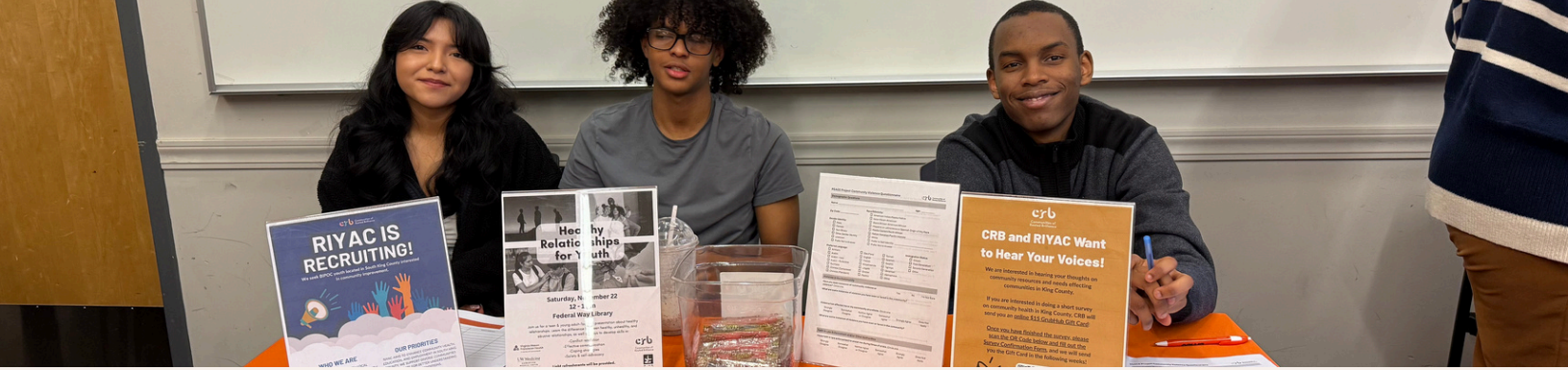




ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER

Monthly Edition
February 2026



Stay Informed - Stay Connected

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the 2nd issue of the Communities of Rooted Brilliance Advocacy Newsletter! Through this newsletter, we will be updating communities on RIYAC activities, events, and projects.

- This past month RIYAC has finished its series of three workshops with the King County Dispute Resolution Center focused on healing and conflict resolution. We are grateful for all the families and community members who attended whether that was one or all three!
- RIYAC will be hosting a virtual workshop with Virginia Mason and Ceasefire Northwest on firearm injury prevention in March.

CONTACT INFO

 206-802-5885
 alan@rootedbrilliance.org

UPCOMING RIYAC EVENTS

**Free Virtual Workshop: Firearm
Injury Prevention Education**
[Saturday, March 9th at 11 AM]

Join RIYAC, Virginia Mason Franciscan Health, and Dr. Gregory Engel from Ceasefire Northwest for an engaging, interactive 55-60 minute session on firearm injury prevention. This workshop is designed for students and is based on a public health approach.

More information on the next page

INTERESTED IN RIYAC?

- Visit our website: www.riyac-wa.org, there you can find previous projects and our application to join!
- Follow our Instagram @CRB_RIYAC for updates on events, projects, and programs!

Current Projects

As part of our work to address critical health inequities, we have partnered with Virginia Mason Franciscan Health and Ceasefire Northwest to run a free virtual workshop focused on Firearm Injury Prevention Education that will occur on Zoom on Saturday, March 9th from 11 AM to 12 PM

Created and run by Dr. Gregory Engel, this workshop is educational and practical, focused on student safety and harm reduction, and has drawn widespread praise by educators across Washington State. This interactive session equips students with knowledge and skills to protect themselves and others, while promoting thoughtful, informed conversations about safety.

Link: www.cutt.ly/firearmworkshop

Meeting ID: 949 7435 6856

Password: 954089



Virginia Mason
Franciscan Health™



Communities of
Rooted Brilliance



CEASEFIRE
NORTHWEST



Dr. Gregory Engel

Current Projects

Children's
Network
A united voice
for the children of Solano County

WHAT TO SAY TO KIDS ABOUT ICE

Even if a child isn't directly affected, they may hear about ICE at school or online. Avoiding the topic can cause more fear. Calm, honest conversations help children feel safe and supported.

START THE CONVERSATION

Begin by asking: "What do you know about ICE?" This gives you insight into what they've heard or seen. If they say "I don't know," you can gently explain:

"ICE is a government group that checks if people are following immigration laws. Some families are scared of them because they help decide who can stay in the U.S. Have you heard about people moving to new countries?"

