

NEWS AND UPDATES

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Clarity, care, and holding one another through what comes next.

As we enter this new year, we do so with clarity and heaviness.

Many of us witnessed the killing of a mother in Minnesota by an ICE officer. While this loss has rightly drawn public attention, it also reminds us of a painful truth: there are many Black, Indigenous, Latine/x/oa, Asian, and Multicultural (BILAM) people whose lives are taken or stymied by systems of power every year whose names we never hear, whose stories never make headlines, and whose families grieve in silence. Their lives matter just as deeply.

What has been especially difficult to witness is not only the violence itself, but the responses that followed. Efforts to dismiss what people saw with their own eyes, the lack of empathy for a life lost, and rhetoric that treats some human beings as disposable all erode our shared humanity and teach us that cruelty is acceptable. It is not.

At OAR, we are continuing to choose a different path.

We are committed to modeling kindness, empathy, and care for everyone who crosses our path. We refuse to participate in narratives that rank human worth or suggest that only some people deserve safety, dignity, and joy. The way we treat one another, especially in moments of conflict or fear, shapes the world future generations will inherit. This year, we will continue to be a place that celebrates difference, learns from it, and protects its beauty. We will be a safe space for all who need support. We will continue to believe that joy is not separate from justice. It is essential to sustaining ourselves, our communities, and our shared humanity.

As we move through this year together, may we care for one another gently, hold space for grief, and make room for moments of joy that help us keep going.

We invite you to join us in rejecting harm and choosing healing.

With care, as we move into this year together,

The OAR Collective

Special Election Alert

VOTING IN VIRGINIA

From Registration to Representation

VOTE!

SPECIAL ELECTION

MEMBER OF HOUSE OF DELEGATES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026

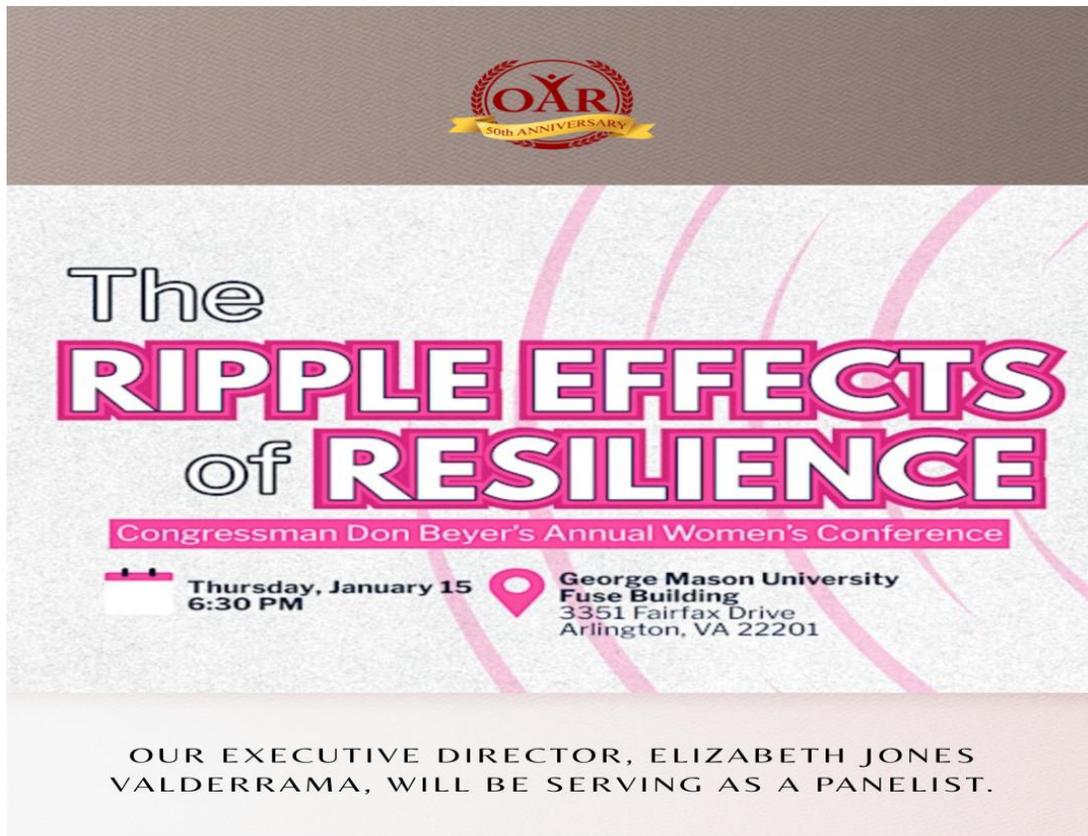
POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM 8:30 AM TO 7 PM



Firehouse Primary for VA Senate District 39 A firehouse primary to choose a new State Senator for District 39 following Senator Adam Ebbin's resignation is happening TODAY, Tuesday, January 13, and your voice matters.

Polling will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. at locations in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax. If you are registered in District 39, be sure to make a plan to vote and bring your ID. For more information, including a list of candidates and polling locations, visit the link below.

