Girls and Dreamers

- KidsPost Reprint: “D.C. area teens hear girls’ rights champion Malala”
- Post Reprint: “Afghanistan must embrace women’s rights”
- Post Reprint: “As Hispanic population booms, immigration debate comes to key Republican’s Va. district”
- Post Reprint: “Virginia’s counterproductive approach to undocumented students”
- e-Replica Activity: Locate the Undocumented in an e-Replica Search
- Student Activity: Watch and Analyze
Laws, policies and international organizations support education as a right of children. How this applies to girls around the globe and in America to undocumented children — those born outside the United States and whose parents entered America illegally — raises questions of culture, finance, equity and action.

Malala Yousafzai has become the face and voice of girls wanting an education. There are thousands of girls denied an education who might be pictured. Younger students read about Malala and older students discuss a guest commentary by former first lady Laura Bush.

The changing demographics of Virginia’s 6th District provides a case study in handling the education of documented and undocumented students. Pair The Post article with its February 3, 2014, editorial, “Virginia’s counterproductive approach to undocumented students.” Students may do an e-Replica search to find the latest news about undocumented students or view and evaluate documentaries.
Friday was all about girl power. Officially, it was the second annual International Day of the Girl. But for some Washington area girls, it was a chance to listen to a superstar among girls: a Pakistani 16-year-old named Malala Yousafzai.

About five years ago, Malala began speaking out about educating girls in Pakistan, a country in South Asia. The Taliban, a group that controls part of that country, is against girls going to school.

A member of the Taliban shot Malala last year, but she survived the attack and continues to spread her message.

More than a dozen students from three local all-girls schools — Georgetown Visitation, Stone Ridge and Madeira — were invited to hear Malala speak Friday at the World Bank, an organization that lends money to businesses and agencies in poor countries.

“Malala talked about how getting girls education would pretty much change the world,” Jillian Murray, a junior at Visitation, said in a phone interview after the event.

Jillian and the other girls are part of a group called Girl Up, a program created by the United Nations Foundation. Girl Up encourages mostly middle school and high school girls to raise money for and awareness about the problems teenage girls face in poor countries.

“What we try to do with Girl Up is focus on five key issues,” Hillebrenner said. “Access to education is central.”

The other four target areas are providing girls access to health care; keeping them safe from violence; giving them opportunities to be leaders; and making sure they have documents such as birth certificates.

Hillebrenner said the International Day of the Girl, which the United Nations started last year, has become a great way to highlight the group’s mission. Hillebrenner spent the day at the United Nations in New York with Girl Up’s teen advisers, a group of 20 or so teens from across the country who are trained as the group’s leaders and spokeswomen.

In Washington, Jillian, 16, and sister Meghan, 15, both former teen advisers, listened as Malala told her story.

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“I just think that we take a lot of the things we have at Visitation ... for granted,” Jillian said. “She doesn’t have any of those things. So many of those girls don’t have what we take for granted every day.”

— Christina Barron, October 14, 2013
The haunting portrait of a young, disfigured Afghan woman on *Time* magazine’s cover this summer issued a stark reminder that the stakes in Afghanistan are high — and that the consequences of failure are brutal, especially for women.

On Friday I met with Bibi Aisha in California, where, thanks to the compassion of many individuals and organizations, she is receiving reconstructive surgery and beginning the long road of healing. The visible scars of her disfigurement will heal with time, but moving beyond the emotional and psychological trauma of her torturous mutilation may be more difficult.

Bibi Aisha’s story and the prevalence of intimidation and violence against Afghan women raise important questions for those working to establish this young democracy. Will Afghanistan embrace and protect the rights of all people? Or will it be a nation that allows the oppression of women to continue unabated?

These questions are central to the challenges confronting those who seek peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan today.

Nine years ago, many around the world learned of the severe repression and brutality against women that was common in Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Girls were forbidden to attend school. Women were imprisoned in their homes and denied access to doctors when they were sick. And Afghanistan had the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the world.

Today there are encouraging signs of progress: More than 6.2 million students are enrolled in Afghanistan’s schools, and 35 percent of them are girls. Afghan women serve as government ministers and lead as provincial governors. Women have been elected or appointed to the National Assembly. Afghan women work as entrepreneurs, educators, lawyers and community health workers. And their work is essential to the growth of the Afghan economy.

