetrators often use children to manipulate their victims. They might harm or abduct the children, threaten to harm or abduct the children, force the children to participate in abuse of the victim.

They often use visitation as an occasion to harass or monitor victims, or pursue child custody battles as a way of punishing their victims.

The American Bar Association points out that domestic violence is not defined solely by specific physical acts, but by a combination of psychological, social and family factors.

In some families, perpetrators of domestic violence may routinely beat their spouses until they require medical attention.

In other families, where physical violence has occurred in the past, perpetrators may exert power and control over their partners simply by looking at them in a certain way or reminding them of prior episodes.

According to the American Bar Association, the batterer typically has deep personal knowledge of the victim's lifestyle, needs and vulnerabilities. The batterer may have unlimited access to the victim and to the victim's children, friends and family members.

The victim is often terrified of the batterer. The consequences of disclosing the violence may include further violence

by the batterer as "punishment," loss of custody of her children, further isolation from friends and family members, and loss of her home. This terror on the victim's part strengthens the batterer's ability to control and to abuse her.

Although every situation is different, the Bar Association points out that "Domestic violence victims trying to protect themselves and their children may need housing, clothing, food, medical assistance, police response, employer assistance, civil legal assistance and protection, criminal justice system action, counseling, translation services, monetary assistance, transportation, hospitalization, shelter protection, and more. They need help from family, friends, and community."

According to a counselor named Sarah at New Beginnings, a Seattle organization that works to support victims of domestic violence, "A victim of domestic violence is in the most danger when they try to create change or seek intervention."

A victim of domestic violence should call 9-1-1 immediately if the perpetrator is inflicting or threatening violence in any form, including physical abuse and damage to property.

Calling 9-1-1 in Seattle summons Seattle police officers, who are trained in dealing with domestic violence situations and who in turn can call upon other city and county resources to track down and punish batterers.

New Beginnings is an excellent resource if a victim of domestic violence wants help in getting out of an abusive situation, needs emergency shelter, or wants help finding legal assistance. This organization's 24-hour crisis telephone number is 206-522-9472.

New Beginnings can help a victim prepare a safety plan, learn about protection orders, connect with community programs, and suggest resources such as therapy or emotional support to help everyone heal. New Beginnings can help people who speak little or no English.

An excellent online list of community resources available to victims of domestic violence in Seattle is at www.seattle.gov/humanservices/domesticviolence/survivors/gethelp.htm.

(If an abuser has access to the victim's computer, it might be best for the victim to use a computer at a library, or a friend's computer, to visit this site and similar sites so that no trail is left.)

Finally, a good source for information about protection orders — orders issued by a judge forbidding an abuser from going near or troubling a victim — is at www.protectionorder.org.

New minimum wage took effect Jan. 1

Washington's minimum wage increased 14 cents to \$8.07 an hour beginning Jan. 1.

Washington's minimum wage applies to workers in both agriculture and non-agricultural jobs, although 14- and 15-year-olds may be paid 85 percent of the adult minimum wage, or \$6.86 an hour.

The Department of Labor and Industries recalculates the state's minimum wage each year in September as required by Initiative 688, which Washington state voters approved in 1998.

As a result, Washington's minimum wage has increased every year since

1999. The state's minimum wage was \$7.93 in 2007.

The law requires the state to adjust the minimum wage according to the change in the federal "CPI-W," which is a national index covering the cost of goods and services needed for day-to-day living.

That index rose 1.8 percent during the 12 months ending Aug. 31, 2007.

Free minimum wage and worker rights posters are available from any L&I office or by calling 1-866-219-7321 or downloading from the L&I web site at www.Wages.Lni.wa.gov.

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The Voice, the newspaper of Neighborhood House, is published monthly with the support of Seattle Housing Authority resident participation funds and the King County 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, SHA or KCHA. We welcome articles and tips from the community and reserve the right to edit all submissions.

MLK

Continued from front page

leaders of the American Civil Rights movement. A Baptist minister who became a civil rights activist, he led the Montgomery Bus Boycott and helped to found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

His efforts led to the 1963 March on Washington, where King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech, raising public consciousness of the civil rights movement and establishing King as one of the greatest orators in American history.

In 1964, King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other non-violent means.

King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Jimmy Carter in 1977.

Martin Luther King Day was established as a national holiday in the United States in 1986.

In 2004, King was posthumously awarded a Congressional Gold Medal.

On MLK Day, to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his vision of justice for the world, Solid Ground's Poverty Action and other leading advocacy organizations brought low income people and their allies from across the state to Olympia for a Summit and March to End Poverty at St. John's Episcopal Church.

At the Summit, presenters discussed key public policy that addresses poverty in Washington State and shared their stories. Afterward, participants marched on the Capitol to meet with lawmakers and urge them to make ending poverty a priority.

Marcy Bowers, Outreach Coordinator for Poverty Action, described the event as a success.

"Leading community organizations all

"Every King Holiday has been a national 'teach-in' on the values of nonviolence, including unconditional love, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation, which are so desperately needed to unify America."

— Coretta Scott King, "The Meaning of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday"

came together and chose five legislative policy priorities toward ending poverty: responsible lending, health care for all, housing for everyone, the new Americans initiative – immigration and naturalization, and income supports for low-income families," Bowers said.

