

# The Journey

THE WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK NEWSLETTER

*I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be,  
and you can never be what you might be until I am what I ought to be.*

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



WINCHESTER  
MULTICULTURAL  
NETWORK

We Educate, Advocate and Respond.

## Winchester Multicultural Network 2009–2010 Board Members

Sahar Ahmed Awerbuch

Sandy Baer

Dennis Brett

Phil Coonley

Nancy Dahm

Eric Dupee

Margery Jackson

Gloria Legvold

Susan K. Lewis

Terry Marotta

Ania Miler

Seeme Moreira

Kaye Nash

Marcia Russell

Robin Smith

John Suhrbier

Sandy Thompson

Hillary Turkewitz

Felicity Tuttle

Lily Yamamoto

Fred Yen

Looking Ahead

## DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

### Family Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday

Monday, January 17, 2011 from 3:00–5:00 p.m.

Metcalf Hall, Winchester Unitarian Church

(corner of Main St. and Mystic Valley Parkway)

FREE – all are welcome

The Winchester Multicultural Network and the Family Action Network (FAN) invite all members of our community—and particularly families with children—to join in a celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. Craft activities begin at 3:00 p.m. and a performance by Teranga Freedom Dance & Drumming will start at 4:00. Learn about West African storytelling through dance and the rhythms of the drums. Alice Heller, who has been studying West African dance for over 20 years, will lead this interactive performance.

The event will also feature a display of art and writing by Winchester students, a book fair, and refreshments. *For information email Susan Lewis at [sklfree2be@yahoo.com](mailto:sklfree2be@yahoo.com) or call 781-729-3785.*

### North Shore Black Women's (NSBW) Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Luncheon

Saturday, January 15, 2011 from 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Anthony's Restaurant, 105 Canal Street, Malden

NSBW proudly presents their 18th annual luncheon honoring the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year's keynote speaker will be Michael Goldman, Senior Consultant for the Government Insight Group, Boston, MA. Tickets are \$40; children 12 and under, \$20. *For information, please contact Mary Moore at 781-324-7547.*

## February is Black History Month

### RACE, THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION

Sunday, February 13, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.  
St. Mary's Church Hall, Winchester

FREE—all are welcome

The Peace and Justice Committee of St. Mary's Church and the Multicultural Network are honoring Black History Month with a screening of *Race, the Power of an Illusion*, a documentary series that reviews the development of the concept of race and its impact on social and political policy. The three segments of the documentary are titled *The Difference Between Us*, which cites scientific evidence for why the peoples of the world cannot be divided into distinct biological groups; *The Story We Tell*, which traces the origins of the racial idea to the European conquest of the New World and the American slave system; and *The House We Live In*, which deals with institutional

racism and its impact on housing, neighborhoods, and communities in America.

If you haven't seen *Race, the Power of an Illusion*, we urge you to attend this screening and participate in the discussion of this powerful film series.

St. Mary's Peace and Justice Committee will present its annual award to someone who works for peace and social justice at this event.

### ST. MARY'S CHURCH CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Saturday, February 26 at 4:00 p.m.  
St. Mary's Church, 155 Washington St., Winchester

The Boston Archdiocese Black Catholic Choir will join St. Mary's Choir to celebrate Black History Month.

## Giving Voice to the Network: Celebrating 20 Years of Building Inclusive Community

### THE JUBILEE TRIO PRESENTS THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

Sunday, March 6 at 3:00 p.m.  
First Congregational Church Sanctuary,  
21 Church St., on the Common

The Network is honored to present the well-known and highly respected Jubilee Trio as the first event in our 20th year. The trio, made up of Contralto Marion Dry, pianist Leslie Amper, and baritone Robert Honeysucker has selected traditional spirituals, as well as songs, poetry, and other musical works by women composers. We urge you to attend this event which is free and open to the public.



### THE HALALISA SINGERS: CELEBRATE!

Sunday afternoon, April 10  
(watch for information on time)  
Jenks Senior Center, 109 Skillings Road

The Halalisa Singers are the greater Boston area's premier world music ensemble. Halalisa is the Zulu word for "celebration," and its repertoire includes African, Latin, American spiritual, gospel, Jewish, folk and jazz music.

