

A Publication for the Conscious Woman

Focus ON Women MAGAZINE

Celebrating our Tenth Year!!!



Puerto Rico's Colonial Past

Fixing Poverty Over Generations

Bozo Anyone?

Economic Implications of Ending DACA



September/October 2017

UNLV

A close-up portrait of a young woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a white graduation gown over a pink top. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery and a building.

Congratulations
Amber Turner

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SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER 2017

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Undoubtedly, the mark of the holiday season brings to us a deluge of spirited giving. With the open hand of gratitude, we embrace the expected and unexpected banquet of offerings before us. This season lends pause to be gifted with presents of a different sort. With selected foresight, the hardships we face are gifts too, beckoning us forward to

a place of greater strength, insight and solitude. Indeed, hassles, hardships and hurdles are complicated hexagons patterned with opportunities. To our readers, supporters and advertisers, may you too embrace the cornucopia of gifts ushered forth which accompanies this holiday season. May you find yourselves in kind company, joyful moments and many days filled with happiness.

"HAPPY HOLIDAYS"

All the best, **Joslyn Wolfe**
Publisher, Focus on Women Magazine

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Registration Now Open For 9th Annual Flip Flop Festivus!



Join us for the 9th Annual Life and Breath Foundation's Flip Flop Festivus Casino Royale

To benefit the Sarcoidosis Community

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7:00 p.m.

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Focus Women ON Women MAGAZINE

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Focus on Women Magazine is a bi-monthly publication for women, to women, and about women which focuses on topics of interest to women and is geared towards a multi-generational audience.

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The Children's Home Presenting **FACES 2017**, Oct. 27 at M&T Bank Stadium

Signature Fundraiser Supports Maryland's At-Risk Children & Youth

The Children's Home, a 501 (c) 3 organization committed to fostering statewide crisis intervention services for youths ages 13 to 21, is moving its signature fundraiser to a new location.

FACES 2017 will take place Friday, **Oct. 27**, from **6 to 10 p.m.**, at **M&T Bank Stadium South East Club Level Lounge** (1101 Russell St., Baltimore, MD 21230).

With the theme, **Glitz & Gloss**, this chic evening will feature a **dinner buffet** with beer, wine and specialty cocktails; **dancing** to live music by **SoulCentered**, **raffle drawings**; an **interactive art activity**; **airbrush tattoo and bodypainting from Airbrush Unlimited Group**, and a **photobooth** from **Fun Fotos MD**.

The highlight is the **silent and live auction featuring photography, paintings, trinkets** and other **handmade gifts created by the at-risk children and youth living at The Children's Home residents**, along with other special items.

As part of a mentorship with **Kimberly Hopkins** (owner/creative, khopdesign LLC) and her husband, **Michael Hopkins**, FACES annually showcases the residents' courage for positive change, along with their innate artistic talent.

ABC2 News Anchor Jamie Costello will serve as the emcee. Event co-chairs are **Regina Cohen** (a volunteer at The Children's Home who is affectionately regarded by the residents as, "The Candy Lady,") and **Tammara Madison** (The Children's Home volunteer).

FACES 2017 is intended to raise over \$50,000 to sustain quality programs and services for at-risk children, youth and their families. **Individual tickets are \$100 per person in advance and \$125 per person at the door. Tables of 10 are \$900.** For more information or to purchase tickets or tables, visit bidpal.net/FACES or call **410.744.7310**.



FACES 2017 Theme: "Glitz & Gloss"
Friday, October 27, 2017
6:00-10:00 p.m
M&T Bank Stadium Southeast Club Lounge

About The Children's Home

Established in 1863 as an orphanage for children abandoned due to the Civil War, The Children's Home celebrates a distinguished legacy of caring for Maryland's at-risk children and youth both inside and outside the family structure. Its programs and services have continued to evolve to meet the needs of the community.

Operating from its 44-acre campus in Catonsville, the non-profit provides a comprehensive program of academic support, recreation, therapeutic counseling, arts and culture and life skills to give each child the opportunity to become a happy and productive citizen. Three of its most exciting program endeavors are weekly equestrian/pet therapies, entrepreneurial expressive arts and job placement assistance for older teens and young adults. For more information, visit www.thechildrenshome.net.

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5 EASY WAYS To Uncomplicate Your Life

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” Leonardo Da Vinci once said that, and I don’t think anything could be closer to the truth.

But how can we bring more simplicity into our complex lives? How can we uncomplicate things for ourselves?

It’s time for a reality check...

Life is actually pretty simple, but we insist on making it complicated!

Here are a few easy ways to uncomplicate it:

1 Learn from the past, and then get the heck out of there!

Past mistakes should teach you to create a wonderful future; not cause you to be afraid of it. Don’t carry your mistakes around with you. Instead, place them under your feet and use them as stepping stones. Never regret. If it’s good, it’s wonderful. If it’s bad, it’s experience. Success is not about where you are standing at any given point in time; it’s about how much you’ve learned and how far you’ve come to get there.

2 Focus on being productive, not being busy.

Don’t just get things done; get the right things done. Results are always more important than the time it takes to achieve them. Stop and ask yourself if what you’re working on is worth the effort. Is it bringing you in the same direction as your goals? Don’t get caught up in odd jobs, even those that seem urgent, unless they are also important. Identify what’s most important to you. Eliminate as much as you possibly can of everything else. No wasted time, no fluff, no regrets.

3 Organize your space.

Start clearing clutter. Get rid of stuff you don’t use and then organize what’s left. Keeping both your living and working areas organized is crucial. If you have a cluttered space, it can be distracting and stressful. A clear space is like a blank canvas, available to be used to create something great.

4 Be efficient.

Stop being inefficient simply because you’ve always done it that way. If you keep doing what you’re doing, you’ll keep getting what you’re getting. Many times we live with unplanned, complex systems in our lives simply because we haven’t given them much thought. Instead, streamline your life by finding better ways of handling common tasks. Focus on one system at a time (your cleaning system, your errands system, your paperwork system, your email system, etc.) and try to make it simplified, efficient, and logical. Then, once you have it perfected, stick to it.

5 Let things be less than perfect.

Smile every chance you get; not because life has been easy, perfect, or exactly as you had anticipated, but because you choose to be happy and grateful for all the good things you do have, and all the problems you know you don’t have. You must accept the fact that life is not perfect, that people are not perfect, and that you are not perfect. And that’s okay, because the real world doesn’t reward perfection. It rewards people who get GOOD things done. And the only way to get GOOD things done is to be imperfect 99% of the time.

Is this email your wake up call to a simpler life?

How many times have you thought “this isn’t working” or “something is not right” or “things have to change”? – those thoughts and words are from your inner voice. It’s your wake-up call calling.

You don’t need a major life crisis to wake you up. And no one needs to tell you because you already know. Your inner voice has been trying to tell you, but in case it’s been a challenge to find time and space to listen through the chaos, maybe you’ll resonate with one of these situations.

- If your life is on auto-pilot, this is your wake-up call.
- If you never put yourself first, this is your wake-up call.
- If you’ve become someone you don’t recognize to please other people or to chase some version of success that doesn’t resonate with you, this is your wake-up call.
- If you are constantly numbing out with food, shopping, booze, TV, or other distractions, this is your wake-up call.
- If you are worn down, beat up, stressed out, and completely depleted, this is your wake-up call.

Getting your wake-up call is not the hard part, answering the call is. Choosing to answer the call instead of ignoring it is hard. Right now, it may feel easier to keep going, and going, and going. But you know if you don’t find a way out of the endless cycle you’re in, it’s going to get worse.

Spend a Year With Us, Making One Powerful Change at a Time

Based on our friend Courtney Carver’s personal simplicity-centered transformation, she created A Simple Year – 12 months of guided simplicity. She invited Marc and me, and nine other world-class simplicity advocates, experts, and authors to help.

Many of the experts in A Simple Year charge hundreds of dollars for just an hour of their time. In this focused, step-by-step course you’ll get their expertise (and ours) for a small fraction of the price.

If you’d like to spend the upcoming year focused on simplifying your life, tackling ONE change at a time so you don’t get overwhelmed, side by side with 12 experts, and a supportive community, please join us.

The program officially begins Jan. 2 and early registration is open for a limited time for an insanely affordable, discounted price.

Learn all about the monthly topics and what to expect from A Simple Year [HERE](#).

It would be our pleasure and an honor to work with YOU.



How will you answer your wake-up call?

