CSJ Center 2015 Symposium in Review

Jennifer Ramos, Associate Professor, Political Science

“We are one…all is one…we are all one…” Kathy Sherman, CSJ

The October Symposium, “People, Planet, Profit—Business Today, Tomorrow—What Next?,” led by the CSJ Center for Reconciliation and Justice, was a beautiful reflection of these lyrics. The 3-day series of keynote speakers, panels and films reminded us that we are all interconnected. In today’s world of globalization, our big and small choices affect those we know and have yet to know, those near and far. Not only through the choices we make but also through the planet we share, our interdependence requires us to see ourselves as one.

Indeed, this is reflected in how the Symposium came to be. A year in the planning, the CSJ Center brought together faculty across campus to brainstorm ideas and design the symposium, within the broad theme of business and justice. True to the Center’s mission of providing a forum for dialogue and education, the CSJ Sisters served as facilitators for wonderful collaborations across the College of Business Administration, Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts, College of Communication and Fine Arts, and the School of Film and Television. I thoroughly enjoyed working with the Sisters and my colleagues on this project; it really did have the feel as if “we are all one.” And my co-planners share this view. Larry Kalbers, R. Chad Dreier Chair in Accounting Ethics, recalls, “I found the experience of planning and participating in the symposium to be amazing. The CSJ Sisters are incredibly warm, thoughtful, and determined…working with my colleagues was extremely collegial and rewarding.”

The importance of the individual and unity were present throughout the program. Though values and profits are often set in contradiction with one another, many of the speakers proposed that they are not necessarily a binary choice. For example, the panel on “Just Employment” discussed how it is possible to have a just employment policy that is compatible with a viable business model. In respecting the dignity of work, we are called at LMU and beyond to provide a just workplace for all employees. Moreover, for-profit businesses can thrive, even when they place their employees first. This view was echoed by Kathy Mazzarella, Chairman, President and CEO of Graybar, from a slightly different perspective. She discussed how an employee ownership model can stimulate innovation and competitiveness without sacrificing core values.

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Putting values first means being consistent in those values, even if it proves challenging. The controversies about ethical management of investments are particularly poignant. As demonstrated in the “Dirty Hands” panel, one of the key debates concerns the investment of values-based organizations and businesses in fossil fuels, which are significant contributors to climate change. While the Symposium highlighted a number of sustainable practices being adopted by businesses and organizations (e.g., responsible sourcing, fair trade), including LMU, this panel reminded us of the importance of transparency and accountability.

While challenges remain in the pursuit of a just society and a sustainable planet, the Symposium offered us the chance to see the possibilities as well; that is, business success can result not in spite of our values, but because of them. Moreover, the stimulating discussions inspired my students, in particular, to think differently about their roles as individuals, employees and future leaders, and perhaps most importantly, to think about their responsibility to others and the planet. For me, this is the real success of the CSJ-LMU collaboration.

HIDDEN HEROES 2015: 
The Language Lesson

Doris Baizley, Hidden Heroes Editor and Writer

To tell the stories of the Hidden Heroes Recognition recipients in our annual presentation, Judith Royer, CSJ and I use the process of making “dramatized narratives” that we started in 2011 and have been developing in our Voices of Justice class at LMU. We select a group of playwrights to interview the recipients and then write short monologues or scenes from the interview transcriptions to be performed in a public staged reading. This year’s Hidden Heroes presented a new challenge, and what we hope will be a continuing feature of our programs: a story told, transcribed, written, and performed in Spanish and English. Our awardee Artemio Luis-Lopez, who works in Facilities Management on the 4th floor of University Hall, speaks some English with Spanish as his first language while David Johann Kim, the writer/actor who would write and perform Artemio’s story, is an English speaker with a little Spanish. With the help of theater artist Guillermo Aviles-Rodriguez the interview was translated as needed by Artemio and David as they spoke with each other, and the final written piece (in English) was translated back into Spanish for Artemio’s comments and consent. For the performance we projected translations of the text (English to Spanish and Spanish to English) so that an all-Spanish or all-English speaking audience would be able to follow it. Guillermo was also a necessary collaborator in helping David make the sensitive cultural and performance choices that were needed for his portrayal of Artemio and his use of language.

The techniques, questions and considerations we learned in putting Artemio’s story on stage will be valuable in all the projects we do with non-English speakers in Voices of Justice as well as in future Hidden Heroes performances. It makes a much wider range of stories possible and provides a way for many more unheard voices to speak. Thanks to Artemio, David and Guillermo for a collaboration that has become a learning experience and a gift to all of us.
In the First Person: 
by Parisa Loftis, ’17

“When words fall short, our artists speak the truth of what lies deep within us. They dance the dance, and sing the song; they tell the story, and paint the vision. They call us to ‘the More.’” – Sister Joanna Carroll, CSJ

On November 7th, all types of artists from all over the campus had an opportunity to share their voice on the subject of human dignity in the fifteenth annual Artists Speak performance. Students representing various fields - dance, theatre, and art - created pieces reflecting the price of human dignity. One student, Brianna Arambula ’16, shared what an opportunity like Artists Speak meant to her as an artist. “Artists Speak is a good place for controversial topics to be presented in an art form. Different art forms like dance, poetry, and skits, allowed for a different perspective on these issues in an emotionally and intellectually engaging manner.”