Network board member Felicity Tuttle is one of the diverse group of 30 men and women who are inspired by the belief that music is a universal language with the power to uplift and unite us. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mary Cunningham Neumann, this Lexington-based vocal ensemble is now in its 21st year of offering performances in the Boston area. In honor of the Network's 20th year of working to promote the recognition, understanding, and appreciation of differences, the Network offers this wonderful family concert as a gift to our community.

### Winchester's Human Rights Statement

(Adopted by the Board of Selectmen September 24, 2009)

Winchester is a community that is grounded in respect for every individual and therefore protects all residents, employees, business owners, students and visitors in the enjoyment and exercise of human and civil rights. It is town policy to ensure equal treatment and opportunity to all individuals regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, ideology, socio-economic status, health, sexual orientation, age, military status, or disability.

## February is Black History Month

In recognition of Black History Month, we highlight a review of a new book about the migration of Black people from the South, a view of Winchester's African-American history, and two important regional organizations.



### *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*

by Isabel Wilkerson

(Reviewed by Dotty Burstein)

This is the unrecognized story that affected six million African Americans who fled the South to northern and western destinations in search of a better life. Although the migration happened roughly between 1915 and 1970, it is not unlike today's streams of immigration—the flight from persecution and deprivation, the courage to risk everything to improve one's plight.

Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize winner in journalism and Chicago bureau chief for *The New York Times*, spent over 15 years interviewing thousands who had participated in the Great Migration, ultimately settling on three 'representatives' of the movement, whose "treacherous and exhausting cross-country trips by car and train and their new lives in colonies that grew into ghettos" she describes in mesmerizing detail. There were Ida Mae Gladney, who left sharecropping and prejudice in Mississippi for Chicago; George Starling, in trouble for attempting to organize the orange pickers in central Florida and fleeing for his life to Harlem; and Robert Foster, who dreamed of studying medicine but first needed to leave Louisiana and drive without stopping, even in 1953, until he reached California. (He became Ray Charles' personal physician.)

Wilkerson, whose own parents were part of the Great Migration, writes, "Their (referring to the people interviewed for this book) migration was a response to an economic and social structure not of their making. They did what humans have done for centuries when life became untenable. They left." At the same time, these people "changed their new cities with southern food, faith, and culture and improved them with discipline, drive, and hard work," not unlike those who flee across our borders today.

### *Winchester's Black History*

by Doug Cromwell

Doug Cromwell is a former board member of the Network and currently a Community Advisor.

The history of African-Americans in Winchester is both rich and varied. Though the majority of families lived in an area that ranged from Swanton Street to Cross Street to Washington Street and Main Street, Black families could be found throughout much of Winchester. Whether it was the Barksdales, the Griffiths, the Joneses, the Kirbys, the Wests, the Lathams, or the Jacksons, among many others, Winchester had diversity.

My family, the Cromwells, reflects much of this history. My father and four of his five siblings graduated from Winchester High School, as have both of my children. My grandfather was custodian at the First Congregational Church for nearly 20 years. My uncle worked at the old Winchester Bowladrome for nearly 20 years as well. Other employers here in Winchester were Beggs and Cobbs on the present site of the Parkview Condominiums and the gelatin factory near Leonards Beach. There were also small business owners such as painters, carpenters, and auto mechanics.

On Cross Street, there was an African-American church called New Hope Baptist Church, which at one time was attended by 75 to 100 weekly churchgoers, not an insignificant number. As time went on and African-American families dwindled, the Church was forced to shut its doors.

As the third of four generations, I am glad to see Winchester becoming a more welcoming community for all.

(February is Black History Month continues on page 4)



## *The Journey*

THE WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK NEWSLETTER

EDITORS: DOTTY BURSTEIN AND SANDY THOMPSON

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: NANCY DAHM, MARIA SOLAREZ, MINDY ARBO, DOUG CROMWELL

GRAPHICS DESIGNER: LILY YAMAMOTO

*The Journey* is published four times a year and is one means that the Network uses to carry out our mission to inform, advocate, and respond.

