

Interns in Action (Part 1)

Impact Report

JUSTICE FOR ALL

Sept. 2021

Training thousands to make abortion unthinkable for millions...

God has given JFA the privilege of working with many who have gone on to lead and train others. Josh Brahm (Equal Rights Institute - ERI), Trent Horn (Catholic Answers), Jacob and Katie Burow (Abortion Dialogue Academy), Jacob Nels (ERI), Antionette Duck (Mafgia), and John Michener (Oklahomans United for Life) all spent time early in their pro-life careers as a JFA intern or staff member, or they partnered closely with JFA.

Others are making an impact in less public but nonetheless incredibly significant ways in their everyday lives. Perhaps you are one of them? Share your story of how you're using JFA's influence for good in your world at www.ifaweb.org/share-your-jfa-story.

This fall we're privileged to be investing in four interns. In this Impact Report two of them share experiences in their own words. Give thanks to God with us for his work in their lives!

SmW - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

...one person at a time

Since mid-August when JFA's fall 2021 internship began, interns Andrea, Rose, Kristina, and Bella have spent many hours conducting outreach events and creating conversations to help people change their minds about abortion. This month, Rose and Bella share a window into their experiences in their own words:

Rose Maddock: At Wichita State University in August, "Natasha" seemed to be captivated by our sandwich boards on display. I greeted her and asked if she had time to talk about her thoughts on abortion. She smiled and eagerly said, "Yes please, I don't usually have conversations about this topic." She mentioned that she was "on the fence" about abortion, but that her mother was pro-life. She proceeded to share and tell stories about her mother's pregnancies and abortions... we moved to sit down in the shade on a nearby bench... [and] the conversation shifted when we were on the same level sitting down together side by side.

She shared with me that she was minoring in Women's Studies. I took an interest in that and started asking her questions about... what she was learning. It then turned into a conversation focused on motherhood and the lies the world tells women about what motherhood should look like. She shared with me that many of her friends that have gotten abortions view the situation as "the most tragic and regretful decisions they have ever made." She also said that after having abortions, most of her friends have become pro-life rather than remaining pro-choice. This statement provided a glimpse of hope for me that women's hearts and minds can and will be transformed after they have reflected upon and faced healing after abortion.

She also mentioned some women in her life that have chosen to be mothers when all the odds seemed against them inspire her. We found common ground in viewing children as blessings rather than burdens, and that babies give women fuel and reasons to fulfill their dreams. At one point in the conversation, I mentioned the pro-life movie *Unplanned*. About five minutes later, her mother texted her a link to the



Introducing our intern class for the fall of 2021: Andrea Thenhaus, Rose Maddock, Kristina Massa, and Bella O'Neill.

movie. If that is not God communicating to me that I was talking to the right person at the right time, I don't know what is. When we ended our conversation she said to me, "Thank you for taking the time to speak with me; you've solidified my pro-life views." That was very rewarding to hear. I was very pleased that I could make a difference through a simple friendly conversation.

Bella O'Neill: Before coming to JFA I thought I was loving the woman, but I really wasn't. I would say I cared, but I didn't understand how to care. I didn't know how to open my eyes wide enough to take in the entire picture. I was scared that if I even for a moment glimpsed away from the unborn that I would somehow fail them. I didn't know how to love the woman, have compassion for the person I was talking to, and still fight for the unborn. I realize now that I didn't have compassion for the woman and the pro-choice advocate because I was still seeing the abortion issue as an *Us v. Them*, instead of an *Us v. Injustice*. Once my mindset shifted from seeing [pro-choice advocates] as the enemy, to seeing them as misinformed yet well-intentioned human beings hoping for justice and peace like me, the game changed. Now when I speak with someone who disagrees with me, I genuinely want to listen to them. Through this mindset I have had more fruitful (and surprisingly pleasant) conversations where a lot of progress has been made. I have learned that compassion is never wasted. It's compassion that invokes us to listen and change...



Rose (center in pink), Kristina (hat), and other JFA team members interact with Wichita State students at a JFA outreach event in late August. See more photos from recent outreach events at www.jfaweb.org/sept-2021.

Yesterday at outreach I was speaking to someone who didn't have that strong of an opinion on abortion, but was pro-choice because he believed that women should be able to decide what to do with their lives. We walked through the biology and the Equal Rights argument, and he agreed with me all along the way. He then said something along the lines that the embryo just seems so far removed and hard to relate to, I agreed with him but [noted] that the way we look doesn't define our value as humans. He agreed but then kind of shrugged and said, "That's just the way society is; I don't know if I'd say it's wrong—it's socially acceptable..." I reminded him that at one point racism was socially acceptable and was the norm, but we now know that that was wrong despite the common opinion. He responded, "You are right, and I bet there were people that when they logically thought about it realized that it was wrong, and that's why we are here today living in a nation that now understands racism is wrong. I guess we need to start educating people about abortion, helping people see what's actually happening with abortion." I was shocked that he had said that. I knew that his mind hadn't completely changed, but he agreed that the divide here is a lack of familiarity and affection for the unborn. People are seeing the unborn as something they are not, so of course it is hard to see where we are coming from.

