



The South Hampton Roads Chapter worked to get people election ready and handed out information about open enrollment on the Health Insurance Marketplace at a community financial planning day in Virginia Beach.



Virginia Organizing participated in the Climate Change March in New York City. Virginia Organizing also participated in an echo event in Charlottesville.



Virginia Organizing volunteer, Shay, is one of many of our great volunteers working on phone banking and other important projects! Contact [harold@virginia-organizing.org](mailto:harold@virginia-organizing.org) if you are interested in phone banking.

## News From the Grassroots

### Virginia Organizing Takes Action on Civil Rights for Immigrants

Virginia Organizing leaders across the Commonwealth launched a non-legislative campaign on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 14 and 15, to call on Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring to protect the civil rights of immigrants being held by local law enforcement due to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) holds or detainers. This campaign is part of the ongoing work for comprehensive immigration reform, but also has real and immediate implications for people in immigrant communities.

An ICE hold is a request from the federal government for local law enforcement agencies to involuntarily detain someone for up to 48 hours after they would ordinarily have been released. For example, if someone pays a bond to be released from police custody, an ICE hold or detainer may keep an individual in custody longer.

The ICE hold request is not required or mandated by law, it is simply a request from the federal agency. Local law

enforcement offices may choose to comply or not. It is important to note that ICE holds are not criminal detainers, warrants, or other legal basis for arrest.

A federal court recently ruled that by honoring an ICE hold request, a county in Oregon had violated an individual's constitutional rights by holding her without probable cause.

In Virginia, local law enforcement agencies have varying policies regarding ICE holds. Some offices honor them and others do not. Because of the lack of uniformity in Virginia, Attorney General Herring was asked earlier this year to issue an opinion on the constitutionality of these holds in Virginia. Based on the fact that ICE holds are not arrest warrants and keep individuals detained without cause, and a federal judge ruled that these holds were unconstitutional, Virginia Organizing and the ACLU of Virginia would like the Attorney General to direct local law enforcement agencies to stop honoring the holds.

Prior to Virginia Organizing and other groups' work in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, the local sheriff's office partnered with ICE through a 287(g) agreement that allowed local law enforcement to act as ICE agents. That

partnership was terminated in 2012 when the Rockingham Board of Supervisors failed to renew the agreement. However, the local sheriff has stated that he plans to continue to honor the ICE holds.

This local response is one of the reasons that an Attorney General's opinion is necessary. Virginians should know that their civil rights will be protected no matter where they are in the state.

Because the Attorney General has not issued an opinion, Virginia Organizing leaders and supporters called his office on October 14 and 15 and said, "I am with Virginia Organizing and we urge you to issue the opinion quickly that directs local police to stop violating the civil rights of individuals so no more people are detained!"

Virginia Organizing inspired hundreds of phone calls to the Attorney General's office. We received an outpouring of responses on social media networks and through email from grassroots people making the call and getting their friends to also call.

While we do not yet know the results of this campaign, we are hopeful that Attorney General Herring will issue an opinion that protects the civil rights of all people.

# Real people. Real change.

## South Hampton Roads Chapter Educates on Affordable Care Options

Virginia Organizing South Hampton Roads Chapter held a seminar this month to help individuals enroll in affordable health insurance and inform the public about the benefits of Medicaid expansion.

"Lack of health insurance leaves vulnerable Virginians exposed to illnesses," said South Hampton Roads Chapter leader Winston Whitehurst. "Virginia is in a position to provide outstanding preventive, acute and chronic health care service by expanding Medicaid. We have an opportunity to take care of Virginia citizens and make sure they are covered."

Health and Human Services Region III Director Joanne Grossi, Virginia Beach Department of Health Director Dr. Heidi Kulberg, Virginia state Senator Louise Lucas, Hampton Roads Community Health Center CEO Barbara Willis, Fort Norfolk Cardiology's Dr. Keith Newby, Sr., and moderator Dr. Noel Manyindo, Senior Director of Community Health and Wellness, all participated in a panel discussion on relative community health topics.

