

Is this email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser.



# Progress 2025 Review

As we reflect on 2025, we're incredibly proud of what Progress Grove City has accomplished together. This year, our community showed up again and again—at school board and city council meetings, rallies, forums, and a wide variety of educational seminars and training events—to promote truth, inclusivity, and civic engagement. Our members participated in countless activities supporting local candidates, from canvassing and fundraising to organizing events and spreading the word, ensuring that more voices were heard and represented. We partnered with an incredible network of local organizations and organizers, created spaces for thoughtful discussion and learning, and stayed connected through social gatherings, creative projects, and shared moments of joy.

One of the most meaningful outcomes of this year has been what grew from the spaces we facilitated. Progress Grove City helped spark and support the formation of new, community-led efforts, including a group for local parents of children with special needs, a pantry and Neighbors Helping Neighbors program, and a rapid response group focused on mutual aid and community safety. These initiatives reflect the heart of this work: trusting community members, sharing resources, and making room for others to lead. None of this would have been possible without our members—those who showed up publicly, worked behind the scenes, welcomed newcomers, shared knowledge, and stayed engaged even when it was difficult.

As we look ahead to 2026, we're excited to build on this momentum. We plan to deepen partnerships, expand educational opportunities, support emerging organizers, and continue showing up for one another with care and courage. There is still so much to do, but we're confident in what we can accomplish together. Thank you to every member, partner, and neighbor who made this year what it was—we can't wait to see where we go next.

**PROGRESS GROVE CITY 2025**

Our mission is to inspire our community toward positive change.

**CORE VALUES**

- PROMOTING TRUTH**  
Evidence-based information & debunking misinformation.
- INCLUSIVITY**  
Everyone is welcome - harmful conduct is not.
- EQUALITY**  
Equal rights and opportunities for all.
- COLLABORATION**  
Partnering with community organizations & leaders.
- EDUCATION**  
Promoting lifelong learning & access to information.
- ADVOCACY**  
Building a thriving, equitable community.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- 19 School Board Meetings
- 24 City Council Meetings
- Virtual Meet the Candidates
- Progress Survey
- Local Representative Meets
- Hours of Action
- Five Minute Activism
- Immigration Law Review
- Persuasive Debate for Everyone
- Postcards

**YARD SIGNS** **stickers** **book** **REVIEWS**

**EVENTS & MEETINGS**

**136+** RALLIES/ PROTESTS      **100+** SOCIAL/ SEASONAL

- ✓ Hands Off!
- ✓ No Kings
- ✓ No Kings 2.0
- ✓ Hands Along High Street
- ✓ Average 5+ weekly rallies shared since April
- ✓ Sunday Funday
- ✓ Happy Hours
- ✓ Spring into Action
- ✓ End of Summer Celebration
- ✓ Soup-a-Palooza
- ✓ Science Experiments!
- ✓ Thanksgiving Meet & Greet
- ✓ White Elephant Party
- ✓ Winter Hikes

**ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED / FEATURED**

- Communities in Schools
- Creeks and Byways
- Fairy Godmothers
- Grove City 2050
- Head Start (Christmas, Eid, Supply Drive)
- Heer to Serve
- Home for Families
- Indivisible Central Ohio
- Mid Ohio Food Collective
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- New Directions Career Center
- Pridefest
- Rank the Vote Ohio
- Stonewall Democrats of Central Ohio
- SWCS PTA Clothing Room
- ZERO Prostate Cancer Run/Walk

**LOCATIONS VISITED**

Scioto Grove Metro Park	Columbus Museum of Art	Scioto Audobon Metro Park
Columbus Main Library	Blacklick Woods Metro Park	Battelle Darby Metro Park
Franklin Park Conservatory		Columbus Museum of Art

[Visit Our Website](#)

[Become a Member](#)

[Donate to the Cause](#)

**Community Safety And Rights**

For better or for worse, understanding our rights has been a recurring theme for us lately. In February 2025, we highlighted Immigration Rights and in April 2025, we focused on Protester's Rights - find those archived newsletters [here](#).

Many community members are deeply concerned that ICE is not operating in ways that reflect due process, transparency, or basic human dignity. Raids, detentions, and intimidation tactics - often carried out without clear communication or accountability - create fear not just for immigrants, but for entire communities. While federal agencies may claim authority, the lack of clear information and the use of coercive practices make it essential for communities to educate themselves and respond collectively and mindfully.

Our commitment is to learn, prepare, and protect one another. This includes distributing whistle kits as an alert measure, learning and training in the proper ways to document agents and encounters when it is safe to do so, and ensuring that people understand their rights. In Ohio, it is legal to record law enforcement and federal agents performing their duties in public spaces, as long as you do not interfere with their actions. Knowing how to calmly observe, document information, vehicle markings, and locations - and how to disengage safely - is a critical part of community defense. We also support signing up for local established vetted networks of responders, legal observers, mutual aid providers, and rapid response teams, so accurate information and support can move efficiently and effectively when and where it's needed most.