Maybe A Simple Year isn’t the answer, and there probably isn’t just one answer, but I want to encourage you to take a step towards change.

You are brave and strong enough to answer the call.

Big change comes from hundreds of tiny steps and they all matter.

You don’t have to have a perfect plan for the next 10 years or even the next 10 days. All you need is an open heart and the next step. Not all the steps, not a big step, just the next one. ●

You’ve got this!

And finally, please share this email with anyone else who could benefit from A Simple Year.

<https://simpleyear.co/>

Sincerely hoping you are already looking forward to a simpler and happier 2018,

Angel Chernoff
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Adventures *with Bozo* - by JILL TOMPSON

Does anyone remember "Bozo,"

the inflatable punching bag? The bottom fills with sand and once inflated it stands about 4 feet tall. You punch it in the face and it pops right back up for another. Well, over the past 15 ½ years, although taller, I have felt as though I am "Bozo."

I am not telling you this for your sympathy-it was just a favorite childhood toy of mine. When I am down for the count and cannot seem to pop back up, I envision this toy and it makes me smile

After writing my book, *Finding Jill: How I Rebuilt My Life After Losing the Five People I Loved Most*, I felt relief to have my story out there. I spoke at different events and toured for a few years after my book was published. I did radio interviews, a few TV interviews, and I even wrote some articles for blogs and magazines. Each time I revisited my past; it took me a few days or up to a week to re-engage with my present life.

My husband John and my son Franklin gave me the space I needed to go through the grieving process I have come to know so well. It was hard on them, but truly exhausting for me. I balanced as best I could, knowing this was my contribution to helping those who are beginning the grief process, as well as helping to shed light into the darkness for those studying grief. In the process, I regained and reclaimed my purpose in life of not only being a wife and mother, but a source of strength for those in need.

Don't get me wrong; I still had enormous loss and grief during these years-the death of my father being the greatest. Yet each time I stood in deep pain and grief, I was able to pop back up, adjust my stance, and look life in the face.

In 2014, I felt surrounded once again by death. People I care very much about lost children while others lost fathers. Each month seemed to bring with it new tragedies. Of course, I also personally knew most of the individuals who died. Yet, losing a child is like losing your breath; and losing a father is like losing your entire foundation. The one event that completely knocked me out was the death of my cousin, Nikki. We only had a couple of months to say our good-byes. I prayed nonstop for a miracle to destroy the cancer that engulfed her body. I wondered how my sweet cousin could be dying just four years after the death of her 38-year-old husband, who succumbed to a heart defect. Nikki's death has shattered so many lives, and the aftershock continues to ripple in catastrophic ways.

I've come to learn that each person must go through his or her own journey. It definitely took me a long while to regain my footing. At the end of 2014, I made a conscious choice to let go of my book; at least the speaking events and promotional efforts. I still wanted to help people, yet I felt my family and close friends needed me, and I could not find a way to balance both.

Although these difficult times seem to outweigh the good, this could be no further from the truth. Since my accident in 2002, I have made a choice to bring happiness into my life. It is not an easy task but I know deep within that there is no one in this world who can accomplish this for me. Certainly support and love helps, yet each individual must find his path. For me, counseling has been a huge help; along with writing and creating a healthy environment, exercise and eating healthy foods, and minimal alcohol. This is especially true during my "down" days. I am far from perfect, but the more I hold true to the above, the greater happiness fills my soul.

After walking around New York City, and again during a Seattle trip near the end of 2014, I realized my bad leg from the accident was affecting me negatively, and the beginning of the ski season confirmed this. I had my leg looked at and sure enough the lower plate needed to be removed as it was tearing into my tendon. My recovery took a bit longer than expected because the surgeon had to shave some bone in order to get the plate out. For me, the hardest part of the surgery was not physical; rather, I did not realize how the surgery on my leg could throw me back to the time of the accident. I was not prepared for all the questions, or the looks of horror on the faces of those around me. I can only imagine what I did and said while going under and coming to. That in and of itself gives me a bit of comic relief! I am not one to lay still and for weeks I was in a complete state of torture having to sit with just my thoughts. Once recovered, I kept busy again and to some degree pushed aside my feelings. Deep within, however, I felt ridiculous that the surgery impacted me in this way.

A highlight of that summer was my aunts, uncle and cousins visiting from Michigan to celebrate my sister Jody's retirement. Much laughter and love filled those days! I even had a chance to share my home, which is 2.5 hours away! It was a wonderful visit. Aunt Doris, my aunt who visited me in Italy with my mom, seemed frail and was on oxygen due to a recent virus. The altitude where my house is located was quite difficult for her. Once she returned to Michigan, her health declined and she had to move in with one of her daughters.

Our cousins kept us up-to-date on the status of her health.

A few days into December, I woke during the middle of the night and was convinced I would never see my Aunt Doris again. My husband John calmed me down and helped me plan my flight there for the next day. It was definitely the best advice John has given me. We had such a wonderful visit! My cousins came, as did my Uncle Bob and Cathy. My Aunt Doris and I had some great discussions, and laughed more than I have laughed in years!

After returning home from Michigan, I only had 2 weeks to prepare for Christmas. I always look forward to Christmas, but this one was exceptionally exciting because my sisters, brother and their families were all coming to Idaho. My brother and his family, and John's mom Gracie would actually be spending Christmas with us, and my sisters and their families would join us the day after.

On Christmas day, we had an early dinner so that John could get to his job of grooming the ski runs at our local ski mountain. One of my nephews went with him while the rest of us enjoyed a relaxing Christmas night. That was until about 7 o'clock.

As I play each detail out in my head, the only one I feel you need to know is that everyone got out safe as we watched our house burn to the ground. It was extremely traumatic, and I am actually having a hard time even writing about it. Maybe I haven't completely dealt with this particular tragedy yet. The chimney installer made a tragic mistake, which could have caused death and injury to my family and I. It is hard not to think about the "what ifs," but I am grateful that this tragedy did not result in any deaths.

Just as I have forgiven the two gentlemen who caused the lives of my husband, two sons, mom, and my niece in the deadly car crash in Italy, I also forgive the young man whose oversight caused the burning of our home and destroyed the safe environment I had worked so hard to create.

The fire shook my family to its core. Franklin's schooling suffered, our marriage suffered, and I once again felt as if I could lose my mind in the next second. I was unable to form complete sentences. I could not finish a thought. I felt like a complete failure in everything I did or tried to do. The difference was that I knew how to become stronger. It took until this last summer, 2017, for me to regain my footing. Once again I feel balanced, secure, and truly happy!

My Aunt Doris passed away a few months after our house fire. I would not have been able to visit her, which makes me feel incredibly thankful for my intuition and for my very supportive husband!

My husband John, my son Franklin, and I are settled into our new home, which we rebuilt on the same foundation with the help and guidance of Peter Harris, the "best builder ever!" Peter has become family to me and has helped to bring peace and tranquility into my life that does not always feel stable. Franklin has adjusted surprisingly well and just this past summer his confidence has returned, alongside his overflowing joy of life! Franklin brings such love and laughter into our home. John and I are so blessed to have him!

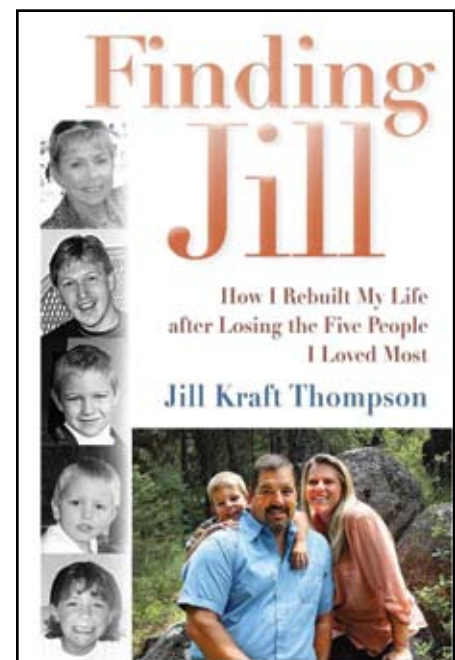
Our marriage struggles are hopefully behind us, yet like any marriage, I am positive we will have more ups and downs. What

we have gained in our relationship is a much stronger communication and a slower reaction time. As long as we have love, honesty, and strong communication, we will grow stronger together.

John worked tirelessly to bring us back home. It would not have happened so quickly without his strength. He knew what Franklin and I needed, and he moved mountains to make it happen!