Winchester Multicultural Network

P.O. Box 346, Winchester MA 01890 • 781-729-7100 • www.wmcn.org

Black History Month (cont'd from page 3)

## Community Change, Inc.

Community Change, Inc's direct approach to racism offers no couching or spinning, and lacks the "soft shoe" dance to racism. Start with this link: <http://www.communitychangeinc.org/Drupal/Whiteness> which focuses on white privilege. The authors address institutional and structural racism. If you visit Community Change, be sure to peruse the Yvonne Pappenheim Library which features materials about racism and white privilege. Community Change education and training includes a perspective that forces the participant to go beyond an individual accounting of racism to an institutional analysis of the systematic impact of racism on communities of color. Their programming includes anti-racist lunch discussions, leadership awards for those challenging racism, an Alternate July 4 Kick-off, a rapid response team, and summer civil rights internships. They can be found on Facebook and have a listserv, as well. For more information, go to [www.communitychangeinc.org](http://www.communitychangeinc.org); call 617-523-0555; or email [info@communitychangeinc.org](mailto:info@communitychangeinc.org)

## The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice

Professor Charles Hamilton Houston (1895 – 1950) left a legacy larger than life. He successfully argued and represented national landmark civil rights cases at a time when the civil rights amendment to the constitution did not exist. The Institute continues Houston's methodical approach to overturn deeply embedded institutional racism. The Institute moves against racism by examining demographic and social data, then developing projects that focus on deep social inequities. It also provides links to legal resources such as Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), Neighborhood Legal Service of Essex County, Katrina Legal Aide Resource Center, and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. Events presented in the past few years include the following topics:

- "The Presumption of Guilt: The Arrest of Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Race, Class, and Crime in America" by Professor Charles Ogletree
- "The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro": 2nd Annual Communal Reading of a Lecture by Frederick Douglass
- "Coming Together to Dismantle the Cradle to Prison Pipeline in Massachusetts": A Half-Day Summit of Community, Faith and Policy Leaders Featuring Marian Wright Edelman

For more information, please go to [www.charleshamiltonhouston.org](http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org), email [houstoninst@law.harvard.edu](mailto:houstoninst@law.harvard.edu), or call 617-495-8285.

## Winchester as a Multicultural Community—a Sampling

*(We welcome contributions to this column.*

*A sentence or two about a multicultural event or experience will help us spotlight the many wonderful ways in which Winchester is becoming more and more multicultural.*

*Just email [office@wmcn.org](mailto:office@wmcn.org))*

- Winchester High School student Tim de Redon organized a field day for special needs students in September. The event was his Eagle Scout project and was attended by 18 special needs students and 22 youth coaches.
- The Winchester Public Library chose *A Good Fall* by Ha Jin for its first international book discussion.
- One Winchester, Many Traditions (a collaboration of the Network's International Connections and the Winchester Public Library) hosted a popular series, "Play and Learn—Spanish for Preschoolers" with Mexican-born Esther Gomez. Esther's warm, outgoing personality and creative teaching entranced her young audience.
- The Jenks Center presented a program by photographer Barry Pell entitled "China—Rapid Changes in an Ancient Land."
- Members of Temple Shir Tikvah met to discuss "living Jewish in a non-Jewish world," which explored issues of religious pluralism.
- One Winchester, Many Traditions hosted two evenings of mah-jongg at the Winchester Public Library.
- The Unitarian Church held a special Thanksgiving service at the First Church in Roxbury, MA.
- Representatives from several faith communities heard a presentation about the Refugee and Immigration Ministry (see article in this issue).
- Temple Shir Tikvah conducted a series entitled "Exploring the Abrahamic Traditions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam" with Ali Asani, Gregory Mobley, and Rabbi Or Rose. The series explored the similarities and differences among these three religious traditions.
- Brio Theatre's October Community Workshop featured guest artist Alice Heller, who led a group of all ages and abilities in West African dance and drumming.
- St. Mary's Church continues to help support its sister parish in Huarney, Peru by providing renewable energy systems in the parish. Twice a year John Duffy, a professor at UMass Lowell, leads a group of volunteers to design and install these systems which have been requested by the townspeople, descendants of the Incas.

## Recommended Multicultural Films by Mindy Arbo

Go to [filmophile@comcast.net](mailto:filmophile@comcast.net) for more suggestions or to add your own.

Films are available through The Winchester Public Library and its Minuteman Library Inter-library Loans, <http://library.minlib.net>, and/or at stores. All foreign films are subtitled. Unless noted, no films are extremely violent or sexually explicit.

**F** = great for families. Go to [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com) for further film information.

