

My name is Ginbowgish Meshesha (GG). I am an educated and experienced professional from Ethiopia. I arrived in the US about four years ago. I have a Master's degree in gender and development and BA degree in international relations. But despite my best efforts and my extensive experience, I have not been able to find a job. I'm here to advocate for the development of programs targeting educated, highly experienced women who need help finding ways to make use of their expertise in leading change, leading people and building coalitions.

Advocacy Agenda

The Challenge of Women scholars coming from different cultures to the USA and facing employment.

My story is not unique. Many educated, highly experienced and skilled women share similar experiences, facing economic and social challenges. Addressing this discrepancy within the County's highly experienced population could help improve economic status, health, and health care disparities they face, benefit the county's economy and social equity and entrepreneur movement.

I am sharing my story with you today to advocate for those unemployed women, particularly educated and highly experienced women coming from other countries living in Montgomery County and working in survival-level jobs and living in poverty and low income. Given the fact that the majority of the Montgomery County population is composed of people of color, including a large number of foreign-born constituents, one may conclude that educated and highly experienced professional women, particularly those of color, are highly represented in the unemployed and underemployed population of Montgomery County.

No data on unemployed or underemployed educated and highly experienced skilled females in the County is available. I conducted informal interviews with unemployed or under employed highly educated and skilled women about their experience before and after coming to the US. I discovered that the hiring officials do not recognize their talents and do not recruit them.

To provide a little more general context

. 51.34 percent of Montgomery population are women

- The County's foreign-born population is 34.1 percent
- 25% of immigrants with foreign degrees are underemployed or unemployed,
- However, one in three noncitizen workers was low-income (below 200% of the federal poverty standard

Failure to recognize the valuable skills of those women contribute to loss in Montgomery County in terms of revenue, untapped source of highly skilled labor force potential job creators.

Thank you for allowing me to speak for this issue.