Join us for The Ripple Effects of Resilience



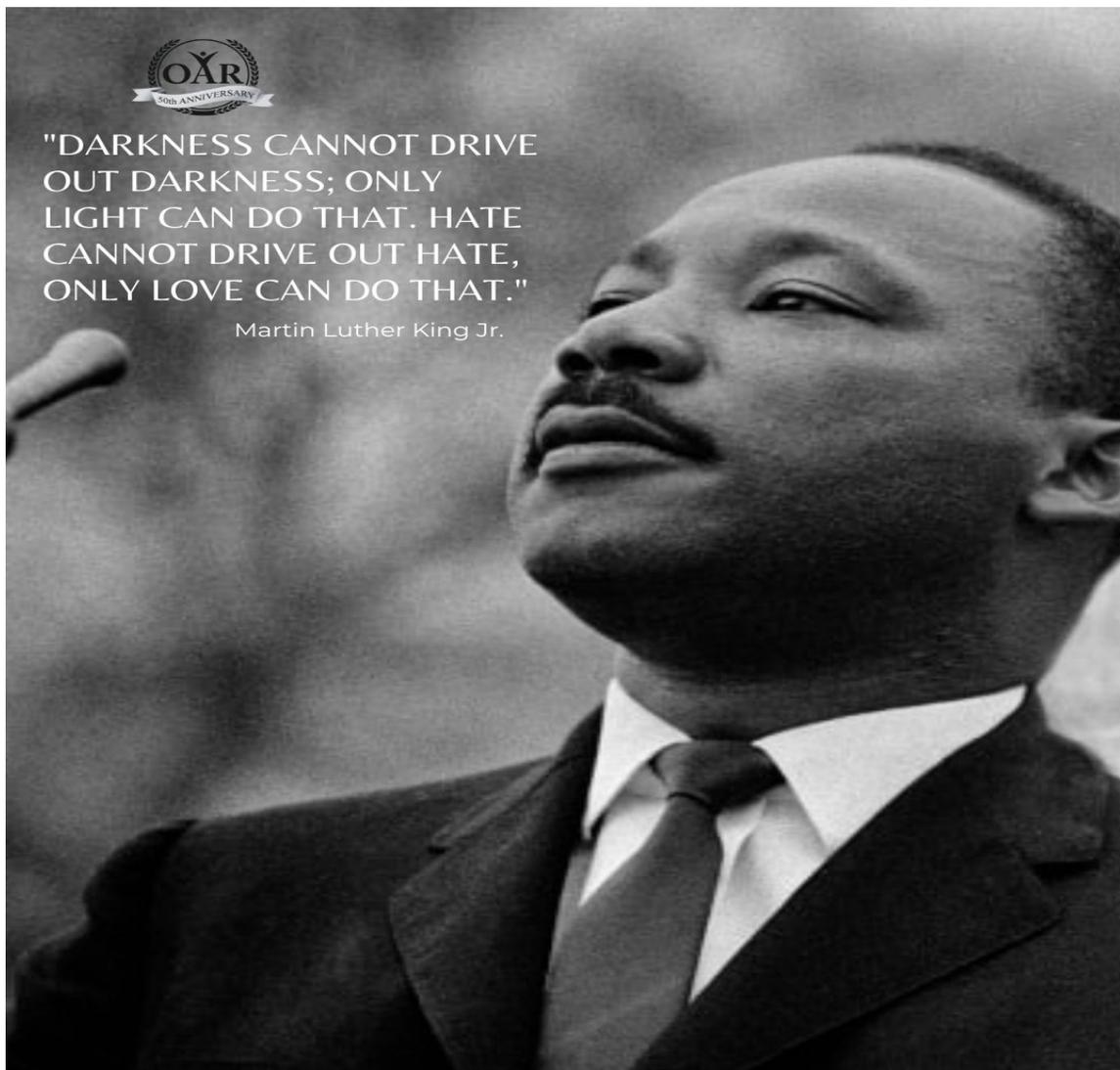
The poster features the OAR 50th Anniversary logo at the top center. The main title 'The RIPPLE EFFECTS of RESILIENCE' is prominently displayed in a pink and white font. Below the title, it identifies the event as 'Congressman Don Beyer's Annual Women's Conference'. The date and time are listed as 'Thursday, January 15 6:30 PM'. The location is 'George Mason University Fuse Building, 3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201'. At the bottom, it states that 'OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ELIZABETH JONES VALDERRAMA, WILL BE SERVING AS A PANELIST.'

OAR is honored to be part of Congressman Don Beyer's Ninth Annual Women's Conference: The Ripple Effects of Resilience, where our Executive Director, Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, will serve as a panelist. The conversation will center on perseverance, leadership, and the ways women are responding to the challenges facing our communities.

Elizabeth will be joined by Brooke Sydnor Curran of Move2Learn and Lisa Jacobs of the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium, with the discussion moderated by Nyree Wright of Edelman. We are grateful for the opportunity to be in dialogue with women leaders whose work is rooted in care, justice, and community.

For more information or to attend, click below.

MLK Day of Service



Join Volunteer Arlington and us for the 9th annual MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 19! This is a free event, but we ask that you register in advance to select a service opportunity. If you would like to volunteer with us on MLK Day of Service, make sure to select OAR when you register at the link below.

Coming Soon



2025 GIVING STATEMENTS

**2025 GIVING STATEMENTS WILL
BE MAILED BY FEBRUARY 5**

Thank you!
♥

We Accept SmarTrip Cards



Did you know we accept used SmarTrip cards? If someone is moving out of the area, or they came for a visit and will no longer be using their SmarTrip cards, we accept them! These cards help individuals access transportation as they navigate daily needs and appointments.

You can mail them to us at: P.O. Box 41030, Arlington, VA 22204

CHARLIE'S CORNER



Hi, it's Charlie, OAR's Ambassador of Happiness. Today I've been moving a little slower, noticing the quiet moments that bring comfort and ease. There is something steady about these small pauses. I am thinking of you and sending gentle warmth your way.

-Charlie

Give With Confidence



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