### *Departures*

A lovely, subtle, and ultimately endearing Japanese film about a failed concert cellist who, desperately seeking work, moves home and naively enters the unknown (and shunned) profession of Japan's own version of undertakers. In Japan, memorial services are held in the childhood home of the deceased, and the ceremony centers around the ritual of body washing and dressing. Ultimately, the ingénue in the film comes to see the value of his work and to feel the warmth of appreciation and respect that he generates through his unique sensitivity to his clients, both dead and living.

### *Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi*

A happy Israeli home becomes dysfunctional as the father is ejected for straying and the mother's distress disables her from caregiving. Shlomi, the elder of the two warring teenage sons, becomes chief cook and bottle washer for the family which includes his live-in disabled grandfather. A beautiful single young neighbor moves in and because of his attraction to her and his own home duties, Shlomi's teachers come to think him stupid and truant. A serendipitous act results in the school head's discovering that Shlomi is actually a genius, and his future and that of his family come to change in unexpected and positive ways. A funny, wise, and life-affirming film. **F**

### *Ma Saison Préférée (My Favorite Season)*

Among France's best, Daniel Auteuil and Catherine Deneuve give top performances as a brother and sister with a history and deep unbreakable bond that nurtures them but prevents them from trusting and loving others.

### *Twilight Samurai*

Taking place in the late 19th century, when the Samurai-centered Japanese culture and way of life was coming to an end, this is an emotionally authentic tale of a unique Samurai, a widower who prefers poverty and the peace of watching his girls grow up to the violence of useless wars. His Samurai oath eventually forces him out of his solitude to fight a sympathetic opponent. **F**

### *The Secret in Their Eyes*

Another mesmerizing performance by Argentina's great Ricardo Darin, as a lawyer who returns from retirement to resolve the murder case that has obsessed him for 20 years.

### *I Am Love*

In contemporary Milan, the alluring but turned hollow middle-aged mother of an extremely wealthy textile-fortuned family finds her life exploding as she rediscovers her self through a passionate new love with a younger man. The cinematography, music, story, and acting all come together to create an undeniably powerful masterpiece of art in cinema.

### *Chaos*

An upper-class Parisian housewife sits paralyzed, as a prostitute is beaten nearly dead before her eyes, while her husband refuses to unlock the car doors and help the victim. Afterwards, the wife leaves her weak, untruthful husband to devote herself to helping the prostitute regain her health and then exact her revenge. This is a tantalizing action film and a riveting 'chick flick' where men fare badly and three generations of women unite for the better good.

### *Ballast*

This is a small, dark, sobering film that might sneak out of your memory but for the fact that, when it is over, you are acutely aware that you have just experienced a masterpiece. Estrangement, undiscussed tragedy, family bonds, and broken hearts and souls—these are the themes holding together this tale of loneliness in a contemporary black family's abject poverty in the no man's land of rural Mississippi. As slow and quiet as reality can be, subtle forces are at work and people do change. Epiphanies can take place in the most mundane situations, and you will likely not forget this film.

### *The Glass Key*

In this excellent '40's film noir, the implacable Alan Ladd and the feisty Veronica Lake star as reluctant observer/accessories in a story of front page news and ethics in the world of upper-and lower-classes entwined politically and motivated by greed. **F**



## International Connections

### LOOKING BACK

On Sunday, November 7, the Winchester Multicultural Network held its 11th annual International Pot Luck dinner in Chidley Hall at the First Congregational Church. The dinner is one of the many activities sponsored throughout the year by the Network's International Connections Committee, whose goal is to help international residents and newcomers feel welcome in Winchester.

Approximately 95 people from Winchester's international community attended and brought traditional dishes from their home cultures to share. "It is heart-warming to see people enjoying food and customs from other cultures in such a friendly social atmosphere," said Fran McClintock, who for the last few years has been one of the main forces behind the event.

More than 25 local merchants contributed food and/or donated gift certificates for a raffle, which, as always, was popular with the attendees, particularly the children. Boston Sevdah, a folk dance group based in Lynn, Massachusetts, entertained with traditional Bosnian music, songs, and dance.

### CONVERSATION GROUPS SPONSORED BY ENGLISH AT LARGE (EAL)

Conversation Groups are groups of eight to 12 learners who meet weekly and practice their English speaking skills. The groups provide an opportunity for learners to improve their speaking confidence and meet other people who are learning English.

#### *Where and when do Conversation Groups take place?*

Conversations in Winchester take place at the Winchester Public Library at the following times:

- Monday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Call the EAL office to learn when the groups resume this winter. To register, please visit the link below and fill in the requested information:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/conversationgroupsfall2010>

### THURSDAY MORNING DROP-IN COFFEE

Stop in at Café Dolce, 831 Main Street any time between 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. for coffee and conversation.