Finally, preparedness includes practical steps for emergencies. Green card holders, asylum seekers, and work visa holders should know and securely store (writing it on your body, for instance) their A-number (Alien Registration Number), and share it with a trusted person or network. This number is essential for locating someone if they are detained and for connecting them with legal support as quickly as possible. Taking these steps does not mean expecting the worst- it means refusing to leave our neighbors isolated. We believe safety comes from shared knowledge, mutual aid, and a commitment to protecting one another's rights and dignity, especially when systems fail to do so.

*Please stay tuned for upcoming training and team opportunities.*

## Community Action Checklist

Staying Informed, Prepared, and Connected

 <b>Learn &amp; Prepare</b> <p>Know your rights &amp; stay informed.</p>	 <b>Document Safely (Ohio)</b> <p>Record ICE activity from a safe distance.</p>
 <b>Use Whistle Kits</b> <p>Alert neighbors to ICE raids.</p>	 <b>Join Local Networks</b> <p>Connect with rapid-response teams.</p>
 <b>Support Immigrants</b> <p>Help with childcare, rides &amp; resources.</p>	 <b>Emergency Readiness</b> <p>Know and share your A-Number.</p>

**Stay Safe. Stay Informed. Stand Together.**

## Remembering Martin Luther King Jr



Martin Luther King Jr. Day is more than a remembrance of a historic leader—it is a call to engage with the unfinished work he left behind. Dr. King's legacy is often softened into a handful of familiar quotes, but his actual work was bold, disruptive, and deeply challenging to systems of power. He spoke not only about racial justice, but about economic inequality, labor rights, militarism, and the moral obligation to resist unjust laws. King understood that civil rights could not be separated from workers' rights, dignity on the job, or the ability for people to live safely and securely in their own communities.

Dr. King stood firmly with labor unions, recognizing that collective bargaining and worker protections were essential tools in the fight against poverty and exploitation. His support of the Memphis sanitation workers—where he was assassinated while advocating for fair wages and safe working conditions—underscored his belief that justice must be material, not symbolic. Today, as workers continue organizing for fair pay, healthcare, and humane working conditions, King's insistence that "all labor has dignity" remains profoundly relevant.

King also spoke plainly about state violence and police misconduct, warning that injustice carried out by authorities erodes democracy itself. His critiques of policing, mass incarceration, and government overreach echo loudly in modern movements for civil rights and accountability. MLK Day challenges us not just to honor his words, but to act on them—to stand against racism, economic exploitation, abuse of power, and the systems that perpetuate harm. As King reminded us, progress is not inevitable; it requires courage, collective action, and a willingness to confront injustice wherever it exists.



# One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This

**Book Written By:** Omar El Akkad

**Review By:** Mandy Gooding

In *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This*, Omar El Akkad delivers a powerful blend of memoir, political meditation, and moral critique. Drawing on his own life as an immigrant and journalist, El Akkad confronts what he sees as the stark difference between the lofty ideals of Western liberalism and the harsh reality of how power is often exercised and justified. At the heart of the book is the eponymous refrain—a warning that in the future, many will claim they always opposed injustice once it is no longer risky or inconvenient to say so—which reverberates throughout his reflections on media, politics, and collective silence in the face of human suffering.

What makes El Akkad's work especially compelling is how it speaks to the present moment in the United States. As communities wrestle with questions of who is afforded dignity, protection, and belonging, his critique of collective indifference feels deeply relevant. Just as the book challenges readers to reckon with how easily moral rhetoric can mask real power imbalances abroad, many in our own country are grappling with federal policies that subject immigrants to fear and uncertainty. In recent months, enforcement actions by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have escalated in ways that leave families and entire neighborhoods on edge, with arrests occurring at homes, workplaces, and even legal appointments. These aggressive tactics remind us that when a nation's actions diverge from its stated values, the impact is felt most among the vulnerable.

El Akkad's prose is at once intimate and unflinching, inviting readers to question not just distant conflicts but also the systems and policies shaping life here at home. Whether one agrees with every argument he makes, there is no denying that this book provokes deep reflection about who we choose to protect and who we choose to overlook. For community members who care about justice, empathy, and the dignity of all people, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* is an important and timely read—one that challenges us to act now rather than defer moral judgment to the safety of hindsight.



## Five Minute Activism



Don't have an hour to volunteer? No problem. Here is a sample letter you can use to contact your local leaders and elected officials at all levels to ask for accountability and transparency regarding ICE actions in our area. You can either tweak it to fit what you're curious about, or simply fill in the blanks.

Dear [Title and Name],

I am a constituent writing to request clear and timely information regarding the presence and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in our community. Many residents are experiencing fear and uncertainty, and there has been little publicly available information to help people understand what is occurring or how to keep themselves and their families safe.