Like I said, I am back on my feet. The outpouring of love and support from our community and family has given me a brace to lean on that I did not realize I had next to me. This has given me newfound strength and courage. I am overjoyed with my life! Could things be easier? Perhaps, yet I would not be who I am today without the things that happened yesterday, or last week, last month, or the years gone by.

But what I do know is that tomorrow better watch out, because here I come!



Finding Jill: How I Rebuilt My Life After Losing the Five People I Loved Most

ISBN: 0989425207, 9780989425209

Author: Jill Kraft Thompson

Publication: September 2013

www.findingjill.com



JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE

Healthy Volunteers Needed

We are looking for healthy children, ages **6-17**, to participate in a clinical research study.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to find out whether an investigational (research) blood test is able to help confirm a diagnosis of ADHD in youth.

Your child may qualify if your child:

- *is a healthy female or male, ages 6-17
- *has no clinical history of ADHD or Bipolar Disorder

Qualified participants will receive monetary compensation.

For study qualification/more information please contact:

Bernice Frimpong (Research Program Coordinator)
443-287-2144 or bfrimpong2@jhmi.edu

*Principal Investigator - Ekaterina Stepanova, MD, PhD
IRB# 00097415*



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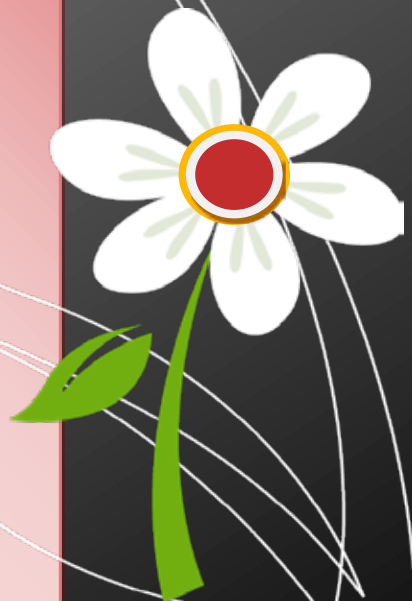
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Multi-generational disadvantage requires multi-generational solutions

For generations, members of Ms. Jones’s (not her real name) family have grown up in public housing. As we chatted in her apartment in a public housing development on the far south side of Chicago, she reflected on not just her own experiences growing up in a building known for its notorious gang violence and deplorable living conditions, but also the housing her mother had grown up in and her daughter’s current struggle to find employment that paid enough so she could move out of her subsidized unit.

While talking about her family’s desire to thrive, Ms. Jones expressed the incredible frustration that comes when your aspirations are stymied at every turn, blocked by what feel like insurmountable obstacles—a bus service that can’t be relied on to get you to work, a route to school that isn’t safe, and local food marts that only sell alcohol and cigarettes.

Some neighborhoods are abundant in positive resources and opportunities, yet far too many others, like Ms. Jones’s, are much more likely to harm than help the families that live there. Recent research has focused national attention on the importance of place for the development of healthy children, families, and communities. Some say “place matters,” others that “zip code shouldn’t determine destiny,” but the central lesson is that where you grow up makes a difference.

Creating opportunities within place

Families in public and assisted housing often need supports and services to help reach their full potential. But for those families that have also experienced the damage and trauma that comes from living in the most distressed neighborhoods, traditional supportive services often fall short. That’s why we designed and implemented the Housing Opportunities and Services Together (HOST) demonstration to test a different strategy.

For the past five years, HOST has brought together families like Ms. Jones’s, public housing agencies, and service providers to collaborate to identify and coordinate needed services to help residents. HOST differs from traditional, light-touch service models by focusing on the strengths and needs of the whole family. Over a period of several years, Ms. Jones worked with her case managers to find increasingly steady employment that would pay the wages she needed to consider moving to unsubsidized housing. Instead of simply referring her to various job fairs or training programs, Ms. Jones’s case manager helped her identify her strengths and address some of the physical and mental health issues that had been a barrier to steady employment.

The family’s case manager also built relationships with Ms. Jones’s children and spent a year supporting her son’s college scholarship search. He’s now a full-time sophomore in college. The case manager checks in with him regularly, because the journey to self-sufficiency doesn’t have a hard stop.

Lessons for federal housing policy

Ms. Jones knows she may have a long road to self-sufficiency and the life she wants, but she is proud her son is already charting a new path. As the first in his family to attend college, he has taken a huge step toward breaking the cycle of disadvantage created in large part by the places his family has lived. This is the promise of two-generation models like HOST.

Lessons from HOST can help inform federal policymaking efforts to provide services for public- and assisted-housing residents in a way that creates a path to self-sufficiency. Based on our HOST experiences, we’ve written a brief that details our recommendations for these programs, including:

- prioritizing two-generation service models that support the whole family;
- requiring rigorous data collection for continuous program improvement; and
- building public housing agency capacity to partner with local service providers to provide comprehensive services.

The experiences of Ms. Jones’s family and others who participated in HOST’s Altgeld Gardens program illustrate how disadvantage accumulates across generations in distressed neighborhoods and why whole-family intensive service models are necessary. ■

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To Know More....

Info About Article: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/multi-generational-disadvantage-requires-multi-generational-solutions>



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*Principal Investigator – Ekaterina Stepanova, MD, PhD
IRB# 00086805*

Task Force on Human Trafficking

Council Resolution 8-2014 established the Howard County Task Force on Human Trafficking. The task force is directed to research the development of protocols, community outreach efforts, training efforts, and partnerships to help increase the identification of human trafficking victims in the County and aid in the establishment of a provider network for comprehensive services for victims of trafficking.

Commission Members:

C. Vernon Gray, Chair

Administrator
Howard County Office of Human Rights

Dario J. Broccolino

State's Attorney
Howard County Office of State's Attorney

Rev. Martin P. Brooks

Associate Pastor
Bethany United Methodist Church

Karen S. Butler

Director
Howard County Department of Social Services

Sara Cochran

HoCo AGAST

James F. Fitzgerald

Sheriff
Howard County, Maryland

Renee A. Foose

Superintendent, HCPSS

Sharon P. Hadsell

Sr. VP Patient Care Services
Howard County General Hospital

Steven J. Hess

US Attorney's Office District of Maryland
Governor's Task Force on Human Trafficking



Andrea Ingram

Executive Director
Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center

William J. McMahon

Chief
Howard County Police Department

Lois Mikkila

Director
Howard County Department of Citizen Services

Maura Rossman, M.D.

Health Officer
Howard County Health Department

Suellen Seigel

Howard County Commission for Women

Sandra Stecker

Deputy Director
Howard County Technology and Communication Services

Meeting Schedule:

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

10:30 a.m.

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room, George Howard Building

Agenda: Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, March 5, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, April 9, 2014

10:30 a.m.

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room, George Howard Building

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, April 9, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

09:00 a.m.

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room, George Howard Building

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, May 21, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

09:00 a.m.

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room, George Howard Building

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, June 18, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, July 16, 2014

09:00 a.m.

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room, George Howard Building

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, July 16, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, August 6, 2014

09:00 a.m.

Gateway Office Building, Conference Room 6

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, August 6, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, September 2, 2014

09:00 a.m.

George Howard Building, CVG Room

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, September 2, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

09:00 a.m.

George Howard Building, CVG Room

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, September 17, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, October 8, 2014

09:00 a.m.

Gateway Building, Conference Room 3

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force - Wednesday, October 8, 2014 (recording), Minutes

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

10:00 a.m.

Location: The Columbia Gateway Building
Room 3

6751 Gateway Drive, Columbia, MD

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force (recording unavailable), Minutes

Wednesday, November 18, 2014

09:00 a.m.

Location: The Columbia Gateway Building
Room 3

6751 Gateway Drive, Columbia, MD

Agenda, Human Trafficking Task Force, Minutes

Monday, December 8, 2014

Presentation to Howard County Council

Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Phone: (410) 313-2001
Contact Council Members
Fax: (410) 313-3297

All information submitted to the County Council is considered public information.



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Dreamers and You....

In six months, 800,000 young people may be hunted down and deported. This is more than the population of the city of Seattle. Their only crime was being brought to this country illegally by their parents. They are collectively known as dreamers and covered by an executive order DACA. The mass round up of people by the government is not new when we look at the internment of the Japanese during World War II and the Trail of Tears to name a few, to our shame. One hopes that we will not be sending bus loads of young people to the border, forcing them across the border to



a country that they do not know, have no ties to, and may not even speak the language.