Yet serious challenges remain. A culture of fear still silences women. In many rural areas, those who dare to teach receive letters threatening not only their own lives but their children’s as well. And though the Afghan constitution guarantees 25 percent of seats in parliament to female legislators, assassinations of prominent women have driven many from public life. Among those
who remain, many are muted by fear.

Though some Afghan leaders have condemned the violence and defended the rights of women, others maintain a complicit silence in hopes of achieving peace. But peace attained by compromising the rights of half of the population will not last. Offenses against women erode security for all Afghans — men and women. And a culture that tolerates injustice against one group of its people ultimately fails to respect and value all its citizens.

Only four years ago, one Kuwaiti woman fighting for universal suffrage spoke out with a compelling message: “Half a democracy is not a democracy.” The truth of her statement resonated among the people of Kuwait, and that year women there attained the right to vote.

Today, RolaDashti’s words call to account Afghanistan and all nations in which women are oppressed and persecuted. A democracy that allows half its population to be silenced by fear, violence or intimidation is not a democracy. And a society that fails to protect the rights of women is not a free society.

Afghanistan’s leaders must defend women’s rights with action and policy, not just lofty rhetoric. True reconciliation cannot be realized by sacrificing the rights of Afghan women. To do so would reverse Afghanistan’s progress and return its people to the perilous circumstances that marked the Taliban’s rule.

There are clear choices for those entrusted with ensuring Afghanistan’s peace and prosperity. Will Afghanistan be a nation that empowers women, or one that oppresses them?

Now is a moment of decision. It is incumbent upon the Afghan people to make the most of this moment in their history.
As Hispanic population booms, immigration debate comes to key Republican’s Va. district

BY PAMELA CONSTABLE

ORIGINALY PUBLISHED MARCH 2, 2014

ROANOKE — As chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, a panel at the center of the national immigration debate, Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) has taken a tough stance on illegal immigration that reflects the views of many House Republicans: better border security and law enforcement before other reforms, and “zero tolerance” for illegal immigrants in the future.

But as the representative of the sprawling 6th Congressional District in southwest Virginia, the former immigration lawyer faces the sort of changing demographics that have transformed this conservative, rural region into a multinational mosaic — and that have put immigration reform at the top of the national agenda.

Roanoke, Goodlatte’s home in the Blue Ridge Valley, has seen its Hispanic population soar by 280 percent since 2000, to 6 percent of 100,000 residents — the biggest leap of any jurisdiction in the state except the Washington suburbs. In Harrisonburg, a college town 100 miles north, Hispanics have reached 16 percent of 49,000 residents. In many other areas of Goodlatte’s district, immigrants are a fast-growing part of the landscape and workforce — from Mexicans who pick apples and process poultry to Indians who work in high-tech and medical fields.

“Since I came here in the 1960s, Roanoke has gone from being a sleepy, segregated town to being a city of extraordinary diversity. Today we proudly celebrate having more than 104 different nationalities,” said Mayor David Bowers, a strong advocate of immigration reform whose wife is from Honduras and who unsuccessfully ran against Goodlatte in 1998. Goodlatte, a member of Congress for 20 years, is well-liked across the district and holds frequent town meetings with constituents. Local leaders describe him as a practical, approachable politician who has promoted the region’s economic interests. These include agriculture, which has come to rely on low-wage Hispanic workers and periodically runs into problems with federal immigration officials.

Leaders of the state’s $3.8 billion poultry industry say they favor immigration reform, including some version of legalization for...
workers without papers. Goodlatte, supportive of the industry but opposed to legalization, has proposed expanding a national guest-worker program that would grant multi-year work visas to farm laborers from abroad.

Until recently, though, Goodlatte and his district had not faced the kinds of tensions over immigration that divide Congress and some areas of the country. Legal immigrants brought needed skills to the area, while illegal immigrants were unable to vote and posed no political threat. The total Hispanic population is still less than 6 percent of the district’s 738,000 residents.

But those dynamics are beginning to change. Emboldened by the growing electoral clout of Hispanics nationwide and by President Obama’s non-deportation policy for some young illegal immigrants, Hispanic activists in the district have begun speaking out and holding protests, demanding a halt to deportations and a path to citizenship. Some have targeted Goodlatte directly and traveled to Capitol Hill to support immigration reform.