"We've come together as a coalition to come up with solutions to our problems," she added. "The MLK quote we use in our promotion of the event every year is 'Poverty in the U.S. should not be accepted as a necessary evil or an insoluble problem.'"

According to the City of Seattle, Seattle has one of the largest annual Martin Luther King Day Celebrations in the U.S.

Seattle residents honored the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for his work toward racial equality and toward economic justice for all people, for his commitment to nonviolence, and for his stand against war and militarism. Events included a rally and workshops held at Franklin High School, followed by a march that began at the school and ended at MLK Memorial Park. This year's theme was "Let Freedom Ring: End Racism, Poverty and War."

Workshops covered such topics as healthcare disparities, Black on Black crime, predatory lending and veterans of color.

Energy assistance available for low-income individuals, families through CAMP

By VOICE STAFF

Low-income individuals and families in Seattle can get energy assistance thanks to the Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP).

CAMP provides financial assistance to help income-eligible residents of Seattle pay their energy bills.

To set up an appointment with CAMP, call its 24-hour appointment line at 800-348-7144.

Hearing-impaired customers may call TTY 800-246-1646.

The program serves residents in the following ZIP codes: 98101, 98102, 98103, 98104, 98105, 98106 (to S. Roxbury), 98107, 98108, 98109, 98112, 98115, 98116, 98117, 98118, 98119, 98121, 98122, 98125, 98126, 98133, 98134, 98136, 98144, 98155, 98177, 98178 (within the city limits), 98199.

Applicants will need to collect certain materials before their appointment,

including:

- Social Security cards for all adults in the household
- Verification of children in the household
- Verification of the total household income for three months prior to appointment
- A current heating bill and Puget Sound Energy gas bill, if they are not the same
- Lease, rental agreement, mortgage coupon or property tax statement
- Picture I.D.

To receive assistance, persons must not exceed a monthly gross income threshold.

An individual living alone must have a monthly gross income of \$1,064 or less. For more information on program eligibility, contact the appointment line.

Adults with zero income should contact the WorkSource Telecenter at 800-318-6022 to request income verification.

kcdems.org.

Candidates on the Republican party's ballot include Mike Huckabee, John McCain, Ron Paul and Mitt Romney.

To learn how to participate in the Republican party caucus, go to www.kegop.org.

The deadline to register to vote in King County has passed. To find out where your polling place is located, go to www.metrokc.gov/elections.



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

Strategically plant this spring's crops to maximize the yield of your garden

By ANZA MUENCHOW
Special to The Voice

This is a good time to get out your previous garden maps, some fresh paper and a pencil to plan for your 2008 food garden.

Some of you do this on a computer, but I go for the old fashioned way. My maps are weather-worn from carrying them around the garden and accidentally getting water on them. But my file of maps goes back years. I can't rely on my memory for which crops I grew where in previous seasons.

What factors should you keep in mind as you sketch out your future garden? First of all, what were your favorite foods that you and your family ate from your garden last year, and how much of them do you want this year? How can you best use your limited space for growing? Which crops will have different light, water and soil needs?

Some soil drains more quickly than other soil and requires more watering. The sun has a different path in April than it does in July.

All of these factors can be overwhelming. Let me recommend ideas that will make your garden planning easier.

Peas are usually the first crop to plant outdoors in the spring. It is important that you plant them in a different area each year, so you will have to move that trellis structure.

Pea pests, especially the weevil, are too difficult to control, except by moving the crop to a whole different site.

Legumes (including peas and beans) are a family of plants that actually put more nitrogen into the soil than they use. They have colonies of bacteria that live on their roots that take nitrogen out of the air and excrete it into the soil, in a very useable form.

Not only is it unnecessary to add nitrogen rich fertilizers for them to grow well, they will improve your soil for the crops you grow after them.

After your pea harvest in July, the soil will have been improved by nitrogen-fixing bacteria.

You can use the same trellis structure for your summer crop of lemon cucumbers, baby boo pumpkins or tromboncino sum-

mer squash.

Crop rotation makes the organic gardener's job much easier. Moving your crops to different parts of your garden will slow or eliminate many of your pest problems.

Many pests target particular food crops, but leave others alone. Pea weevils won't bother broccoli. Club root (the fungus that attacks brassicas like broccoli) won't bother lettuce or carrots.

Besides confusing plant pests, crop rotations can help provide the right soil nutrients to your plants without adding a lot of fertilizers. Some basic crop rotation concepts will help you plan your garden map for the 2008 growing season.

Follow peas with cucumbers, or follow a bean crop with broccoli or spinach (requiring more nitrogen) the next growing season.

Salad greens (lettuce, arugula, green onions, etc.) will benefit from having that extra nitrogen from a previous legume crop.

Remember that fruiting crops, such as tomatoes, peppers and squashes, don't need as much nitrogen.

If you add nitrogen-rich fertilizers such as blood meal or cottonseed meal, you will have problems growing tomatoes, because they get too much leaf growth and not enough fruits.

The excess nitrogen in the leaves can cause severe problems with leaf spot and blight as well. Grow these fruiting vegetables after a crop of brassicas or leafy greens, because the soil will have less nitrogen in it.

