NEA honors OneAmerica With Justice for All with human and civil rights award

OneAmerica is among a dozen recipients of the prestigious NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards

HOUSTON—OneAmerica With Justice for All, a Washington state non-profit organization, was honored with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Award for its dedication to building power in immigrant and refugee communities.

“OneAmerica has accomplished astoundingly impressive work that recognizes every individual’s rights and fights for those who need it most,” said NEA President Lily Eskelsen García. “OneAmerica’s fight for justice is tireless, motivating us all to do our part and take action.”

One area in which OneAmerica focuses its activism is ensuring the right of all students to receive the best education possible. To do so, OneAmerica strives for reform that makes certain that all families, no matter their immigration status, have an education system that is inclusive, responsive, and meets the needs of every student.

In an effort to provide schools that honor and respect all students’ cultures, OneAmerica has helped introduce and pass legislation that expands dual-language instruction to dozens of Washington schools. OneAmerica also fought for the Washington Dream Act, which grants all Washington students in-state college tuition, regardless of their immigration status.

“WEA salutes the work of OneAmerica which works to expand access to a quality public education to all children in our state. They are making a positive difference for our future.”

OneAmerica has a philosophy of deriving power from the grassroots, and subscribes to a theory of change that begins with community organizing and leadership development in immigrant and refugee communities of color. Community organizing helps grassroots leaders build and reform the policies that impact the lives of immigrant and refugee people, empowering these communities to shape the laws that directly affect them.

Alongside other groups in Washington, OneAmerica is a founding member of the Washington Immigrant Society Network (WAISN), a group of organizations dedicated to defending immigrants. WAISN implemented the first Immigration Raid Hotline, and also pushes cities and counties to protect the legal rights of all immigrants and refugees by guaranteeing local law enforcement will not collaborate with federal immigration enforcement authorities.

OneAmerica devotes itself to improving the lives and protecting the rights of immigrants and refugees because of their unequivocal belief in racial equity and every individual’s human rights, and effectively using resources to improve the nation for all. Their work has been extremely impactful and will continue to be for years to come.

OneAmerica With Justice for All was one out of 12 outstanding social justice oriented people and groups honored at NEA’s 2019 NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards, which took place on July 3, in Houston, Texas. Click on link to view video tribute of OneAmerica.

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The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing more than 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.