All DACA does is allow certain young illegal immigrants to apply for work permits. Applicants must have been younger than 16 when brought to this country. They must either still be in school, high school graduates or in the military. They also must not be convicted of a serious crime and be younger than 31 before 2007. This is not amnesty and does not offer a path to citizenship.

Two reasons are usually given for revoking DACA: President Obama did not have the legal authority to issue the order and the people receiving the work permits are taking jobs away from American citizens. The first part of the argument is already facing legal challenges since no legal precedents were cited. Janet Napolitano, former secretary of homeland security, who created the program among those suing the Trump administration for violating administrative procedures and constitutional due process. A group of 16 state Attorney Generals, have filed suit in Federal court and claimed that the order was driven by racial motives and failed to follow federal rules governing executive policy making.

Those who claim that these young people are taking jobs from unemployed citizens never specify what jobs these are. Most of the unemployed that critics are speaking of are older blue collar workers while most of the workers covered by DACA are working in service, sales and administrative support. Very few unemployed blue collar workers are entering these fields. The employment rate for these young people is extremely high for two reasons: they are all high school graduates and have clean criminal records. This high labor force participation is important because these workers pay federal

and state income taxes and pay into the social security system. Roughly one fifth of DACA workers are in the health care and educational sector. Government projections show that the economy will need to add hundreds of thousands of workers in these fields in the next five to ten years. If the DACA workers in these areas are deported, there could be a disaster for those who rely on them for their care.

If these young people lose their work permits there are other serious implications: they will lose their jobs and any benefits connect to these jobs, including health insurance. Even if they do not have health insurance through their employers they could lose state-sponsored health benefits. They would lose driver's licenses, teaching certifications and access to some state educational benefits. In many cases, they are the only one in their family that can work legally and have any health insurance. Their work ethic is also a good example for other family members. All of these outcomes would serve an impact on the communities in which they live.

The revocation of DACA can affect all of us. The first group that will feel the effects will be the elderly and the disabled who need health care workers. There will be a shortage of bilingual teachers and other workers. For the aging population, this means fewer workers supporting Social Security and posits a reason for concern about the future of Medicare. Driving out younger workers will only exacerbate these matters. Younger workers are more likely to be consumers rather than the elderly which more beneficial in keeping economies, local and national more buoyant and is thus more beneficial for businesses. The US Chamber of Commerce understands and is one of the groups opposing the revocation of DACA. We should all understand that this program benefits the entire country. ●

Here you go!

Where did you get your artistic ability? Did it begin as a child and how and why so?

Yes, if I were to describe myself in three words...it would be curious, imaginative and fearless. Like most children, we are naturally all artists and scientists. We love to observe our surroundings, work with our hands to figure things out, and see how we affect the environment around us. So much of how we progress from there is dependent on an innate sense of aesthetics, beauty, as well as the space and encouragement to practice.

I deeply believe we all are born with the innate sense to create, invent and build. This is our DNA. Unfortunately, we also have the propensity to form "blocks" by doubting our abilities, our worthiness to contribute, a supportive environment and the drive to make it happen. Fortunately, I had supportive parents, teachers and friends who believed in me, my abilities, and gave me continuous positive feedback and support. More than that, I believed in myself.

You appear to have a business acumen. Where does that come from?

My business acumen came with working twelve years as a contract engineer. I have worked in many business environments, many Fortune 500 companies. I learned the way businesses practiced, including the way information flowed, how companies were structured, how to develop trust and integrity among people at work, high work ethic, and a tenacity for problem solving.

How does your work stand out from that of others?

I believe my greatest gift is the ability to use both sides of my brain collectively. This wasn't always the case. It took quite a number of years to have my left and right brain on the same team. I was torn for the longest time questioning which side of the fence I was really on. I had a strong and natural impulse for using the right side for drawing, painting and any artistic venture. My left side loved logic and reasoning ~ the absolution of math and problem solving. It wasn't until I began in the alternative hair industry that I could empower both sides of my brain to work in sync. Forming an alliance between them allowed me to manifest what I desired much greater and quicker than I could ever have imagined. I truly believe anything is possible.

<http://lawrencehoward.com>

TEL : 410.363.6205 CONTACT: Larry Lichtenauer

What was a turning point in your adult life when you knew you had to delve into the unknown and pursue this idea?

A friend of mine lost her hair due to chemotherapy treatment. She had bought a wig which looked pretty bad and she never left the house except to go to treatment. At that time, my then husband was developing a hair replacement procedure for men. He had aligned himself with a factory to produce men's hair grafts. I promised my friend that I would try to make something for her that she would be happy with. Honestly, I did not know what I was doing, but I was confident I could incorporate my art background with my engineering to develop an enhancement she would be happier with. In the end, I replicated her hair and she felt alive again. So was I. This was the turning point for me. Two years later, I quit my career as an engineer to pursue designing alternative. I have been able to successfully combine my art and design skills, with problem solving. I should also say that I don't sleep much. My brain is almost always activated to forming new and better ways of doing things. My husband says I am like a vampire.

What was the journey like from where you were ten years ago to where you are now?

It has been an amazing journey, especially the last 10 years. Looking back until now, we have gain so much momentum and fortitude with my original vision. The vision being that any woman could enjoy wearing enhancements not only for "skinny" hair, but for looking younger, fashion fun and modern convenience. After patenting/protecting my designs, I created a customized design/ordering system, marketing and an extensive educational curriculum so that we may duplicate what we have been doing at Versacchi at partner salons across the country/world. We have partnered with some amazing talent and created an alliance of hair professionals that I am so honored to be affiliated with.

What would you say was your best life's work?

My children.

If there was something that you could change, what would it be?

To delegate more of the work so I could paint in my studio at least 3-4 days per week. #

How Hurricane Maria exposed Puerto Rico’s “colonial boom and bust”



Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico and its 3.4 million residents. Power and resources are still scarce on the island, and [federal aid has been slow](#). In addition to this immediate crisis, the storm highlighted Puerto Rico’s existing infrastructure problems.

In the following conversation with Zaire Dinzey-Flores, associate professor of sociology and Latino and Caribbean studies at Rutgers University and author of [Locked In, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City](#), we explore what led to Puerto Rico’s decline before Hurricane Maria and what’s next for the island.

What historical factors came into play for Puerto Rico’s development before the storm?

Dinzey-Flores: An injection of economic development in the 1950s made the island feel more like the US than its impoverished past. Operation Bootstrap began to modernize Puerto Rico at a whirlwind pace. It brought public schools, public housing, electricity, manufacturing, television, lit highways that cut straight lines, modern infrastructure, growing social services including public medical clinics, real estate booms, and petrochemical industries.

Water and electricity, two of the most pressing issues three weeks after the storm, had at one time been symbols of Puerto Rico’s advantages. Massive investment in the electrical grid and industrialization efforts peaked in the 1970s with the construction of a grid that reached remote rural areas and provided massive production to industry, commerce, and residential areas. Potable water was also widespread and available.

During the middle of the 20th century, Puerto Rico had become a leading expert in urban planning, serving as the model society for global urban development work. Puerto Rico’s planning agency and its technocrats provided worldwide leadership in infrastructure development and city and regional planning.

That Puerto Rico seemed to be “ready” for hurricanes is nowhere more evident than its use of cement. By 2006, Puerto Rico was using 1.9 million tons of cement annually, almost double the world’s average annual per capita use. [Experts have said](#) the outsized use of cement was a direct result of the island being in a “hurricane prone” area.

What led to Puerto Rico’s problems before Hurricane Maria?

Dinzey-Flores: By the late 20th century, Puerto Rico had electricity, fast roads, cable TV, the largest mall in the Caribbean, and the highest square footage of commercial space in the world. In contrast to nearby islands like the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico had fast-food companies, investors, and reliable electric power. Capital, too, flowed in Puerto Rico, and investors felt confident to invest in the government’s growing debt. Puerto Rico’s [per capita GDP](#) rose rapidly and consistently from \$717.51 in 1960 to \$28,703.75 in 2013. In contrast, the Dominican Republic rose slowly from \$204.13 in 1960 to \$6,027.06 in 2013.

But the capacity to produce, buy, and use cement came from the long-standing political-economic colonial arrangement with the United States, including the Dormant Commerce clause, which puts the US Congress in direct control of all commercial activity in and out of Puerto Rico. Akin to the Jones Act, this historically contingent configuration seemed to make sense in the middle of the 20th century and seemed to put Puerto Rico ahead of its neighbors.