Consider your onion crop as a "greens" crop, since they also require extra nitrogen. Root crops, such as carrots and beets, have less nitrogen requirements, so you can plant these after a leafy green or fruiting crop.

For a simple crop rotation, plant legumes, then greens, then fruiting crops, then root crops, and back to legumes. Keep in mind the light requirements and water needs and this rotation will help increase your garden performance without as many added fertilizers.

Enjoy the lengthening days and we'll get serious about getting the garden planted next month.

Community notes

Parking limited at SHA's Central Office beginning this month

Beginning Feb. 1, the parking lot south of Seattle Housing Authority's Central Office at 120 Sixth Ave. N. is closed due to construction.

Limited parking for visitors (eight spaces) will be available one block north in the Impark Lot just north of the Travelodge. The sidewalk south of the SHA offices to the corner of Denny Way and Sixth Ave. N. will also be closed.

This will make access to SHA's Central Office more difficult for residents and staff alike. Construction on a residential inn and retail space, including underground parking, will begin on the site this month.

Goldberg to read at Central Library

Author Natalie Goldberg will read from her book, "Old Friend from Far Away: The Practice of Writing Memoir"

from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22 at The Seattle Public Library, Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Microsoft Auditorium, Level 1.

The program is free and open to the public. No registration is required. Parking will be available in the Central Library garage for a \$5 special event rate.

Goldberg has written nine other books, including the bestselling "Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within." In her work, she combines Buddhist teachings with writing and explores writing as a Zen practice.

She lives and teaches writing workshops in Taos, N.M.

The program is presented in partnership with the Elliott Bay Book Co. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

For more information, call the Central Library at 206-386-4636.

Elections

Continued from front page

Registered voters may vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary.

Candidates on the Democratic party's ballot include Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama.

To learn how to participate in the Democratic party caucus, go to [THE VOICE](http://www.</p>
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A life changed, a cycle broken

Education is the ticket to a new life for Angelica Gonzalez and her daughter

By JULIE GABEIN
Special to *The Voice*

In Angelica Gonzalez's childhood there were no Barbie dolls, trips to the zoo or carefree soccer games in the park.

Instead, the streets of Phoenix where she grew up homeless with her mother were populated with pimps, prostitutes, and members of California gangs.

They slept in the back of her mother's decrepit car and washed their clothes in 7-Eleven restrooms. Gonzalez went to school with clothes smelling of mold. She scavenged food from other kids for lunch. She bounced around from school to school as her mother attempted to evade Child Protective Services.

By the time she was 11, it was normal for girls on the street to be living with their boyfriends, drinking, and doing hard drugs.

"I felt like the lowest person in the world back then," Gonzalez says, her hazel eyes drifting outside the rain beaded window. Society's expectations for a girl raised on the streets are low; she had every reason to fail.

Yet here is the 21-year-old Gonzalez on a Saturday morning, dressed in a tidy black cardigan and a pearl necklace, sipping coffee in Starbucks. She has long since traded Phoenix for Auburn, and the streets for an apartment of her own.

Her two-year-old daughter, Jasmine, sits next to her, a big smile plastered on her chubby face. Jasmine's dark cuffed jeans, warm jacket with fuzzy white trim and new white shoes are a far cry from the moldy outfits of her mother's childhood.

The conversation drifts to Gonzalez's plans to break the cycle of poverty. She isn't just referring to herself either — she

wants to effect change locally, nationally and globally. Don't even try to tell her she can't do this; she won't listen.

Trading the streets for the suburbs

It was a different story ten years ago. Gonzalez ran away from her mother and the streets of Phoenix to live with her father in Washington. She arrived to a school system in Auburn where kids had parents who cheered for them at their baseball games, packed their lunches, and often bought them new clothes.

"When I started school here, none of the other kids drank or did drugs," Gonzalez says as she watches Jasmine giggle and roll around on the floor. "They were all afraid of me because I came from this other world."

Gonzalez struggled with the school work because her early education was sporadic at best. As a seventh grader, she didn't know how to divide, let alone spell or write essays. No one cared, so she slipped further and further behind.

Life at home wasn't easy, either. Although Gonzalez's father was not street poor, the emotional damage the street life had inflicted followed her to Auburn.

She fought with her father on a regular basis and felt depressed most days. At one point, she seriously toyed with the idea of killing herself.

"I started giving into my life and accepting that I would never be like those other kids whose parents cared, who would come to their games and helped them with their homework," Gonzalez says

By 17, Gonzalez had a criminal record and was pregnant. She dropped out of school and moved in with Jasmine's father. As her stomach grew, Gonzalez realized she didn't want her daughter born into this cycle of poverty.

"What mothers achieve will be what affects their kids; I knew I had to change my life for my daughter," Gonzalez says. "I'm going to change her life because I got an education and, in turn, that will change the lives of my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren."

Her first step was to graduate from high school. She enrolled at West-Auburn High School, a local alternative school.

Colleen Rayburn, a teacher there, took interest in Gonzalez. Rayburn would call if Gonzalez didn't show up for school and worked with her to improve her writing skills.

"I didn't learn how to write well until I met Colleen. She made my papers bleed. She was firm; you can't escape from her in a good way," Gonzalez says with a laugh.

A helping hand

Rayburn is also the person who suggested Neighborhood House. She put Gonzalez in touch with Jenifer Chao, an Employment Project Manager at Neighborhood House who worked with drop-out youth.

