

Hawo's Dinner Party

**THE NEW FACE
OF SOUTHERN
HOSPITALITY**



*Recipes and
DISCUSSION GUIDE*



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Shelbyville

MULTIMEDIA



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About "Hawo's Dinner Party: *The New Face of Southern Hospitality*"

"Hawo's Dinner Party: *The New Face of Southern Hospitality*" is a video "module" designed to support dialogue, bridge-building and cultural exchange in communities that receive immigrants and refugees from Muslim-majority countries. Adapted from the documentary *Welcome to Shelbyville* directed and produced by Kim A. Snyder, it follows the trajectory of Hawo Siyad, a refugee and former nurse from Somalia, who has come to work at the nearby Tyson Foods chicken processing plant. Dressed in colorful hijab even on the assembly line, Hawo is determined to learn English and to connect with her neighbors. But as news of "home grown terrorism" appears in the national media and as Hawo tries to reach out, we get an intimate glimpse into the honest—and often uncomfortable—encounters that emerge.

Produced by Active Voice in association with the BeCause Foundation, "Hawo's Dinner Party" shows what happens when newcomers and "welcoming ambassadors" communicate and work together to transform their community, even in the most challenging times. This guide includes recipes from the cast of *Welcome to Shelbyville* to encourage communities to come together around food and fun. Other story-based resources for community leaders—including clergy, educators, law enforcement and public officials—who are committed to making their communities safe, welcoming and inclusive are available on *Shelbyville Multimedia* at www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org.

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Why Use "Hawo's Dinner Party"?

Are you a community-based organization that works to make your community safe, welcoming and inclusive? Do you think that personal stories help people connect emotionally to issues like diversity, hate crime prevention and social inclusion? Are you looking for new ways to talk about immigration in your neighborhood? If so, "Hawo's Dinner Party" can help get the conversation started off right. You can use it to:

- Put a human face on immigrants and refugees from Muslim-majority countries and highlight their stories and contributions;
- Spark productive dialogue and bridge-building across cultures, faith and citizenship status;
- Help break down stereotypes (in meetings and at community events);
- Enhance cultural competency among employers, service providers, first responders and teachers;
- Organize programs and activities that encourage civic participation among immigrants and refugees.

Discussion Questions

The DVD of "Hawo's Dinner Party: *The New Face of Southern Hospitality*" is chaptered so that it can be used in a range of targeted events (trainings, forums, small group dialogues, potluck dinner screenings, etc.). Show the DVD in its entirety for public screening events or select chapters individually to spark deeper conversations in settings with specific objectives.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONVERSATION

To prepare for an honest and respectful conversation, it's always a good idea to get clear on the objectives of the gathering. For example, is the objective of the event to listen and learn from one another's experiences, to strengthen community ties, to collaboratively come up with proactive solutions to tensions or something else? Here are some basic ground rules to consider for any successful conversation:

- Make space for everyone to speak, including people who may not usually feel comfortable doing so.
- Allow people to "pass"—they do not have to speak.
- Keep everything said in the group, within the group; confidentiality may be important to some participants.
- Make sure to listen to others without interrupting.
- Use "I" statements (instead of "Everyone thinks," "We all know...") to avoid putting words in other people's mouths.
- Seek clarification if you don't understand something someone else is saying.
- Practice active listening: pay attention not only to *what* the speaker is saying but also to the emotions behind their words and to what may be most important for them.
- Suspend your judgment.
- Don't expect others to know everything about your experiences or the topic at hand.
- Encourage curiosity: no question is stupid!

Remember to have fun and enjoy getting to know your neighbors. Sometimes people get wrapped up in emotion and the conversation can get heated, but that usually means someone cares deeply about the issue. Take a moment to acknowledge the experiences in the room that make this an important discussion to everyone and, if necessary, remind other participants of the ground rules and shared objectives. Then, begin again.

For facilitation tips and other discussion and dialogue resources, please see the "Hawo's Dinner Party" Event Planning Toolkit and Facilitation Guide available for download at www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/modules/HDP.