Starting in 1990, as places like the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Cuba saw their fastest economic and infrastructural growth, boosted by international configurations of development, Puerto Rico became a stepchild to the US. As infrastructure support declined in the US, Puerto Rico’s infrastructure and hurricane preparedness suffered. US infrastruc-

“ Puerto Rico citizens felt this deterioration before the hurricane, with increasing commonality of blackouts, decaying roads, undrinkable water, and growing inequality. ”

ture spending steadily declined between the late 1970s and mid-1990s, and this was true for Puerto Rico as well.

Starting in 1990, as places like the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Cuba saw their fastest economic and infrastructural growth, boosted by international configurations of development, Puerto Rico became a stepchild to the US. As infrastructure support declined in the US, Puerto Rico's infrastructure and hurricane preparedness suffered. US infrastructure spending **steadily declined** between the late 1970s and mid-1990s, and this was true for Puerto Rico as well.

By the early 21st century, the publicly owned power and water companies, two of Puerto Rico's most prominent infrastructure projects, were in trouble. In 2015, most of the tap water in Puerto Rico was declared unsafe to drink, a reflection of its failing infrastructure and growing debt. The political relationship with the US incapacitated the island from maintaining all that cement and infrastructure.

What factors shaped Puerto Rico's ability to deal with an event like Maria?

Dinzey-Flores: A central theme of the 2016 US presidential election, like prior elections, was infrastructure. Puerto Ricans who live on the island can't vote in US elections, nor do they have voting representatives in Congress. A voice-only single "resident commissioner" in Congress is the product of an earlier era of direct colonial rule. But the US electorate's decisions have dire results for the island, and the political disinvestment from infrastructure gravely affects this territory of 3.5 million people.

Puerto Rico citizens felt this deterioration before the hurricane, with increasing commonality of blackouts, decaying roads, undrinkable water, and growing inequality. Attempts at fixing the shortfalls, including addressing a massive governmental debt, have come in the form of privatization proposals. Debating the appropriateness of public and private services takes a different tone when considering a colony. It is not only about whether private companies should be in charge of and derive profits from managing public services, but about whom—local or foreign entities—should reap the rewards.

The collapse has been slow but steady. With the end of tax exemptions that incentivized companies to the island, many industries left, and Puerto Rico's economy shifted to a finance economy. Puerto Rico began its reconvergence with conditions known to be more authentically Caribbean and less typical of the US mainland: high unemployment, high levels of informal work, high public benefits enrollment, high sales taxes, tax-free incentives, increasing mercenary political class and corruption, and limitations on tourism. Decaying roads, blackouts, water rationing, and declining commerce contrasted the international multilaterally supported growth in other parts of the Caribbean.

Few events can fully expose the stitching of colonial boom and bust that Puerto Rico has experienced since 1898. Hurricane Maria did it. In the same way that Katrina exposed the land-use inequality in New Orleans, Maria has exposed the infrastructural collapse in the island that is a result of its unique political-economic configuration.

Where should Puerto Rico go from here?

Dinzey-Flores: Some have said, "It's like a bomb went off," and perhaps treating it more like a bomb site is more adequate. Starting anew requires careful attention to the planning enterprise again, to building and maintaining an island that is resilient in the long term. As immediate needs are addressed, it is paramount that Puerto Rico focuses on the long game. Planners, beyond techies and politicians, need to be part of the conversation. Planning in a socially, ecologically, and politically sustainable fashion is essential.

Today, a satellite aerial map of the Caribbean shows the island in near darkness, next to well-lit Dominican Republic and Cuba. Puerto Rico's return into the light requires many things. First among them is the full federal aid of the US government to address the shortfall of infrastructure maintenance on the island. But most of all, Puerto Rico must rethink itself as an island that requires a unique way of seeing and building itself to face the storms—natural, social, and political—that will continue to come. ■



Carlos Martín
A senior fellow

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To Know More....

Info About Article: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/how-hurricane-maria-exposed-puerto-ricos-colonial-boom-and-bust>



POVERTY AND TRAUMA

Being poor hurts, physically and emotionally. Although we can fill an empty stomach, the pain of the experience of hunger causes anxiety and fear that hunger will occur again. Trauma changes who we are and how we see our world. When we understand trauma we are better equipped to help people in need actualize their dreams. Understanding and responding to trauma creates hope and empowerment, both essential ingredients in self-sufficiency and the realization of dreams.

The University of Maryland Medical Center defines a traumatic event as "an experience that causes physical, psychological, emotional distress or harm. It is an event that is perceived and experienced as a threat to one's safety or to the stability of one's world."

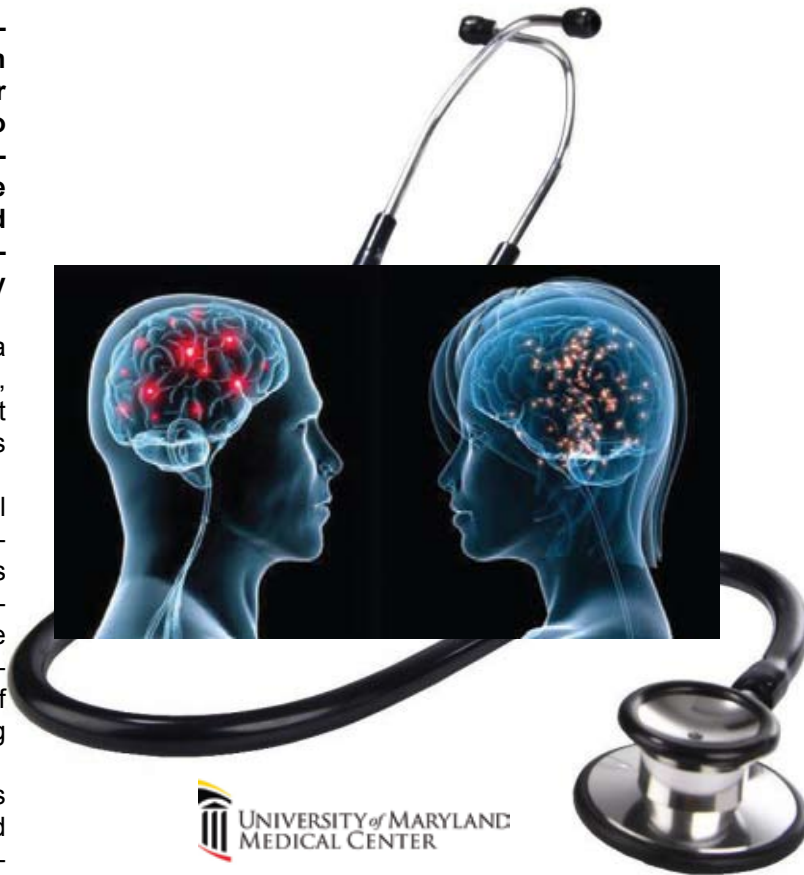
The research is clear. Trauma takes a direct physical and emotional toll on individuals, families and communities. The connection between trauma and poverty is well-documented. The more stress there is in a childhood environment, both in and outside of the home, the more the developing mind of children ages 0 to 5 is compromised. In March of 2016 The American Academy of Pediatrics declared poverty as the single most pressing chronic health issue facing children in the US.

With depleted, inconsistent, or nonexistent resources comes increased pressure, increased stress, increased sense of powerlessness, low self-esteem, fear and anxiety. The chronic conditions of poverty promote a deep-seated traumatic response regardless of your age, sex, race or religion.

There are increased risk factors for trauma that are associated with poverty. If you are living with economic hardships you have an increased likelihood of: insufficient income for basic needs resulting in deprivation (ex: food insecurity), chronic stress, family conflicts, divorce, social isolation, inadequate knowledge of and skill with problem solving, limited ability to read and write, alcohol and/or drug abuse, depression/mental health concerns, a lack of supportive relationships and a lack of child care supports, and discrimination.

Certain traumatic exposures are common in poverty. If you are living with economic hardships you have an increased risk for: low neighborhood safety, exposure to violent crime, gang activity, domestic violence, lack of access to basic needs (food, housing, heat, and water), drug and alcohol abuse, house fires, incarceration, and increased rates of illness and death.

Survivors need respect, to be informed, connected and hopeful regarding their own recovery. The interrelation between trauma, poverty, substance abuse, mental health issues and chronic physical illnesses must be recognized and addressed. Individuals and organizations helping those in poverty must understand that poverty is not a choice and is the direct result of exposure to environmental conditions. Understanding poverty as a treatable condition is the first step toward meaningful and long lasting recovery for survivors, their families, friends and other organizations that support recovery.