"Neighborhood House played a big role in turning around my life. I felt I could call Jen anytime when I was in need of help, and she would get right back to me," Gonzalez



PHOTO COURTESY ANGELICA GONZALEZ

As she pursues a college education, Angelica Gonzalez envisions a bright future for herself and her 2-year-old daughter, Jasmine.

says, adding softly that "it's really easy to backslide. There are so many things that can happen to you in that culture without family support."

Neighborhood House provided her with clothing for job interviews, bus vouchers and other resources that made it possible for Gonzalez to graduate from high school while also feeding and clothing herself and her infant child.

Gonzalez actually started to think about the future instead of just living day-to-day. Through Neighborhood House, she secured an internship as an administrative assistant at a salon and enrolled in the Digital Bridge Academy, a technology oriented program for low-income and at-risk youth.

After four months learning technical and computer skills, she accepted a paying internship with REI as a contractor. Gonzalez began to realize her own self worth and potential in the midst of the corporate culture at REI.

She also began to connect the dots between education and opportunity.

It became clear to her that she needed more education to ensure a stable, comfortable life for her and Jasmine.

Neighborhood House awarded her the Heart of Oak Scholarship, based in part on her performance at the Digital Bridge Academy.

The award pays for her Green River Community College tuition and books so that her financial aid can cover the living expenses.

Her conversations with REI CEO Sally Jewell during her internship convinced Gonzalez that she wants to become a corporate executive after graduating from the University of Washington, where she plans to enroll after Green River.

Her recipe for success includes a heavy course-load. She has enrolled in 20 credits this quarter, including 15 business credits. Gonzalez maintains a 3.9 GPA by studying long days, only taking breaks to eat and play with Jasmine.

"People sometimes say I am neglecting my daughter because I am going to school," Gonzalez says. "My response is the time sacrificed now is so little compared to the rest of her life. By the time she is five, I will have my bachelor's degree and a high-paying job to support her."

As much as she enjoys school, it has been

a rough ride. Besides having little time to spend with Jasmine, she has had many naysayers who don't think she can rise above the poverty line.

"When people don't believe in me, I just keep doing what I am doing until they begin to admire the effort and hopefully change their own lives," Gonzalez says.

A desire to lead

Gonzalez's 26 year-old sister has been inspired to finally earn her high school diploma. A talk Gonzalez gave to a Digital Bridge Classroom motivated another young mother to earn an internship.

However, she has begun to realize that she isn't satisfied by just talking to others. She wants her own programs that can change the lives of other young mothers, low-income students, and Hispanics.

In June 2007, she created Angelica's Community Impact Project. Remembering the hand-written assignments she was marked down on in high school because she didn't have a computer, Gonzalez directs computers donated by REI to students who don't have a computer in their household.

To Gonzalez, homelessness is still her problem. While she doesn't sleep on the streets anymore, she knows too many people in America still do — 3.5 million to be exact, according to the 2007 report by the American Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

She doesn't feel that enough is being done to alleviate this problem. Gonzalez has plans to prevent other children and young women from living on the streets and missing out on an education.

Her next order of business is to create a housing program in Auburn for low-income mothers. She also harbors aspirations to run for a political office.

These are things that never crossed her mind as she was trying to survive as a homeless child and pregnant teenager — now she wants other young mothers and low-income students to have the opportunity to dream of the future, instead of fearing it.

"I know that education is not a free ticket, but it gives you the skills to do what you want to do," Gonzalez says as she grasps Jasmine's hand and heads towards the door. "I now have the playing cards to get in on the game."

The Heart of Oak Scholarship Fund

Established in 1999, the \$2,500 Heart of Oak Scholarship is offered each year to help a successful candidate pay for tuition and other college expenses.

The scholarship was created to be the principle means for the student to pay for college. Therefore, potential recipients should not be receiving other scholarships of an equal or greater amount.

The successful applicant should be:

- A resident of public housing or any community served by Neighborhood House
- A high school graduate or GED recipient who plans to pursue an advanced education
- Able to demonstrate financial need and that he or she has overcome personal obstacles or hardships
- Able to demonstrate a likelihood of success at higher education

If the recipient earns a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, or is in the top 30 percent of the student's class, the student will receive the scholarship for a second year (maximum of two years) upon application.

The application deadline is Friday, April 11. For more information or to download an application, go to www.nhwa.org/gethelp/scholarship-heart-of-oak.php.

“Một Dấu Nối” liên kết các em học sinh Việt Nam với các phụ huynh và trường học

Editor's note: Last month, The Voice published an article entitled "Helping Link connects Vietnamese students, their parents and the schools." A version of that article translated into Vietnamese follows below:

BÀI VIẾT BỞI NHÂN VIÊN CỦA SHA

Trong năm 2005, Nha Học Chánh Seattle đưa ra chương trình trên mạng, được gọi là The Source, để giúp các phụ huynh giúp cho con em của họ được thành công nơi trường học. Dùng máy vi tính để truy cập vào các thông tin về lớp học của con em, các bài làm, và tài liệu học vấn, các phụ huynh có thể trao đổi cách dễ dàng với các thầy cô và hơn nữa làm tăng thêm sự liên quan của họ vào đời sống học hành của con em.