In Part 2 next month, we'll share reflections from interns Kristina and Andrea (and more photos).

Know Someone Who Would Make a Great JFA Intern? www.jfaweb.org/intern
Want to Support JFA's Intern Scholarship Fund? www.jfaweb.org/donate



Interns in Action (Part 2)

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JUSTICE FOR ALL

Oct. 2021

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At JFA, our internships are an expression of our passion for nurturing young leaders, helping them create conversations that change hearts and minds and helping them learn to train others. In all of these activities, we emphasize dependence on God to bring the results He wishes to bring through our efforts.

In our Impact Report last month (www.jfaweb.org/sept-2021), interns Rose and Bella shared stories of conversations they had during August and September outreach events at Wichita State University.

In this Impact Report, interns Andrea and Kristina share a window into how this process of creating conversations has affected them personally, including deepening their trust in God at every moment. As you endeavor to make a difference in the lives of those God puts in your path, I hope these insights from Andrea and Kristina will also encourage you to trust God throughout each interaction.

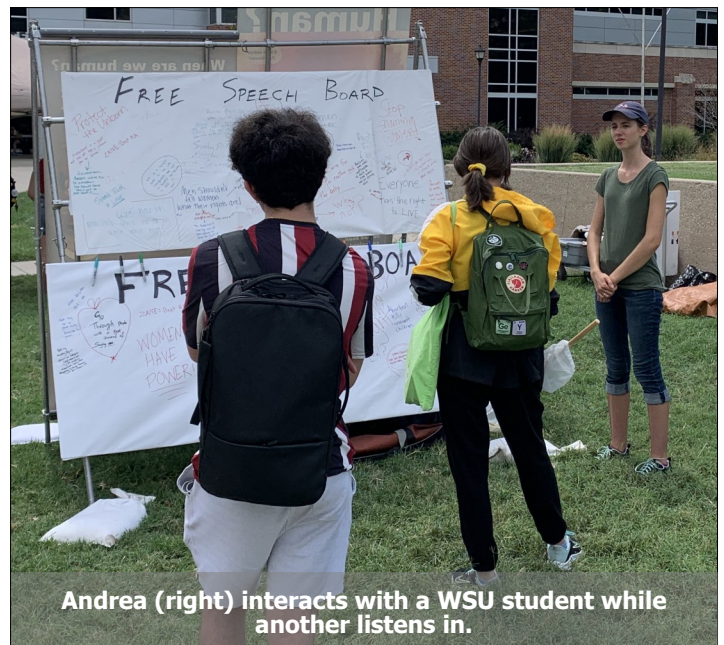
SmW - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

...one person at a time

Some of JFA's interns come to us with very little conversation experience, just like many of our training participants. Because we place conversations and outreach front and center in the internship, interns quickly identify with our training participants' normal fears and uncertainties, but our interns also gain insights they can share out of their personal experience with people they will be training. Interns Andrea and Kristina recently shared some of those insights:

Andrea Thenhaus: One of the most valuable skills I have learned is how to listen with an open heart yet also be able to share the truth in a conversation. I have gained a greater understanding of how to meet people in whatever circumstances they may be... I appreciate the mentoring that JFA provides. When out on campus I had a JFA member evaluate each conversation I had, which was especially helpful... I have been stretched in the Lord and grown in boldness. I have learned the importance of relying on the Lord to direct my conversations. Every conversation is an invitation to let the Holy Spirit step in and accomplish His work through me. I am thankful that the Lord is faithful to give me wisdom.

Kristina Massa: The scariest part about abortion dialogue is initiating the first conversation. Even after training and practice with Justice For All, the fears that accompanied asking strangers what they think about abortion continued to billow in my mind: *What if they share an argument for which I'm not prepared? What if they yell at me? What if this is an emotional topic for them, and my question stirs up those emotions?* The



Andrea (right) interacts with a WSU student while another listens in.



Kristina (center) uses the *Invitation to Dialogue Brochure* (www.jfaweb.org/invitation) as a visual aid in a conversation at WSU.

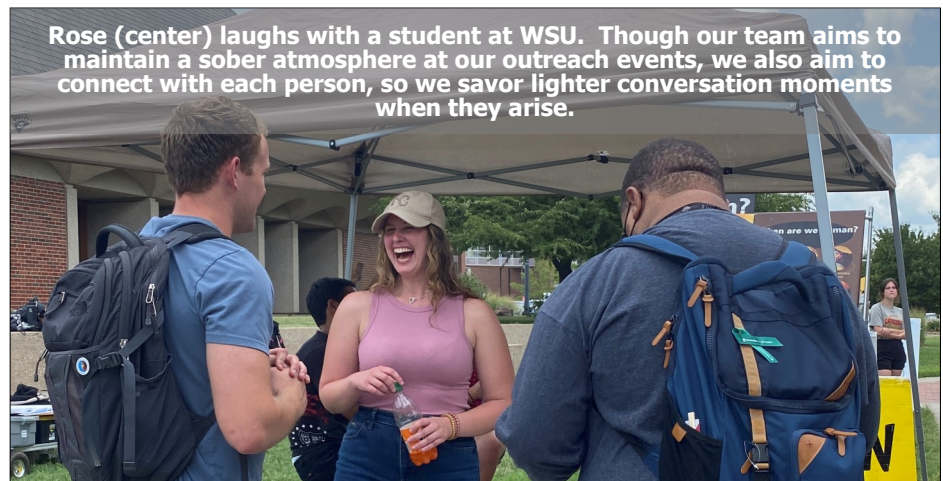
list of fears and lies the devil plants in our minds to prevent us from taking the first step can feel like it goes on forever, but the army of graces that God affords us to overcome those fears puts that list to shame.

