

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**APRIL 28** Estate & Business Succession Planning

**JUNE 30** OPEN DC Annual Picnic at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens

**NOV 3** OPEN DC Annual Event

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## HQ2 TO DC, MD OR VA? Experts Say Region is Bezos' Top Choice

More signs are beginning to indicate that a site in the Washington DC region will be selected for the much anticipated second headquarters for Amazon. A decision of this magnitude will impact everyone in the region as it will bring 50,000 jobs, provide a surge in income tax revenue, and spur significant real estate development.

Of course, it also comes with a fair share of headaches as well. Increased stress on transportation infrastructure, a shock to home values perhaps further exacerbating the urban housing affordability crisis, and highly controversial corporate incentives are a part of the deal.

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## FEATURED CHARTER MEMBER

**Kewan Khawaja**

President, OPEN Global

Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Techlogix and AlmusNet

Techlogix is a global IT Services, consulting, and business solutions company that helps its clients achieve enterprise transformation by harmonizing people, business processes, and technology. Techlogix builds high performance solutions leveraging its practice-specific delivery methodologies that utilize its globally distributed development teams. Its people combine the spirit of engineering excellence with a strong commitment to deliver a delightful end-to-end customer experience.

AlmusNet is a spin out from Techlogix and this new company has a flagship product – Campus on Cloud – that is a SaaS-based Campus Management system, that covers the complete student life cycle: admissions through graduation. It manages three major operational areas for a University or College: Admissions, Academics, and Financials.

While donning multiple hats, Kewan loves playing a motivational role to bring out the best in the company's multifaceted workforce. Kewan's consulting interests are focused around business process management, business intelligence, and alignment of enterprise IT initiatives with corporate strategy.

Kewan holds a Master's degree in Information Systems from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

### What made you decide to become an entrepreneur?

I had gone back to Pakistan in 1991 after getting my Master's degree from MIT and working for a Boston-based software company for a couple of years. Since there were hardly any exciting software companies to work for at that time in Lahore, I started a software company with a friend who had in similar fashion returned to Pakistan from the United States.

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### Roots

Lahore, Pakistan.

### Most inspired by

Albert Einstein, Steve Jobs, Nietzsche, Mirza Ghalib.

### Hobbies

Reading books on history, philosophy and poetry, listening to Sufi music.

### What do you want to achieve next

Raise \$5-10 million of venture funding for AlmusNet and to grow it to \$100 million annual revenue in the next five years.

### Favorite vacation destination

Switzerland.

### Why should one join OPEN

For meeting and collaborating with a highly accomplished set of entrepreneurs and professionals who are involved in growing a wide and diverse range of innovative business models.

### Tip for readers

Get involved in initiatives that bring constructive individuals in the world over together to counter the parochial and divisive trends that have taken root in many countries.

# OPEN DC HOSTS FIRST EVENT OF THE YEAR Business Tax Law Update with G.F. Joey Musmar

OPEN DC hosted Joey Musmar, CPA, CFF, CVA, who gave an insightful and opportune presentation on updates to business tax laws. Given the legislative whirlwind in congress over the past 12 months, many business owners have been left wondering how the most recent regulatory changes will impact them. Congress approved the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) on December 22, 2017 and although many in the accounting field are able to digest the updates, the sophisticated nature of tax and accounting laws can sometimes disorient even experienced small business owners.

Joey Musmar, a Partner at Miller Musmar based in Reston, Virginia, educated the audience on the impact changes can have based on the firm's revenue, legal entity, and even the structure or presence of local vs international ownership. The attendees were also briefed on expenses that were removed from the current permissible deductions write-off list. The audience's interest piqued during a discussion on the impact that a transition from an S Corporation to a C Corporation would have on retirement planning. As the old adage goes, there are two guarantees in life, death and taxes.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Greetings,

Welcome to the first edition of the OPEN DC Gazette, 2018. We are planning to publish this newsletter four times during the year. We hope you will find this to be an excellent way to stay informed about the happenings at OPEN DC as well as other information relevant to our membership. I want to thank Rameez Munawar and Yasmeen Ahmed in leading the effort to develop and publish this Gazette.

