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2015 Heartland Delta Virtual Conference

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2015 Heartland Delta Virtual Conference

On Thursday, May 28, 2015, over six hundred faculty and staff representing twelve Heartland Delta Jesuit Colleges and Universities participated in the first ever Virtual Conference – a day of reflection and conversation about the shared mission in Jesuit education to challenge the globalization of indifference through attentiveness to the poor and vulnerable. Faculty and staff represented the following institutions: Creighton University, John Carroll University, Loyola University Chicago, Loyola University New Orleans, Marquette University, Regis University, Rockhurst University, Saint John's College, Saint Louis University, Spring Hill College, University of Detroit Mercy and Xavier University. Hosted through Rockhurst University, Heartland Delta VII focused on the theme: "Balancing Our Economic Realities with Our Call to the Margins." Keynote speakers and facilitators included:

Fr. Greg Boyle, S. J., Founder and Executive Director of Homeboy Industries
Sr. Peggy O'Neill, S. C., Director of the Center of the Arts for Peace in El Salvador
Fr. Rick Malloy, S. J., Director of Campus Ministries and University Chaplain at the University of Scranton
Dr. Raymond Reyes, Associate Academic Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Gonzaga University
Dr. Antoine Garibaldi, President of the University of Detroit Mercy
Fr. Michael Sheeran, S. J., President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

All presentations are available at www.xavier.edu/heartland-delta-7

Two individuals who participated in Heartland Delta VII provided reflections on their experiences. Dr. Linda Osterlund is the Associate Dean of the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy at Regis University. She served as a

discussion leader among the 52 participants attending the virtual conference at Regis University. Kim Jensen Bohat is the Director of the Service Learning Program in the Center for Teaching and Learning at Marquette University. She addressed all participants after Dr. Garibaldi, President of University of Detroit Mercy, spoke to the conference on the topic, "Remaining Economically Viable as We Respond to Our 'Call to the Margins.'"

The reflections of Dr. Osterlund and Ms. Bohat follow. Also appearing is a reflection from Mr. Ken Phillips, Assistant to the Vice President for Mission at Regis University. Mr. Phillips' "An Examen for My Workday" was shared with the Regis community attending Heartland Delta VII on Friday, May 29, 2015, the day following the Conference.

**Reflections on Heartland Delta VII:
Balancing our Economic Realities with Our Call to the Margins**

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I had the pleasure of attending the Heartland Delta virtual conference with 52 other members of the Regis University community. When it came time to share summaries from each of the participating institutions, I was invited by our group to share a reflection of our time together.

“Only when we have gone inside ourselves and experienced healing our own wounds can we then give voice to the pain of others” in the words of Henri Nouwen author of The Wounded Healer.

Father Boyle challenged us to find places of commonality with others, rather than focus on what separates us from one another. It is helpful to be reminded that we all need healing, and that we are all “the other” and experience marginalization on some level. We ourselves need to be able to open ourselves up to be vulnerable – to expose our weaknesses with humility. Our ability to self-reflect and to allow ourselves to be exposed, improves our ability to remain non-judgmental of others in their weaknesses and allows a safe place for vulnerability, and a place of common connection. We cannot begin steps toward solidarity, without first beginning with deep reflection and listening to our inner self.

With this increased self-awareness, we become aware of the margins that exist within ourselves. How are we aware of our own privilege and biases towards others? In what ways do we feel marginalized by others? These are the things that separate us from God and others. Being conscious of these thoughts, feelings, and attitudes we can then move into new territory. We hope to move from complaining about annoying behaviors of others, to celebrating our differences. We hope to move from our focus on scarcity and fears of not enough (not enough time, not enough money, not enough sleep, not enough...fill in the blank!) to a feeling of gratitude and welcoming opportunities to share ourselves and receive others.

Going into the margins we move from within ourselves, to our families and friends, neighbors

and co-workers within our colleges and universities. Practically speaking, we want to GO FROM Regis University, out into the world, into the margins. We want our students to see us living lives that matter – with purpose and meaning, and finding vocation which serves others for the common good.

At Regis University, our Cultivate Health project is an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to going into the margins. Cultivate Health was launched by Regis after receiving a nearly \$1 million grant from the Colorado Health Foundation. The neighborhood area around Regis University consists of a food desert, and a federally recognized Health Professional Shortage Area, including a lack of behavioral health services. The Cultivate Health project is an opportunity for Regis to collaborate with many other service organizations to provide healthy food, an active lifestyle, and integrated health care services in our community.