GENERAL DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Which of the cast members did you relate to the most? Why?
- What scene jumped out at you? Why?
- Can you think of some shared values between the Somalis, long-term residents featured in the module and yourself? What are they?
- If you are a Muslim, in what ways did the film reflect your own experience of being a Muslim and in what ways did it differ? If you are not Muslim, did you see aspects of your own beliefs or experiences reflected? What were they?
- What factors contributed to some of the misunderstandings between the Somali residents of Shelbyville and their neighbors?

Chapter 1: A Shaky Reception for Somalis

1. In one scene, we hear a resident express the opinion that if the Somalis want to live in Shelbyville, they "need to dress like we do, speak our language and live like we do." Do you agree? Should people always adhere to local customs such as dress, even if it is contrary to their beliefs? Imagine yourself in such a situation: would you? Why or why not?
2. Reporter Brian Moseley recalls the history of segregation in the South: "The issue of segregation and race in the South is long past; those issues have pretty much gone in the history books." Do you see similarities between this history and the challenges that the Somalis in Shelbyville face?
3. At the Rotary Club meeting, members grapple with how to accept the Somali newcomers. One member explains that he was handed a sheet that explains "a whole lot of things about Somalis" that he did not know. If you were to create a sheet about your own community for others, what are the most important things you would want them to know?
4. Police Chief Austin Swing recalls what happened when a police officer touched a Muslim man's wife and Mayor Ray complains that Somalis try to haggle for prices at the Walmart — both explain situations when a lack of cultural context and understanding may have contributed to tensions. Have you been in an uncomfortable situation because you didn't know something about a person or group's culture? Looking back, what did you need for the situation to have turned out better?



Suggested Activity: What Would Your Fact Sheet Say?

Break up into small groups of four to six people to collaboratively prepare a fact sheet. Work together to respond to the following questions:

1. What do you want others in the room to know about you and your cultural, religious or other group?
2. What would you like to know about some of the other cultural, religious or other groups represented in the room?

photo credit: Greg Poschman

Chapter 2: Hawo Makes Her Way

1. Shelbyville residents explain the fear they feel or have felt about the presence of Somalis in their town. Can you think of a time when you initially harbored distrust or fears about someone or some group that eventually changed? If so, what do you think made this possible?
2. Hawo describes the loss of loved ones, home and the life she had before the war broke out in Somalia. She came to Shelbyville to find work and make a new life for herself and her family. Have you ever had to leave everything behind and move to a new place? If not, how do you think you would feel if you had to make this decision? What do you think you would need from your new community to start out your new life?
3. Hawo was a nurse in Somalia before she fled the Civil War. She explains that she left her family behind in Minnesota and came to Shelbyville — far from her husband and children — because there were jobs available. Have you ever been separated from your family to work? Have you ever had to leave work you loved? Have you ever accepted work that was not equal to your level of training or was far from your loved ones because you had no other choice? If so, how did that experience shape your perspectives today?

Chapter 3: Somalis in the Headlines

1. Brian Moseley explains that many of the responses he got to his newspaper series were hateful. Hawo laments at how damaging this was to her and her community. Are there issues being covered in your local paper or news outlets that are perhaps unfair or damaging to a community? If yes, are there misperceptions that contribute to the negative standpoint? What are they?
2. Ms. Luci thinks that it would have been helpful if Brian Moseley's articles also described how Somalis are trying to fit into Shelbyville, such as learning English. Do you agree? Why or why not? Why do you think Hawo is working so hard to fit in?