Các phụ huynh có thể thấy được điểm bài làm của con em mình cũng như các kế hoạch học vấn cá nhân, và học biết về những điều như những nguồn tài liệu giúp con em làm bài, và nhận ra các tài liệu học hỏi thêm.

Phụ huynh của các em học sinh từ lớp 7 trở lên có thể kiểm tra xem con em mình có đến trường hay không.

Lúc đầu, chương trình chỉ phục vụ cho gia đình nói được tiếng Anh mà thôi.

Hiện nay, trong kế hoạch thực hiện thử, thì một cơ quan bất-vụ-lợi gọi là “Một Dấu Nối” đang giúp cho các gia đình Việt Nam tham gia vào chương trình.

Chương trình được tài trợ bởi thành phố Seattle trong ngân sách Technology Matching Fund và cơ quan United Way.

Nhằm vào các phụ huynh Việt nam di dân và tị nạn có con em đang đi học trong

khu học chánh Seattle, cơ quan Một Dấu Nối – The Source cung cấp các lớp hướng dẫn với 10 giờ đồng hồ huấn luyện cho việc xử dụng máy vi tính. Chương trình The Source cung cấp các tài liệu học vấn.

Cơ quan Một Dấu Nối thu nhận không quá 10 học viên cho một khóa học trong kế hoạch thử nghiệm này.

Thêm vào lớp hướng dẫn và 10 giờ đồng hồ huấn luyện xử dụng máy vi tính, các phụ huynh có thể tham gia các lớp học Anh Văn.

Cũng thế, tài liệu học vấn được cung cấp từ trên trang mạng trong chương trình The Source. Một số bài hướng dẫn còn có 1 kèm 1, có nghĩa là một hướng dẫn viên hay một thầy cô kèm dạy cho 1 phụ huynh.

Cô Minh Đức Nguyễn, người sáng lập chương trình và hiện nay là người đứng đầu của tổ chức Một Dấu Nối, và chính

cô cũng là người tị nạn.

Cô đề ra các mục tiêu cho chương trình thử nghiệm The Source “sự tự tin với năng khiếu của chính mình” đối với thành phần phụ huynh và “thu hẹp lại sự cách biệt về khoa học kỹ thuật giữa các phụ huynh di dân và con em của họ, từng bước một.

Các lớp học trong The Source được mở ra vào các buổi tối ngày Thứ Ba và Thứ Năm trong mùa học từ 6 giờ đến 8 giờ tối ở văn phòng Một Dấu Nối ở số 1032 S.Jackson St, phòng C.

Khóa dạy máy vi tính học sinh có thể học các thảo luận căn bản bằng cả hai tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt.

Một Dấu Nối cung cấp một số lớp học khác – lớp đàm thoại Anh Văn, lớp luyện thi nhập tịch, vi tính và mạng lưới internet, tiếng Việt, dạy kèm sau giờ học. Trong mùa hè, còn có lớp học dạy cắm hoa.

Để biết thêm thông tin về chương trình The Source của Một Dấu Nối về các lớp học hoặc các chương trình khác, xin vui lòng gọi đến 206-781-4246 hoặc gửi điện thư helpinglink2003@gmail.com

The Voice: Policy for stipends

BY VOICE STAFF

In 2006, The Voice adopted a \$25 stipend system to compensate freelance reporters for writing articles.

Reporters who collaborate with the Voice editor in writing a news article for publication in the newspaper will be eligible to receive a stipend.

The Voice editor maintains a pool of freelance writers to assign stories, and also receives outside submissions. So which ones receive compensation? Below is a series of guidelines for receiving a stipend from The Voice:

1. Propose the story – Before a reporter gets to work on an article, he or she must pitch the idea to the editor. Think of this as an opportunity to flesh out your goals for the story. What is newsworthy about the item? Who will find this information useful? Who should you interview for the story? What type of background information will be required? It's also the time to discuss receiving a stipend.

2. Talk to sources – As a general rule, any piece of journalism should include comments from at least two sources. The editor can help you decide who you

should contact. Take notes during the interview and try to include at least one direct quote from each source.

3. Do the research – Many articles tackle issues and topics that may be unfamiliar to readers. As necessary, provide background information to put the story in its proper context.

4. Be objective – It's important to check our own opinions at the door when we're reporting. The editor can advise you on objectivity in your writing. Because letters to the editor and op-ed pieces are not held to the same standards, they do not receive stipends.

5. Be independent – This ties into objectivity. Journalists are independent of the issues they cover. The Voice receives many article submissions each month from people who are writing as representatives of a specific group or agency. We are happy to publicize groups and events. However, these types of stories do not receive stipends.

If you're still not sure if your article is eligible to receive a stipend, ask the editor. Voice editor Tyler Roush can be reached at 206-461-8430, ext. 227 or tylerr@nhwa.org.

Good and bad news in unemployment stats

BY EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DEPARTMENT

The unemployment rate in Washington inched up in December, but the annual average of 4.7 percent is the lowest in the state's history.

Washington's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.8 percent in December from November's 4.7 percent rate, according to the state Employment Security Department.

At the same time, Washington's seasonally adjusted non-farm employment increased by 7,100.

