Poverty Awareness Week Collaborative

This year’s annual Poverty Awareness Week will be November 6th-11th. The mission of this week is to raise awareness and promote advocacy efforts in response to the root causes and effects of local and global poverty. Poverty Awareness Week is a student initiated organization run out of the Faith-Justice Institute. Each year a group of committed Saint Joseph’s University students, under the supervision of Jill Amitrani-Welsh begin meeting in early September to plan the program. The 2011 Poverty Awareness Week will be presented in partnership with the Old Saint Joseph’s Church Social Justice Committee. Poverty Awareness Week committee members Joanna Barlow (Junior) and Maria Selde (Senior) met with the Old Saint Joseph’s Social Justice Committee to explore ways in which the two respective Jesuit Institutions could collaborate in the mission. The Old Saint Joseph’s Parish Community will be hosting the Monday evening “Reflection on Homelessness & The Ignatian Response” as well as supporting the food drive and the “Day of Fasting.” John Trombore, Old Saint Joseph’s Parishioner, will be one of the presenters for the “Children of Kenya” event on Thursday evening. If you have any questions about the Poverty Awareness Week program, or would like more information, please contact Jill at jamitran@sju.edu.

Jill Amitrani-Welsh, MSW

Events

Poverty Awareness Week 2011
November 6th-11th
The Poverty Awareness Week Committee (of the Faith-Justice Institute at Saint Joseph’s University) in partnership with Old Saint Joseph’s Church Social Justice Committee and Parish present this year’s program.

Week-Long: Collection of Can Goods For Local Community
A collection box will be located on the 1st Floor Wolfington Center near the main stairwell. All contributions will be donated to Philabundance. Priority Items Needed: Mac&Cheese, Creamy PB, Jelly, Breakfast & Hot Cereal, Canned: Tuna, Pasta, Beef Stew, Chili, Corn, Green Beans, Fruit

Monday, 7th
Reflection on Homelessness & Our Ignatian Response
Come learn about the root causes and impact of poverty from people who have personally experienced homelessness. We will also hear about current outreach efforts by the Old Saint Joseph’s Parish Community 7pm at Old St. Joseph’s Church.

Tuesday, 8th
Fair Trade Market
Learn about the Fair Trade and Living Wage Campaign while shopping for products from vendors who promote a fair wage. Saint Joseph’s University Students For Workers’ Rights are co-sponsoring this event. 11am-1pm, Downstairs foyer in Campion Hall

Wednesday, 9th
The Faith-Justice Institute Presents The Sister Francis Joseph RA Outreach Lecture Series Event: Cultivating Generative Genius: Developing Effective Social Entrepreneurs. Rich Massaro, from Ignatian Volunteer Corps and New Jerusalem, a residential addictions recovery community will speak on successful rural development initiatives in Africa, urban development and social service efforts in the Philadelphia area, microfinance programs in Asia and other enduring programs show remarkable similarities. 7 pm in Campion Forum Hall

Thursday, 10th
DONATE!
The St. Vincent de Paul Society truck will be parked at Loyola Center (Jesuit Residence) at Saint Joseph’s University from 9am-2pm accepting clothes, shoes, bedding, towels in clean, good condition and small working appliances in plastic bags.

Friday, 11th
Fast in Solidarity
Fast in solidarity with people who suffer from hunger. A simple meal and reflection will be offered at 5:15pm and 6:30pm in the Wolfington 1st floor Conference Room. If you are interested in participating in the fast and simple meal, please email Joanna jb513627@sju.edu. Please contact Joanna if you will be fasting in solidarity, but unable to attend the simple meal.

Children of Kenya
Come hear the stories of life and service with the children of Kenya. John Trombore, Parishioner at Old Saint Joseph’s Church, will speak about his experiences in the Children’s Village in Meru. Michael Mungai, recent SJU Alum, will speak about his experiences in Dagoretti, Kenya. Both speakers will have a visual presentation capturing their story.

7:15-8:45pm in Campion Forum Theater

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Working For Justice Through Summer Research

Ginny Johnson, Director, and Jill Amitrani-Welsh, Assistant Director of Student Development, mentored students Thomas DiNatale and Ashley Wilson, respectively, in their justice-related research through the Summer Scholar program, a program designed to engage current Saint Joseph’s University students in mentored research during the summer months.