Chapter 4: A Teacher Makes a Difference

1. Shelbyville residents describe frustration about the state of the economy; some say the refugees are taking all the jobs. Others think that the jobs are available to anyone who wants them but, as Ms. Luci explains, "the American people come in, the work is too hard, they're gone." Can you think of any jobs that you would refuse to take? What are they and why? Why do you think so many refugees and immigrants in Shelbyville like Hawo, a former nurse, are willing to take the jobs at the Tyson plant?
2. Ms. Luci emerges as a strong ally to Hawo and her other Somali students as she encourages them to exercise their rights and ask the local newspaper to stop writing the damaging articles. What personal experiences does she mention that lead her to do this? Consider a time you decided to help someone out or teach them a skill: why did you do it?
3. In one scene, Hawo expresses frustration at the way she and other Somali women are criticized, that they "have clothes, big clothes, too many clothes, something like that." Many cultural or religious groups have dress codes: Catholic nuns wear habits, some Catholic women attending mass wear veils, some Orthodox Jews dress in black and/or wear kippas. Many other groups, such as the Amish, also have similar codes. Do you believe that the perceptions of Muslim women wearing a hijab or veil are perceived differently? Why or why not?

Chapter 5: "Why Don't You Want to Hold Hands?"

1. When Mohamed Ali sits down with Brian Moseley, he explains: "If somebody discriminates against you, you can feel it because you are human." Consider a time when you were treated unfairly or discriminated against. Are there lessons you learned from that experience that you use in situations when others are being targeted and face discrimination? What are they?
2. Miss Marilyn asks Mohamed why he won't hold her hand during prayer. How might the dinner have been different if Miss Marilyn did not ask her question? What opportunity did Miss Marilyn's question provide to the other dinner guests? What conditions need to be in place for you to feel comfortable about asking an honest question?
3. At Thanksgiving dinner, one guest relates to Mohamed and suggests that there may be some similarities between the Catholic religion and Islam. Have you ever been surprised to learn you have more in common with someone from a different background than you thought? If so, what did you have in common and what did it take for you to finally discover it?

Chapter 6: Dinner at Hawo's

1. Mayor Ray explains that coming together is the only way to get to know one another. Hawo decides to invite her new friends to her home for dinner. Are there strangers in your own community that you would like to meet? What would you like to know and what would you like them to know about you? See the exercise on page 6 to take it further.
2. Miss Beverly takes a risk and asks her Somali neighbors about the "buzz around town" that the Somalis in Shelbyville are going to start blowing things up. This broke the ice and paved the way for a difficult conversation. Do you have a difficult question about an immigrant group in your community? What is it? Then think of how it could be received: what is the most respectful way to ask it?



Take Action!

photo credit: Greg Poschman

Become a "Welcoming Ambassador"

www.welcomingamerica.org

Watch "Building a Nation of Neighbors"

www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/modules/BNN

Host a Welcoming Gathering

www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/get-involved/welcoming-gatherings

Support local immigrant service and refugee resettlement organizations. For example, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

www.refugees.org

Record your own Welcoming Story

www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/get-involved/welcoming-stories

Volunteer with or donate to relief agencies. For example, American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Be sure to visit the "Hawo's Dinner Party" Event Planning Toolkit and Facilitation Guide for more suggestions and resources.

www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/modules/HDP

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights works to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of immigration status. To learn more, visit: www.nnirr.org/index.php

For a list of Resource and fact-sheets, visit:

www.nnirr.org/resources/index.php?op=list&type=3

For more recipe ideas from around the world, take a look at the NNIRR 25th Anniversary Commemorative Cookbook:

<http://nnirr.blogspot.com/2011/06/calling-all-recipes.html>

Fact or Fiction? By Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding

The "welcoming ambassadors" in Shelbyville helped people learn about each other. Some of the issues discussed are from the opinions of residents and not necessarily the facts. The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding has created a series of Fact Sheets on the following topics for people to engage in discussions that challenge some fictions created around important topics related to people getting to know one another:

- **World Religions**
- **Opposition to Places of Worship and Religious Practices in the United States**
- **Houses of Worship in Lower Manhattan and New York City**
- **Park51 Community Center**
- **September 11, 2001 & Terrorism**
- **Muslims and Islam in the United States**
- **Diversity in Islam**

You can find these Fact Sheets and more on at www.prepareny.org.com/page/curricula-1 or through Tanenbaum's website at www.tanenbaum.org.



photo credit: Greg Poschman

Recipe and Dinner Party Section

Sometimes the way to a community's heart is through its stomach. Various scenes in "Hawo's Dinner Party" feature community members coming together around food. For example, a welcoming Thanksgiving at Ms. Luci's and Hawo's dinner-discussion-dance party both provide great contexts to host a gathering of your own, whether it is a simple potluck or a meet-and-greet at a local ethnic restaurant. So you may decide you want to host your own dinner party. Whether you want to borrow a recipe from Shelbyville to inspire your guests or if you want to challenge your guests to a game of Table-top Trivia, this section of the guide is for you.