AGES 3-6

"Some families are being treated unfairly because of where they were born. You're safe, and I'm here with you."

- Keep it simple and comforting
- Provide extra hugs, reassurance, and routines.

AGES 12-18

"It's not right for people to be treated unfairly because of where they're from. This hurts kids and families."

- Acknowledge their awareness
- Encourage healthy ways to process: writing, talking, art, advocacy.

AGES 7-11

"Some families are being separated because of how they came to the U.S. Even kids are getting hurt, and that's not okay."

- Be honest without overwhelming

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR ALL AGES

"It's okay to feel scared or frustrated. What matters is we talk about it and help each other feel better."

- Encourage breathing, drawing, or journaling

WHAT **NOT** TO SAY

- "Don't worry about it." Dismisses their feelings
- "That won't happen to us." Creates false reassurance

WHAT TO SAY **INSTEAD**

"You're not alone in this. People are trying to help, and I'm one of them. If you ever feel scared, we can talk about it together."

Plan for emergencies. Use our Family Preparedness Toolkit: childnet.org/immigration-resources

Address inequities also means tackling critical community needs affecting the families and communities we serve that are being unfairly targeted. We wanted to share to families with young children tools and resources for you to use when speaking to your child about ICE and how you can make them aware and support them at this time.

APPLICATIONS FOR ARTISTS!

We are looking for BIPOC youth artists in South King County
interested in creating and presenting their works at our
Community Art Gallery in June!



APPLY NOW!
VIA OUR QR CODE



Applications are a rolling basis

As part of the Youth Healing Project, RIYAC will once again host a 'Youth Art Exhibition' with a focus on platforming the work and voices of BIPOC youth artists in South King County, where many of the communities we work with are located. This project will give youth BIPOC artists a platform in which they can speak about and share stories through various mediums of art that address historical marginalization, trauma, racism, and other adverse experiences that have impacted them and their families.

Artists will be compensated for their work. The application deadline is rolling, but slots for the Exhibition are limited. If you or anyone you know is interested, please scan the QR Code, fill out the application, and send any art examples or portfolios to alan@rootedbrilliance.org.



College Youth Assistance Program ✦

CRB is offering assistance to college-aged youth (ages 18-24) who are from first generation newcomer families who require financial assistance for needs outside of rental assistance.



What to know:

- Scan the QR Below for Application
- Must be part of higher education institution (community, trade, 2-year, 4-year) in King County
- Must have Washington State residence
- Must have proof of Rental Housing
- Funds are limited, once they are gone, applications will be closed



Thanks to the generous support from Young Grantmakers of the Greater Seattle YMCA and the Raikes Foundation, we are offering support to college-aged youth (ages 18-24) from first-generation newcomer families who need financial assistance for needs beyond rental assistance.

Funds are first-come, first-served. Once funding has been used, the application will be closed. If found eligible, youth will receive a one-time payment of up to \$500, depending on need.

RIYAC Council Member Corner

From its establishment in 2017, RIYAC has always done its best to give youth from newcomer and refugee communities a chance to grow as leaders. Through our projects and work, RIYAC members have tackled a wide variety of issues that affect the daily lives of the communities they are part of. From mental health, transportation, food insecurity, community violence prevention, and more. We are proud of the work that we have done, and the leaders that RIYAC has built.

In this page, we will be giving an opportunity for past and present RIYAC members to give their thoughts on joining RIYAC, why they joined RIYAC, and how RIYAC has left an impact on them.



“Serving as Chair of the Refugee Immigrant Youth Advisory Council has been one of the most impactful leadership experiences in my life. In this role, I helped lead mental health workshops, food justice initiatives, and community programs that supported refugee and immigrant families across King County. Through this work, I learned how to listen with intention and understand the real needs of communities by engaging directly with families and youth. I gained strong leadership and organizational skills by coordinating projects, working with partners, and making sure programs were carried out responsibly and with care. This role also taught me patience, accountability, and the importance of building trust, especially when working with communities that have faced displacement and systemic barriers. Being Chair pushed me to grow personally and professionally by stepping into difficult conversations and advocating for others in meaningful ways. Most importantly, this experience confirmed my desire to continue working with refugee and immigrant communities in the future and showed me how powerful youth leadership and community centered work can be when it is done with empathy and commitment.”

Zobir Tarin, Former-Chair, RIYAC Member since 2023