Student Spotlight

PJC student Alexandria Boutros on Illinois JusticeCorps

Last summer I took part in an eye-opening internship that gave me a firsthand feel of how terrible our judicial system is for pro-se litigants (people representing themselves in court). Illinois JusticeCorps is an innovative program that enhances access to justice for the growing number of unrepresented people in the courts by empowering and training student volunteers to help people without lawyers navigate the court system by providing legal information and procedural guidance.

People coming to court without lawyers often do not know where to go, what to ask for or who to see for documents. They often are confused, intimidated and scared. While participating in the internship I was able to assist self-represented litigants in the self-help web center and other assigned locations by providing legal information and connecting them to available legal aid resources, accompany people without lawyers around the courthouse to help them complete the necessary steps to move forward with their legal matters, and answer general questions about the legal process and making referrals to legal aid and other services when necessary.

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A Note from the Director

A few things to remember:

- Seniors who haven’t completed an internship and juniors who will be gone in fall 2017 need to take PAX 392 in fall 2016.
- All seniors and anyone graduating by December 2017 should be prepared to sign up for PAX 350 Capstone in winter 2017.
- Students are eligible to do an internship placement in summer, but you will need to speak with me.

Congratulations to our seniors! Keep in touch with us as you continue on your journey, and be sure to share your alumni experiences with pjc@depaul.edu.

— Mary Jeanne Larrabee
My favorite part of the job was something called “substantive self-helps”. A substantive self-help is when the JusticeCorps members do something “above and beyond with our clients”. For example, one of my substantive self helps was spending a whole day with a woman trying to divorce an abusive husband. I was working in the JusticeCorps office in the Daley Center when a woman came storming out. I asked her why she was so mad, and she told me she waited for over three hours to get legal advice and then the lawyers told her they could not help her. So I helped her. She was just trying to get a simple divorce from her husband. She had showed up to her court call at 11:00am and was turned away and given more paperwork to do. She had absolutely no clue what was going on and why she needed to do this paperwork. We were in the same boat.

As a JusticeCorps member I had been trained in the multiple resources the Daley Center offers for people who did not go to law school. Together, this woman and I used Illinois legal aid online to fill out this paper work. The whole time I was thinking, *The court wouldn’t just give her random paperwork, so this has to be important for something.* Her original court call was at 11:00 and the last court call was at 2:30. It was 2:15. We finished the paperwork as much as possible and ran to the court room. The clerk standing in the doorway took our paperwork, looked through it and told me that the only reason she was letting us in was because of how hard I had worked to get her stuff done.

That is the point where I learned the power of being a JusticeCorps member. The people that work in the court appreciate the work of JusticeCorps since we both know the immense struggles of being a person in poverty trying to navigate the judicial system.

Visit this site for more information about the organization and how to get involved.

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**Special Collections in the Classroom**

Students in spring quarter’s PAX 242/CPL 242, taught by Professor Susana Martinez, spent two class sessions viewing the Brockman Romero archives with Special Collections Librarian Morgen MacIntosh Hodgett. They viewed photos of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador in 1980 and wrote papers about how the past and present characterize social justice, violence, activism and solidarity.
People of faith involved in our national immigration debates often raise the verse in Leviticus to “love the immigrant as the native.” I thought that claim had lost some of its meaning and power within the contemporary debate. I hoped to explore how to reinvigorate that claim within debates about immigration policy. I engaged in a thought experiment about immigration law based on the biblical narrative.

The article is in four parts. The first part stresses the importance of narrative in all our lives, both to give definition to whom we claim to be, but also to help provide guidance on issues of justice and morality. I choose the biblical narrative, in part because it is my faith tradition, but also because of its importance in world history. I also maintain that the narrative—a narrative specifically formed in exile—stresses loving the immigrant. Given the historical legacy of that narrative, I also encourage those who do not follow that narrative in their own lives or do not believe in a divine presence, that, it, nonetheless, remains important to understand the biblical narrative given its historical role in formulating United States society and government. I also invite them to discern what is the narrative that defines their own lives and helps them figure out how they stand with respect to immigration policy.

Part II engages in a thought experiment asking what would have happened if American immigration law was in effect at the time of the formation of the biblical narrative? I find that every major biblical protagonist would have been deported or excluded. In all likelihood, Jesus had the most deportable immigration violations of anyone I discussed. In effect, no narrative would have occurred. I ask what losses are we incurring in implementing a law with little discretion or mercy today?

Part III examines my understanding of St. Vincent DePaul and the mission to welcome the stranger. Although this particularly traces St. Vincent DePaul’s legacy, I believe that anyone who interprets the biblical narrative could resonate to his understandings with similar responses to that narrative.