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Neighborhoods at the top are even more likely to stay there than those at the bottom



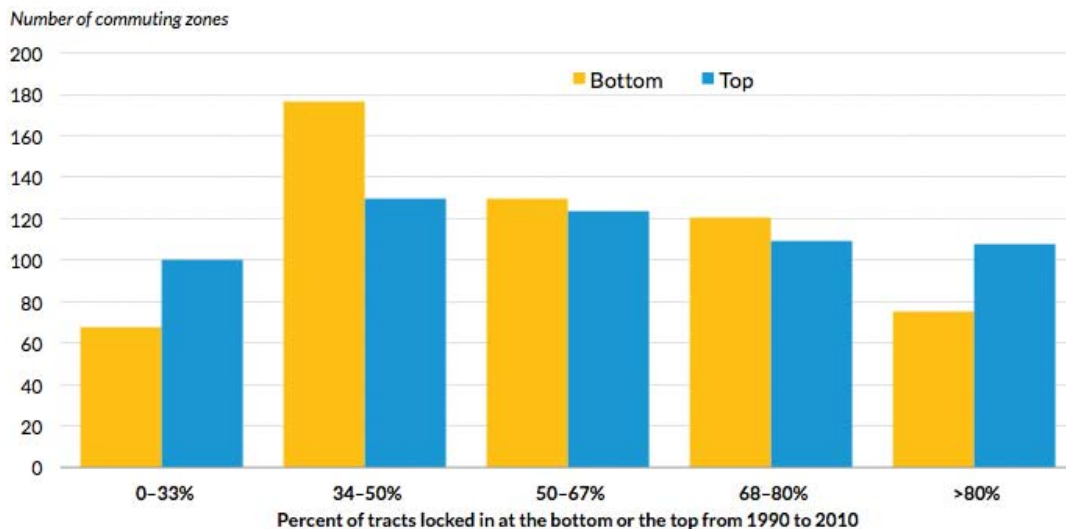
America’s most affluent neighborhoods are [worlds apart](#) from its most disadvantaged ones, and the gap has grown in the past two decades. How much of that change happened within the same neighborhoods—that is, how many of the neighborhoods at the top in 1990 stayed at the top, as even richer versions of themselves, in 2010? What about the bottom neighborhoods? Did they get stuck too?

Until recently, it’s been tough to answer questions like these because the Census Bureau redraws its neighborhood boundary definitions every 10 years. But Urban’s [Neighborhood Change Database](#), built with support from the [Rockefeller Foundation](#), allows us and many other researchers to learn about how, whether, and why neighborhoods evolve because it reconciles boundaries and data definitions over time.

Some neighborhoods are locked in to disadvantage-or privilege

Policymakers and researchers have been concerned recently about the extent to which distressed neighborhoods stay that way over time—that is, they get “locked in” to disadvantage by a cycle in which investment lags, crime grows, and households and businesses flee when they have a chance to find a better location.

Top Tracts Were More Likely to Be Locked in Than Bottom Tracts from 1990 to 2010



Source: Neighborhood Change Database

URBAN INSTITUTE

Our research bears out this concern. We ranked each commuting zone's tracts based on income, housing value, homeownership rates, and college education rates. Of the bottom 10 percent of neighborhoods in 2010, more than three-fifths (62 percent) were already bottom tracts in 1990. Among the large commuting zones, lock-in at the bottom was most pronounced in slow-growth, racially segregated commuting zones. In Baltimore, Boston, Bridgeport, Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, between 70 and 80 percent of the bottom tracts in 2010 were also bottom tracts in 1990.

Overall, the tracts in the 570 commuting zones we analyzed gained almost 50 million residents from 1990 to 2010. But the bottom tracts grew by fewer than 30,000 people over that period, and almost 40 percent lost at least 10 percent of their population.

What about the top tracts? Here, lock-in is even more pronounced: a full two-thirds of the 2010 top tracts (the highest-ranking 10 percent of tracts) were already in the top 10 percent in 1990. In 108 commuting zones, over 80 percent of the top tracts in 2010 were also top tracts in 1990. Only 75 commuting zones had this level of lock-in for bottom tracts. All the commuting zones with high lock-in at the bottom also had high levels at the top, but a few other high-income commuting zones—San Jose, Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC, for example—were also among those in which over 70 percent of the top neighborhoods in 2010 had already become top neighborhoods by 1990.

How the top tracts stay on top

A web of self-reinforcing policies and practices protect the position of top neighborhoods in their metropolitan areas. Many wealthier neighborhoods use [zoning to keep apartments out](#) and [purchase open space to limit development](#) further. In many states, they [incorporate as separate municipalities](#) to control school districts and tax rates. In suburban areas, they [reject investment](#) in roads, water supplies, and sewers as a way to limit growth—especially growth at densities high enough to support rental housing.

States often condone or reinforce these local exclusionary practices. In the mid-2000s, for example, Maryland—home to some of the nation's most privileged neighborhoods—required local governments to approve in advance all applications for federal low-income housing tax credits. While this policy was in effect, [the share of projects built with the credit in low-poverty neighborhoods fell by 17 percentage points](#). (Maryland has since changed this policy.)

Lock-in among high-opportunity neighborhoods is one reason why the recently issued [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing](#) rule is so important. It requires state and local governments to allow developers to meet market demand for affordable rental housing by changing their exclusionary policies. When low-income people live in better and safer neighborhoods, with greater access to high-quality public services and private goods, it will improve their health and their children's earning potential. Indirectly, then, reducing lock-in could even contribute to national economic growth. ■



Rolf Pendall

Codirector, Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center

Rolf Pendall is codirector of the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute. In this role, he leads a team of over 40 experts on a broad array of housing, community development, and economic development topics, consistent with Urban's nonpartisan, evidence-based approach to economic and social policy.

<https://www.urban.org/author/rolf-pendall>

**** Metropolitan : Baltimore, Boston, Bridgeport, Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, San Jose, Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC.**

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To Know More....

Online Article Link: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/neighborhoods-top-are-even-more-likely-stay-there-those-bottom>

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New evidence should drive policies on neighborhoods and economic opportunity



Raj Chetty has been shaking up the conversation about [economic opportunity in America](#). He's using creative statistical methods to analyze millions of individual tax returns to track patterns of upward mobility from birth to adulthood. Chetty's [latest studies](#) find that place really matters: where kids grow up has a big impact on what they earn as adults.

This new evidence makes a huge contribution to the body of [research evidence](#) about place and opportunity. We know that the connections between where people live and how they fare in life are complicated and that the causal arrows go both ways. But the research case is strong that living in a deeply poor, distressed, and isolated neighborhood undermines people's well-being and long-term life chances, possibly even [across generations](#).

And we're now starting to see more and more compelling evidence that a [change in neighborhood environment](#) can yield improvements in life outcomes, especially if the change happens early in life and is sustained over time.



90% of the 4M poor kids growing up in high-poverty urban neighborhoods are children of color

What's the right policy response?

For far too long, scholars and policymakers have been bickering over the false choice of people vs place: Should we deliver assistance-like the earned income tax credit or food stamps-that helps all poor families, regardless of where they live? Or should we transform the distressed places where many poor people are clustered?

I reject this choice. It seems painfully obvious to me that-if we care about boosting economic mobility, especially for kids starting out at the bottom-we have to do both. Efforts to expand employment opportunities, boost wages, strengthen work supports, and bolster the social safety net are all necessary, but they are insufficient for families living in severely distressed neighborhood environments.

That doesn't mean I'm a proponent of interventions that focus myopically within the boundaries of distressed neighborhoods, interventions that have historically been described as place-based. Instead, I argue for what I call [place-conscious](#) strategies. By that I mean strategies that help people by explicitly addressing the neighborhood conditions most damaging to their well-being and to children's healthy development.

This involves four quite different lines of work.

- Investing in the most urgent needs of poor neighborhoods (with reducing exposure to violence at the top of this list).

- Breaking the link between where a family lives and its ability to gain access to critical opportunities (particularly good schools and jobs).
- Eliminating the barriers that block poor families, especially families of color, from finding affordable places to live in neighborhoods that already offer lots of opportunity (like exclusionary zoning and housing discrimination).
- Using federal housing subsidies (including housing vouchers) to help poor families move from distressed neighborhoods to safe neighborhoods with good public schools.

To be very explicit, I see housing mobility assistance, school choice, and neighborhood revitalization as complementary place-conscious strategies, not as competing ideologies.