At Regis University, we will continue to define our success by our faithfulness and the transformation of ourselves, our students, and our community. We hope the opportunities that are found at Regis prepare students to be culturally responsive and to bring tenderness into the margins – whether it is on campus, in the Cultivate Health neighborhood, in our beautiful state of Colorado, or across the world. 🌍

Examining Our Institutional Heart

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Thank you, President Garabaldi, for your insights. My name is Kim Jensen Bohat, and I am the Director of the Service Learning Program in the Center for Teaching and Learning here at Marquette, and I am an adjunct professor in the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences where I teach Introduction to Social Welfare and Justice.

Here in Milwaukee, we share a lot of unfortunate commonalities with Detroit, and with many of the cities where our other Jesuit schools reside. Milwaukee has the worst black and white employment gap in the nation. Out of 102 of the largest metro areas, we have the worst racial and economic residential segregation. Black and white disparities in infant mortality are among the country's highest. We are the ninth poorest city in the nation and over 42.6% of our children live in poverty. Only 60% of our high school students graduate here in Milwaukee, and the graduation rates for blacks and Hispanics have been on the decline in recent years. More than half of African American men in their thirties are either incarcerated or have been incarcerated.

There is no doubt that injustice overflows at our doorstep. As I read some of those statistics to my students in my Introduction Social Welfare and Justice Course early in the semester, I like to watch their response. There are always some that look like a deer in the head lights as they try to digest these numbers. There are some that glaze over not wanting to believe or trying to block out the immensity of inequality those stats suggest, and then there are a few that nod knowingly because they grew up here in Milwaukee and have seen these things up close and personal. The harder part to observe in those first classes is what else is going on in their heads and in their hearts.

Are they blaming the victims or do they see the institutionalized nature of oppression?

Are they questioning their own privilege or bias?

Are they sitting back and saying, "Oh my gosh I am so lucky that was not my experience?"

Do they get stuck and shut off with their own guilt or fear?

Are they thinking about how inequality impacts them and how they might use their talents, gifts, and resources to contribute to working for change?

Do they want to be a savior or do they understand the complexity of solidarity, kinship, and interconnectedness?

Do they turn and isolate themselves from a city and the people the media and sometimes even their families have taught them to be afraid of?

Are they frustrated and angry with their classmates' lack of understanding, awareness, or compassion?

So my students and I begin our semester long journey together, and embark on better understanding what those statistics really mean. We begin unpacking injustice and doing the personal gut checks that are necessary in this work. We engage with our community through service learning, we have intense and sometimes heated discussions. We read, we listen, and we reflect on our context and experience. We grow because of each other. We work to understand what those statistics mean, to see the humanity tied up in those numbers, to explore our values

and new knowledge, and then understand that this new knowledge requires us to work for justice.

Engaging with the real is messy, heart-wrenching, disorienting work. It is not just tough for our students. It is tough for us faculty and administrators too. As Fr. Dean Brackley says, “It wrecks us.” It alters us. But we cannot let our students be the only ones who examine those tough questions. We have to do as Dean Brackley suggests, take care of our own cognitive hygiene or cognitive liberation, and do this internal check-up of our own values and goals. This is important to consider both personally—in our work with teaching, researching, and administering—and also as an institution and member of the larger Jesuit network. Doing Community Engagement work without this sort of critical reflection does not allow our authentic self to be at the table. So let us take a minute and think about our own answers to these tough questions:

Who do we overlook and leave out in our community engagement and justice work? Who do we need to bring in from the margins?

What are our assumptions, biases, and blinders about Milwaukee, our neighbors, the nature of community engagement work?

How might we abuse our power and privilege? What have been the historical consequences?

When and how do we react out of fear or the need for prestige instead of a quest for mutual understanding and kinship?

When have we gotten stuck, shut off, or went the easier route because it is too painful, intimidating, or scary?

Do we enter our work as saviors and experts or as an individual and an institution that is willing to stand with our community partners and to listen?

Are we frustrated and angry with our colleagues lack of understanding or opposing viewpoints?

What is our responsibility to respond and create change around the inequality that exists in our community? How do we share our talents and gifts with our community’s hunger and needs?

As the Director of the Service Learning Program I am part of the Task Force on Community Engagement, and also part of a team that is trying to create a new community engagement database to track everything that is going on here, I know how much Marquette is doing in our city and internationally. We have been awarded the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, and every year receive the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with recognition in the interfaith, economic development, education, and general community service categories. We offer a vast array of clinics that serve the community, most of our students participate locally, nationally, and internationally in service learning and/or community service programs before they graduate, our faculty are engaged in research that directly impacts the wellbeing of our neighbors, and sit on boards throughout the city helping to guide vital decision making. As someone who is currently dealing with this huge data set, it is nearly impossible to get our arms around all of the community engagement work we do. In two weeks I will meet with the other AJCU Service Learning Directors, and I will hear about all the great engagement activities undertaken by our sister schools.