As an Elem/Special Education major, with an interest in working with children with special needs, Thomas DiNatale’s research was entitled, “Learning to Cope: Improving Emotional Regulation for Individuals with Autism to Increase Positive Expressive Behavior.” Tom’s research defined behaviors more specifically exhibited by children with autism, and then outlined multiple strategies to assist a child presenting the behavior. Tom hopes his research will help teachers identify behaviors and provide strategies to replace maladaptive behaviors with increased positive behaviors in the classroom. Ashley Wilson is passionate about working for the use of Fair Trade products on the SJU Campus. Ashley took this passion and focused it on a Summer Scholars project entitled, “Fair Trade and The Ignatian Imagination: Striving for Justice through Student Organizing.” Ashley’s research explored the impact of economic injustice in developing countries and the Jesuit, Catholic response. Her work includes a student development manual for promoting a community dynamic, educating students about the Jesuit mission, and engaging in advocacy work.

The Faith-Justice Institute is proud to have worked with such dedicated students in their pursuit for social justice through research and advocacy.

-Jill Amitrani-Welsh, MSW

Lutheran Settlement House

Lutheran Settlement House (LSH) is an faith-based organization located in Northeast Philadelphia that serves the community through social, educational, housing and advocacy programs. Created in 1902, it continues to fulfill its mission by meeting the evolving needs of community members. In the summer of 2011, LSH lost funding to pay teachers in its adult education program, a program that provided much-needed classes in basic literacy, GED tutoring, and job training to the community. Through an existing relationship with the Faith-Justice Institute’s Service-Learning Program at Saint Joseph’s University, LSH teachers benefited from student volunteers working one-on-one with adult learners to support progress in the classroom. Through their existing relationship, staff at LSH and the Faith-Justice Institute worked together to develop a solution to Lutheran Settlement House’s funding problem and to continue offering Service-Learning students opportunities to work with the adult education program. In the fall semester of 2011, Saint Joseph’s University students from Fr. Tom Brennan’s English Service-Learning Course, Text and Context, serve as primary tutors to adult learners to help them achieve GED tutoring, job training, or basic literacy skills. With the continuation of LSH’s adult programs, Service-Learning students are now able to continue learning about real issues of literacy and adult education in the Philadelphia community. The presence of SJU Service-Learning students, Fr. Brennan, and the staff at LSH enables community members to continually receive the educational support they need to achieve personal success.

-Carrie Hutnick, MEd

Lutheran Settlement House is one of the 60 outstanding community agencies the Faith-Justice Institute is happy to be partnering with this fall.
University Explores Topic of Prison Hospice

“A stellar example of ‘Love Your Neighbor’”
“Truly moving”
“The photos portrayed the dignity of the human spirit in less than ideal circumstances”
“The quilts (and the quilting project) were absolutely beautiful!”

From mid September to mid October the Faith-Justice Institute served as the host for a local sharing of the Grace Before Dying exhibition. The photo exhibit is an award-winning documentary chronicling the prisoner-run hospice program at Louisiana’s maximum-security Angola State Penitentiary. The photographer, Lori Waselchuck, collaborated with the Angola Hospice Volunteer Quilters to create a traveling exhibit with her photographs and the quilts.

Visitors to the exhibit were struck by the simple dignity and overall respect visible in the photos. Ms. Waselchuck, sponsored by the Open Society Documentary Photography Project spoke about her work at a reception from 3-5 on Thursday October 20, 2011. Her slide show and words demonstrated the love she felt for the men she had met through the project. She commented that she was not there to judge-as judgment had already been passed- but to consider that no one of us is only the worst thing we have done. Her answers to many questions resonated with students, faculty, and staff in attendance. Many commented on the critical importance of the project to Saint-Joseph University and the larger community.

-Girard College Work Ready Program

An exciting new Intern opportunity this past summer invigorated the Faith-Justice Institute staff as Ashley a student at Girard College high school in Philadelphia came to work with us. Miss Ashley participated in Girard College high school’s Work Ready Program coming three days a week from her home in North Philadelphia to assist in many different summer tasks. Her upbeat can-do-attitude led us to believe that Miss Ashley was the best student-intern ever!! This fall Miss Ashley returned to Girard College high school for her junior year. She hopes to study criminal justice after High School. We wish her the best of luck and hope our paths will cross again.

-Girard College Work Ready Program

Learning Communities

Since 2007, the Service-Learning Program offers faculty development for both experienced and new service-learning faculty. One opportunity offered each semester are learning communities. Learning communities are small groups of four service-learning faculty members who meet twice a semester over a meal (paid for by the Institute) to foster resource-sharing, critical thinking on service-learning pedagogy and collegial relationships. Learning communities are open to all service-learning faculty (whether or not currently teaching) and are scheduled according to the availability of the participating faculty. Learning communities continue to thrive each semester with over 30 faculty members having participated since the Spring of 2007.

-Ann Marie Jursca Keffer, MSW

For more information contact the Faith-Justice Institute staff at 610-660-1338

“Grace Before Dying” exhibit on display in Saint Joseph University Drexel library