For all of 2007, the unemployment rate averaged 4.7 percent, putting 2007 in the history books as the lowest annual jobless rate for the state since these data began being compiled in 1976.

“Washington's record year of low unemployment, even when a lot of the nation is seeing set-backs, shows that we're making good decisions and doing right by businesses in this state,” said

Governor Chris Gregoire. “It is heartening to go into a new year with such a strong economy.”

Professional and business services surged in December, posting a 3,100 job gain, their largest monthly increase since December 2000.

Other industries with the largest job growth in December were leisure and hospitality, with 1,600 new jobs, transportation, warehousing and utilities, up 1,300, and manufacturing, with 1,000 new jobs. The weakest major industry sectors were retail trade, down 1,700, and financial activities, down 600.

Since December 2006, 77,200 net new jobs have been created in Washington. Overall, non-agricultural jobs grew by 2.7 percent, which compared to a national rate increase of 1 percent.

To view the full report, go to www.workforceexplorer.com and select “Current Employment Situation Report.”

Rallying for the health of Washington



PHOTO BY ROBERT CANAMAR

An estimated 200 people gathered on the front steps of the State Capitol in Olympia to lobby for health-care reform Jan. 14. A week later, about 1,000 activists turned out for a march and rally at the Capitol Building to lobby for health-care, education and housing reform.

Digital TV

Continued from front page

In Seattle, 20 percent of us get our television reception for free, using “rabbit ears” or other antennas. After the change to digital in 2009, televisions that use an antenna will not receive a signal unless they have a digital converter box. Those who subscribe to cable or satellite service will not see any change in their TV reception.

Starting in 2009, all analog TVs (those more than three years old) will need a converter box to receive free TV. To assist with the transition, the federal government created the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program. If you have a newer TV, you will not need to get a converter. If you are not sure about your TV, check with the manufacturer to see if it is digital.

To continue getting reception from an analog television, you can:

- Get a digital converter box
- Subscribe to cable or satellite TV
- Get a new TV with a digital tuner

Remember, you do not have to buy cable service or a new TV; getting the converter

box will work just fine.

A maximum of two \$40 coupons per household will be available to help offset the cost of a converter, which is expected to cost between \$50 and \$70 and should be in stores beginning this month.

To get your converter box coupon(s), between January 2008 and March 31, 2009, you can:

- Call: 1-888-388-2009 (1-888-DTV-2009)
- Go Online: www.dtv2009.gov
- Write: DTV Coupons, P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208

Note: once you have the coupon(s), you must use the coupon within 90 days! If you do not, it will expire and you will have to pay full price for the converter.

If you have any questions, call 206-386-1989 or visit online Web sites at www.dtv2009.gov or www.seattle.gov/digital-tv.

Republished with permission from Senior Services' January 2008 issue of Passport. For more information on Senior Services, go to www.seniorservices.org.

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Employment Support Class for Women

Are you an individual who needs to re-enter the workforce because of divorce, separation, death or disability of a spouse, or loss of welfare? If so, find tools and support, at no cost to you, in workshops presented by the Displaced Homemaker Center from Pathways for Women YWCA. The next workshop will be held

February 6th - February 20th
9:00 am to 2:30 pm

CALL (425) 258-2766 EXT. 226 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

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- Learn where to get training
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Free

Free Esperanto Language Lessons. Esperanto is four times easier than English. Speak with your neighbors from around the world. For information 206-600-1178 or seattlesperanto.org.

To place your ad in
The Voice
contact
classmgr@nwlink.com

Market place coupon

Do you have a couch or other item you want to sell? Take advantage of the free person-to-person classified advertising in The Voice by filling out your 24-word ad below. Remember, write only one word per line and don't forget to include your telephone number in your ad! Mail your ad before the 18th of the month and it will be included in the next month's issue.

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Write your ad here (one word per line)

_____	_____	_____	_____
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Check the classification: Items for sale Autos for sale
 Items wanted Services

Mail to: PPC, 4000 Aurora Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98133 Fax: 206-461-1285
E-mail: classmgr@nwlink.com w/subject line "The Voice"

TRANSLATIONS

TRANSLATED ARTICLES FROM THE VOICE

New minimum wage took effect Jan. 1 ኢዲዮ የወጣው የዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ በጃንዋሪ ጀምሯል!

የዋሽንግተን ዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ በ14 ሳንቲም ወደ \$8.07 በሰዓት የጨምረ ሲሆን ይህም ከጃንዋሪ ጀምሮ በሰራ ላይ ውሏል። የዋሽንግተን የዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ ጭማሪ ለሁሉም በግብርና ስራ ወይም ከዛ ውጭ ለተሰማሩት ሰራተኞች ሲሆን የ14 እና የ15 እድሜ ያላቸው ወደ 85 ፐርሰንት አዋቂዎች ከሚያገኙት ክፍያ \$6.86 በሰዓት ሊያገኙ ይችላሉ።

የሰራተኛውና የእንዳሱትሪ ዲፓርትመንት በየዓለሙ ሴፕተምበር የዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ አስፋፊ ለማሻሻል በ688 ኢንቨስትመንት መሰረት የዋሽንግተን መራሮች በ1998 ባወጡት ደምብ መሰረት ይመለከታል።