“Some people see us as a plague, but we are here to work honorably,” said Ricardo Andrade, 30, a Mexican construction worker in Roanoke who has helped organize several protests outside Goodlatte’s local office. “Many have no papers, and they are scared of being deported. We want to overcome those fears and make our voices heard.”

In Washington, Goodlatte has come under attack from some on the right for being too willing to compromise with the Senate, which passed a bipartisan bill on immigration last year. The issue is stalled in the House, with uncertain prospects for revival. Goodlatte declined to be interviewed for this article but sent written comments through his staff. While noting the contributions of immigrants to his district’s economy and culture, he reiterated his tough stance on illegal immigration, saying that it “undermines the integrity” of U.S. policy. Echoing the approach advocated by many House Republicans, Goodlatte said the United States must “secure the border and enforce our laws” before undertaking broader measures. “It’s more important to get immigration reform right than rush to pass legislation,” he wrote.

A history of tolerance
Roanoke’s open attitude toward immigrants is rooted in its past. Built at the crossroads of two railroad lines, the city has a history of welcoming strangers and cultivating racial harmony; an African American pastor served as mayor from 1975 to 1992. The recent influx of needy newcomers has placed burdens on schools and services, but a growing number of ethnic festivals, churches and charities has helped them adapt and fit in.

“We haven’t had a lot of pushback,” said Russell Merritt, director of a nonprofit literacy program in Roanoke that teaches foreign refugees — from Congolese war victims to Russian brides — to speak English and apply for citizenship. “We have a low unemployment rate, a low crime rate and a lot of jobs immigrants can fill.”

A community of legal immigrants has also helped defuse problems. Pearl Fu, an aristocratic emigre from China, created an outreach group called Local Colors. Yolanda Puraya, a Mexican-born physician, championed an annual Latino Festival and a campaign to involve Hispanics in electoral politics.

Goodlatte, 61, was born in Massachusetts, graduated from law school in Lexington, Va., and practiced law in Roanoke, where he and his wife raised two children. His
clients included legal immigrants from more than 70 countries, as he noted in his comments. After entering Congress in 1993, he became a promoter of specialty work visas that allow foreign-born engineers, scientists and researchers to come to the United States for several years at a time.

Merritt said Goodlatte supports his literacy program and often attends its annual celebrations to welcome participants. At the most recent event, he said, the congressman “talked about how America is the land of opportunity and how his office is available if they have any concerns. He did not delve into controversy, but he is not hiding from the issue at all.”

Beyond Roanoke, some areas of the district remain strongholds of conservative rural tradition; Bowers describes his town as “a blue island in a red sea.” But a recent sampling of opinions from leaders in other communities found both tolerance of demographic change and aversion to making immigration a partisan issue.

In Lynchburg, an old manufacturing city in the Blue Ridge foothills, the Hispanic population has nearly tripled to 2,300 in the past decade, while a wider immigrant pool has also been drawn to its five colleges and its fast-growing high-tech, health-care and financial-service sectors. Some companies train high-skilled immigrants from South Asia, often via the kind of specialty visas Goodlatte has promoted.

“As we’ve grown and become more cosmopolitan,” said Lynchburg Mayor Michael Gillette, adding that the city has experienced “no detrimental impact” from the growing Latino population. He praised Goodlatte, saying, “I cannot point to a single issue where he has failed to serve our community,” but he added that city officials have tried to steer clear of divisive partisan issues such as immigration reform.

Further north along Interstate 81 are rural towns like Waynesboro, which has long depended on Mexican migrant laborers to work in its orchards and nurseries. Now more are staying and settling down, but their numbers are still small, and local officials said they have been generally well received.

‘Whatever it takes’

Once the highway reaches Harrisonburg, a liberal university town with a long-established program for foreign refugees, one can find Puerto Rican mechanics, Pakistani professors, Iraqi exiles, Peruvian restaurant owners and Chinese college students, as well as the more numerous Mexicans and Central Americans who come to pick fruit or process turkeys.

In the city’s public schools, where 17 percent of new students speak little English, officials work hard to help them and their parents adjust, sponsoring tamale-making contests, literacy classes and soccer tournaments. “We will do whatever it takes,” said Laura Feichtinger McGrath, a school administrator. “What we are really trying to teach is tolerance and coming together as a community.”

