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I'm not going to lie, when I first found out the juniors and seniors of my school were going to a training about abortion, I was not too excited. I did not particularly want to go to a college campus and approach people about aborted babies! My first thoughts were that we would be "protesting" and my definition of protesting was "screaming at someone to get your point across about a specific cause". The JFA staff completely changed that definition. I learned that I can discuss a subject like abortion in a loving manner and people are more willing to listen to what I have to say. A verse I used as I approached going on that campus was Proverbs 15:1-2, "A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath. The tongue of the wise makes knowledge attractive, but the mouth of fools blurts out foolishness."

Whenever I thought about going to Norman, I did not plan on speaking to anyone about abortion. It frightened me completely! I mean, who likes to be yelled at? Not me! I had a feeling I would get nervous under pressure and would not be able to fight for my cause. The day of the event finally came and I found myself standing by a poll table that read, "Should this exhibit return next week?" I did not expect this poll table to spark as much conversation as it did. My friend, Wade, and I were the only student volunteers at the table. I believe that he, also, did not plan on talking to people that day. I just felt the need to pray for all the people brave enough to approach these people interested in the exhibit. As the day went on I felt the urge to talk to people about their thoughts on the twenty-foot tall exhibit. Wade and I talked to this man who signed the YES side of the poll table. It seemed pretty easy to talk to the people who were for my cause, which is pro-life. After I got the hang of talking to people on my side, my biggest fear was talking to someone on the other side. Wade became my official partner for the day. He started the conversation and I would try to get to the point. We would help each other out in the middle. Some people were more open to listen than others were. It seemed that the argument "my body, my choice" was the most popular. I saw heartbreak in the eyes of most of the people on that campus. I felt the heartbreak as well. Most of these people were just hurting. They probably either have had an abortion or known someone that has. Seeing these graphic images definitely hit a nerve, which stirred most people to argue or scream. I suppose this is why we were prepared to just listen. I have tremendous respect for the JFA staffers who are so open to listening to whatever story they hear or to be yelled at for standing up for what they believe in.

This experience most definitely changed me. I learned two important tools that I can use throughout the rest of my life. The first one is to listen. It seems so easy to spout out the first thing that comes to your head whenever someone is getting angry with you. My first reaction whenever my parents accuse me of something I have done wrong, is to argue and get loud. I learned that it is so much easier to listen to what someone has to say first before you respond. It gives them a chance to see that you truly want to listen to what they have to say. I heard a comment from a girl I talked to that day and she said "From just being across the street I could tell who was for which cause. The pro-life advocates were quiet and willing to accept the other cause's perspective, while the pro-choice advocates were chanting and blowing kazoos rather than listening". I completely agreed with her. The verse, Proverbs 15:1-2, gives a perfect example of this. The second important tool I learned was compassion as well as love. When I first noticed the protestors, I was angry. I thought why would they accuse people so harshly when they don't even know them. I disliked them so much for what they were doing. I just felt God saying to love them. God loves everyone no matter what. He sent His Son for all people. I have messed up just as much as they have. Who was I to hate them, so I learned to love.

If I could choose, I would definitely participate in this experience again. I would do it even if I could just walk around and listen to people's conversations. My history teacher mentioned to us that it was also an experience of being able to see how the college atmosphere is on a daily basis. I think it gave us all a visual on what we might be experiencing in the next four to five years. I think it would be superb if Justice For All could come back to our school next year and years to come.