Specifically, I am requesting the following information, to the extent it is available to your office:

- How many individuals have been detained or arrested by ICE in our area in the past [30/60/90] days?
- Of those individuals, how many were charged with or convicted of violent crimes, non-violent crimes, or had no criminal charges at all?
- Are local law enforcement agencies or city/county resources being asked to cooperate with ICE, either formally or informally? If so, in what ways?
- Has your office been contacted by ICE or federal authorities requesting assistance, information, or coordination? If yes, what has your response been?
- What rights residents have when interacting with ICE or law enforcement
- What steps local officials are taking to protect due process and prevent unconstitutional practices
- What actions community members can take to stay informed, advocate for themselves and others, and raise concerns safely

Transparency is essential to maintaining public trust. Regardless of one's views on immigration policy, most people agree that families should not live in fear and that government actions should align with constitutional protections and human rights. I urge you to share this information publicly and to clearly state your position on how our community will be treated and protected.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[City or Zip Code]

[Optional: Phone or Email]

## Membership Reminders

# About Our Groups, Membership, and How to Join the More Secure Space

Hey folks — it's about that time again: **membership renewals** (and sign-ups if you're new!). At the same time, we've been hearing a lot of requests for a **more vetted, secure space** for deeper discussion, organizing, and community building. That feedback makes sense — and the good news is, **we've got one for you**. We've actually had it since the group was formed, but we haven't pushed it because most of our work was outreach.

Now with the public group growing so much, we want to take a moment to clearly explain how our community spaces work, why we intentionally maintain more than one space, and how you can plug-in in the way that best fits you.

## Grove City Area Progress — Public Group

This space is open to anyone who engages in good faith and remains aligned with our core values. Its purpose is to:

- Share timely information and resources
- Create visibility around local issues and events
- Welcome new people into the community
- Provide an accessible entry point for learning and engagement
- Support public-facing advocacy and outreach

The public group plays an essential role in helping Progress Grove City:

- Reach new community members
- Build awareness and momentum
- Share updates quickly and broadly
- Create transparency around our work

Because it's a public and visible space, it naturally includes a wide range of perspectives — and sometimes higher traffic, disagreement, or bad-faith behavior. Moderation here focuses on **baseline safety, accuracy, and respect**, but this group will always function as a public square.

## Private Member Group

We also maintain a private member group for people seeking a **more secure space**, with higher expectations around trust, accountability, and confidentiality.

This group is intended for:

- Deeper discussion
- Organizing and coordination
- Community building
- Constructive disagreement rooted in trust

Membership in the private group requires:

1. Completing a membership form (so we know who we're talking to)
2. Agreement to the Private Member Group Code of Conduct
3. Having met at least one group leader in person (vetting)
4. \$25 annual dues — **or a sponsorship if dues are a barrier**

In addition to helping support the group's work, membership also includes:

- A membership sticker
- A personalized membership badge
- Early access to events and merchandise
- Discounts on merchandise when available

## What Do We Do With Membership Dues & Donations?

Membership dues and donations directly support the work of Progress Grove City and help us show up consistently for the community.

Funds are used to cover things like:

- **Community education and training programs**, including guest speakers and workshops (for example: policy briefings, civic education, safety trainings like *Stop the Bleed*, and similar opportunities)
- **Event and booth fees** for voter registration, community engagement, and outreach events
- **Event space rentals** for larger gatherings, forums, and community meetings
- **Promotional and organizing materials**, such as stickers, yard signs, and other outreach materials
- **Merchandise production**, allowing us to offer items to members at reduced cost when possible
- **Subscriptions and tools** that support our organizing and communications work, including platforms for newsletters, data, voter outreach, and coordination

This list reflects common and expected uses of membership funds, but is **not exhaustive**.

Dues and donations may also be used for other reasonable expenses that support our mission, values, and community work as needs evolve.

Put simply: membership support helps us **educate, organize, and advocate** more effectively — and reduces our reliance on one-off fundraising or last-minute scrambling.

### About Sponsorships

We never want money to be the reason someone who shares our values can't participate.

If dues are a barrier right now, **sponsorships are available** — no explanation required.

Sponsorships are supported by other members who choose to help cover annual dues.

If you're interested in membership or requesting a sponsorship, you can apply [here](#).

We truly appreciate everyone who shows up in good faith, wherever you participate. These spaces exist for **different purposes**, and being clear about how they work helps protect all of them — and the people who make them meaningful.

---

## Monthly Meeting Recap - December

Our annual White Elephant party was a blast yet again. We had a great time as a group sharing laughs, stories, and delicious food and drinks. The gifts ranged from truly tantalizing homemade goodies to hilarious items, and many friendly fights were had as items were stolen and stolen again. Especially as things feel more and more hectic and uncertain, we feel the importance of time with friends and chosen family.





Next Up...



# JAN 19, 2020

## REGISTER ON WEBSITE FOR LOCATION

Register [here](#) for the location, stay tuned for more information, and as always, bring a friend!

### Join Our Partners In Action

If you're eager to make a significant impact in your community, consider taking action now. It's time to address the issues that matter to you and express your concerns about leadership. Our friends with Indivisible Central Ohio are planning in person visit's to Senator Moreno's office. Please consider joining them to share your thoughts and help drive meaningful change! You can find the sign up sheet at [this link](#).

Thanks everyone!!



[ProgressGroveCity.com](#)



If you would like to unsubscribe, please click [here](#).