Pablo Cuevas, a Cuban-born Republican and county supervisor for the past 24 years, said the Hispanic surge has brought some problems, such as public drinking and gang activity, but has also helped to revive ailing farm industries. Recently, he has helped students apply for legal status under Obama’s offer, and he is convinced that Congress must extend similar rights to older undocumented residents.

“These people work hard and do jobs others won’t. I see them going out in 12-degree weather to prune apple trees,” Cuevas said. “If they can’t get a driver’s license or go to college, they can’t contribute to society.”

He said he has grown frustrated with the legislative stalemate on immigration and disappointed that Goodlatte has not pushed harder for compromise on reform.

“Bob’s a good man. He’s always been accessible and responsive,” Cuevas said, noting that Goodlatte sought to compromise between the need to curb pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and the expense imposed on farmers to reduce waste runoff. But on immigration, he said, “I keep telling him Congress needs to act.”

A few miles away, a group of Hispanic activists met one recent night at a restaurant owned by a former Salvadoran dishwasher. Several were local college students planning a trip to Capitol Hill, where they were scheduled to participate
in a discussion with Goodlatte; it was later canceled because of a snowstorm.

“We are not beasts of burden. We want dignity,” said Yossimar de Jesus, 23, a student from Mexico at Harrisonburg’s Eastern Mennonite University. “We may be undocumented, but we have friends and relatives who can vote. If Mr. Goodlatte does not clearly support immigration reform, we will all work against his reelection.”

MARYLAND COLLEGE STUDENTS ALSO RALLIED FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT RIGHTS

Montgomery College student Ricardo Compos, at center wearing mortarboard, marches in Rockville in support of the Dream Act.
LET’S SAY that a teenager from California moves to Virginia with his family and graduates a year later from a local high school. Under Virginia law, he would be eligible for heavily subsidized in-state tuition rates as a freshman at the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech or any other public college or university in the commonwealth.

Now take a student of the same age brought to Virginia as a child by his undocumented parents. He graduates from elementary, middle and high school; his parents pay taxes; and, thanks to a dispensation granted by the federal government, he may work and live in the United States without fear of deportation. However, if he hopes to continue his education in Virginia, he would have to pay the out-of-state tuition price, which is two or three times higher than the in-state rate.

Nothing about the disparity in treatment for those two students is economically rational or serves Virginia’s interests. The state, having invested heavily in educating undocumented students through high school, squanders their potential by making college prohibitively expensive. College graduates earn more money than those with only a high school diploma, pay more in local and state taxes and more frequently go on to build wealth for others.

At least 16 states have figured out that it makes sense to grant in-state tuition to undocumented students; they include such Republican strongholds as Texas, Utah, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. But in Richmond last year, the GOP-controlled House of Delegates ignored legislation to do the same. Now the bill is in play again, having gained bipartisan support last week in the House Education Committee. So far there’s no word on whether the Republican leadership will allow it to advance.

Opponents used to dismiss the idea of helping illegal immigrants gain college educations, on the grounds that they could not work legally in this country. But since 2012, the Obama administration’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program
has allowed undocumented immigrants to work and live without fear of deportation, provided they have been in the United States since 2007 and were no older than 15 when they arrived. (Those provisions also mean that the number of undocumented students who would benefit from the Virginia legislation is modest and finite — probably fewer than 1,000 in the next decade or so.) The immigrants in question are hardly freeloaders; to be eligible for in-state tuition in Virginia, their parents would have to show state income tax returns for at least the previous three years.

Republicans in Richmond face a moment of self-definition. They can continue to stonewall. Or they can embrace the new tolerance that House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) advocated in urging immigration reform, including opportunity for undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children through no choice of their own. “One of the great founding principles of our country was that children would not be punished for the mistakes of their parents,” Mr. Boehner said in a statement of principles. Republicans in Richmond should take that to heart.

— February 3, 2014

Read More

The Post’s View: Virginia needlessly holds some promising students as outsiders

The Post’s View: Christie’s broken dream on tuition support for undocumented youth

Elizabeth F. Cohen: Should illegal immigrants become citizens? Let’s ask the founding fathers.
Search | Locate the Undocumented

Children are guaranteed an education through grade 12 in U.S. schools. Wisconsin is the only state to reach the goal of graduating 90 percent of its students who enter high school. The good news is that in February 2014, the U.S. Department of Education announced that for the first time the national high school graduation rate had reached 80 percent.