OPEN Washington DC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of entrepreneurship, professional development, and advancement of leadership skills. It provides networking opportunities to its members and to the community at large. OPEN was founded in 1988 in Boston, Massachusetts and has 12 chapters across the world. OPEN Washington DC Chapter, since its

establishment in 2005, has created an inclusive, strong, and welcoming network of successful entrepreneurs and professionals.

OPEN DC has provided a rich environment for business collaboration and an avenue for advice and guidance for young entrepreneurs and professionals. OPEN Washington DC has successfully provided opportunities for networking, mentoring, knowledge exchange, and exposure to senior corporate executives with the aim of fostering entrepreneurship, business growth, and professional development. The Chapter organizes a variety of events throughout the year, including fireside chats, mentorship sessions, and workshops featuring dynamic speakers sharing knowledge and experience on topical issues and business opportunities.

OPEN Washington DC is committed to promoting the entrepreneurial spirit of accomplished business owners and that of the next generation of aspiring entrepreneurs. We warmly look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming scheduled events.

As President of OPEN Washington DC, it is my unique honor to work with an Executive Team of dedicated professionals and Board of Directors ensuring achievement of the Chapter's vision and accomplishing its mission to further strengthen the organization for many years to come.

In the spirit of networking,

**Hasan M. Ibrahim**  
President, OPEN DC



continued from cover  
Featured Charter Member  
Kewan Khawaja

### How do you handle the anxiety and challenges of a start up?

If one picks ideas that are close to one's heart but at the same time based on real market opportunities, then the ride itself becomes exciting despite challenges and the potential of failure. Also, myopic inside-the-box thinking in difficult times increases anxiety, so I have always invested time in activities or interests beyond business to unwind and to get fresh ideas that can sometimes help in overcoming those challenges.

### As a busy entrepreneur, what does your typical day look like?

The morning half of my day is typically structured with meetings and conference calls. But the afternoons and evenings are more flexible where I focus on more strategic issues. I believe that being too

rigid or pedantic about time throughout the day can stifle creativity so part of the day for me has to be a bit random.

### What is one achievement that you are most proud of?

Over the last two decades, Techlogix hired more than 1,500 engineers in Pakistan. Nearly a dozen software companies operating successfully in Pakistan and abroad have been formed by our ex-employees, so we have been quite a nursery for polishing engineering talent and sowing further seeds of entrepreneurship.

### What in your opinion is the critical factor that made you successful?

Over the longer term, the critical factor has been flexibility of strategy – the capability to innovate every few years so that the company moves in a new exciting dimension and does not become stale.

### What is one failure you had as an entrepreneur, and how did you overcome it?

We have been a profitable company for most of our existence but several years ago, we expanded operations so rapidly in many countries that our expenses went out of whack and we suffered substantial losses. It took us 3 years to come out of the red but we re-established profitability by revamping our project control processes and being more selective in geographies to operate. Importantly, we overcame our predicament without laying off a single employee in those tough times.

### What would be your advice for the new entrepreneurs?

Do a lot of soul-searching first to make sure that you are launching on this journey with full conviction and not because entrepreneurship is such a fad these days. Once past this filter, bet hard on your instincts and do not give up easily at the first few hurdles or criticism that you face.

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HQ2 TO DC, MD, OR VA?

So why exactly do economists, politicians, and business leaders feel that Amazon is leaning towards the DC region? Well for one thing, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos loves the area. He owns The Washington Post and purchased a second home for a whopping \$27 million. Amazon Web Services already has a significant presence in Northern Virginia and the region possesses three airports, top-notch educational institutions, high quality of life, and provides immediate access to the power structure of our government.

Odds makers have named Atlanta and Boston as the frontrunners. Given Amazon's progressive corporate culture, Atlanta's chances may have taken a hit after Georgia's legislature removed a tax-exemption for Delta Airlines after its squabble with the National Rifle Association. Boston is running into issues with the availability of contiguous developable land and Amazon recently took an additional 1 million square feet of space not tied to HQ2. Baltimore is the only major east coast city that was exempt from the list after Amazon had narrowed it down to 20. Officials have cited the lack of available tech talent the driver behind the decision.