Brianna, a Senior Film Production major, took part in Sister Judith Royer and Dorie Baizley’s dramatized narrative production known as Voices of Justice. This performance was put on by a semester long class that was split in half; each worked on two different social justice pieces. Brianna’s group focused on homelessness and worked with OPCC (Ocean Park Community Center), a social services agency that addresses the effects of poverty, abuse, neglect and discrimination. The other group from Voices of Justice worked with The Francisco Homes, a transitional housing program that offers hope and support to formerly incarcerated individuals. Screenwriting major, Ian Salazar ’17, explained how he was able to “absorb the wisdom” from the insightful individuals in The Francisco Homes community. To Ian, Artists Speak was a wonderful opportunity where people can start a conversation on social justice.

Another theatrical piece was The New War Zone, written by Senior Theatre Major, Lauren Buckley. Her unique voice gave new insight on mass shootings and gun control. To Lauren, “Artists Speak is an opportunity to create a piece of art focused on an important issue in our society. I wrote The New War Zone to express my feelings on the lack of gun control in our society and the destruction it is causing.”

Other performances included dance pieces: Rung by Sarina Ramirez-Ortiz ’16, Dear Danny by Anthony Languren and That which we share by Abigail Samson. A poem entitled Coffees in Forty-Five Pieces by Michael Robinson, a set design by Mikayla Blanchard, and theatre pieces: Three Simple Steps to Talking to Anyone by Monica Beld and Okay by Nicholas De Los Santos.

As a whole, it was the wonderfully talented LMU students who bravely shared their hearts with the audience and took a stand to discuss controversial matters that brought the fifteenth annual Artists Speak to life.

Upcoming Events

February 4th
Film Series: Cinema and Sacrament
This Changes Everything
Film Viewing at 4:30pm in Life Sciences Building, Auditorium (LSB 120)

February 11th
Film Series: Cinema and Sacrament
Selma
Film Viewing at 7:00pm in Ahmanson Auditorium
Reception and discussion following

February 20th
Voices of Justice Performance – The Francisco Homes
2:30pm – Murphy Hall
Reception following in Dunning Courtyard
Based on dramatized narrative writing from the Fall ’15 Voices of Justice Class

February 21st
Voices of Justice Performance – OPCC (Ocean Park Community Center)
2:30pm – Murphy Hall
Reception following in Dunning Courtyard
Based on dramatized narrative writing from the Fall ’15 Voices of Justice Class

March 18th
St. Joseph’s Day Liturgy and Luncheon
12:10pm – Sacred Heart Chapel, Lunch will follow in Sculpture Garden and CSJ Center for Reconciliation and Justice Open House
3:00pm – 5:00pm, University Hall Suite 2000

March 19th
Time and place TBA
Undergraduate Research Symposium – Voices of Justice Panel Presentation

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“The Center gives tangible witness to the presence and tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange at Loyola Marymount University and in a wounded world...”

Conversations That Enrich Us

This year I have the privilege of engaging in a wonderful interfaith experience entitled “Re-imagining the Legacies of Abraham.” Led by Debra Linesch, Ph.D., from the Graduate Department of Marital and Family Therapy, this monthly gathering of women representing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, provides an opportunity for each woman to explore sacred texts; share creative responses that “help us achieve deeper understandings”; and create, through the use of simple materials, “nonverbal commentary.” At each monthly gathering I find that our conversations go deeper, our artwork becomes more meaningful and our friendship grows. I can only imagine what the fruit of this opportunity might bring. I have a feeling that it well go well beyond our last gathering. Our monthly meeting is held at the Pico Union Project http://www.picounionproject.org/ Check it out to learn about its history, mission, and current programs.

MaryAnne Huepper, CSJ

From the Director

By Judith Royer, CSJ

We have been so blessed at the CSJ Center to work with a myriad of talented, creative, and mission driven people. Fall 2015 again provided us with this opportunity. A highlight of this semester was our newest collaboration with faculty and students from the College of Business Administration in preparation for the 2015 CSJ Symposium on business and justice. As we brought together faculty from across various disciplines to form a committee to design the event, the academic rigor and commitment to justice was palpable and the fruit of their labor was a very successful Symposium. A number of faculty mentioned how much they enjoyed working with colleagues from different disciplines with whom they had only an acquaintance. These encounters remind us of the multiple possibilities that await us as we move into the future.

Spring 2016 was inaugurated with an off-campus event at St. Joseph Center in Orange specifically directed to alumni in Orange County. We worked closely with Alumni Relations to bring the Cinema and Sacrament Series south. Out of a selection of possible films, Inside Out was the film of choice. Alums and their children along with some participants from the neighborhood enjoyed a delicious reception. Tim O’Neil (School of Film and Television) and Michael McNaught (Center for Religion and Spirituality) invited Dr. Darnise Martin and Van Partible ’93 to be respondents after the film. Michael moderated an informative dialogue between the panelists; the audience asked thoughtful questions. What a great event! The success of this event reminded us at the CSJ Center how we might continue to serve the LMU family, not only on campus but in the wider neighborhood. Look for more events like this in the future.

Making Connections

One of the key desires of the CSJ Center is to connect with others and learn about the ways we can support each other. In November, at the invitation of Robert V. Caro, SJ I had the opportunity to meet the current cohort of Companions in Mission and share lunch along with Joan Treacy, RSHM, Anne Hennessy, CSJ and Theresia de Vroom. Sisters Joan and Anne presented a brief presentation about the charisma and history of the two communities. Time was provided for Theresia and me to speak about the Marymount Institute and the CSJ Center. It was a great opportunity for us to share the work of our ministries with the Companions. It made for great synergy and good afternoon of conversation.

MaryAnne Huepper, CSJ