For an estimated 65,000 of those graduates the news is not so good when it comes to higher education. These undocumented students face legal and financial barriers. No federal or state law forbids admission, but the policies of colleges and universities place hurdles.

Read About Education for Undocumented Students
Opinions vary on whether undocumented students should receive financial aid, be eligible for in-state tuition, or receive scholarships. Read and discuss three Washington Post articles. What perspectives do they provide?
1. “High school graduation rate rises in U.S.”
   By Lyndsey Layton, March 19, 2012
2. “Second act for the Dream Act?”
   The Washington Post editorial, August 5, 2013
3. “Former Post owner hoping to send ‘dreamers’ to college
   By Lyndsey Layton, February 3, 2014

Conduct an e-Replica search
Go into the pages of The Washington Post to learn more about education for undocumented students. Begin with these key terms to see what results you will get.

- DREAM (Development, Relief, and Alien Minors) or Dream Act
- Guest-worker program
- Immigration reform
- Maryland Dream Fund proposal
- Specialty visa
- Undocumented students

Consider Different Perspectives
Select and read three to five of these articles to add to your understanding of the issues. Summarize different points of view expressed. What additional information do you need before you are ready to take a stand on the issue of higher education for undocumented students?

Draft a Commentary
Based upon the reading you have done and the experience you have, draft a commentary on the topic of education for undocumented students.
Watch and Analyze

Short Documentary  | Audio Informative Story  | Audio Personal Essay

The short documentary, audio informative story and audio personal essay explain, create an argument, enhance understanding of the topic, provide perspective and/or develop a desire to explore the topic further. Facts are presented to illustrate the main idea of the work. Individuals are interviewed to provide perspectives, to give information that others do not know, and to personalize (give a face to) the issue. The narrator sets the tone and guides the listener/viewer through the piece.

Listen to a short documentary, informative feature or audio personal essay. Evaluate the success of the producer, writer and narrator. Below are some guidelines to assist you.

OPENING
4 3 2 1 Did the opening grab your attention?
4 3 2 1 Is the topic of the piece clear?

THE WORK AS A WHOLE
4 3 2 1 The work provides an understanding and insight into the topic.
4 3 2 1 The topic is explored in depth, presenting more than one point of view.
4 3 2 1 The work is organized for a clear progression of ideas.
4 3 2 1 The content is more than a report being read or a series of interviews.
4 3 2 1 The work kept your interest to the end.

PARTS OF THE WHOLE
4 3 2 1 It is clear why different people were included in the work.
4 3 2 1 The actualities/sound bites are effective.
4 3 2 1 The narrator’s voice is clear and engaging.
4 3 2 1 The levels for sound recording enhances the work; allows for important information to be heard.

VIDEO TECHNICAL DETAILS
4 3 2 1 The stand-up, if used, is delivered with clarity and poise.
4 3 2 1 A variety of shots is used (long, medium, close, close-up)
4 3 2 1 Videography contains steady shots, artistic framing, sharp focus.
4 3 2 1 Graphics and/or lower thirds are effectively used.
4 3 2 1 B roll is effective and contributes to the whole.
4 3 2 1 Credits are given at the end of the piece.

Documentaries: Focus on the Undocumented Student

These short documentaries relate the stories of undocumented youth and the impact this legal limbo has had on their lives.

Documented
Writer, Director: Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas

The Graduates
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/graduates/
Filmmaker: Bernardo Ruiz

Illegal
http://www.illegalmovie.org/index.html
Producer: Philanthropist Curry Glassell

Inocente
http://inocentedoc.com
http://colorlines.com/archives/2013/02/formerly_undocumented_teen_inocente_made_the_oscar_stage.html
Director: Sean Fine, Andrea Nix Fine

Papers
http://www.papersthemovie.com
Producer: Rebecca Shine

Teens in Between
http://www.mhznetworks.org/watch/teens-between
Producer: MHz Networks

This (Illegal) American Life
http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/this-illegal-american-life/
Producer: Mariana van Zeller