### ONE WINCHESTER, MANY TRADITIONS

#### INTERNATIONAL BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, February 1, 7:00 p.m. Winchester Public Library

*The Unknown Errors of Our Lives* by Chitra Divakaruni will be discussed. Come and join the group!

#### INTERNATIONAL FILM SERIES, 2011

Mondays at 6:30 p.m. Winchester Public Library Meeting Rm

January 10 – *Outsourced* (India/US)

February 14 – *I Not Stupid* (Singapore)

March 14 – *Viva Cuba* (Spain)

April 11 – *Red Cliff* (China)

---

## Two Important Organizations to Know About

### The Refugee and Immigration Ministry (RIM)

RIM provides community-based services for two groups of people: (1) asylum seekers, who have left home because of war, famine or religious, political or other kinds of persecution; (2) refugees who, seeking a better life, have come to this country through international agencies. Asylum seekers need financial support until they obtain asylum, which may take six to 12 months. RIM volunteers offer social support and a helping community until clients become self-sufficient.

To learn more about RIM, which is an interfaith, community-based organization founded in 1986, go to [www.r-i-m.net](http://www.r-i-m.net), email [information.rim@verizon.net](mailto:information.rim@verizon.net), or call 781-322-1011.

### Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (MIRA)

Immigrants and refugees come to our area, work in the community, live among us, and struggle through a daunting learning curve to live from day to day. MIRA keeps the focus on immigrants' refugees' basic rights and needs by advocating for policy change. MIRA also coordinates with social service providers, government agencies, religious and grassroots groups, and immigrant advocacy centers to bring the immigrant plight to the forefront.

The Executive Director, Eva Millona, a lawyer and former Albanian judge, focuses on federal and state policies that affect immigration issues. Board member, Bishop Philipe Teixeira, from Luanda-Angola, emigrated to the U.S., became an ordained bishop, and founded an order that

(continued on page 7)

## Immigration Stories by Maria Solarez

As a way to identify with the classic struggles of peoples who come to a new country, board members of the Winchester Multicultural Network (WMCN) contributed snippets of their immigration stories. Immigrants to this country speak other languages, cook different kinds of foods, hold values that contain fresh customs and traditions, which at times may be met with negative reactions from town locals. In addition, immigrants must live and contend with the nuances of English, the dominant language. Some do not use banks and face check cashing businesses or hide money in their homes. The undocumented have no access to health insurance and must face illness without a network of health care providers. Some work under the table, and do not look forward to a 401k or monthly social security at the end of their working years. Just imagine.

Here are some of the immigrant stories from WMCN board members.

All four of my grandparents emigrated through Ellis Island from what was then western Russia — very near the Polish Border, before 1915. Their spoken and written language was Yiddish. My maternal grandparents learned to speak English but never learned to read or write it, and they lived into their 80s. My maternal grandfather was a tailor; although I did not know this growing up, tailoring was a very common occupation for Jewish immigrants. My paternal grandparents were much more “assimilated,” having arrived at younger ages. My maternal grandparents arrived in their teens, my paternal grandmother was 3 years old. —*Hillary Turkewitz*

\*\*\*

The French branch of my family suffered religious persecution as they were Huguenots (“French Protestants”) and had to flee France. They escaped through Germany and then into the British Isles and America. —*Gloria Legvold*

\*\*\*

I moved here with my family in 1969. I was seven years old at the time. My father had been a practicing surgeon and was an assistant professor back home in Egypt. Nevertheless, he accepted a job as a surgical resident at Malden Hospital.

I have a very strong recollection of our first days here. My sisters and I knew how to speak English because we had attended English pre-school and elementary schools back home. However, my mother spoke only French and Arabic. I know she had a difficult transition because my father was constantly on-call and she basically had to figure it out on

her own. She was a very outgoing person and made friends with our next door neighbor, Mrs. Takagashi, who was Japanese and who also did not speak English. They would invite each other to tea and sit there patiently with their dictionaries trying to converse. I have such a clear picture of that. When I got older, I realized how special that was.