The following recipes are from the cast of *Welcome to Shelbyville*. You may decide to pair your screening of "Hawo's Dinner Party" with a dish straight out of Shelbyville. Take a look.

Miguel's 'Pollo En Crudo'



Miguel from the cast of *Welcome to Shelbyville* recently decided to contribute his own recipe to our Welcoming Gatherings page. He explained: "Every time I would return to Mexico for a visit, my mom would ask me what I want and I would always say, 'Pollo en Crudo.'" To hear Miguel's story about why this recipe means so much to him, visit: www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/recipes.

Ingredients:

2 pounds of skinless chicken cuts (legs, thighs, breasts, wings)
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 medium tomatoes
1 garlic clove
1/4 of medium onion
1/4 teaspoon of dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon of salt
2 tablespoons vinegar
1 cup sliced pickled carrots
1 cup sliced pickled onions
1 cup sliced pickled nopales (pickled cactus)

Directions:

Step 1 — Blend and crush (but do not puree): tomatoes, garlic, onion, oregano, pepper, salt and vinegar.
Step 2 — Sauté the blended mixture in olive oil for approximately 5 minutes.
Step 3 — Add the chicken pieces to the mixture and cook them for approximately 30 to 40 minutes, or until fully cooked. Stir to ensure the chicken is fully covered in the mixture.
Step 4 — Add pickled carrots, onions, and nopales (cactus) to chicken.
Step 5 — Cover pan with lid and cook for approximately 5 minutes.
Serves 4 to 6

Beverly's 'Po Man's Steak'



Miss Beverly from the cast of *Welcome to Shelbyville* told us that every Easter, she and her family gather to celebrate one another, togetherness and survival. "You had to make it one way or another," she observed, "so we give thanks for the folks who made the food, the farmers, and – of course – God. To learn more about this tradition and why Easter with her family is so special, visit: www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/recipes.

Ingredients:

3 cans Double "Q" Wild Alaska Pink Salmon
3 eggs
3 cups of saltine crackers
1 whole onion
6 tablespoons of flour
3 tablespoons of corn meal
½ cup of extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper (to taste)

Directions:

Step 1 — Dice the onion.
Step 2 — Crumble the crackers.
Step 3 — Drain the salmon and take out the bones.
Step 4 — Mix all ingredients (except the olive oil) together in a bowl.
Step 5 — Pat out the mixture into little palm sized patties (make sure it holds together).
Step 6 — Heat the frying pan with olive oil until it is sizzling.
Step 7 — Cook for 5 minutes on either side or until the crust is slightly browned.
Step 8 — Set the patties on a paper towel to drain the oil out a bit.

There are more recipes where that came from— visit the recipe section of *Shelbyville Multimedia* where you'll find many more options to choose from: www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/recipes. You can also learn more about how to host a Welcoming Gathering: www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org/get-involved/welcoming-gatherings. And don't forget to check out our "Hawo's Dinner Party" Event Planning Toolkit and Facilitation Guide to make sure you've thought of everything.

Table-top Trivia

Are you looking for an activity to spice up your dinner-party gathering? If so, consider using the following frequently asked questions (and answers) in a game of trivia, with dessert as the prize! Or if that doesn't seem like the appropriate tone for your gathering, simply refer to this section to get your facts straight. Either way, your guests may have a lot of questions after the screening of "Hawo's Dinner Party," so the following FAQs are organized by theme to help you manage them.

