

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: 2022 WAS A DYNAMIC YEAR FOR SNL!

- In January, we kicked off our first fundraising trimester, and raised \$17,000 from our Banquet Ad Book. We did this by instituting a new monthly “Circle Leaders Formation” program, with monthly, bi-lingual gatherings of circle leaders building community through discussions of the tensions, tools, and joys of leadership in their parishes and communities.
- In April, we held our first ever Banquet at the Carpenters/Millwrights Union Banquet Hall, with circle leaders bringing 400 people, including a great Mexican Dance Troupe, Democratic Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and Republican (Former) State Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan.
- Also in April, faculty members of 10 Catholic High Schools brought delegations of students to our 2nd High School Conference. The students elected a leadership team and named their group “Youth In Action for Immigration.” Led by Notre Dame Prep, they held a Solidarity Walk in Pontiac for immigration reform.
- In June, we hosted the nationally recognized Sr. Norma Pimentel, Director of Catholic Charities Rio Grande Valley. She described conditions and politics at the border on a state-wide tour covering Grand Rapids, Romeo, Detroit, and Ann Arbor.
- In July we elected a new board of directors, 15 people – 7 immigrant leaders and 8 non-immigrants.
- In April, the leaders and staff of the Immigrant Women Circles of Support contracted with a Mexico-based psychotherapist for regular group sessions to help the members deal with many forms of trauma. The Immigrant Women Circles also had workshops related to women’s dignity and the circle meetings became a space for spirituality. At the same time, the Immigrant Women Circles began to discuss elements of what would become our Platform for Dignity.
- In September, we decided to plan an Assembly for Human Dignity. Immigrant leaders and non-immigrant leaders formed the Advocacy Task Force, met with 5 different county officials, and created our Platform for Dignity.
- On December 9, on the feast of St. Juan Diego, we held our first Assembly for Human dignity, hosted by the union of Carpenters and Millwrights. 350 people joined together to press state legislators, led by Sen. Mary Cavanagh, to re-introduce legislation allowing immigrants to apply for drivers licenses regardless of their immigrant status.

- Also at the Assembly, we pressed county and city officials to join with us and Global Detroit to convene a February 24th Breakfast of Champions, where mayors and county officials will collaborate to move our Platform items into reality.
- Our Health Promoters Statewide Team has arranged a sit-down meeting with Elizabeth Hertel, the Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, in Lansing on February 8th to discuss needed funding for mental health services in migrant camps...and in many other places in Michigan. If you are interested in joining us for this meeting, contact Bill O'Brien at 313-549-0421.

Financially, our grassroots trimester got off to a good start with the Banquet Ad Book and Circle Member Dues. However, we survived a tough moment when we learned that our funding source for one of our staff organizers closed its doors, removing \$62,500 from our 2023 budget.

We are grateful to individuals who have invested throughout the year, and to major institutions who have already committed funds for 2023:

- \$65,000 from Catholic Campaign for Human Development (USCCB) for our work expanding into Grand Rapids, Saginaw, and Gaylord (Traverse City) dioceses – and our work with Catholic High Schools;
- \$5000 from the Catholic Foundation of Michigan for our work bringing together the Immigrant Women Circles of Support with our parish circles and \$1000 to start an Immigrant Women's Circle of Support in North Macomb;
- \$5000 from the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) to expand our circles Downriver.
- \$50,000 from the Center for Disease Control (through Alianza Americas) to develop our statewide Health Promoters Team to work among farmworkers and Spanish-speaking essential workers in the Dioceses of Grand Rapids, Saginaw and Gaylord (Traverse City).

So, we ended 2022 on a high note. But in 2023, we will need to focus on fund development, Circle and Parish Dues, and individual member dues so that we can continue to develop our grassroots Catholic effective presence in our parishes, high schools, and communities, expanding and deepening our circles – and our voice – in Southeast Michigan, in Grand Rapids, Saginaw and Gaylord (Traverse City) Dioceses.