በውጤቱም የዋሽንግተን የዝቅተኛው ክፍያ ከ1999ም ጀምሮ በመጨመር ላይ ይገኛል። የሰራተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ በ2007 \$7.93 ነበር።

ይህ ኢንቨስትመንት በየጊዜው የሚያሳየውን ለውጥ የዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ክፍያ እንዲፈጸሙ “CPI—W” በአገሪቱ ውስጥ ያለውን የጉልበትና የአገልግሎት እንዲሁም በየቀኑ ለኑሮ የሚያስፈልገውን በመመልከት ያስተካክላል። ይህ እንደክስ 1.8 ፐርሰንት በ12 ወር ውስጥ እስከ አገስት 31 2007 ጨምሯል። ነፃ የሆነው የዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ ለሰራተኛ መብት ፖስተር ከማንኛውም L & I ቢሮ ይገኛል ወይም በ1866-219-7321 ወይም ከ L & I ዌቭሳይት beWages.Lni.wa.gov ይመልከቱ።

አብ ሰዓት ዝኸፈል ደሞዝ (ዝውሓደ) ካብ ዕለት ጃንዋሪ 1 ጀሚሩ አብ ግብር ክውዕል ኣዩ። ናይ ዋሽንግተን ሚኒሙም ወግ ምውሳኽ ብ 14 ሳንቲም ክወሰኽ እዩ ክሰብ \$8.07 ክኸውን ኣዩ ካብ ዕለት 1 ጃንዋሪ 2008 ኣዚ ናይ ዋሽንግተን ስቴት ሚኒሙም ወግ ንኩሎም ኣኣብ ናይ ሕርሻን ኣብ ካልእ ስርሓት ዝሰተፉን ይምልከት ወላውን እቶም ዕድሚኦም 14-15 መንእሰያት 85% ካብ ናይ ዓበይቲ ሰራሕተኛታት \$6.86 ኣብ ሰዓት።

ቤት ጽሕፈት ሰራሕተኛታትን ኢንዱስትርን ኣቲ ናይ ስቴት ሚኒሙም ወግ ኣብ ነብሲ ወከፍ ዓመት ይግምግም ኣብ ወርሒ ሰፕተምበር መሰረት ኢንቨስትመንት 688 ምሰረት ብቲ ናይ ዋሽንግተን ነበርቲ ብምርጫ ድምጺ ዘሕለፍዎ ሕጊ ምሰረት ኣብ 1988።

ብዚ ምክንያት ናይ ዋሽንግተን ስቴት ሚኒሙም ወግ ኣኣብ ነብሲ ወከፍ ዓመት ክብ ኣኢሉ ካብ 1999 ጀሚሩ ናይ ስቴት እዚ ሚኒሙም ወግ 7,93 ኣብ 2007 ነይሩ። ኣቲ ኢንቨስትመንት ሚኒሙም ወግ ከመዓራሪ ይጠልብ ብምሰረት ፈደራዊ *ሲፒ-ዳብልዩ* ሃገራዊ መምርሒ ኮይኑ ናይ ዋጋ እቕሑን ሃለኻትን እገልግሎትን ንመዓልታዊ መነባብር ዘመዓራሪ ኣዩ እቲ መምርሒ ወይ ኣባሪ 1.8% ወሲኹ እብ ወሽጠ 12 ወርሒ ክሰብ ኣገስት 31,2007። ነጻ ናይ ሚኒሙም ወግን ናይሰራሕተኛታት ዝልጠፍ ፖስተርት ካብ ላቦር ኤንድ ኢንዱስትሪ ኣብዚ ሰልኪ እዚ ብምድዋል ክትረኽቡ ትክክሉ-1-866-219-7321 እብዚ ውብሳይት ብምካድ ክትረኽቡ ትክክሉ Wages.Lni.wa.gov.

New minimum wage took effect Jan. 1

Washington qiimaha ugu yar oo lagu shaqeeyo waa la kordhiyey 14 cents waxayna noqotay \$8.07 saacaddiiba laga bilaabo Jan. 1, 2008.

Washington qiimaha yar oo lagu shaqeeyo beeralayda iyo kuwa aan ahaynba laga bilaabo 14 jir ilaa 15 jir waxaa la siinaya 85 boqolkiiba dadka waawyn waxay noqonaysaa lacagta ugu yar oo la siinayo \$6.86 saacaddiiba .

Qaybta Shaqada iyo Shaqaalaha ee Dawladda qaybta ugu yar oo lagu shaqeeyo ee Setember taas oo looga baahan yahay Initiative 688, Dawladda Washington dadka codka dhiibta oggolaaday 1998.

Sida go'aanka Dawladda Washington qiimaha ugu yar oo lagu shaqeeyo waxaa la kordhiyey 1999. Dawladda qiimaha ugu yar oo lagi sheaqeeyo wuxuu ahaaThe \$7.93 - 2007.

Initiativeka waxaa la rabaa in laysku dheelitiro qiimaha ugu yar oo lagu shaqeeyo federal “CPI-W,” taas oo ah waddanka qiimihiisa alaabada oo u baahan maalinba maalin oo nolosha taas oo ku eg dhamaadka Aug. 31, 2007.