Frequently Asked Questions

REFUGEES

Question: What is a refugee?

Answer: According to the Department of Justice, refugee and asylum status may be granted to people who have been persecuted or fear they may be persecuted on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

For more information about refugee status and asylum, visit the website for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS): www.uscis.gov

Question: Why does the United States take refugees?

Answer: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 14, recognizes "the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." According to the U.S. Department of State, while no country is legally obliged to resettle refugees from a third country, the United States does so to uphold the rights of refugees and also "uses resettlement strategically to advance its foreign policy interests."

To learn more about this, visit: www.state.gov/documents/organization/88040.pdf

Question: What happens when a refugee flees their country?

Answer: Refugees flee their homes and communities in order to escape war and persecution often with very little, leaving behind important paperwork like diplomas and other professional documents. Once they arrive at the country of asylum, they are usually placed in a camp where they wait and apply for resettlement in a third country through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Only about one percent of all refugees' applications for resettlement are accepted; the large majority remain in camps.

For more information about the refugee resettlement process, visit the website for the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants at: www.refugees.org/our-work/refugee-resettlement

Question: How do refugees get to the United States?

Answer: The U.S. Department of State, which oversees the process, sends a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) officer to the country of asylum to interview eligible refugees. If the refugee passes the interview process, which includes a health screening and security clearance, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) arranges air travel for most U.S.-bound refugees and arranges a travel loan, which must be repaid by the refugee. The majority of refugees are offered cultural orientation prior to coming to the United States.

For more information about refugee resettlement processing, please visit: www.state.gov/m/a/dir/regs/fam/09fam/c22773.htm

Question: What happens to refugee families when they get to the United States?

Answer: Detailed information on all refugees approved for resettlement in the United States is sent to the Refugee Data Center (RDC) in New York. RDC matches refugees with one of 11 voluntary agencies that provide reception and placement services for refugees coming to the United States. The resettlement organization must supply a written guarantee that various basic services will be provided to the refugees in their initial reception. The resettlement organization determines where in the United States the refugee will go based on the availability of housing, employment, services and readiness of host community.

Staff from the resettlement agency meet newly-arriving refugees at the airport and welcome them to their new home. The resettlement agency helps refugees apply for Social Security numbers, register their children in school, undergo thorough medical examinations and begin English classes and cultural orientation. The resettlement agency provides refugees with the tools they need to become self-sufficient.

For more information about the refugee resettlement process, visit the website for the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants at: www.refugees.org/our-work/refugee-resettlement

Question: Are refugees allowed to work in the U.S.?

Answer: According to the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, refugees and asylees are authorized to work indefinitely. The U.S. government expects a working-age refugee to find a job within six months of arrival. Resettlement organizations often have employment specialists available to help refugees with their job search.

For more information about the employment rights and responsibilities of refugees and immigrants, visit the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) site: www.justice.gov/crt/about/osc or call OSC at 1-800-255-8155

Hawo's Journey

AT A GLANCE

Hawo flees Somalia and leaves everything behind

She, her husband and her sons arrive in Kenya where she remains in a refugee camp for 12 years

Hawo and her family are interviewed by a USCIS officer and undergo a health and security screening

Hawo and family are approved for refugee resettlement to the U.S. and undergo cultural orientation

Question: Do refugees pay taxes?

Answer: Soon upon arriving, refugee resettlement organizations will help refugees file the paperwork to receive a Social Security number. They are thus subject to the same employment, property, sales and other taxes as any U.S. citizen. Refugees, however, cannot vote.

For more information about this and other facts about refugee employment, visit: www.refugees.org/resources/for-employers

Question: Are refugees U.S. citizens?

Answer: Refugees are not immediately given U.S. citizenship. Refugees can apply for Permanent Resident Alien (PRA) status (commonly known as a "green card") after they have been in the United States for one year. After residing in the U.S. for five years, refugees can then apply for U.S. citizenship.

