

IMMIGRATION ACTION COALITION
Annual Report
May 2015 to April 2016
Submitted by Cheryl Valentine

Goals: The Immigration Action Coalition was formed in 2014 with these goals:

1. to educate ourselves and the UUAA congregation about immigration issues
2. to advocate for immigrant rights
3. to act in ways to make our community more welcoming to all people.

The group meets on the third Saturday of each month and is open to all who are interested.

ACTIONS

Washtenaw ID Project - The IAC worked closely with Synod to kick off the Washtenaw ID project which was developed to help the approximately 38,000 Washtenaw residents who do not have a government issued photo ID. Here's what we did.

1. Hosted a training May 30 for 15 volunteers interested in working at the Washtenaw ID Clinic
2. Volunteered at the ID Clinic. IAC members Arlene Huff, Carol Thomas, Lucia Heinold, Joanna Courteau, Linda Sprankle, Kathryn Doud, and Cheryl Valentine volunteered at the ID Clinic at the Washtenaw County Clerk's office
3. Formed a speaker's bureau to talk about the ID project at community events

Syrian Refugee Collection - Anne Drake spearheaded a collection of household goods and script for refugees settling in our community. Over 100 congregants participated in the month-long drive in January. Three van loads of household goods, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies were donated as well as \$2,678 dollars in script were delivered to Jewish Family Services.

EDUCATION

Immigration: Both Sides - Organized and presented two educational programs.

Immigration: Both Sides on Oct 18 and "Why Not Just Get Legal" on Nov. 22. In the first session Kathryn Doud led a discussion of National immigration issues after a video showing the story of a border Minuteman who lived with an undocumented family for thirty days. During the second session Cesilie Cordovilla presented a power point on why legal immigration is not an option for the approximately 11 million in the US without the proper paperwork. A discussion of local issues followed.

Book Talk: The Book of Unknown Americans. Barb Cherem lead a discussion of the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti reads 2016 book, "The Book of Unknown Americans" on Feb. 21. Participants agreed the novel seemed to give a realistic portrait of the experiences of Latino immigrants in the US.

Connect and Act - Cheryl Valentine, Melanie Harner, and Anne Drake presented a workshop about the Immigration Action Coalition, the challenges we've faced, and the actions we've undertaken as part of the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice's program

Salam Neighbor - sponsored a screening of this documentary on the Syrian refugee camps which showed at the Michigan Theater March 29

"The Washtenaw ID Project and You" an educational program March 20 for our Congregation on the ID project, how it changes lives, and actions you can take

ADVOCACY

Witnessed the jury trial of Ubaldo, a young man who was arrested at 19 for not having ID and deported to Mexico, although he had lived and gone to school most of his life in Michigan. Held a protest outside the courthouse. Worked with BAMN, but they weren't very well organized.

Advocated against Fredy's deportation. Telephoned, wrote letters, and petitioned ICE. Pressured representatives. Protested. So many calls, ICE offices asked us to stop so they could get work done. Our efforts were successful in getting a stay of deportation for this father of three, who would have faced certain violence if deported to his native Honduras.

Witnessed A's Bond Hearing at Immigration Court in Detroit. A's lawyer said that because A has no family here, the judge probably would not have set bond if we hadn't been there to show community support.

List-Serve for political action. Supported justice for immigrants nationwide through petitions and phone calls.