

May 2022 Update of SCNY Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation Spirituality of Advocacy in Action

Jennifer Puac, a young adult PJIC Office Volunteer, traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the April Network Lobby Training. She shared a summary of her notes (see below) with the SCNY Immigration Committee. Jenn is committed to accompanying those who are vulnerable and in need as she works for her graduate degree at Columbia University. Her desire to “make the world a better place” is demonstrated in the way she is present to people, builds relationships, and works for structural change – elements of what we might call a “spirituality of advocacy”.

We share Jenn’s notes on NETWORK’s Training to raise awareness of a “spirituality of advocacy”. The Feast of Pentecost reminds us that Jesus promised that the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, is with us always. May we reflect on the meaning of “advocate” and our call to a “spirituality of advocacy”.

You are invited to reflect on the following questions.

If you to share your reflections, email PJIC Office Director at cdeangelo@scny.org

1. What phrases in Jenn’s summary stand out for you?
2. How do you put them into practice? What are the challenges / where are the supports?
3. How do they “fit in” with your understanding of spirituality and faith?

Phrases that stand out for me in Jenn’s summary (see below) are:

1. There is power in unity
2. Power as collective and shared
3. Definition of self-interest
4. Relationship building and sustained relationships
5. Shared values

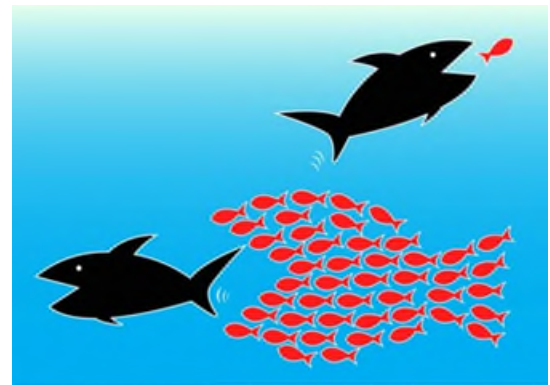
Jenn’s summary of NETWORK Lobby April Training

Organizing: The Basics

- Jobs With Justice defines community organizing as the act of building “principles and ordered **sustained relationships** around **self-interest** and **shared values** in order to **build power**”

- **Organized Power**

- There is power in unity
- Big fish and small fish versus a big fish and a group of small fishes
- **Power** = organized people + organized money
- Power is collective and shared, not held by an individual or exclusive group
- Developing new leaders is a key component in the work of organizing



- **Organizing tactics**

- Requires ongoing building work. Hence, every action requires building components:

- canvassing, hosting town halls, conference calls, demonstrations/sit-ins, organizing a group to write letters, engaging in the media, organizing online (social media)
- **Self-Interest**
 - *self-interest is about recognizing your own needs and desires amidst the needs and desires of the others alongside whom you are working*
 - To put it simply:
 - **Selfishness:** concern with self only
 - **Self-interest:** concern with self and with others
 - **Selflessness:** concern with others only, an unawareness of self
 - Reflection questions help to uncover self-interest
- **One-on-Ones**
 - Individual conversations between two people initiates the real work of organizing; happens where you learn about others' self-interest and where you build relationships
 - One-on-ones are the first step you can take in building or expanding your advocates team
 - One-on-ones must be strategic and there are 4 specific goals:
 - Building relationships
 - Uncovering self-interest
 - Developing clarity
 - Gathering information
- **Effective Meetings**
 - **Requires:** self-preparation, pre-meeting with key leaders, agenda, next steps/commitment, evaluation/debrief
 - **Meeting roles:** facilitator, timekeeper, note taker/minute taker, evaluator
- **Tools for Effective Advocacy**
 - Research! – data is effective and important
 - Sharing stories are powerful
- **How to have an effective Lobby visit**
- **Advocacy on social media, the Press, and Capitol Hill**

Please email Sr. Carol De Angelo, Director, Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation at cdeangelo@scny.org if you have insights or comments on reflection questions or Jenn's summary. Thank you!

June 2, 2022