The sites pitched in Virginia are Crystal City, Rosslyn, and the Center for Innovative

Technology in Herndon. DC Mayor Muriel Bowser proposed four sites including NoMa, Shaw, Hill East and along the Anacostia River. Maryland Governor Larry Hogan has pitched the former White Flint Mall site as the best option.

What's my guess? South Lake Union, where Amazon's main headquarters is, was a patchwork of parking lots, warehouses, and low-rise industrial buildings before Amazon's transformed it. Sounds like a place I know. Anacostia.



Proposed masterplan at Capitol Hill East



A rendering of the proposed Amazon HQ2 site on the Anacostia Waterfront.

**FEATURED CHARTER MEMBER****Irfan Malik**

Co-Founder, Ciena

**Roots**

Islamabad, Pakistan.

**Most inspired by**

Warren Buffet, Bill Gates

**Hobbies**

Learning different cultures, travel

**What do you want to achieve next**

Help young Pakistani Americans achieve their dreams

**Favorite vacation destination**

New Zealand

**Why should one join OPEN**

OPEN provides a platform for networking and mentorship, a key for success

**Tip for readers**

Balance and stability in personal life brings happiness and satisfaction. Marketplace rewards has limited shelf life. As an entrepreneur one must maintain a healthy balance between passion and family life.

**What made you decide to become an entrepreneur?**

I was a Mechanical Engineer working in product development in telecom industry. After working in the industry for 15 years, I was somewhat frustrated with my career and work practices. I wanted more control of it. That led me to look for jobs in startups where one can define the work environment and practices.

**How do you handle the anxiety and challenges of a start up?**

As a father of three school going children, the anxiety I had was the market acceptance of the product we were developing, which would translate into company success.

In the pre-internet and telecommuting era of the 1990's the biggest challenge was to deal with the unstructured environment of the start-up. On a daily basis your role could evolve from janitor to media relations officer (accordingly you would keep different sets of clothes in office to dress according to the needs of the hour). Agility was the other challenge, as we were in uncharted territory, had to constantly change direction and adjust to cross winds.

**As a busy entrepreneur, what does your typical day look like?**

One of my principle was not to bring work home. I would start early in the morning, so that I can be home before my children would go to bed. The month of Ramadhan was very productive, as I could start earlier in the morning. My most productive time was before normal work day would start, when interruptions from door knocking and phone ringing would start. We had an open-door policy, that helped in many ways, but created extra work for decision makers.

Time management was essential, I had allocated a good portion of single day for staff meetings; similarly portion of one day for external meetings – customer, vendors, etc.; portion of one day on marketing and product development issues; portion of one day on administrative issues. This made my work environment structured for most of work week.

**What is one achievement that you are most proud of?**

When our first product was shipped to customer. We achieved this by shrinking

product development time in half, through risk taking, smart working and workflow. Another proud moment was when we hit \$1 billion in revenue, within less than eighteen months of our first revenue dollar.

This led to our company going Public in February 1997 and hit a market cap of \$1.9 billion on the first day of trading on NASDAQ stock market

**What in your opinion is the critical factor that made you successful?**

There are many factors. Maneuvering market conditions, and managing customer requirements, educating customers what is good for them. Staying ahead of technology developments and trends. Attracting good talent and maximizing employee satisfaction.

**What is one failure you had as an entrepreneur, and how did you overcome it?**

With success come arrogance. We were convinced that we could do nothing wrong. Till one day one of our major customer decided not to renew their purchase order because of their business needs. The news was released after close of stock market. Next morning at stock market open we lost half of our company value. That evening and night we were all looking for ways how to minimize the impact to employees and investors.

Employees understood the rationale of cancellation of order. This introduced some humility amongst employees and the corporate culture. Morale was down for few days but got back to normal level in 3-4 weeks' time.

Investors were not that impressed and took us more than a year to recover the lost value of the company.

**What would be your advice for the new entrepreneurs?**

There are many. Success will follow you, if you are willing to work hard and smart, take risk, and be agile. It's more challenging to manage success, than to be successful.

Avoid becoming a victim of your success. This could be due to Product/Industry migration. Success brings arrogance, remain vigilant not to let it creep in. You must plan for growth but keep your feet on ground.

