RIYAC Newsletter

October 2026

In this issue of the RIYAC (Refugee & Immigrant Youth Advisory Council) newsletter, we will explore:

- **Our conference trips**
- **Look2Justice Workshops**
- **RIYAC Sub-Projects**
- **Youth Financial Assistance Program**
- **RIYAC council member corner**

Our Conference Trips



Othering and Belonging Institute Conference

October has been a time of sharing space and community with other like-minded community members, organizations, and leaders. We would love to shout out the King County Public Health's Healthy and Safe Environments team for providing funds for our participation at the Othering and Belonging Institute (OBI) yearly conference. This year it was held in Louisville, Kentucky!

There, we were able to share stories and ideas with community organizations and leaders across the United States. During this time of turmoil and uncertainty, it is more important than ever to find connections and work together.



Bridge Conference

We attended School's Out Washington's two-day 2026 Bridge Conference alongside Washington State educators, community organizations, and agencies, coming together to connect and brainstorm on how to empower and platform the voices of young people on topics that most impact them. This year's theme, *The Art of Being Water*, invited us to embrace the power of adaptability, resilience, connection, and collective flow.

Hosting a Look2Justice Workshop



A warm thank you to Look2Justice, whom we worked alongside for two October workshops focused on youth advocacy! Through these workshops, youth from different community organizations came together to learn how to get more involved in legislative advocacy, work together to amplify their voices and interests, and connect with officials at all levels.

This work is possible thanks to Look2Justice's Director of Programs, KJ Jones; Director of Inside Organizing, Antoine Davis; and Heidi Sadri from Disabilities Rights Washington, who gave youth examples of how community advocacy can bring positive legislative change.

Email for more information at info@look2justice.org

RIYAC Upcoming Sub-Projects

Public Health

Partnering with CBOs to facilitate culturally responsive workshops that help families recognize signs of youth mental health challenges, reduce stigma, and build skills to support youth mental health.

Immigration

Creation of culturally and linguistically accessible resources that help youth and families navigate immigration-related scenarios, identify trusted community resources, and access emotional support. These materials aim to reduce fear, uncertainty, and isolation while promoting resilience during times of crisis.

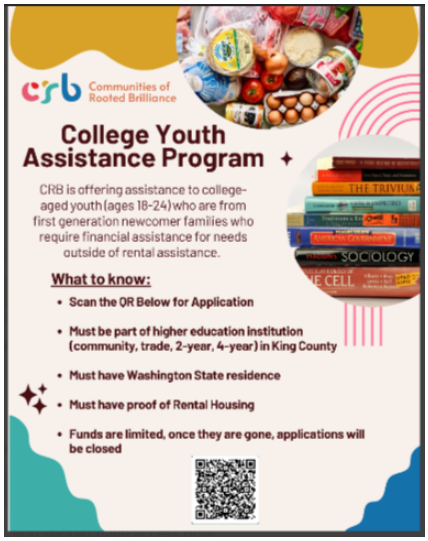
Education

Mentorship program connecting first-generation college-bound high school students with mentors from similar cultural backgrounds. Beyond support in college applications and financial aid. Mentors will provide encouragement, social connection, and peer support to reduce isolation, stress, uncertainty and improve youth mental health during a critical life transition.

Nutrition

Partnering with local food banks and CBOs to host pop-up pantries that increase access to non-perishable food and hygiene products in underserved South King County communities. These events will educate youth and families about the relationship between nutrition and mental health, while providing resources on how food insecurity can contribute to mental health challenges.

Youth Financial Assistance Program



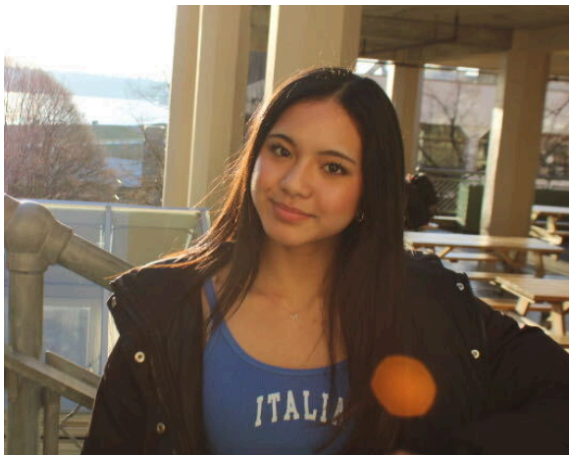
Thanks to the generous support from Young Grantmakers of the Greater Seattle YMCA and the Raikes Foundation, we are offering support to college-aged youth (ages 18-24) from first-generation newcomer families who need financial assistance for needs beyond rental assistance.
Funds are first-come, first-served.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

Click the poster or email Alan for more information at alan@rootedbrilliance.org

RIYAC Council Member Corner

Since 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. These include 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.

On 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.



"I joined RIYAC because, as a youth, I wanted to dedicate my time to something that [...] empowers my community and myself as well. RIYAC had priorities that I aligned with, and I wanted to be part of something that truly helps me grow. As I continued to participate in this council, I met so many other participants with great ideas that inspired me to continue working towards a career in public service."

Mae Dela Cruz

Donate to CRB

Behind every success story, every community event, and every resource we share is a network of supporters who believe in this work. Your contribution directly funds the programs, resources, and advocacy efforts that are creating real change right now.

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