

What's Changing? What's Staying the Same?

As Executive Director, My Work Enters a New Chapter



STEPHEN WAGNER'S MONTHLY UPDATE

JUNE 2014

Note: Please read the [recent letter](#) from Justice For All's Board of Directors before reading on. It provides important context for this letter.

Dear Supporters and Friends,

“Should Steve be appointed Executive Director?” JFA’s Board of Directors was discussing this question with JFA’s leadership team present. Scott Klusendorf, a member of our Board and a long-time mentor of mine, asked me a pointed question: “Steve, you’re the best trainer in the country on person-to-person pro-life apologetics. Are you prepared for your work to change when you take on the role of Executive Director?”

Job One: Delegate.

My simple answer to Scott and the Board was this: “I wouldn’t be able to take the job if it weren’t for the trustworthy JFA team to whom I can delegate.” It would be naïve to say that my role is not changing at all, or that I am not taking on some new responsibilities. By making delegation one of my highest priorities, though, I will tailor the Executive Director role at JFA to allow me to exercise my gifts of training, speaking, creating, and casting a vision for JFA. I’ll lead our trainers by example, keeping focused on our community’s first love: *reaching out to pro-choice advocates while training pro-life advocates to do the same.*

Organizational Fundraising: I am heading a team that is sharing this responsibility.

I already have a team of five others who have agreed to share the load of the fundraising duties that have been solely the Executive Director’s responsibility over the past few years.

Administrative Duties: I’ve delegated day-to-day operations and staff supervision to others.

I have been working as part of a three-person team to run JFA’s day-to-day operations since 2013, so becoming Executive Director has not added much in the way of administrative duties to my plate. The role has, however, allowed me to delegate many of those duties so that I can focus more time on what I do best. For example, I have asked Paul Kulas to make the day-to-day operations decisions that the three-person team had been making previously, and to consult me only when he deems it necessary.

Family: I am putting my family first, and I’ve instructed the JFA staff to do the same.

One other clarification I made for the Board was this: I will be a good Executive Director by being a good father and husband first. My role at JFA could easily consume all of me, but I won’t let it. I’ve already communicated to the JFA staff that I expect every JFA staff member to follow this same priority of ministry. With the urgency of babies



Active engagement of pro-choice advocates, as during this open mic session earlier this year at the University of North Texas, will continue to be a cornerstone of my work.



JUSTICE FOR ALL — TRAINING THOUSANDS TO MAKE ABORTION UNTHINKABLE FOR MILLIONS, ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

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dying, and abortion's availability entrenched in law, we might be tempted to work so hard that we burn out quickly and our families disintegrate. Instead, we'll give great energy to our work, but we'll pace ourselves, expecting that we will have to be at it for a long time. In a sense, we have to think long-term, while at the same time attempting to make abortion unthinkable and work ourselves out of a job in short order.

Hearing about these added responsibilities of fundraising and casting vision for JFA, you may be wondering if other things are changing. To clarify, though, three other aspects of my work that have formed a continuous thread throughout 13 years in ministry will not be changing with my new role.

Salary: I'll continue to raise my personal support.

I will continue to raise 100% of my salary as I always have, so please continue to designate gifts to support my work. Additionally, now I will help to raise the operating expenses that our trainers incur in order to train pro-life advocates. These expenses include flights, rental cars, fuel, materials, brochures, office space, internet, and cell phones. I have directed our staff members who are working on raising operating expenses (including myself) to keep one principle in mind: Keep your personal support raising strong.

Training: I'll continue speaking, coaching our trainers, mentoring our volunteers, and creating dialogue at outreach.

I will lead our trainers by example, focusing a good portion of my time on training people to dialogue about abortion. This includes ample time on the ground doing outreach with our team. During the past year, I have delegated a significant portion of our certification program to Catherine Wurts, but I'll continue to assist her with training our trainers.

Creativity: I'll continue to create content and materials.

I will continue to give direction to our content creation across the organization, including speaking scripts, mentor training, JFA's *Interactive Guide*, new campus outreach exhibits, and JFA's websites. Yes, I'll be delegating these tasks when possible to my excellent team, but I will continue to create as well.

I've entered a new chapter in my work, but in a sense, the book is the same. Indeed, the need continues to be the same. We still must labor to train thousands of pro-life advocates to defend the unborn by making abortion unthinkable, one person at a time. Only then can public opinion change so that our culture will protect unborn children in law. Thank you for continuing to stand with me.



Above, I am engaged in a lively role-play with a student during our Texas trip this year. Almost hidden behind me to the left is Kinsey Smith, who was sharing the duty of leading this group and learning from watching me lead as well. Interacting with pro-life advocates of all ages, as well as mentoring leaders and speaking to larger groups (below), will continue to be important activities for me.



Warmly,
Stephen
Stephen Wagner