## THE INS AND OUTS OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

### Mentorship Session with Narjis Ali

OPEN DC held its first mentorship session of the year with Narjis Ali, President of Sure Secure Solutions and a former OPEN DC Chapter President. The sold out event was moderated by Charter Member Mushtaq Khan and Executive Committee Member Habeeb Syed. During the conversation, Narjis shared her background and experience on a wide range of topics which included:

- Guidance on how to enter the government contracting sector.
- Leveraging smaller opportunities to establish a track record and build relationships.
- Developing proposal writing skills. Tracking government-wide acquisition contracts.
- Differentiating yourself in a competitive environment through appropriate emphasis on unique skills and digital marketing.
- Balancing personal, professional, and entrepreneurial goals.
- Developing partnerships to leverage your strengths and remaining committed to the community.

Mentorship sessions are designed for small groups, providing personal interaction with the mentor and fellow attendees. Participants were an eclectic group, including those with backgrounds in IT consulting, cybersecurity, and social entrepreneurship.



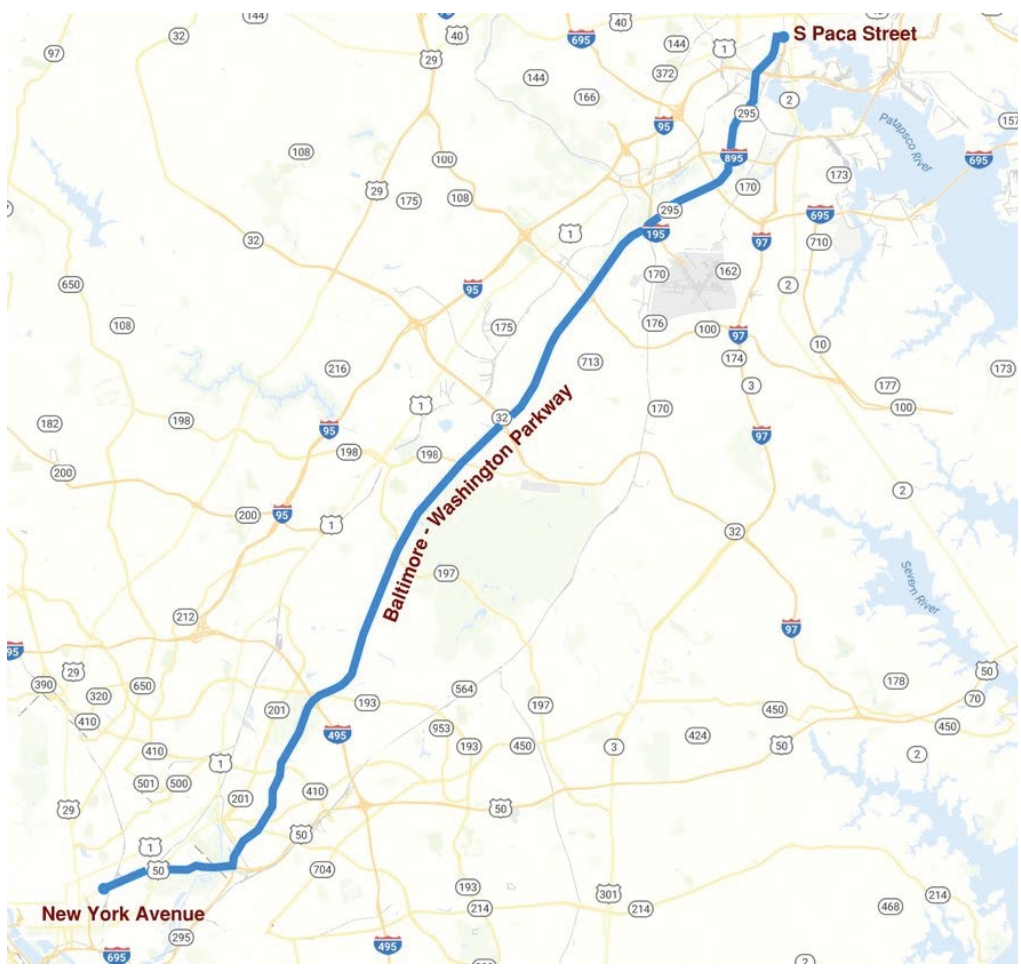
## ANNUAL EVENT TEASER

### Abbas Haider President and CEO, Aspetto

The first confirmed speaker for the annual event is Abbas Haider, an entrepreneur whose product is quite unique. Abbas founded Aspetto in 2008, a manufacturer of affordable, bespoke mens clothing and bulletproof clothing. A fashion aficionado with a thirst for business, Abbas secured the US Government as a client in 2012 and subsequently they became known as America's first bulletproof clothing line.