Racial inequality and injustice

Neighborhoods of concentrated poverty and distress aren't the products of "natural" or "normal" housing market operations or unconstrained choices. They are the consequence of decades of discriminatory public policies at federal, state, and local levels and discriminatory practices by private-market institutions.

Today, high-poverty, severely distressed neighborhoods are almost all predominantly black and/or Hispanic. Poor whites are much more dispersed geographically, scattered throughout non-poor neighborhoods. In fact, of the roughly 4 million poor children growing up in high-poverty urban neighborhoods today, **almost 90 percent** are children of color.

Over many decades, public policies **built segregated neighborhoods of poverty and distress** by simultaneously excluding poor families, especially families of color, from neighborhoods of opportunity and starving poor, minority neighborhoods of essential investments.

Reversing that legacy requires that today's public policies tackle both the disinvestment and distress plaguing poor neighborhoods and the barriers that exclude low-income people from neighborhoods of opportunity.

That may sound like a pretty daunting policy prescription. But I think we actually know a lot about the **tools** necessary to implement it, and we're continuously refining those tools as we learn more about what works and what doesn't. ■

WHITE local levels state policies
 Racial inequality and injustice POOR FAMILIES
 BLACK/HISPANIC federal policies
 families of COLOR distress plaguing poor families
 LOW INCOME distressed neighborhoods
 high-poverty public policies



Margery Austin Turner

Senior Vice President for Program Planning and Management

Margery Turner is senior vice president for program planning and management at the Urban Institute, where she leads efforts to frame and conduct a forward-looking agenda of policy research. A nationally recognized expert on urban policy and neighborhood issues, Turner has analyzed issues of residential location, racial.....

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To Know More....

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What delays in immediate disaster relief mean for Puerto Rico's long-term recovery



The **speed** and **quality** of the federal response to Hurricane Maria's devastating toll on **Puerto Rico** and the **US Virgin Islands** continues to draw scrutiny. Two weeks after the storm's landfall on US soil, wide swaths of the islands are still without **electricity**, **telecommunication lines**, **medical care**, **fuel**, **clean water**, **cash currency**, and **other necessities**. Many **rural communities** remain physically inaccessible. Only 13,832 households in Puerto Rico **have applied** for Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance, a number much lower than after other disasters of similar intensity and damage.

Because of the increasing frequency of natural disasters, we know the quality and robustness of response and relief will have **deep repercussions** for recovery of the island's people, homes, and communities.

People's recovery

The most immediate consequence of disasters is their toll on human life. Death counts rise after the event largely because of search and rescue findings. Other people do not survive the wounds and pain inflicted during the disaster. But a more **insidious cause** is people's inability to access medical care for disaster-induced emergencies and for prior medical conditions. Sustained **gaps in medical access** in Maria's wake are likely to extend the counting process and increase the overall death count.

But death counts do not foretell recovery. Low immediate death counts often **yield reductions** in attention, resources, and will for recovery. Many medical cases may be life threatening, but most will lead to conditions that produce physical pain and incapacitate victims from employment and their regular lives **for years to come**.

Other health effects will play out during recovery beyond physiological wounds and care gaps. Many of them are unknown at this point because they were not monitored before the disaster.

Environmental hazards are often exacerbated by disasters, such as the massive release of toxins from a breach in a manufacturing plant or a waste site. The US witnessed this following **Hurricane Harvey**, as the media outlets and public health departments that tracked air and floodwater toxicity warned Houstonians to **avoid** the water that surrounded them. Status **reports** from the US Environmental Protection Agency and local environmental agencies are just starting to emerge about **hazard sites** and debris across the **islands**. The effects of these hazards will continue for years.

In addition to the toll on physical lives, the **mental health** of victims will suffer. Postdisaster studies have shown the detrimental effects of severe trauma, especially on children. This trauma is compounded when relief and response are delayed.

Households' recovery

Disasters are the confluence of an external hazard striking **where people live and work**. Failure to prepare houses physically for likely hazards and to secure insurance to mitigate the costs of rebuilding means that most US homes are unprepared for what could come. This was true in **Puerto Rico** and the US Virgin Islands, as less than 1 percent of homeowners in Puerto Rico have flood insurance and only 50 percent have wind insurance. Current property damage estimates **range** widely and will require massive assistance **beyond** what is being considered.

Delays in response have two unexpected consequences on recovery. The first involves people attempting to recover posses-

sions and repair their homes without proper safety precautions and construction knowledge, often because of relief delays and distrust in public assistance. Many well-intentioned **charities** have contributed to this chaos in past disasters. The desire for stability and normalcy is strong, but poor immediate **choices** can shape home quality, property values, and family budgets. A longer relief phase creates a bigger window for bad choices, especially where building codes are weak and poorly enforced.

Second, hurricane damages can get worse if not attended to immediately. Water deteriorates structural and finish materials, and, even when floodwaters recede, moisture damage leads to mold and mildew that make matters **worse**. **Delays** in the relief that typically comprises debris removal and tear-downs could increase the number of uninhabitable homes beyond those wrecked during the hurricane.



Communities' recovery

Beyond individuals, the **rush to rebuild** after a prolonged relief phase could lead to a failure to **enact** better building codes and better enforcement, the institutions that produce better housing. After Hurricane **Katrina**, haphazard code enforcement and flood mitigation maps led to **staggered** home elevations. Rural **municipios** (county subdivisions) in Puerto Rico already suffered from poor administrative resources, but there are signs that institution building rather than rebuilding what was there actually works. In Florida, though, better **building codes** adopted after Hurricane Andrew have proven to be the lifesaving factor that helped the state's residents withstand Hurricane Irma.

Similarly, knee-jerk requests for massive new seawalls and other defensive infrastructure may lead to poor investments. Thoughtful and difficult conversations about whether and how people should recover in existing communities become less tenable when suffering persists during relief. Opportunities for **better physical communities**—the quality of rebuilt homes, the thoughtful planning of **cities and infrastructure**, and the possible relocation of families—dim in poor relief and response scenarios. Puerto Rico's predisaster financial crisis will also give credence to the calls for purportedly cost-efficient "infrastructure as usual."

Of course, these decisions may be moot. The mass displacement and resettlement of victims to other states and countries are becoming common. With the likely **relocation** of tens of thousands of Puerto Ricans to the US mainland, combined with the devastating effects of the **island's financial crisis** before the hurricane, the relief and response delays to Maria may radically alter communities' demographics and the **relationships** of victims to their hometowns.

But there is **hope** that those remaining in "la isla del encanto" (the island of enchantment) will survive the disaster and cut through the detritus of relief and response to be a **model** with the help of **those who leave**. For the US to recover from the current season of disasters, though, we must learn to **plant the seeds** of comprehensive preparation and thoughtful response. ■



Carlos Martín

Senior Fellow

Carlos Martín is a senior fellow in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where he leads research and evaluations on the physical qualities of housing and communities, and the industry that builds them.

Martín, a trained architect and construction engineer, uses his.....

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meet
Rene Michelle
SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I am an Actress, Motivational Speaker, Author, and Advocate against domestic violence, sexual assault and molestation. I am a proud mother of 3 with two in-laws. I am also a grandmother of twelve; and a wife of 17 years. I have worked in the nursing field for over 18 years. I am a soldier in this war against domestic violence and sexual assault. I Am The Voice For The Silent!

My encouragement to you...

I would encourage anyone that is going through domestic violence to go get help! Don't think being silent will solve your problems. It won't! Share your experience - it can and will save a life. Keep God in your life!

Galatians 6:9 (KJV) “ And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

I am an advocate against Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Molestation as well as a survivor of all of the above. I was molested at an early age by several family members. I was also raped 3 times at the ages of 11, 14, and 26. I eventually met a young man who I thought was going to be my knight in shining armor; and he ended up being more like a nightmare. He was very nice in the beginning and as time moved on he changed. He began to be very possessive and controlling. He would tell me what to wear and what not to wear. Where to go and where not to go. He would isolate me, not only from my friends, but family as well. As time moved on, the physical abuse came in. Our apartments were across the walkway from each other, and I was not allowed to walk from my apartment to his without him. I could not go to work without him sitting at my job to watch me. He beat me bloody, picked me up by my hair and began to put a gun to my head to put fear in me. He threatened if I left that he would kill me. He made russian roulette a regular part of my life to keep me in fear of him. Time went on, the emotional, verbal and physical abuse continued. The beatings became so severe, I now suffer from epilepsy due to severe blows to my head.

