

Crippled by Fear? Rise and Do Feet Work.

Impact Report


JUSTICE FOR ALL

October 2014

Training thousands to make abortion unthinkable for millions...

In my July letter to supporters (www.jfaweb.org/ED-July-2014), I shared the story of how JFA outreach events changed my life. In this Impact Report, three JFA volunteers share in their own words how outreach, and multiple days of outreach, changed their lives. Specifically, the way JFA manages its seminar and outreach events helped them overcome their fears related to creating conversations about abortion.

It's common for our volunteers to express fear and nervousness about engaging in conversations about abortion. This is our specialty—taking a person from whatever level of experience and skill to successfully engaging in a different kind of conversation with someone who believes abortion is okay. It's a conversation that has the power to change hearts and save lives.

 - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

...one person at a time.

Angela was the very picture of confidence. Until JFA.

Having studied pro-life apologetics for at least a year, she participated in JFA's week-long summer internship as professional development for her new position as Northern Regional Coordinator with [Students for Life of America](#).

Coming into this week there actually was not a lot that I was nervous about... I started to get more nervous...when we started our first seminar, and we started breaking up into groups [for] one-on-one mentoring... I realized that I was not as equipped as I [thought]. So that was really eye-opening.

That was Monday. Fast forward to Friday.

My most successful conversation this week was actually my last one... I met a young woman [who] was very intellectually honest and was open to understanding what I had to say. And after talking to her about some of those tough cases she confided in me that her friend got pregnant at the age of 19 and that she herself had driven her friend to the abortion clinic.

And I could tell that she was, I think, a little troubled by this. So it was really amazing to break that barrier, and I actually got to minister to her in a way that I hadn't been able to minister to other people in a lot of my other conversations.



I got to watch that conversation. I knew that Angela had a lot of good pro-life arguments to share, but I was on the lookout for a different sort of confidence, one that I now saw Angela masterfully expressing. She was engaging in dialogue without defensiveness, or as we say, “with an open heart.” In this conversation, Angela wasn't just parroting arguments she read in a book—she was listening. Her wealth of knowledge could then do its proper work, helping her to decide which questions to ask in order to open up a door to the excellent arguments she was ready to share.

JFA struck a healthy fear into Angela during Seat Work (seminar) and then mentors walked with her through many conversations during multiple Feet Work opportunities (outreach) to help her rise above that fear. Angela was again the very picture of confidence, but this time she was not only confidently thinking *internally* about her reading about abor-

tion — Angela was now also confidently engaging a young woman at Wichita State University and changing how *she* thought about abortion.

Molly, a [Benedictine College](#) student, joined us recently for her second outreach to the University of Kansas (KU) with JFA.

When I first got to KU on Monday for the outreach, Catherine prayed with me, which...calmed me down a bit and reminded me that I would not be alone in my conversations that day. I made the goal to start my own conversation within two or three hours of arriving... I listened in on several conversations with several different mentors before starting my own... Joanna helped me get my own conversation going by having me lead a survey. I think it was easier for me to start my first conversation knowing that she was there to take over if I got stuck. Even though I did get stuck and she did take over for me, that experience of starting a conversation gave me the courage to start my own conversation soon after that. I knew from my past outreach experience that I liked using the poll table as a conversation starter, [so] I went back to the poll table, where I eventually started my own conversation.

With the help of mentors and this second Feet Work experience, Molly started to gain her footing:

The first two conversations were a little tough, as I was still nervous... [Both conversations involved discussion of] children with defects and deformities, and whether such lives were worth living... After those conversations, I talked to several of the mentors, and each person I talked to gave me some good ideas for how to address that concern in the future. After that I felt a little more confident and was able to start multiple conversations... I really felt as if I was doing something to make a difference; I was actually talking to people, trying to find the truth with them.

Afrika, a junior at [Christian Heritage Academy](#) (CHA) in Oklahoma, received permission to miss class to extend the training she began with JFA six months prior when she participated in CHA's mission trip to the University of North Texas with JFA. She joined the JFA team for outreach to Oklahoma State University to continue learning to dialogue. After a number of meaningful conversations throughout the day, Afrika summarized how her third outreach day with JFA changed her view of her fears.

One main idea that stuck out to me was not to waste opportunities because of fear. It is so important that I have deep, meaningful conversations—that people walk away with something to think about. People today seem to fear starting conversations about anything uncomfortable and real. What a waste of my words if I never impact people with them. I learned people are willing to talk about hard things because people are seeking truth. If I am too afraid, whether it be to offend or [due to] embarrassment, then shame on me to not share with them truth. That is why since JFA I have consciously been trying to have conversations with my classmates, friends, and family about abortion using JFA skills. Thank you for teaching me how!

Join me in thanking God for working through JFA to help Angela, Molly, and Afrika. Each member of the JFA community has been crippled by fears at one time or another, and like the paralytic responding to Jesus's call to "rise and walk," we've developed confidence by practicing the art of conversation again and again during Feet Work outreach events. Thank you for partnering with us to help strengthen these women and many others like them.

- Stephen Wagner, for the JFA Team



Molly interacts with a student at the University of Kansas.



During her first JFA outreach event, Afrika (right) listens to a University of North Texas student.

More Thoughts on Giving Fear a Good Dose of Feet Work:

www.jfaweb.org/Impact/Fear-Extras