With a keen focus on high-end fashion, Abbas wanted to step away from the bulky look that traditional bulletproof clothing offers. In order to develop a strong and lightweight alternative, Aspetto has partnered with the world's best ballistic manufacturers which has led to product that exceeds NIJ and FBI testing requirements.

Hear more about Aspetto and Abbas's journey at the 2018 OPEN DC Annual Event in November.



## HYPERLOOP ANYONE?

### The Boring Company is Generating Excitement

Last Fall, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan announced that Elon Musk's "The Boring Company" received approvals from the Maryland Department of Transportation for the East Coast Hyperloop. The underground tunnel would bring a much needed high-speed transit option to the region, allowing for a trip from Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes.

The Boring Company website has shared an image (left) of the tunnel's route and reported that construction could be done in 12 to 20 months. The twin tunnels would run parallel to each other and can travel up to 150 miles per hour. Each skate can carry between 8 and 16 passengers and the project is 100% privately funded. Perhaps the most eye opening feature is its human scale and minimally invasive construction. The size of stations will be no larger than a few typical parking spaces and there would be no construction noise to its 30-foot depth.

Who knew transit could be this exciting?

## BOOK BRIEF

# What Color is Your Parachute?

By Richard Bolles



With more than 10 million copies sold in 28 countries, the world's most popular job-search book is updated for 2018 and tailors Richard Bolles's long-trusted guidance with up-to-the-minute information and advice for today's job-hunters and career-changers.

In today's challenging job-market, the time-tested advice of What Color Is Your Parachute? is needed more than ever. Recent grads facing a tough economic landscape, workers laid off mid-career, and people searching for an inspiring work-life change all look to career guru Richard N. Bolles for support, encouragement, and advice on which job-hunt strategies work--and which don't.

This revised edition combines classic elements like the famed Flower Exercise with updated tips on social media and search tactics. Bolles demystifies the entire job-search process, from writing resumes to interviewing to networking, expertly guiding job-hunters toward their dream job.

### Selected Excerpts

"The common belief among job-hunters is that if an employer has a vacancy, they will always post it on the internet. Not True. Generally speaking, employers will only post their vacancies if they are having trouble filling a position."

"Job hunters will go endlessly to group meetings, job support groups, business presentations, college reunions, beer parties – and when you ask them what they're doing, they will say "i'm unemployed, i'm networking". They will collect business cards day after day, week after week, convinced that this will somehow pay off down the line."

"Ideally each story should have five parts. Your goal or what you wanted to accomplish, some kind of hurdle or obstacle, a description of what you did step by step, a description of the outcome, any measurable or quantifiable statement of that outcome."

"Do the homework. Dream a little. Dream a lot. One of the saddest lines in the world is "Be Realistic". The best parts of this world were not fashioned by those who were realistic. They were fashioned by those who dared to look hard at their wishes."

### The 10 greatest job interview mistakes

1. Going after large organizations only
2. Hunting all by yourself for places to visit
3. Not researching the company beforehand
4. Allowing HR to interview you
5. Setting no time limit when you first begin
6. Letting your resume be the only agenda discussed
7. Talking primarily about yourself
8. Failing to give examples of the skills you claim to have
9. Approaching the employer as if you were a job beggar
10. Not sending a thank you note right after

## About the Author

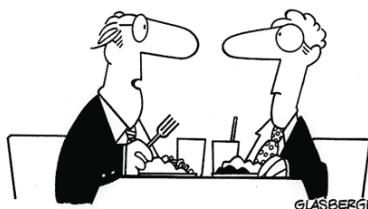


Richard Bolles led the job-search field for more than 40 years. He is credited with founding the modern career counseling field, and is often described as the field's foremost authority. Bolles is a recipient of the National Samaritan Award, whose previous honorees include Karl Menninger, Betty Ford, and Peter Drucker. He is also one of LinkedIn's 300 "Influencers" or "thought leaders," and writes regularly for the site as well as a number of others.