During that time, the only thing I could do was pray. I continued to pray that God would get me out of that situation. One time I called the police, I was told "Ma'am, I don't see any bruises on you... let him go his way, you go back in the house; and if we get any more calls today, someone's going to jail." Needless to say at that point, I lost faith in the justice system. I thought, the only person who could get me out of this is God. I continued to pray. Mentally, I probably should be insane. But!!!! I am here! NOT BY MISTAKE! I eventually ran for my life. I left everything, but I was not alone. I have a 23 year old daughter by my abuser. I would not have made it without God! I Am A Survivor!

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meet Sheila

SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I am a proud mother of 2 adult children and a grandmother; an inspirational speaker and founder of Healing 2 Grace, an organization dedicated to recognizing life after abuse and domestic violence; and the unspoken pain and it's ability to show up in many areas of one's life.

My encouragement to you...

It is not your fault. God created you to be something amazing. He has a plan for your life. You don't deserve to be treated that way; and you've done nothing wrong to be treated that way. Free your mind, release the guilt and shame of your past, and love yourself.

Jeremiah 17:14 (AMP) “ Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; Save me and I will be saved, For You are my praise.

I first met my abuser when I was on vacation. He was charming and I was so excited to get the attention that I had never received before. But little did I know what was about to happen to me. During the marriage, I was brutally beaten and left for dead. I was strangled, called names, threatened, put out of my own apartment, bitten, hit, and kicked — everything you can think of, was done to me.

I didn't know what love meant because someone had spoken to me in such a demeaning way for years. I was told that I was nothing, I was ugly, no one would ever love me, I would never amount to anything, and I was lucky he was with me. I struggled to love myself, even as a kid, I never loved myself. I was so ashamed because I was tall and lanky. So, I never knew self love when I got into this abusive relationship. I tried to commit suicide. I wasn't thinking about it — I was in the act of suicide, attempting to hang myself. But God delivered me from that moment.

When I first left my abuser, I was so happy that I was free. I thought I was ok; but I was broken inside. I was really angry with any and everybody. I started counseling and learned that what I went through was trauma and there are psychological scars left. My healing started with understanding that; and the second piece is forgiving myself. For so many years, I blamed myself for making the choice to marry him. So, I began to share my story and release the guilt of my past; peeling back the layers of pain.

Today, I am a survivor and I am so happy that God is taking me through the process of healing.

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meet Cynthia

SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I am evolving, healing and rebuilding. There are times when I feel fragile and unsure; but GOD has provided me an amazing support system that reminds me of how far I have grown, how much I have accomplished and how much they value me. GOD has provided me the courage to reach for my dreams including returning to school after a 30 year hiatus to pursue a MBA, graduating with honors, and founding a non-profit mentoring program for teenage girls. I am extremely proud of my children's accomplishments and I like to believe my unwavering love and support has contributed to their success.

My encouragement to you...

I understand some of what you are feeling, you are inundated with emotions, confusion, shame, fear, and hopelessness, that doesn't seem to go away. This is not your ending. GOD has not forsaken you and you are not alone. I'm here, let me help.



Psalm 46:10 (KJV) “ Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Probably like a lot of people, I was aware of the prevalence of physical abuse, but no one was talking about the other types of (domestic) abuse: emotional, mental and financial abuse. I was subjected to these forms of abuse. I lived in what seemed like never ending turmoil, mayhem, and madness. I didn't know what was going on, I couldn't wrap my head around what or why this was happening to me. Later, I would find out that all the contradicting of my recollections, the redirecting, diverting, trivializing and denial of events, were abusive techniques known as gas-lighting, a form of mental abuse. This is a very systematic, gradual process where initially the actions of the perpetrator seem miniscule, easy to dismiss; however, the continuation of these abusive patterns cause the victim to become confused, anxious, and depressed, in my case confirming the culprits' description of me.

I had fought long and hard for my independence and slowly, subtly, it was disappearing; and I didn't know how to stop it. Someone was taking control of my life, undermining all of my efforts to get to a place of confident self-assuredness, causing me to question everything I believed true about myself, my value, my significance and my worth. I felt fragile, like I would literally break into a thousand pieces; was experiencing the gamut of emotions: anger, confusion, betrayal, fear and paranoia. It was overwhelming, paralyzing, and I didn't know what to do. I wanted so desperately for someone to save me, to protect me, to believe me and no one did. I felt completely alone.

When GOD finally spoke to me, or should I say, when I was still enough to finally hear, my spirit was calmed. I felt at peace, free of fear, I put my trust in Him and He lead me to safety. I cried out for a long time for someone to save me, to protect me, and GOD heard my cry and answered me. There are times when I am confronted with demons of the past, when I'm treated like the perpetrator instead the victim and I wonder if leaving was the right decision? And I respond with a resounding YES, I made the best choice, I took back my life.

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Chanel

SURVIVOR OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I'm a proud parent of two wonderful children. My goal is to destroy the stereotype of a domestic violent victim (i.e., insecure, uneducated, and poor). I am determined to be the woman God intended me to be.

My encouragement to you...

You are not alone. Once you speak up, you will realize there are so many people around you who can be there for you. Don't be scared. As long as you are silent, domestic violence is winning - and you don't want it to win. You can heal and move forward. This does not define who you are because God made you greater and stronger than this.

Psalm 23:4 (NIV) “ Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

No one who knows me would ever believe that I am a survivor of Domestic Violence. I was always the strong independent person who everyone depended on. My abuser was someone I considered my best friend before we got into a relationship. I could talk to him about anything that was going on with my male friends with no problems. He was always so attentive and understanding. Things started changing once he met my daughter and we started dating exclusively. The abuse started with little things like him questioning who and where I was going. Eventually he pushed me away from all of my friends. I didn't notice anything wrong because he was so wonderful with my daughter. He escalated to yelling and degrading me when we were by ourselves. Once I got pregnant with our son, that's when the physical abuse started. He wouldn't hit me in places where it would be visible like my face. His favorite place was my head where my hair hid everything. He would never do anything in front of anyone, so everybody thought he was a wonderful man.

During the violence, I believed that all I needed to do was love him more and the abuse would stop. I knew he had a problem and I wanted to find a way to help him. I wanted to protect him; but I didn't view it as I was putting myself in danger. As I remained silent, the abuse continued to get worse. So bad that I started having anxiety attacks in my eighth month of pregnancy from the violence. I told people that it was the stress at work because I didn't want people to know what was going on at home. The doctor wanted to put me on medication and I said no because I didn't want it to affect my baby; but I did start counseling.

Counseling helped me understand that I couldn't do anything to fix him. He would always apologize, and say things will change when he held his son; but it never changed, it only got worse. He became verbally abusive around my daughter. I realized that this isn't what my kids needed to see, and that it was a matter of time that he would physically abuse me in front of them. I left and moved my kids to my old bedroom at my parents' house. It was easier for me to forgive him, than it was for me to forgive myself. After over seven years, I can truly say that I love and forgive myself. I am now a Domestic Violence Warrior!

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Rocky Krogfoss

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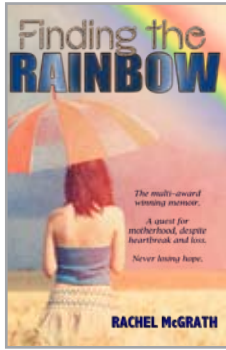
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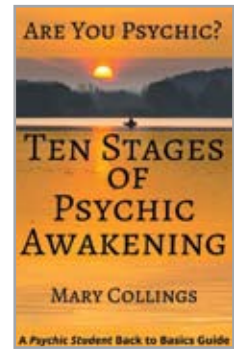
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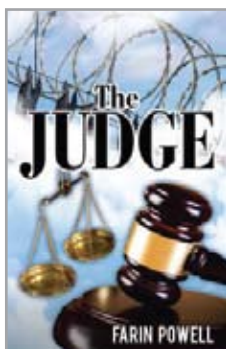
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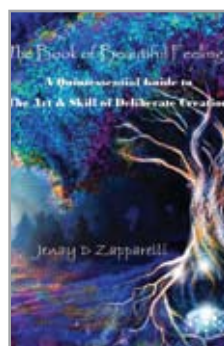
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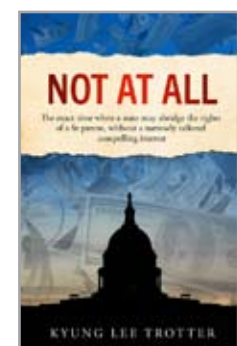
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Marcella Wilson

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