

## NVHC CHANGE, Your Social Action Committee

NVHC Change, the social action committee, offers many ways to get involved, make a difference, and find connections within the NVHC community. Ready for positive change? We invite you to find an area of interest below and join one of our friendly teams. We support NVHC's commitment to *Tikkun Olam* and our congregation's participation in social justice, community service, issue advocacy and learning.

Look for announcements in the temple weekly email, join the NVHC Change mailing list, or let us know if you are interested in any of the following activities by contacting Ellen Ranard at [SocialAction@nvhcreston.org](mailto:SocialAction@nvhcreston.org).

### **FOOD INSECURITY** (team lead, Bess Eisenstadt)

#### **Community Shelter Meals**

- Cook or bake at home and bring your dish to Cornerstones' Embry Rucker Shelter, where we provide dinner for about 75 shelter residents.
- Help to serve the dinner at the shelter.

#### **Home Cooking for Hypothermia Shelter**

- Help provide dinner for 35 to 40 guests at Cornerstones' Hypothermia Shelter roughly every two weeks from December through March.
- Donate food for others to prepare, or cook or bake at home and deliver to the shelter.

#### **Weekend Snack Bags for Neighborhood School Children with Helping Hungry Kids**

- Transport food from Costco and Sam's Club to NVHC for volunteers to pack in snack bags.
- Help pack the snacks into bags on Wednesday mornings at NVHC.

#### **Annual High Holy Day Food Drive for Cornerstones**

- Fill your grocery bags with non-perishable foods, personal hygiene items, and baby items.

### **MENTORING FOREST EDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN** (team lead, Jim Rose)

- Meet weekly with a student for 30 minutes (meeting times and dates are at the mentor's discretion as approved by the school counselor). Program operated as MentorWorks across FCPS.
- Activities consist of board games, reading, homework or classroom support, or other activities. High need for Spanish speaking adults.

### **WELCOMING THE STRANGER: Afghan and Ukrainian Family Resettlement** (team co-leads, Kathy & Ken Laskey (Afghan) and Ellyn & Dave Pontell (Ukrainian))

- Your generous donations of cash, gift cards, cars, furniture, clothing, and household goods have created the essential foundations for these families as they start over.
- Our teams have worked to assist our two extended families, focusing on housing, ESOL, jobs, transportation, government benefits, medical care, and children's needs.
- From time to time, we reach out to the community to ask for specific needs and assistance.

### **GET OUT THE VOTE, ELECTION PROTECTION** (team lead, Rachel Ingber)

- Write nonpartisan Get Out the Vote postcards for upcoming elections.
- Register voters, serve at polling sites, drive voters to the polls.
- Help our group work with Jewish Partnership for Democracy.

### **ADVOCACY** (team lead, Andy Lacher)

- Join us in nonpartisan, interfaith advocacy for:
  - Criminal justice reform
  - Social justice

- Anti-hate legislation
- The interests of marginalized communities
- Local solutions to climate and environmental issues
- Affordable Housing
- Work with:
  - The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (the RAC)
  - Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP)
  - Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)
  - Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS)
  - Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE)
  - Cornerstones' Advocacy

**PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT: NVHC's GREEN TEAM** (team lead, Ken Gubin)

- Help identify and implement solutions to reduce NVHC's carbon footprint.
- Educate NVHC members on how they can enhance sustainability in their daily lives.
- Volunteer for our Adopt-A-Highway clean-up commitment along Wiehle Avenue.

**WORK TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE** (team lead, Andy Lacher)

- Engage with NVHC members and the broader community to promote racial justice and equity.
- Help identify specific areas for understanding and action through study, internal conversation, advocacy, and partnership with outside organizations.
- Volunteer to work with an interfaith coalition to prevent local police violence.

**SUPPORT REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS** (team co-leads, Ellyn Krause Pontell & Dominique Cytryn)

- Step up and help us explore the ways we can best support this vital cause.
- Join us to support patients at local clinics by making comfort care packages and baked goods for workers.
- Join us at the Falls Church Women's Health Center. We gather monthly for prayer and song to liturgically advocate for abortion freedom.

**WELCOMING THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY** (team lead, Ellen Ranard)

- Greet and welcome participants with us at the annual Reston Pride event each June at Lake Anne Plaza.

**DISABILITY JUSTICE** (team lead, Meryl Paskow)

- Engage with the NVHC community and beyond to help combat societal inequities, discrimination, and stereotypes faced by members of the disability community through education, advocacy, and service.

**INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIPS** (team lead, Ellen Ranard)

- Help us create and nurture relationships with people of other faiths and other congregations in the region.
- Welcome our Muslim neighbors when they come to NVHC for their Friday prayers.
- Get involved with interfaith projects and activities (in the past we have held interfaith dialogue and classes with Muslims and Catholics and participated in interfaith projects such as a survivor workshop on child abuse).

**NEW PROJECTS** (team lead, Ellen Ranard)

- Have an idea for a new project? Please share it with us!
- We are on the lookout for urgent needs and effective ways to address them, adding new work each year.
- We want to hear your voice!

## NVHC CHANGE

### Counting the *Change*: Our Work by the Numbers

- \$50,000 in cash and gift cards donated this year by our generous community to support our Tikkun Olam work and donations on behalf of NVHC.
- 5,000 pounds of food donated annually at our High Holy Day food drive for Cornerstones.
- 12 shelter meals prepared and served annually by friendly NVHC volunteers to 75 residents in the community shelter and 30 in the hypothermia shelter.
- 3068 packets of oatmeal, 1320 packages of popcorn, 1152 granola bars, 504 apple sauce pouches and 96 ramen containers donated in a single month for elementary school snack bags, with similar amounts each month during the school year (paid for with \$10,000 in Tikkun Olam funds).
- With those supplies, 500 weekend snack bags packed each school week by HHK volunteers for 8 neighborhood elementary school children, with occasional assistance from our religious school students and NVHC volunteers.
- 850 Nonpartisan Get Out the Vote postcards written and mailed, and untold hours spent registering voters, working at polling places, and participating in nonpartisan advocacy.
- Hundreds of NVHC volunteer hours provided one-on-one relationships and mentoring to Forest Edge students.
- Incalculable benefits to our Afghan extended family of 11 and our Ukrainian immigrant families of 8, supported with generous personal assistance, financial contributions, household good donations, gift cards, 4 used cars, and countless hours of English lessons and other volunteer work.
- Improvements identified to reduce NVHC's carbon footprint, as well as sustainable solutions for congregants' homes and businesses.
- 14 dozen rainbow brownies and cookies handed out by NVHC volunteers welcoming participants at the annual Reston Pride festival at Lake Anne.
- Time, talent, energy and initiative by dedicated NVHC volunteers to:
  - Racial Justice
  - Reproductive Rights
  - Interfaith Partnerships
  - Rebuilding Democracy