Part IV examines two issues, the eleven million undocumented living in the United States and the detention and deportation of women and children by the United States government today. It argues that both the biblical narrative and St. Vincent DePaul call us to challenge those policies and seek to discern how to “love the immigrant” within our nation and its laws and policies. Again, although particular to St. Vincent, I note that the narrative calls all who interpret the legacy of the narrative to address how to love the immigrant in our times.
Historic Vatican Conference on Nonviolence and “Just Peace”
By Ken Butigan, Peace, Justice & Conflict Studies

The atmosphere of an unprecedented gathering on nonviolence at the Vatican — where change-makers from every part of the globe deliberated with priests, bishops and the Catholic Church’s top officer for justice and peace — was electric from beginning to end.

The “Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence” took place in Rome, from April 11-13. Eighty-five lay people, theologians, members of religious congregations, priests, and five bishops traveled from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Oceania to take part in this landmark gathering, which I helped to organize. Many participants live and work in contexts of extreme violence and injustice, and came seeking a bold new direction from the global church.

The Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Pax Christi International and other Catholic organizations from around the world sponsored the first-of-its-kind assembly. DePaul’s Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies Program, where I teach, fully supported my participation in this initiative, for which I am deeply grateful.

The head of the Pontifical Council, Cardinal Peter Turkson, opened the conference with a warm message of support from Pope Francis, who said, “Your thoughts on revitalizing the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular, will be a needed and positive contribution.” The gathering ended three days later with a dramatic consensus process that called on the pope to issue an encyclical — a major Catholic church document on active nonviolence. Taking the pope’s words to us seriously, the conference’s final text urged the church to integrate nonviolence at every level of the global institution — including in the dioceses, parishes, agencies, schools, universities, seminaries, religious orders and
voluntary associations — and also called on it to no longer use or teach the so-called “just war” theory.

The conference’s final document — An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-Commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence — was delivered to Pope Francis shortly after the conference concluded. Confessing that we and the Catholic Church had betrayed Jesus’ nonviolence many times, including by “participating in wars, persecution, oppression, exploitation and discrimination,” we concretely proposed that the church “promote nonviolent practices and strategies (e.g., nonviolent resistance, restorative justice, trauma healing, unarmed civilian protection, conflict transformation, and peace-building strategies); initiate a global conversation on non-violence within the Church, with people of other faiths, and with the larger world to respond to the monumental crises of our time with the vision and strategies of nonviolence … continue advocating for the abolition of war and nuclear weapons; and lift up the prophetic voice of the Church to challenge unjust world powers and to support and defend those nonviolent activists whose work for peace and justice put their lives at risk.”

This landmark gathering had been in the works for over a year. In March 2015, I joined the planning committee, which involved those of us from El Salvador, the Philippines, Japan, Italy, Australia, Britain and the United States working with the Pontifical Council to craft an agenda that would be interactive and productive. Marie Dennis, the co-president of Pax Christi International, drew on her considerable experience of organizing international gatherings to create a process where everyone would be heard.

The “Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference” was an astonishing experience, and we hope that it will bear great fruit in the Catholic Church and the larger world. As José Henríquez, a member of the planning committee and recent past secretary general of Pax Christi International from El Salvador put it, “We live in a complex world where armed conflicts are pervasive and where violence has become the first — and many times the only — way to address those conflicts. As a global community, we need to foster the creative imagination to build merciful societies where nonviolence is the norm and not the exception.” At this historical turning point, we invite people everywhere to spread this call for “nonviolence and just peace.”

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Reprinted from WagingNonviolence.org.

In Autumn 2016, Prof. Butigan will be teaching:

**LSP 110**: Discover Chicago: Nonviolent Chicago;
**PAX 250**: Topics: Tools for Nonviolent Social Change; and **PAX 392**: Internship in PJC.
Summer Courses

There is still time to register for Summer 2016 courses!

Classes are offered in two summer sessions—Session I (June 13-July 17) and Session II (July 18-August 21)—as well as for the full 10-week Summer Quarter. If you still need to complete PJC major and minor requirements, the summer would be a great time to fulfill your core or elective courses.

Autumn Course Highlights

PAX 250-701: Restorative Justice Training
T 6:00-9:15pm  |  First Five Weeks  |  Prof. Jane Nicholson

- Course covers the basics of Restorative Justice and of facilitating peace circles (all hours apply toward certification as a peace circle facilitator). Students will learn to build community and justice at the grassroots level.
- Circle certification is a respected credential by education, service learning, community activism fields and more.
- Class meets in circle, and there will be discussions of social testimony in personal-local to global instances of accountability, solidarity, social/justice issues, and processes like reconciliation.
- Students will gather in circle to discuss what matters to you and hear out the others in class.