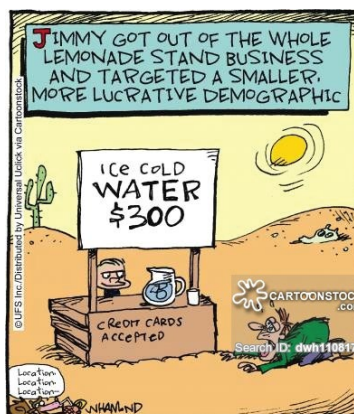
A member of Mensa and the Society for Human Resource Management, he served as the keynote speaker at hundreds of conferences. Bolles earned a bachelor's degree cum laude in physics from Harvard University, a master's degree from General Theological (Episcopal) Seminary in New York City, and three honorary doctorates.

## Cartoon Corner

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"The reason I'm successful is because I'm lucky. But I didn't get lucky until I started working 90 hours a week!"



"I call my invention 'The Wheel,' but so far I've been unable to attract any venture capital."

# THE BACKPAGE CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

1. Small business loan backers.
4. Customers do it 'til they drop.
8. Astronaut Sally.
12. 'You've got mail' they said.
13. Chinook word for beaver wood.
14. Good ones inspire startups.
15. \_\_\_ newsreader.
16. Raise money, as with Kickstarter.
18. French river in Brittany.
20. Zilch.
21. Don Draper's specialty
24. When to give up, said Churchill.
27. Promoting, pricing, selling, and more.
28. Sink \_\_ swim.
30. Used for clarification, for example.
31. Slanted letters (abbreviation).
33. Tax-friendly way to save for later.
35. Way to share pix of passions.
38. Profitable color.
40. Mickey's logo.
39. Close \_\_\_ sale.
45. They determine if your business succeeds.
49. Microsoft's online intranet (initials).
50. Smart machine (initials).
51. Secret ingredients storage place.
52. Work week start (abbreviation).
53. Small business help, often on a nearby college campus (initials).
54. Medicine man or woman (abbreviation).
55. \_\_\_ and only

## DOWN

1. Draped dress.
2. Springsteen.
3. Here's another.
4. Break away.
5. Not him.
6. Broke up the Beatles?
7. Leave an object to secure a loan.
8. Shot aimed with precision.
9. Txt for 'I don't understand.'
10. Foxes live here.
11. Work permit (initials).
17. Car's first tiny dint.
19. Nice place to enjoy a day off.
23. French river in northeastern France.
25. The tool of the majority.
26. Historical time periods.
28. Music trade association.
31. Taxing dealing with them.
32. Military rank (abbreviation).
33. In corporate finance (initials).
34. Hairdressers do it. Cu \_\_.
35. Minister's child (initials)
36. Indian auto company Ta \_\_.
37. Helps remove the graphite.
39. When running well, everything is copa \_\_\_\_.
41. Windows Office on a phone (initials).
42. Creator of Wii's laws.
43. Atop.
44. The hue of a color, or sound
45. Controls website's appearance (initials).
45. Feeling down.
47. Videogame giant.
48. Andy Griffith sequel, Mayberry, \_\_\_

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## About OPEN

OPEN is a voluntary, not-for-profit 501(c)(6) organization dedicated to the promotion of entrepreneurship and leadership. OPEN is one of the pioneers in fostering the spirit of entrepreneurship among its members and the community at large for almost 20 years.

Our chapter, OPEN Washington DC, promotes the same spirit in its local community and has proved to be one of the key business networking organizations in the Greater Washington Metropolitan Area. We are an organization dedicated to promoting the business interests and professional development of our members.

**Connect with us!** [openwashingtondc.org](http://openwashingtondc.org)

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**Questions? Feedback?**  
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**Newsletter Team**  
Rameez Munawar  
Yasmeen Ahmed

## Solution

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