

Conversations with Helen and Lisa

Impact Report


JUSTICE
FOR ALL

Dec. 2023

BECAUSE ONE PERSON CAN...

Thank you for supporting JFA's work this year. We've been especially encouraged by the efforts of our fall 2023 interns, Seth and Catherine. In this Impact Report, you'll read first-hand accounts of their conversations with "Helen" and "Lisa." Catherine will continue to volunteer with JFA in the coming months, and Seth is now raising support to work full-time as a Training Specialist. We thank God for these talented pro-life advocates, and we thank God for your partnership that has helped them make an impact.

You can still give a year-end gift at www.ifaweb.org/donate, or you can give a year-end gift by mail using the enclosed giving form and envelope. To receive a 2023 donation receipt, make sure gifts are submitted online or postmarked by December 31, 2023. Merry Christmas!

 - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

...CHANGE THE WORLD

IF WE HAD NOT GONE...

By Catherine Gimino, Fall 2023 Intern

"Helen" was unsure of her words, not just because we had interrupted her morning walk to class with an unexpected survey on abortion, but also because she was a foreign exchange student and new to speaking English. Despite this added difficulty with an already culturally-loaded topic, she was very willing to talk. I began by asking her questions to understand her view on abortion. Her view was that the unborn is not human until birth and so abortion at any stage is acceptable.

I walked her through what biology teaches us about the unborn, showing her that they are human beings starting at fertilization. I used Trot Out The Toddler and the Equal Rights Argument, tools taught by JFA to keep the conversation focused and to show that the unborn are human beings with an equal right to life. My attempts to clearly lay out the arguments were far from perfect. Despite feeling discouraged by my lack of eloquence, I kept going.

I eventually asked my coworker Kristina to jump in. She asked Helen, "Based off of what you've heard, do you think differently about abortion?" Helen responded saying that abortion should be illegal through all nine months and that she would support pro-life laws!

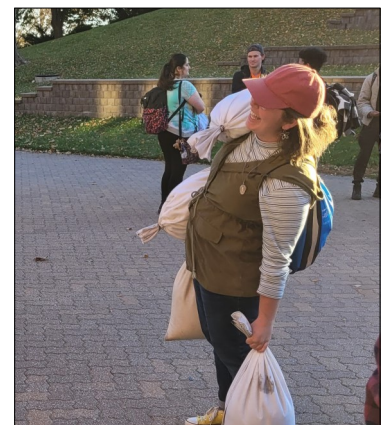
After Helen left, we debriefed the conversation. I told Kristina that I thought I could have explained things more clearly, but Kristina



Fall 2023 Intern Catherine Gimino (in cap, facing camera) navigates a group conversation at University of Central Oklahoma. (October)



Fall 2023 Intern Seth Wiesner speaks at an interactive training seminar in Minnesota. (September)



Catherine, with characteristic joy, carries all of the 40-pound sandbags at our Johnson County outreach. Don't worry - Seth didn't leave all the sandbag carrying to the women! (November)



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refocused me on the big picture: “That was a total mind change! By talking to you she went from thinking all abortion is okay to being against abortion. That is really awesome!” Then I realized something. If we had not gone out to WSU and asked Helen to participate in a JFA survey, her usual walk to class would have remained uninterrupted, and she would not have learned the truth about abortion that morning.

I trust God will bring a lot of fruit from this “interruption.”

A CONVERSATION AT MANKATO

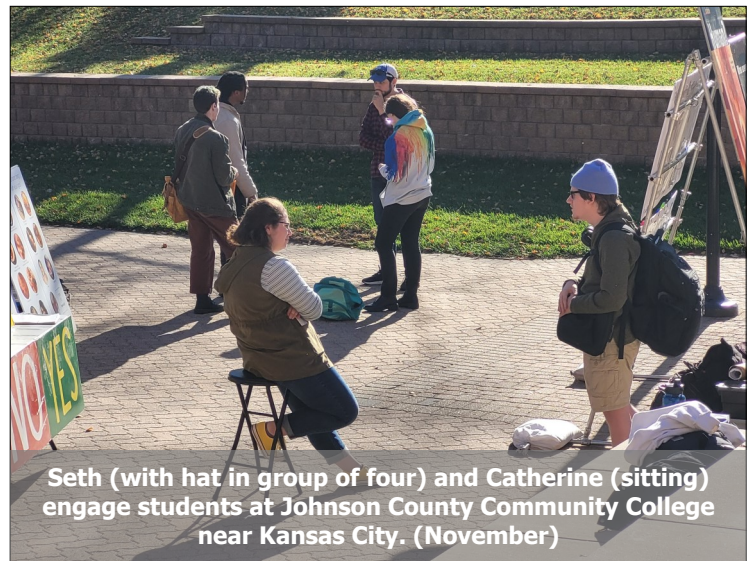
By Seth Wiesner, Fall 2023 Intern

In October I was doing outreach with the JFA team at Minnesota State University in Mankato. I started a conversation with a young woman named “Lisa.” She quickly became angry and began raising her voice. Suddenly she exclaimed, “I wish I had been aborted!”

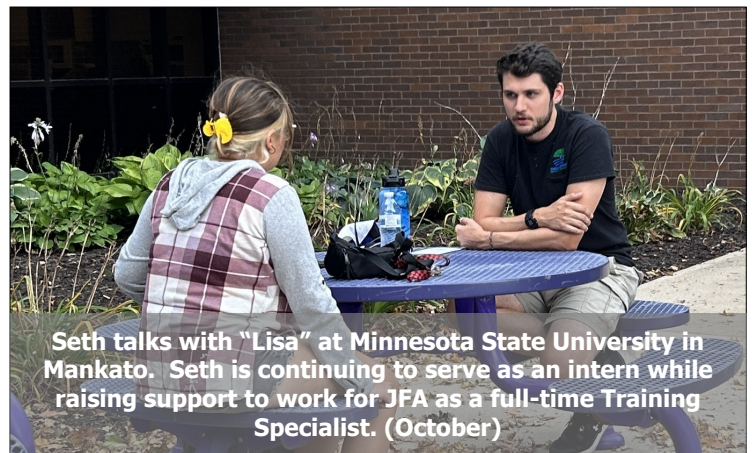
Sensing that this issue was very personal to her, I took a step back from the questions I typically ask in order to challenge a person’s view. Instead I simply asked questions to try to understand her perspective. Asking questions about her beliefs not only helped me understand her position, but also demonstrated my care for her as a person. It gave me the opportunity to learn about her background, and this helped me discover the unspoken reasons that influenced her position.

Using this approach, we discussed her views on many different topics including the resurrection of Jesus. By the end of our conversation, she had softened her demeanor and her pro-choice views considerably. She accepted JFA’s “Invitation to Dialogue” brochure when I offered it to her and told me she was open to being pro-life. Thanks be to God. (See www.jfaweb.org/brochure to view and download the brochure.)

There is a great need for people to understand the truth about abortion. There are many out there, especially young adults, who haven’t been taught well and need someone to help them see how appalling abortion is. My conversation with Lisa is an example of how asking questions with an open heart and listening to understand can change the course of a conversation and lead people closer to the truth.



Seth (with hat in group of four) and Catherine (sitting) engage students at Johnson County Community College near Kansas City. (November)



Seth talks with “Lisa” at Minnesota State University in Mankato. Seth is continuing to serve as an intern while raising support to work for JFA as a full-time Training Specialist. (October)



Seth (second from left) talks with a group of students at University of Northern Colorado while Catherine (left) and JFA trainer Kristina (near kiosk) listen. (September)

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