PAX 253-101: Despair and Hope
T/TH 2:40-4:10pm  |  Prof. Frida Kerner Furman, Religious Studies

Students, like other members of our society, struggle with the weight of significant personal and societal challenges. As human beings, we all confront periods of personal crisis, which might involve loss and death, depression, and identity definitions. A university education includes exposure to the many problems facing our society and our world. All too often this exposure leaves students with a sense of powerlessness and hopelessness in the face of seemingly insurmountable issues. This course attempts to respond to this situation by guiding students to religious, ethical, psychological, and other models and tools they may use to address these as well as more personal concerns—a move from despair to hope—an essential transition in developing the human capacity for personal thriving and for involvement in constructive citizenship and socio-cultural transformation.

Dates and times are subject to change. Check Campus Connect for information on all Peace, Justice & Conflict Studies course offerings for autumn quarter.
PJC Welcomes James Walker

James received his PhD in Philosophy from the University at Albany in 2004 and spent over a decade teaching Philosophy at the university level, including an appointment as Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Union College in New York, and as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Frostburg State University in Maryland. During this time, his research interests included ethical issues of war and non-violent means of achieving and maintaining peace, particularly in east and central Africa. He also worked on issues concerning the nature of aid and development in these regions, emphasizing the need for grassroots efforts that empower local communities.

Several years ago James stepped away from academia so as to take a more hands-on approach to these issues. During this time he returned to school and received his Associates in nursing and became licensed as a Registered Nurse, so as to give him the hands-on skills to better assist communities at the grassroots level as they struggle to overcome violence and achieve peace.

After having worked as a director of grant writing and serving on the board of directors for a small NGO in the south of Uganda from 2010-2013, James co-founded the Asteroidea Health Alliance, an NGO whose mission is to equip community-based health initiatives in east and central Africa with the tools and resources to improve the health and well-being of their communities. Asteroidea’s work is guided by two fundamental principles. First, that every person has a fundamental right to both health and accessible and affordable quality health care. Second, the work of securing these rights should be directed by, and work to further empower, local community members, who should occupy the leading roles in determining the scope and direction of the initiatives and programs to be implemented, as well as in any partnerships they choose to engage in. James has traveled to Uganda on several occasions, as well as to Rwanda, and has worked closely with the local populations there on developing health care related programs and services.

Ultimately, James’ goals are to continue the process of integrating his diverse skills, knowledge, and experience in an effort to further develop, empower, and aid grassroots community based organizations throughout east and central Africa in an attempt to provide the people of this region with increased access to quality health care and health related resources.

Now returning to academia, in addition to continuing this hands-on work on the ground in east and central Africa, James’ research is focused on understanding the role that hierarchical power relations, such as those imposed by colonialism and imperialism, have played as the catalysts for continuing cycles of violence within east and central Africa, and how those power structures can be deconstructed in an effort to achieve a lasting positive peace in this region. This work involves issues such as considering the nature of revolution and the role of non-violent action within revolutions; how to engage in nonprofit health care development work without further reinforcing the very problematic power structures at the root of health care inequity and other forms of injustice; and how to decolonize our conflict narratives of east and central Africa and, in doing so, finally come to hear the voices of those living within these conflicts and the possibilities this has for achieving positive peace in the region.

James Walker will teach PAX 218: Human Rights: Promise & Problematics, TTH 1:00-2:30pm in autumn quarter.
The Peace, Justice, & Conflict Studies Program offers students an undergraduate major and minor curriculum that helps them reflect on the origins and causes of conflict, violence, and social injustice as well as the wide spectrum of conflict intervention, from armed conflict, through governmental and organizational peace-building, to local and interpersonal conflict resolution. The Program also introduces students to strategies for resolving interpersonal, communal and international conflicts peacefully, as well as tactics that promote the common good in a way that addresses the structural origins of violence.

Helpful Links & Resources for Students

Career Center
careercenter.depaul.edu
Loop: 312.362.8437
LPC: 312.325.7431
The Career Center is a great resource to find an internship or job, network with professionals, and get career development assistance.

Center for Intercultural Programs
studentaffairs.depaul.edu/cip/
Follow this link to sign up for the CIP email list and for events calendar.

University Ministry
http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/ministry.aspx
Follow this link for information on Vincentian Community Service and Service Immersion Trips, as well as other resources.

Important LAS Commencement Dates

Cap & Gown Distribution
Monday, June 6 and Tuesday, June 7, 2016
10:00am-6:00pm, both days
Lincoln Park Campus Student Center
2250 N. Sheffield Avenue, Room 120 A&B

Celebration of the Baccalaureate Mass
Friday, June 10, 2016
St. Vincent de Paul Church
1010 W. Webster Avenue
Students, please check in at the Student Center dressed in your caps and gowns at 3:00pm. Guests, please go directly to the church. Mass begins at 4:00pm.

Commencement Weekend Kickoff Party
Friday, June 10, 2016
Lincoln Park Campus Quad
5:00-9:00pm

118th Commencement—Class of 2016
College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences
Sunday, June 12, 2016
Allstate Arena
6920 N. Mannheim Road
Rosemont, IL
Graduates report to the Skyline Room at 7:00am. Processional begins promptly at 8:00am.