

IMMIGRATION ACTION COALITION ANNUAL REPORT May 1, 2019 - April 30, 2020

Submitted by: Cheryl Valentine, Chair

WHAT IS IAC?

The Immigration Action Coalition (IAC) at UUAA works to educate ourselves and others about immigration issues, advocate for immigration policy reform, and act in support of immigrants in our community. Motivated by our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, IAC has met monthly for over five years and has collaborated with many community organizations as we've worked towards these goals.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

DIRECT AID TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS

In response to Covid19 IAC contributed \$14,000 from the UUAA Sanctuary Account to a WICIR (Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights) Emergency Fund to help undocumented families in our community. Over 200 families (mostly single mothers, the sick and the elderly) have been helped as of April 25 with \$200-\$300 cash grants. We also donated \$3500 to WICIR through the December's Share the Collection.

SOAP FOR COUNTY JAIL INMATES

IAC members contributed bars of soap to a campaign led by students in U of M's School of Public Health for people in detention in Michigan county jails who lacked a way to sanitary supplies to fight Covid-19. Over 1,000 bars were collected.

ADVOCACY FOR ICE DETAINEE RELEASE

IAC members advocated for the release of immigrant detainees from Michigan jails where conditions make the spread of COVID-19 especially dangerous to inmates, staff, and the surrounding communities.

MIGRATION FAMILY FUN NIGHT DECEMBER 6

IAC showed the border-crossing film, "Who is Dayani Cristal" and led a discussion. Members also introduced the Migration is Beautiful Project and showed children and adults how to make butterfly tiles. The tiles were placed in public areas to remind folks that migration is a natural and beautiful thing. IAC collaborated with the local Jewish Community who envisioned this project and with The Ann Arbor Friends who inspired by us, introduced the project to Quaker families.

ASYLUM SEEKER ASSISTANCE

- IAC partnered with Legal Services of South Central Michigan to pay legal fees (\$1,045) to stop a deportation order for **JGD**, a 26 year old woman previously approved for a U-VISA (victim of a crime) and DACA.
- We partnered with the Network Supporting Asylum Seekers (NSAS) and the River Raisin UU Fellowship to bond **K** out of detention (\$5,000) and donated \$2400 for transitional help.
- IAC sponsored **D**, a DACA recipient and WCC student with \$1025 for tuition, books and supplies
- We helped Mexican journalist, **Emilio Gutierrez** in finding housing and furnishings and helped promote his watercolor exhibit, "Migration and Memories."
- We contributed \$500 for living expenses for **Irma**, a Honduran feminist leader.

SANCTUARY

Supported Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary, a coalition of 14 local religious organizations, which has kept Mohammed safe in sanctuary over the past year. UUAA paid membership dues of \$2400 and members have volunteered as door-minders.

ADVOCACY FOR TPS

IAC led a letter-writing campaign in support of a path for citizenship for holders of Temporary Protected Status. Over 100 letters were delivered to UUSC for this national campaign.

DRIVING WITH DIGNITY

Partnered with Cosecha, a local immigrant led group, to send postcards to Michigan legislators asking them to enact new laws giving all qualifying Michigan residents the right to apply for a drivers license.

FUTURE PLANS

IAC LEADERSHIP CHANGE

IAC is currently restructuring so that leadership roles are dispersed among three subgroups.

- 1) **Educational programming** lead by Susie Thompson and Cesilie Cordovilla.
- 2) **Systems Advocacy** for immigration policy changes lead by Dan Saunders and Joan Parker.
- 3) **Action** in support of local immigrants lead by Kathy McLean and Ruth Cassidy.

SEPARATED BOOK TALK

Author and public health advocate, William Lopez, will virtually discuss his book, Separated, on Sunday, May 17 at 6 p.m. In the book Lopez analyzes the mental health impact of an ICE raid on our local community. Co-sponsored with Challenging Racism and Unity Forum.

SAMARITAS TEMPORARY FOSTER CARE

IAC IS Working with Samaritas to raise awareness of the need for Temporary Foster Care homes for unaccompanied minors. IAC hosted Samaritas to give the 5 minute social justice talk on Sunday, Jan 19 and an art show of works by immigrant youth. We are planning a virtual Q&A covering ways congregation can help.