In school, we were pretty much the only foreigners besides the two new boys from Italy. So we all used to take ESL class together. I always thought those classes were so funny because they thought we didn’t know how to speak, except we knew everything they were saying. We just stayed quiet so we didn’t embarrass anyone. Teachers always had us talk about our country. I was amazed that nobody knew where Egypt was. They had no idea that in Egypt we drove cars, lived in houses, had playgrounds, and did a lot of the things that are done here. I felt like we came from another planet.

As the years went on, we learned more about our new home, and we made new friends. My mom spoke English, started driving and was constantly busy. We continued to visit Egypt every year. When I was leaving here I would say I am going home and when I was leaving there, I would say the same.

—*Sahar Ahmed*

\*\*\*

My mother’s parents came to Arizona from Mexico to work on the railroads. They were teenagers fleeing the Mexican revolution and poverty’s promise of a limited future. My father’s father was Native American and his mother was from Mexico. Inclined to romanticize their early lives, my son, the Latina American studies major, stopped me in my tracks. He reminded me that many who worked in the railroads were never paid. On the back of a postcard, never mailed, is a message to my great-grandmother in Spanish. A daughter tells her mother all is well and she loves her mother. —*Maria Solarez*

---

### MIRA (cont’d from page 6)

works with immigrants and refugees. MIRA members include Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD), the International Institute of Boston, Mass Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS), New England Bangladesh American Foundation (NEBAF), and Womenshelter/Companeras. Go to [www.miracoalition.org](http://www.miracoalition.org) to learn about all the ways MIRA advocates for immigrants, or call Marcony Almeida at 617.350.5480 Ext. 205. You also may request the MIRA email news.

# The Network Responds....

In December, members of the Multicultural Network Board wrote a Letter to the Editor of the *Winchester Star* in response to a column about the *Americans with Disabilities Act* written by Jean Batty, a member of the Disabilities Access Commission, and Jason Lewis, our State Representative. We are re-printing that letter here. If you are interested in reading the original column, please contact our office and we will email that to you (office@wmcn.org).

To the Editor,

We are writing to applaud the Guest Commentary written by Jean Batty and Jason Lewis, "Celebrating the Americans with Disabilities Act" (11/18/10). The authors note that progress has been made in the 20 years since 1990 when the Act was passed, but also invite us to "recommit ourselves to this important work so that all people can realize their full potential and live their lives with dignity." Whether disabled since birth, or afterwards by disease, accident, war, or aging, all who live or visit here deserve our respect and appropriate accommodations.

Our Board of Selectmen adopted the Town of Winchester Human Rights Statement in September, 2009 which commits to this same vision: "...It is town policy to ensure equal treatment and opportunity to all individuals regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, ideology, socio-economic status, health, sexual orientation, age, military status, or **disability**" (bold added).

As a first step in fulfilling this vision, the town developed a draft of an ADA Transition Plan that identifies steps that need to be taken to bring public buildings and programs into compliance with Federal legislation. This process will be more

costly and complex since it was so long delayed and even some of our newer buildings are not in compliance.

On the other hand, as we make the changes to meet at least the minimum Federal ADA standards, we can now elect to meet higher standards and become a model community, attracting those with family members who are disabled, and allowing all who become less fully able-bodied to stay here more safely and happily.

We encourage the town to complete as expeditiously as possible the ongoing update of the ADA Transition Plan and to begin implementation of the recommended actions. To achieve the desired goals, it is important that the town have a paid, professionally-trained ADA Coordinator. Only a Coordinator who is trained in the applicable codes and is familiar with the range of needs presented by people with disabilities would be able to efficiently guide priorities and cost effectively oversee the improvements needed. This Coordinator could also ensure that all future town renovation and construction is at least fully compliant with the law to avoid unnecessary injury and related law suits.

Possible ideas to help fund this position include a small allocation from the town's Housing Fund to cover housing-specific work, sharing the position with a neighboring town, state or federal grants, and/or an ADA Coordinator Fee (sliding) for commercial and residential construction projects above a certain size.

We are thankful for all of the steps taken thus far to address the landmark ADA, and now urge a process that will result in Winchester becoming exceptionally welcoming and accessible to all.

## Winchester Multicultural Network

P.O. Box 346  
Winchester, MA 01890

Address Service Requested

---

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Winchester, MA  
Permit No. 70

---

.....  
**Would you like to get our newsletter online?**

Going online saves paper, printing, and mailing costs. Also, if we have your email, we can let you know of upcoming events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Network.