Lacag la'aan qiimaha ugu yar oo lagu shaqeeyo waxaad la xiriri kartaa adigoo wacaya 1-866-219-7321 ama adigoo downloading ku sameynaya L&I web siteka Wages.Lni.wa.gov.

New minimum wage took effect Jan. Новая минимальная зарплата введена с 1-го января Минимальная зарплата в штате Вашингтон увеличилась на 14 центов в час до \$8.07, начиная с 1-го января 2008 года. Минимальная зарплата касается как сельскохозяйственных работников, так и других, хотя работники в возрасте 14 и 15 лет могут получать 85 процентов от минимальной зарплаты, то есть \$6,86 в час.

Министерство труда и промышленности пересчитывает минимальную заработную плату для штата ежегодно в сентябре, как того требует законодательная инициатива 688, утверждённая избирателями штата Вашингтон в 1998 году.

В результате этого минимальная заработная плата увеличивалась каждый год с 1999 года. Минимальная почасовая зарплата в 2007 году составляла \$7,93. Законодательная инициатива требует от штата регулирования минимальной заработной платы в соответствии с изменениями федерального «CPI-W», что является национальным индексом, учитывающим стоимость товаров и услуг, необходимых для повседневной жизни. Этот индекс увеличился на 1,8 процента за 12 месяцев, предшествующих 31 августа 2007 года.

Бесплатные брошюры о минимальной зарплате и правах работников можно взять в любом офисе Министерсва труда и промышленности или заказать по тел. 1-866-219-7321, также можно получить информацию на вебсайте Министерства: W ages.Lni.wa.gov.

New Minimum wage took effect Jan.1st 2008

፲፱፻፳፰ ዓመት ሰራተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ በጃንዋሪ 1 ጀምሯል።

ጊዜያዊ ሰራተኛዎች ለደሞዝ ክፍያ ለውጥ ለውጥ የደሞዝ ክፍያ እንዲፈጸሙ “CPI—W” በአገሪቱ ውስጥ ያለውን የጉልበትና የአገልግሎት እንዲሁም በየቀኑ ለኑሮ የሚያስፈልገውን በመመልከት ያስተካክላል። ይህ እንደክስ 1.8 ፐርሰንት በ12 ወር ውስጥ እስከ አገስት 31 2007 ጨምሯል። ነፃ የሆነው የዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ ለሰራተኛ መብት ፖስተር ከማንኛውም L & I ቢሮ ይገኛል ወይም በ1866-219-7321 ወይም ከ L & I ዌቭሳይት beWages.Lni.wa.gov ይመልከቱ።

ጊዜያዊ ሰራተኛዎች ለደሞዝ ክፍያ ለውጥ ለውጥ የደሞዝ ክፍያ እንዲፈጸሙ “CPI—W” በአገሪቱ ውስጥ ያለውን የጉልበትና የአገልግሎት እንዲሁም በየቀኑ ለኑሮ የሚያስፈልገውን በመመልከት ያስተካክላል። ይህ እንደክስ 1.8 ፐርሰንት በ12 ወር ውስጥ እስከ አገስት 31 2007 ጨምሯል። ነፃ የሆነው የዝቅተኛው የደሞዝ ክፍያ ለሰራተኛ መብት ፖስተር ከማንኛውም L & I ቢሮ ይገኛል ወይም በ1866-219-7321 ወይም ከ L & I ዌቭሳይት beWages.Lni.wa.gov ይመልከቱ።

MỨC LƯƠNG TỐI THIỂU CÓ HIỆU LỰC BẮT ĐẦU TỪ NGÀY 1 THÁNG 1

Kể từ ngày 1 tháng Một , mức lương tối thiểu ở tiểu bang Washington tăng lên 14 xu, ở mức \$8.07 một giờ. Mức lương tối thiểu ở tiểu bang Washington được áp dụng cho công nhân cả hai ngành, ngành nông nghiệp và ngành có công việc không liên quan đến nông nghiệp, dù vậy thì lương của các em 14 hay 15 tuổi thì mức lương thấp hơn 5% phần trăm so với đồng lương của người lớn, hoặc là chỉ \$6.86 một giờ.

Bộ Lao Động và Công Nghiệp qui định mức lương mới cho mỗi năm vào tháng Chín, do Điều Luật 688 đòi buộc, điều luật này đã được thông qua hồi năm 1988 bởi các cử tri.

Do từ kết quả đó mà mức lương tối thiểu ở Washington đã tăng lên mỗi năm kể từ năm 1999. Mức lương tối thiểu của tiểu bang trong năm 2007 là \$7.93.

Dự Luật đòi buộc tiểu bang phải điều chỉnh mức lương tối thiểu dựa vào điều lệ của chính phủ liên bang gọi là “CPI-W- đó là chỉ số trên toàn quốc về giá cả hàng hóa và dịch vụ tiêu dùng hằng ngày. Chỉ số đó trong năm 2007 đã tăng lên 1.8 phần trăm trong 12 tháng tính đến 31 Tháng Tám 2007.

Có sẵn các tờ bích chương được cung cấp miễn phí nói về mức lương tối thiểu và nói về quyền hạn của công nhân từ các văn phòng Bộ Lao Động và Công Nghiệp, hoặc có thể gọi cho 1-866-219-7321, hoặc có thể tải xuống từ trang mạng Wages.Lni.wa.gov.