



Winter 2020 Issues

A Newsletter of the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center

Standing Against War

By Jessie Frank - Program Manager

I sometimes chuckle when I explain my work managing IJPC's Peace and Nonviolence programming to a new face. Creating a peaceful society, ending war, uprooting violence - it's an ambitious mission, certainly, and likely not the most common way people spend their 9-5. But ambition is what we need in these times, and just when it seems like maybe we're too small to carry such a bold vision to completion, the community shows up and reminds me that we not only can press forward, but that we must.

Just a few days after Iranian Gen. Soleimani's assassination, IJPC's peace committee meeting swelled to include over 30 individuals who wanted to get to work opposing yet another unnecessary war in the Middle East. Representatives from various

community groups, including Democratic Socialists of America, Socialist Alternative, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Greater Cincinnati Native American Coalition, and religious communities, in addition to concerned individuals, came together that evening to discuss various action strategies aimed at de-escalating the conflict. The energy from that meeting resulted in organizing a protest and march on January 25 as a way to participate in the global day of protest against a U.S. war with Iran.

On that cold, flurrying afternoon, dozens of concerned Cincinnatians answered the call to vocalize opposition to going to war with Iran. It felt reassuring that, despite tensions having relaxed somewhat between the two countries, people still saw the need for action, the need to say "no" to war even when we weren't right on the brink. I was also incredibly proud of the collaboration between the organizations who all came together to unite against war, despite our differing opinions and approaches elsewhere. Cohesion and collaboration is crucial to any movement, and I am hopeful that we can sustain an anti-war movement beyond moments of immediate crisis with the help of concerned people and community groups dedicated to ending US imperialism and violence.



Sr. Alice Gerdeman, CDP

Trafficking: Awareness Through Education

By Chloe Corkery - Program Assistant

As I've recently begun learning about the realities of [human trafficking](#), I'm often struck by the common misconceptions and how they work in the traffickers' favor. It has become clear to me that education about human trafficking is crucial to ending it. That is why I felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to attend End Slavery Cincinnati's Annual Human Trafficking Conference.

The first session I attended was about recognizing human trafficking in a healthcare setting and creating a protocol to respond. The speaker, Patrice Fanning, informed us that 87.8% of trafficking survivors reported accessing healthcare services. However, many medical professionals do not have the knowledge or protocols in place to deal with this situation in a safe way. This lack of education allows the controller to bring the victim into public spaces unnoticed time and time again. If the warning signs and safe ways to help were common knowledge, it would be much harder for controllers to continue trafficking individuals.



Samantha Searls & Chloe Corkery

The importance of education was also a key theme of the Words Matter session, hosted by Em Joy, Ronda Deel, and IJPC's very own Samantha Searls. This session called attention to the many harmful stereotypes about human trafficking legitimized by the language and pictures used in mainstream media. Victims can be overlooked and have trouble self-identifying because they do not fit the common narrative of being kidnapped and held against their will. This miseducation works in favor of the trafficker by allowing them to continue coercing vulnerable people into trafficking.

Attending End Slavery Cincinnati's Human Trafficking Conference was an important reminder of how essential education is when it comes to ending human trafficking. I believe we all took away a deeper understanding of the issue and a motivation to educate more people about human trafficking.

A Letter from Allison Reynolds-Berry

As we begin a new decade, IJPC celebrates 35 years of work for justice. This fall, IJPC welcomed four new board leaders and as part of the board's December retreat, we asked former IJPC staff members Sr. Alice Gerdeman, CDP, Kristen Barker, and Eunice Timoney-Ravenna to participate in a panel and share highlights from their time with the organization. It was a beautiful opportunity to reflect together and acknowledge our contributions to the work for social justice over many decades. IJPC has done incredible work for good in big and small ways.

Just this past year [The National Association of Social Workers Ohio Chapter](#) chose IJPC as the Agency of the Year for Region 6. We will also be honored as the 2019 Agency of the Year for the entire state of Ohio at their [March gala!](#)



Left to Right: Sr. Alice Gerdeman, CDP, Allison Reynolds-Berry, Kristen Barker, & Eunice Timoney-Ravenna at the IJPC staff and board retreat.

We are receiving this award because of you. You who share a story of injustices you've experienced or witnessed. You who hear stories of vulnerable people's rights being violated and turns to IJPC to take action. You who look forward to receiving our quarterly newsletter and reads our educational emails. We feel incredibly honored, proud, and humbled to receive this award next month, standing alongside each of you and on the shoulders of so many inspirational folks who came before us.

Want to help us celebrate this achievement and support the work of IJPC? Join us at the [Love of Justice fundraiser](#) on March 21st, featuring leaders in the immigration movement. We know that some of the most significant shifts towards justice occur when hearts and minds are changed after hearing a new perspective. Help us continue to share these perspectives by attending this event and hearing a perspective that may be new to you.

