



Transforming our community together toward equity and justice through community organizing.

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- Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act
- SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY
From The Sisters of Mercy, Network and RocACTS
- RocACTS Poverty, Housing and Jobs Taskforce Task Force

MARCH CALENDAR



MAR 2 ND	Ash Wednesday
MAR 7 TH	Eastern Orthodox Beginning of Lent
MAR 16 TH -17 TH	Purim Jewish
MAR 17 TH	St. Patrick's Day
MAR 21 ST	Naw-Ruz Bahai

GET INVOLVED

To learn more about Trainings, RocACTS Task Forces, and how to become a member, visit our website at: rochesteracts.org/get-involved



Visit our

[Website Here>>>](http://rochesteracts.org)

TENANT OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE ACT.

Article by Elizabeth McGriff



Tenants have lived in horrible conditions, and Landlords and Investors refuse to make repairs. Sometimes tenants are bullied and afraid of evictions and they just move. The landlord will just re-rent it without making any repairs. Sometimes the City of Rochester will fine the Landlord and they pay the fine because it is cheaper than making repairs. So, tenants complain about the condition and get evicted.

In order for the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) to work, there needs to be a funding source. Creating a Housing Trust Fund (HTF) would set aside funding as well as create a Tenant Purchase Assistant Program (TPAP). A progressive tax fee would be a way to fund TOPA. We introduced this to Mayor Lovely Warren and created a team which included City-Wide Tenants Union (CWTU) however, none of the recommendations we made were accepted.

The Anti-Displacement Learning Network program through Enterprise was also creating funding for a pilot program. We have been told lie after lie that the Community Land Trust (CLT) could not be used because they were already receiving funding. The CLT is receiving funding from Enterprise for a legal consultant. The program they created had three Request for Proposals (RFP); the CLT was the only program that had everything they were asking for. Pathstone and Homeleasing also applied and had nothing with low income, affordability and permanent ownership. It is sad.

VISION

An empowered and engaged community, grounded in shared values, working to build and sustain an equitable, just and moral society.

MISSION

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CONTACT US

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Walking with Mercy

By Virginia Fifield

NETWORK is an organization of women religious who have been advocating and lobbying in Washington D.C. for 50 years. The focus primarily is on Catholic Social Justice Teachings, but it goes beyond that. NETWORK believes in working toward a more just world that allows every person to live with dignity by standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

Some of the issues NETWORK lobbies for are: the Federal budget and where the monies are allocated; food security; affordable health care; a living wage; mass incarceration; police reform; fair trade; immigration reform; racism within the governmental and societal systems; and fair, yet affordable, housing.

If you remember, a number of years ago, NETWORK had the campaign of “Nuns on the Bus.” The idea was to have six Sisters ride this bus around the country, stopping in some of the hardest hit cities to listen to the stories of the marginalized and bring attention to those impacted most by the inequity that exists in society.

By invitation, the Bus came to Rochester. The Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St. Joseph along with Associates and other supporters made stops, at The House of Mercy, the Homeless encampment, the Catholic Workers House on South Avenue, and the senior care center on Lyell Avenue. At each one of these stops, we heard talks by advocates as well as those who were impacted. Once you listen and hear about these injustices you must act.

Right now, the City of Rochester is in crisis. The violence that has broken out is at an all-time high, and shows no signs of letting up. The evictions and housing crisis we have because of Covid is at crisis levels. We must act now, not later.

One or even two groups cannot change systems. It’s going to take everyone working together. By joining and working with the different communities within RocACTS, we know that we can bring about change in order to make Rochester, and beyond, a more equitable place where people can live with dignity and security.



Virginia is a member of the Mohawk Nation in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and an Associate of the Sisters of Mercy. She has served on the Mercy Institute Anti-Racism Transformation Team and the Extractives Team and is working with NETWORK on the many issues in Congress. She is a former Board member of the Native American Cultural Center. She is a proud mother of three children and great grandmother of two and a member of St. Marys Church in the Southeast Catholic Community.

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RocACTS Poverty, Housing and Jobs Taskforce Task Force

*Asim Johnson, RocActs Chair
Healthcare Advocate*

- ✚ To advocate for better living conditions in the region.
- ✚ To speak for those without a voice
- ✚ To challenge those in power to do what is right and just.

We believe that all God's children should be treated equally. Equity and Equality only happen when all have access to quality housing, jobs and can be lifted from poverty. We're advocating in collaboration with City-Wide Tenants Union to pass Eviction Reduction laws locally.

The Good Cause bill will be presented to Common Council in February. Call your City Council and tell them to pass Good Cause protections because no one should be left on the street!

For Background Information on Reduction Local Law, please find the following documents on the RocACTS website (www.rochesteracts.org) under the "Get Involved" tab, then click Poverty/Jobs/Housing:

Rochester Eviction Reduction Local Law: draft bill for No Eviction without a Good Cause and Certificate of Occupancy

Good Cause Eviction Protection Handout

No Eviction without a Certificate of Occupancy handout

**Interested in volunteering for the committee or
Learning about this important work,**

Contact:

Asim Johnson at asim.johnson@1199funds.org

PURPOSE

RocACTS is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, multi-ethnic, multi-racial, interfaith community organization working to transform our community for the common good by:

1. Breaking down the barriers that divide us by working to eliminate systemic racism and other forms of discrimination in order to promote social and economic justice.
2. Training community members as leaders and preparing and supporting them in public engagement initiatives.
3. Addressing the issues that impact the quality of life in our neighborhoods and community, both independently and in collaboration with other like-minded organizations.
4. Promoting a faith-community centered model of community organizing

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