For more information about refugee status and asylum, visit the website for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS): www.uscis.gov

Hawo and family arrive at a Refugee Processing Center (RPC) in New York where they are matched with a refugee resettlement organization

Hawo and family arrive in Chicago, where they are met by a refugee resettlement organization assigned to help them navigate the first year of their new lives

Hawo and family move to Ohio

Hawo, seeking employment, is forced to separate from her family; she moves to Shelbyville with one of her sons, while her husband and remaining sons move to Minnesota

SOMALIA

Question: What is happening in Somalia?

Answer: Civil war has been devastating Somalia since 1991 when it began, particularly in the South-Central region where the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) has been fighting insurgent groups. In contrast, the North-east (Puntland) and North-west (Somaliland) regions are experiencing relative peace, even though the populace faces periods of ongoing economic and political insecurity.

Question: Why can't Somalis stay in Somalia?

Answer: According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, the conflict in many parts of Somalia is so dangerous and unpredictable that humanitarian agencies have been forced to suspend operations in these heavily populated areas.

In addition, Somalia is currently experiencing its worst drought in nearly half a century, making life even more difficult for the affected populations and creating tens of thousands of environmental refugees who seek relief in neighboring countries.

Question: How many Somali refugees are there?

Answer: According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, in 2011 alone, fighting has displaced more than 200,000 people within Somalia, while another 70,000 have fled to neighboring countries. There are more than 614,000 officially registered Somali refugees worldwide. These numbers, however, are official. Reports from varying sources are significantly higher.

For more information, visit the UNHCR's Somalia page:
www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483ad6.html

ISLAM

Question: What do Muslim's believe?

Answer: The five central tenets of Islam are: declaring faith, giving to charity, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca and prayer. Muslims are called to help immigrants, feed the hungry, spread peace and do devotional practice.

Question: What is the Qur'an?

Answer: Islam's central holy text is called the Qur'an (or "Recitations" in Arabic). It comprises the collected revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad from God through the Angel Gabriel between 610 CE and Muhammad's death in 632 CE. It contains stories of prophets including Joseph, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

Question: Why do Muslim women wear a hijab?

Answer: For many Muslim women, the wearing of hijab (hair covering) is about service to God, not about subservience to men. Some Muslim women have explained that covering one's body is freeing because it prevents others from making them into sexual objects.

Answers in this section are adapted from The Islam Project resources and from Intersection International's Change the Story project. For more Islam-related information and frequently used terms, please visit the following resource pages:
www.islamproject.org/community/community.htm#tools
www.changethestory.net/?q=content/what-islam

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Discussion Guide

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“Hawo’s Dinner Party: The New Face of Southern Hospitality” is part of Shelbyville Multimedia a project of Active Voice, in association with BeCause Foundation. Adapted from the documentary *Welcome to Shelbyville* directed and produced by Kim A. Snyder, it is designed to support dialogue, bridge-building and cultural exchange in communities that receive immigrants and refugees from Muslim-majority countries. It was developed with generous support from Open Society Foundations and Andrus Family Fund.

For more Shelbyville Multimedia resources, including webisodes and modules, visit www.ShelbyvilleMultimedia.org.

About *Welcome to Shelbyville*

Change has come to rural Tennessee. Set against the backdrop of a shaky economy, *Welcome to Shelbyville* takes an intimate look at a southern town as its residents — whites and African Americans, Latinos and Somali — grapple with their beliefs, their histories and their evolving ways of life. *Welcome to Shelbyville* is directed and produced by Kim A. Snyder and executive produced by BeCause Foundation, in association with Active Voice. www.welcometoshelbyvillefilm.com

ACTIVE voice®

Active Voice uses film, television and multimedia to spark social change from grassroots to grass tops. Our team of strategic communications specialists works with mediamakers, funders, advocates and thought leaders to put a human face on the issues of our times. We frame and beta-test key messages, develop national and local partnerships, plan and execute high profile, outcome-oriented events, repurpose digital content for web and viral distribution, produce ancillary and educational resources and consult with industry and sector leaders. www.activevoice.net

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