But with the staggering statistics that impact our beautiful city, neighbors, and our larger world it is not a time to pat ourselves on the back for doing this work. To engage with the realness at our door step, we must constantly ask ourselves these deeper questions. We as a body of individuals that make up our great institutions must do our homework and push beyond the superficial or the status quo. As we set agendas for programming and projects we have to examine our motives and assess our true impacts. Our students learn from our example, and as uncomfortable as it can be,

we must model that our heads, hands, and hearts are guided by faith and a quest for justice so that we can continue to grow and learn from each other. 

Milwaukee is the ninth poorest city in the US.

Glauber, Bill, and Kevin Crowe. "Milwaukee Poverty a Regional Problem, Mayor Tom Barrett Says." *Journal Sentinel* [Milwaukee] 18 Sept. 2013.

29.9% of people in Milwaukee live in poverty. 42.6% of children in Milwaukee live in poverty.

Glauber, Bill, and Kevin Crowe. "Milwaukee Poverty a Regional Problem, Mayor Tom Barrett Says." *Journal Sentinel* [Milwaukee] 18 Sept. 2013.

Milwaukee has the greatest segregation of the poor from everyone else than any other metro region.

Florida, Richard. "The U.S. Cities Where the Poor Are Most Segregated From Everyone Else." *The Atlantic Cities*. N.p., 24 Mar. 2014.

Milwaukee is the most segregated city in the US.

Jacobs, Harrison, Andy Kiersz, and Gus Lubin. "The 25 Most Segregated Cities In America." *Business Insider*. Business Insider, Inc, 22 Nov. 2013.

Wisconsin has been ranked the worst state in the country for racial disparities between black and white children.

Race for Results: Policy Report. Rep. Baltimore: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014.

Milwaukee Public schools' graduation rate was 62.8% in 2012.

"Milwaukee Public Schools Annual Summary." *Milwaukee Public Schools*.

79.7% of children in Milwaukee Public Schools qualify for free or reduced lunches.

"Milwaukee Public Schools Annual Summary." *Milwaukee Public Schools*.

Milwaukee has the worst employment gap. Milwaukee has the worst incarceration rate.

"Report Card" *Greater Together*
<http://greatertogogether.me/the-report-card/>

Created by AIGA Wisconsin. 2015

Black and white disparities in infant mortality are among the country's highest.

Crocker Stephenson. "For Milwaukee's Children, An Early Grave." *Journal Sentinel* [Milwaukee] 22 Jan. 2011.

An Examen for My Workday

Ken Phillips
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1) Centering:

I take a moment
to slow down,
to shut the door,
to turn off the phone,
to turn off the computer monitor,
to breathe,
to ask God's help
for making me
aware
of God's
presence
in
this
day
of my
work...

2) Gratitude:

I recall
the blessings of the day --
moments
of clarity,
of collegiality,
of progress,
of increased understanding,
of good
communication,
of forgiveness...
and I thank God,
simply
and honestly...

3) Review:

I recall
the events of my workday
where I felt
God's presence --
camaraderie
with co-workers,
beauty
in my work environment,
some generosity extended,
a moment of
unexpected grace,
a gift of kind laughter,
a tension broken through,
a feeling that I was
not alone,
a sense of strength
in the face of adversity,
a feeling of peace
in the presence of chaos...

I also remember
moments where
I resisted
to grow in love—

a grudge I nourished,
a hard word spoken,
a prejudice I fostered,
anger that went unchecked,
bitterness that I fed,
criticism given
without cause,
work done begrudgingly
or dishonestly...

4) Sorrow:

I recall
moments
in my work day

words,
actions,
decisions...
for which
I am
genuinely
sorry.

I allow myself
to acknowledge
that I
screwed up...

5) Forgiveness:

I ask God
for forgiveness.
I ask for healing
if that's needed.
I consider
the forgiveness
I may need
to give co-workers,
colleagues,
superiors...

I consider
what forgiveness
I need to give
to others.

I forgive myself
for shortcomings
and mistakes.

I let go...

6) Grace:

I ask God
for the grace I need
for tomorrow's work,
for the work of my life.

I make the intention
to be attentive to ways
God may be eager
to make my work place
a better environment through me...

I make a commitment to be open to change,
to God's intervention
in my habits,
attitudes,
patterns...

I breathe...



Based on the Examen summary by Jim Martin, S.J.