## Voter Registration, Restoration of Rights, and Voter Photo ID Education in Local Chapters

The Richmond Chapter partnered with Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. to canvass the local area, register voters, provide information on the restoration of civil rights process, and educate voters on the new voter photo ID law. The Chapter and

Sorority spent several weekends on outreach to meet the October 14 deadline for voters to register for the November election.

In Charlottesville, Chapter leaders passed out information on voter registration, restoration of rights, photo ID, and absentee voting.

The Fredericksburg Chapter had a voter registration drive in Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Spotsylvania. Volunteers passed out voter photo ID information, spoke with individuals who were interested in getting their rights back, and helped register voters. The Chapter worked with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

## Virginia Organizing Staff Expands to Roanoke

Virginia Organizing is thrilled to welcome Lauren Wines, Roanoke Valley Organizer, to our staff! Lauren interned for Virginia Organizing in 2013 while working toward her Bachelor of Social Work. Lauren lives in Roanoke with her partner, Heather, and their dog, Yuri. She's looking forward to building the Roanoke Chapter and working for a more just Virginia. Welcome, Lauren!



Virginia Organizing regrets to announce that Laura Castro, one of our South Hampton Roads Organizers, will be leaving in November. Laura has been a valuable member of our staff and we are sorry to see her go, but understand that she has family obligations. Thank you for all your great work, Laura!

## Leader of the Month Daniel Willson



Daniel Willson is a Baptist pastor and Virginia Organizing leader in Martinsville. Daniel first got involved after students visited him to talk about Virginia

Organizing, but he was already interested in learning more from driving by the local office.

He was happy to get involved with Virginia Organizing because of the opportunity to work for social justice with other members of his local community.

"Working with Virginia Organizing is great because it creates a partnership between ministry and community organizing," said Daniel. "I love that the people of Virginia can come together to confront the urgent matters of our time using our skills and expertise to work for justice."

Daniel is currently active in his local Chapter's work on child care subsidies in Virginia. He has seen firsthand through work with the church day care that the system is broken and he is working to find other child care providers with similar experiences to raise their voices.

Daniel also said Virginia Organizing has restored his confidence in the ability to get things done through the political process.

"It's important to be politically involved because democracy favors those who show up," said Daniel.

In addition to work with child care subsidies, Daniel has been active in civic engagement and Medicaid expansion.

Thank you, Daniel, for your great work and leadership!

## VIRGINIA ORGANIZING

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## Local Chapters and Areas Served

Augusta/Staunton/Waynesboro  
Charlottesville/Albemarle County  
Danville  
Harrisonburg/Rockingham County  
Fredericksburg  
Lee County  
Louisa County  
Martinsville/Henry County  
South Hampton Roads  
Washington County  
Tri-Cities/Petersburg  
Richmond

On Campus: UMW, VSU, CNU, UVA, E&H, U of R, ODU, NSU, RU, TCC, VCU, JMU, EMU, MBC



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## News in Brief

- Virginia Organizing released the Alliance for a Just Society report on the state of Women's Health in Virginia, which gave Virginia a grade of "C" for our current practices. One big recommendation from the report: expand Medicaid. Read more at <http://bit.ly/WomensHealthVa2014>.

- We're celebrating 20 years in 2015! Be sure to sign up to receive our emails at [www.virginia-organizing.org/signup](http://www.virginia-organizing.org/signup) for the latest information. You can also follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and now Pinterest at [www.pinterest.com/VaOrganizing](http://www.pinterest.com/VaOrganizing). There will be a local celebration every month next year — in different parts of the state — that you don't want to miss! Stay tuned for more details.

- Be sure you have a photo ID to vote in the November election. If you don't have an ID, you can get a temporary ID from your registrar that will allow you to vote in the November election. Learn more at [www.sbe.virginia.gov](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov).

- The Augusta/Staunton/Waynesboro Chapter is working on a new local campaign to ban the box from their local government job applications. Many other cities across Virginia have banned the question regarding criminal history on job applications, giving returning citizens better opportunities for a second chance.

[www.virginia-organizing.org](http://www.virginia-organizing.org)