With the support of the JFA team, I took a leap of faith in my first conversation at outreach. A young woman approached us to sign our poll which asked, “Should Abortion Remain Legal?” I initiated a conversation by asking her questions about her view. I was nervous, my demeanor was shaky, and I stumbled on my words. Any snarky person could have easily used my weakness to walk on me. To my surprise, the woman (who identified as pro-choice) was extremely gracious, and we found ourselves in a productive dialogue filled with lots of common ground. God used the woman’s temperament to compensate for what I was lacking. We may not have all of the right words or confidence we want in every conversation, but time and time again, God has demonstrated to me that He will provide the safe ground to land on as long as we take our leap of faith.

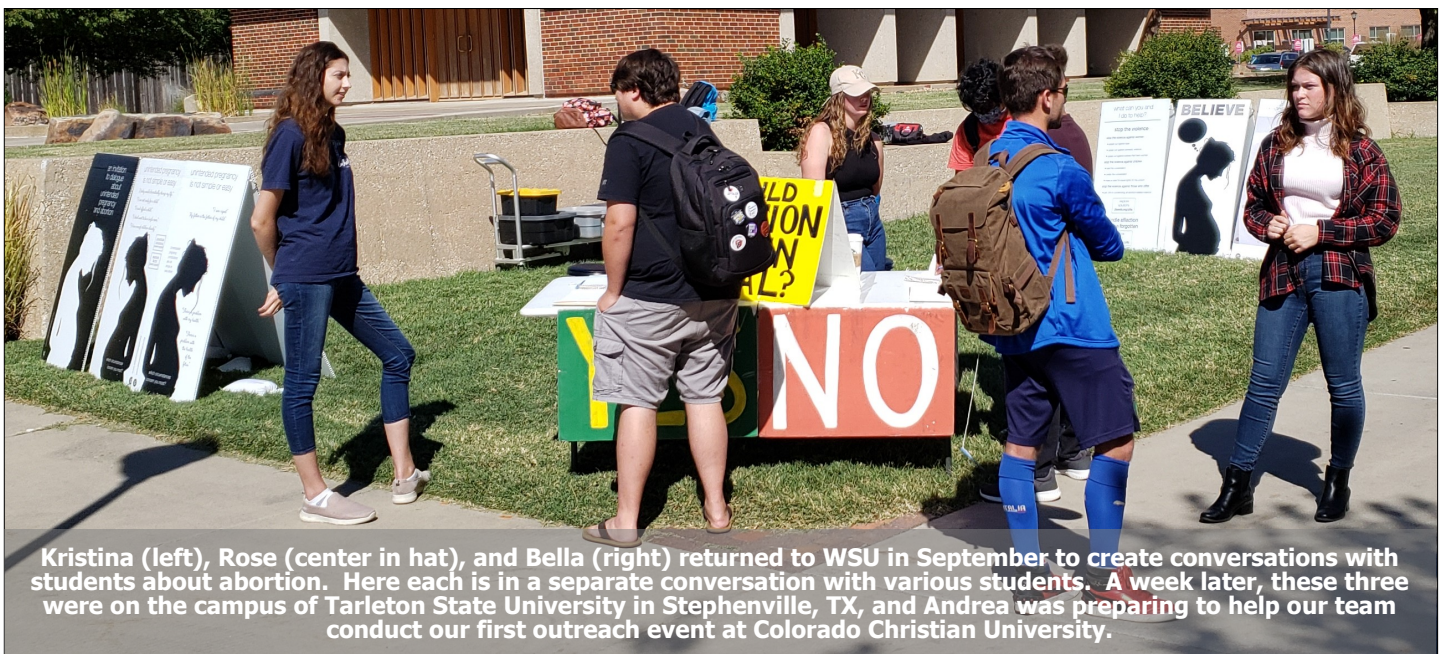
For more outreach photos, see www.jfaweb.org/oct-2021.



Bella (left) interacts at WSU in August.



Rose (center) laughs with a student at WSU. Though our team aims to maintain a sober atmosphere at our outreach events, we also aim to connect with each person, so we savor lighter conversation moments when they arise.



Kristina (left), Rose (center in hat), and Bella (right) returned to WSU in September to create conversations with students about abortion. Here each is in a separate conversation with various students. A week later, these three were on the campus of Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX, and Andrea was preparing to help our team conduct our first outreach event at Colorado Christian University.

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