

Go Local. Get Active.

Regional Emphasis Helps Small University



APRIL 25, 2014 • SPECIAL UPDATE FROM THE JFA WAGNER THREE

Dear Friend,

Why bother? That's what Val Hernandez said about going to pro-life meetings at Fort Hays State University (FHSU). That's what he said...before JFA. After spending two days listening to conversations during JFA's outreach, he had a different perspective entirely. Now he's coming to Wichita this summer to participate in JFA's summer internship, a week of intensive focus on local outreach.

The Fort Hays project is one result of our focus on regional team development – equipping leaders in conjunction with the local church and local pro-life groups to do outreach right where God has placed them.

Joanna was recently asked to step into a new role, which she accepted. She'll be learning to lead JFA's Wichita Regional Team, which is responsible for training volunteers within three hours of Wichita, Kansas. Because of the Regional Team approach, Joanna and her team have stepped up JFA's work with Kansas universities, like Fort Hays, not yet touched by JFA training. Becca Kohl, the president of the Students for Life club at FHSU, reflected on the experience:



JFA mentor CK Wisner (far left) interacts with Becca (center) and her small group during JFA's Seat Work event at FHSU.

March 27, 2014

Somewhere around September 2013, I received an email from Wichita asking if a group of people could come visit our club for a mere two hours to present their seminar and outreach project to us. My first thoughts? They're going to think it's not worth it once they get here. They're going to ask why more people aren't there. They're not going to be impressed with our tiny campus. My thoughts after they came? God is good. It was such a blessing to have Justice For All take interest in our campus. The seminar and outreach set off a spark in the stubble, and flames have started to appear.

I truly believe that the most effective aspect of the outreach was the ability of the Justice For All staff to connect with the group they're working with. I and each member that attended the seminar felt so comfortable and trusting of the staff. They built friendships in a matter of hours. It's so much easier to learn from people you respect. This made the outreach incredibly effective (at least in the lives of the students in Students for Life) because they were able to work alongside people they felt they could truly trust. What a rare thing that is!

The outreach actually impacted me in more ways than just the pro-life movement. Although that was a huge part of it, and I know now so many ways in which I can bring someone over to the pro-life side, I learned valuable lessons that apply to talking to anyone about anything. I learned to value them as human beings, and to not just wait to talk but to listen to what they are saying, to listen to their heart. I learned to find common ground so they don't feel attacked or ignored. Basically, I learned how to communicate. And this is such a great thing for me to learn because I struggle heavily with communicating effectively!

Basically, I learned how to communicate.



After the Justice For All staff left, our group met and we talked about everything we had absorbed in those few days. The impact that time had made was priceless and did a lot more than I could have ever guessed or wished for. We have a member [Val] doing the week-long internship this summer [with JFA in Wichita] and he is one that, before JFA came, used to ask why he would ever bother going to Students for Life meetings. He said that since he knew abortion was wrong, he didn't need to go to meetings at which people just talked about it being wrong. He now knows that action is a responsibility we have if we believe in the sanctity of life!

We have another member who almost considered not going to grad school and just doing mission work in any organization that would serve God's people in a very heroic way. She ended up discerning (through lots of prayer) that she was called to go to grad school so she can do more intense work in the medical field and ultimately defend the right to life. If it weren't for the seminar and outreach, she probably would have never come to this conclusion, or at least not so soon. Basically, thank you so much for coming to Fort Hays! It was a blessing in more ways than I could count.

In Christ,

Becca Kohl
President, Fort Hays State Students for Life

Note how Becca described her club as stagnant prior to JFA's three-day Seat Work and Feet Work project. Note how she highlighted students like Val, now active in seeking to stop abortion through outreach and dialogue. We're ecstatic that our regional emphasis is helping us identify leaders like Becca and Val on small campuses which we could not have visited before.

What made the difference for Becca and her group? Becca said it was being able to work alongside Joanna and the other JFA mentors, people they had come to trust. Now they can build on the outreach experience they had.

Steve and Jon have had the privilege over the last two years of working with JFA's leadership team to steer JFA towards a regional focus. Regional Teams can connect deeply with the church and pro-life groups locally to develop leaders who can take responsibility for defending the unborn in their communities.

Thank you for supporting us prayerfully and financially, so that we can train students like Becca and Val to get active by creating heart-transforming conversations on their campuses.

Warmly,

Joanna, Jon, and Steve

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Bill Flipse, a passionate pro-life retiree in Fort Hays, participated in all three days of our FHSU events (see picture on the reverse) and joined our Wichita Regional Team two weeks later for three more days of seminar and outreach events at the University of Kansas (pictured with Joanna)!

GET ACTIVE!

Contact Joanna, Jon, or Steve through the JFA office (316-683-6426) to find out about upcoming regional events that you can use as a mission trip.