Upcoming Events

For more information on these dates, visit IJPCcincinnati.org/events

March 3, 6:30-7:30PM

[Immigration Learning Community](#)

IJPC

March 9 & April 13, 9:30-10:30AM

[Human Trafficking Public Education and Awareness Committee Meeting](#)

Health Collaborative (3/9); IJPC (4/13)

March 10 & April 14, 7:00-8:00PM

[Anti-Death Penalty Committee](#)

IJPC

March 21, 8:00-10:00AM

[Love of Justice Fundraiser](#)

Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church

March 25, 6:30-8:30PM

[Immigrant Dignity Coalition](#)

Clifton Mosque

March 28, 9:30-11:30AM &

April 5, 2:00-4:00PM

[Race and Racism in Cincinnati Bus Tour](#)

Meet at Peaslee Neighborhood Center

April 10, 12:00-2:00PM

[Way of the Cross for Justice](#)

Fountain Square

May 2 & 3

[Flying Pig Marathon](#)

Downtown Cincinnati

Founding Sponsors:

Congregation of St. Joseph
Sisters of Charity
Sisters of Mercy
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg

Sponsors:

Anawim Community
Bellarmine Chapel
Cincinnati Friends Meeting
Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship
Comboni Missionaries
Congregation of Divine Providence
Dominican Sisters of Hope
Franciscan Sisters of the Poor
Franciscans, St. John the Baptist Province
Glenn Home Missioners
Institute of Secular Missionaries
Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church
Sisters of Notre Dame of Covington
New Jerusalem Community
St John Unitarian Universalist Church
Ursulines of Brown County
Ursulines of Cincinnati

Staff:

Jessie Frank
Program Manager

Hayley Huge
Operations Manager

Sandra Ramirez
Immigration Program Organizer

Allison Reynolds-Berry, MSW
Executive Director

Samantha Searls, MSW
Program Manager

Board of Directors:

Kay Brogle, *Vice Chair*
Nick Caprino, *Chair*
Mark (Zeek) Childers, *Treasurer*
Esther Claros Berlioz
Linda Davis, *Secretary*
Lucienne Driehaus
Michael Howard II
Shannon Hughes
Jeff Hutchinson-Smyth
Brad King
Robert Sanker

Email: info@IJPCcincinnati.org

Web: IJPCcincinnati.org

Phone: 513.579.8547



Become an [IJPC Peace Partner](#) and help us continue our important work by committing to a monthly gift. Visit IJPCincinnati.org/give to learn more.

A Year of Action for Young Immigration Activists

By Olivia Miller, YES Advisory Board Leader

We asked a YES leader to share her thoughts on why she got involved and advocates for immigrants.

Immigration is important to me because it's a matter of basic human rights. Ever since I became aware of how the government controls the immigration process, I've been extremely interested in getting involved and using my voice to help those whose voices are being silenced.

The treatment that immigrants get in our country, whether or not they are documented, is unbelievable. They are constantly stereotyped and blamed for ruining the economy and bringing danger to our communities when in actuality areas with higher immigrant populations show higher economic growth and lower offense rates.

I first came to a [YES](#) meeting in October of 2018 when YES was putting on a special Halloween meeting. I was invited by my good friends at the time Josh and Ana María because they knew that I had an interest in learning about immigration reform. I was nervous about coming to the meeting as a new member but as soon as I stepped foot inside of the IJPC building, those nerves immediately went away.

I didn't quite know what to expect so I was really relieved to see that



Olivia Miller

everyone running the meeting was close to my age. It takes a lot of pressure off of the situation when you're surrounded by peers who share your interests. We talked about real issues in a positive way, which inspired me to come back and keep learning ways to educate people and use my voice for good.

It's easy to let hard topics like immigration reform get you down, but the realization that we all have a voice and that we can all contribute to helping people get involved is really inspiring.

As we continue into 2020, our community and our country face a lot of challenges. I think it's important that we look at 2020 as a year of hope. I would like to see YES take initiative in reaching out to young people, inspiring them to use their voices for change. One way we can help the youth do this is by providing them with the skills and knowledge they need to talk about these issues. I want to see young people educated on their rights. It's important that each one knows their worth in society and that they do have the power to make a change.

Just Mercy

By Jessie Frank - Program Manager

Last month I eagerly plopped into my seat ready to watch *Just Mercy* armed with a single tissue, not suspecting that I should have brought an entire box. Weeks earlier, I had read in the New York Times's review of the film that, "Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy* is a painful, beautiful, revelatory book, the kind of reading experience that can permanently alter your understanding of the world." After some thought, IJPC decided to host a screening of the movie because I had a feeling that being in a room full of people who were open to a new understanding of the world might be important...and I was right.

I can't recall the last time a film had such a visceral impact on me. Despite the fact that I poured over the book months before viewing

the film, and that I regularly confront the injustices of capital punishment through my job, I wasn't prepared for the deep sadness and anger I would feel when watching the film. I didn't expect that precisely because of my connection to this issue, I would feel everything so deeply when I saw it visually represented on the screen. It was as if I were grieving not only the injustices displayed in the film, but the entire system we have created, a system that values whiteness, wealth, and vengeance over mercy and humanity. It was as if I felt all at once the weight of what we are working to abolish.

Whether the folks who came to IJPC's viewing were new to the anti-death penalty movement or had dedicated years to it, I was grateful to be in a room of people united by justice after taking in the harsh injustices of capital punishment displayed on the screen.

After seeing the film with IJPC, guest Tay Tucker said, "I don't know how someone can ethically support the death penalty after learning about these stories." I don't know how people could either, but I do know that for whatever reason, some people will. But what I also know is that the conversation around abolition is heating up, and if *Just Mercy* can challenge people's understanding of capital punishment-- even just a little bit-- then it is a massive success.

IJPC is honored to be named Agency of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers, Ohio Chapter



IJPC INTERCOMMUNITY
JUSTICE AND
PEACE CENTER

215 E 14th Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
513.579.8547

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
Cincinnati, OH
#4959



Help us to reduce our paper consumption.

Contact: info@IJPCcincinnati.org to join our e-mail list to receive this newsletter online instead.

Join Team IJPC
for the

Flying Pig

**Walk or Run for
Peace and Justice**

5k | 10k | Relay
Half Marathon | Marathon



May 2 & 3, 2020

Email

Hayley@IJPCcincinnati.org
to join or sponsor our team



Register

Raise

Run

Give:



Visit IJPCcincinnati.org/Flying-Pig-2020 to support our Team.