

Events & Announcements

PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Seattle Youth Basketball

A player on the Seattle Parks and Recreation Magnuson 12-year-old boys' basketball team tries to take the ball to the basket in a game against Jefferson Jan. 27 at the Rainier Beach Community Center. Jefferson won the game, beating Magnuson 34 to 15.

Community Calendar 2018

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

AN EVENING OF CASSICAL JAZZ: This event features guitar and piano performances by SPU music faculty members Julian Catford and Don Kramlich. Musical selections performed will range from swing and bossa nova in this celebration of jazz. This is a free concert for the public to enjoy. Nickerson Studios, 340 W. Nickerson St.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

FREE HOMEBUYER EDUCATION: Windermere Real Estate and Guild Mortgage Company have partnered with the Washington Housing & Finance Commission to help homebuyers understand both the down payment assistance loan programs and tax credits available to them. The seminars are free. 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Guild Mortgage Company, 150 120th NE, Bellevue.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

LUNAR NEW YEAR IN CHINATOWN: Ring in the New Year of the Dog at this massive Lunar New Year celebration that showcases the diversity, richness of the Asia community. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., Chinatown International District.

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the families left behind that are unable to afford legal representation. The Metropolitan King County Council this week provided assistance to those families by unanimously requiring the County to provide legal representation through the County's Department of Public Defense during the inquest process.

In King County, the Executive has the authority to conduct an inquest into the causes and circumstances of any death involving a member of any law enforcement agency within King County while in the performance of his or her duties.

Many of the procedures involved in the inquest process, including participating in the pre-inquest hearings, engaging in discovery or examining witnesses at the inquest, can only be done by legal counsel representing the family.

According to data collected by the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, between 2012 and 2016, there have been 34 deaths involving a member of a law enforcement agency that resulted in an inquest. Of those 34 inquests, 12 families obtained either privately retained or pro-bono legal counsel. Washington law does not require the appointment of a publicly funded attorney to represent indigent individuals at an inquest.

This week's adopted ordinance will require the King County Department of Public Defense to represent the families of the decedents during the inquest process at public expense. Public Defense will absorb the cost of these cases within its existing budget. Families would be able to decline representation if the family does not wish to be represented by the department's attorney.

Council Approves Creation of Immigrant and Refugee Commission

In 2016, the Metropolitan King County Council accepted the recommendations of King County's Immigrant and Refugee Task Force that evaluated the challenges facing King County's growing immigrant and refugee community. This week the Council voted toward acting on those recommendations with its unanimous approval to establish a King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission.

The goal of the commission will be to act as a central point of contact, communication, and coordination for all immigrant and refugee residents, and those serving and engaging with them. It will also focus on understanding and addressing challenges faced by immigrant and refugee communities living in suburban cities and unincorporated areas of the county.

From 2000-2010, more than half of King County's new population was foreign-born, a number that continues to grow, with the majority of the population being located in communities outside of Seattle. The Council established the Immigrant and Refugee Task Force in 2015 and asked for recommendations

that would assist the County in ensuring that these communities, in both urban and suburban/unincorporated areas, have the opportunity to successfully integrate and become "engaged, thriving members of the community."

The adopted legislation calls for the creation of a commission that will:

- Assist and advise the county and other levels of government on issues, programs, plans, funding and policies impacting immigrant and refugee communities,
- Promote civic participation and government representation by encouraging application for employment within the county workforce by immigrant and refugee residents and representation of immigrant and refugee residents on boards and commissions,
- Collaborate with organizations that implement programs to enhance integration, naturalization and English-language learning,
- Increase public awareness of immigrants and refugees and their contributions to our community.

The commission will have thirteen voting members and four nonvoting members for three-year terms, with the exception of the inaugural term members whose terms would be staggered into three, two, and one year terms to ensure continuity of experienced members in the commission. Those interested in applying to become a commissioner should contact either their local community organizations or their member of the County Council.

Mayor Durkan to Begin Extensive Citywide Review of Harassment and Discrimination Policies

In a letter to City employees, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan announced that she is launching an extensive review of the City of Seattle's harassment and discrimination policies.

To conduct the review, Mayor Durkan will convene a City-wide Anti-Harassment Inter-Departmental Team (IDT) to identify areas for improvement and make specific recommendations on both short-term and long-term policy changes. As the IDT develops its policy recommendations, Mayor Durkan will work with departments across City government, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and the Seattle City Council to implement necessary policy changes.

Mayor Durkan is forming an Inter-Departmental Team, which will include Mayor's Office staff, Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda (Pos. 8, Citywide) or her representative, and labor representatives.

This IDT will make recommendations by the end of May using the employee feedback from the upcoming RSJI survey.

With the engagement of employees and our labor partners, the IDT will provide recommendations on

training, reporting mechanisms, and personnel rules that focus on discrimination and workplace harassment.

The IDT will engage employees and use employee feedback from the upcoming citywide RSJI employee survey, which will include anti-harassment questions for the first time. Mayor Durkan also will mandate annual anti-harassment training, which will be expanded and updated regularly.

Councilmember M. Lorena González (Pos. 9, Citywide) and chair of the committee which oversees issues relating to Gender Equity said, "As a longtime civil rights and employment law attorney, I've represented women who've endured intimidation, criticism and retaliation after refusing to remain silent in the face of ongoing harassment. Every worker deserves to feel safe and protected when bringing reports of harassment to light, and I'm thankful that Mayor Durkan is taking this issue seriously. The City of Seattle, as a large employer, must take seriously our own responsibility to ensure that our employees feel safe and heard when they step forward to break the silence. I look forward to reviewing the IDT's recommendations to ensure they afford the strongest protections available to those who bring forward claims."

In December, Mayor Durkan announced to her cabinet new procedures for complaint reporting requirements and settlements.

The City has established new protocols for involving Human Resources a full 30 days before commencing any settlement agreements, Step 3 or 4 grievances, lawsuits, or formal investigations. Human Resources has been charged with tracking these incidents and providing recommendations for intervention as appropriate.

In one of her first actions, Mayor Durkan signed an Executive Order affirming the City of Seattle's commitment to the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI).