



VirginiaTech

University Outreach
and International Affairs

School of Public
and International Affairs

Community Voices (CV): Ideas for Change, Ideas that Matter

The CV Research Series

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Institute for Policy & Governance

205 West Roanoke Street (0489)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-1118 Fax: 540/231-6722
E-mail: ipg@vt.edu
www.ipg.vt.edu

When we launched *Community Voices* we had in mind building a series of talks that would allow members of the university and regional communities to come together to consider important concerns from the perspective of vital thought leaders drawn from all three sectors of our nation's political economy. An interdisciplinary group of graduate students, faculty and community representatives manage all aspects of the series' planning and production. What we did not expect, and what has occurred, is that team has emerged as an informal, continuing and vital seminar that reflects on the character and challenges of securing community change and on strategies to attain it. We anticipated that we would use the series to produce research as well as to offer outreach publications linked to it. I am pleased to report that plans are afoot for both sorts of offerings.

Our research series begins today with Lyusyena Kirakosyan's article entitled: "From Ideas for Change to Research for Change: Exploring Civic Creativity in Small Communities." Lyusyena recently completed her Ph.D. here at Virginia Tech and has been an indispensable participant in the Community Voices group since its inception. It is fitting that her piece concerning the potential utility of appreciative inquiry as well as the arts as strategies to encourage dialogue for change should launch our occasional series of research articles drawing on questions and insights generated by our programs to date.

Readers may expect to see additional brief analytic essays concerning different facets of community change and possibility illuminated by CV in coming weeks and months, so do check back. We will soon post our plans for a larger publication based on our past programs as well. Community Voices addresses significant concerns and at a critical scale for the health of our democratic society. It is a pleasure daily to be involved with the talented students, community members and faculty who produce our programs and who will now examine the portent of the reflections of the gifted individuals it highlights for a larger audience.

Sincerely,

Max Stephenson Jr. Professor of Public and International Affairs and
Director, Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance

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