

NETWORK CONNECTION

SECOND QUARTER 2021

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE...
2020 ANNUAL REPORTS!



**ADVOCATING FOR THE COMMON GOOD
WITH HOPE AND ENOUNTER**



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STAY CONNECTED WITH NETWORK

We want to make sure that we can reach you not only by mail, but also digitally. Update your email and phone number by going to www.networklobby.org/connect. Thanks!

ON THE COVER

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS speaks at a Nuns on the Bus event at Hope CommUnity Center in Apopka Florida in October 2018.
Photo by Colleen Ross, NETWORK Lobby.

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Advancing the Common Good Together

Conversation and Connection Can Transform Us

SISTER SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS

"To speak of a 'culture of encounter' means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone."

Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, Paragraph 216

What a treat to come to my last column in *Connection* magazine! After more than 16 years, it is a joy to look back at what we together have accomplished in our work for justice together. Without a doubt, the high points of my time at NETWORK have been so many events in various parts of our country that gave me the opportunity to meet and grow in relationship with all of you, the members of this Spirit-filled community. Whether through Nuns on the Bus, NETWORK's business roundtables, or our rural roundtables, we have met so many of you!

You have shaped our advocacy. You anchored our work in the lived reality of your lives, the lives of your neighbors and your communities. NETWORK, and our movement for justice, is stronger because of that. As I look back, I see this "culture of encounter" at the heart of our advocacy.

I vividly remember the night before our very first Nuns on the Bus trip in 2012. We were in Des Moines, Iowa to begin our journey and two Humility of Mary Sisters, Jeanie and Elaine Hegendorf, insisted we could not just start the bus tour the next morning with our first event. No! They said we had to have a blessing of the pilgrimage. Hundreds of people showed up, demonstrating right from the start that the true value of the bus trips was creating spaces for connection.

At this inaugural bus blessing, I remember a conversation with a woman and her family who had driven all the way from Omaha, Nebraska. She was so concerned that the federal budget cuts we were fighting against would affect her son's wellbeing, who was disabled. She wanted us to know that that the federal budget debate was not about dollars, it was about people.

At the end of the second Nuns on the Bus trip, which was about immigration reform, a speaker at our closing rally in San Francisco told the crowd his grandmother's story. His grandmother had immigrated to the United States from China in the twentieth century, but she was detained for months on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay because her husband who was already living in San Francisco could not prove they were married. Her grandson recounted his grandparents' months of anguish. Eventually, two Protestant women visiting detainees took up her case. Working with the woman and her husband, they finally broke through the bureaucracy and the family reunited. Once again, we were reminded that ordinary peoples' determination to end an injustice can make change.

(continued on page 9)



Notable Quotables

What justice-seekers have been saying this quarter

"People of faith have a duty to end state-sanctioned violence and the systemic white supremacy it stems from."

Sr. Mara Rutten, RSM on the House passage of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

"We must boldly declare justice can never be about just us."

Rev. Traci Blackmon, speaking during a Black History Month Faithful Democracy Town Hall

"We look ahead in our uniquely American way – restless, bold, optimistic – and set our sights on the nation we know we can be and we must be."

President Joe Biden speaking to the country in his Inaugural Address

"A vote is a kind of prayer for the kind of world we desire for ourselves and for our children, and our prayers are stronger when we pray together."

Senator Raphael Warnock (D-GA) speaking in support of voting rights in his first speech on the Senate floor

"Even in dark times, we not only dream, we do. We not only see what has been, we see what can be."

Vice President Kamala Harris speaking the evening of Inauguration Day

"And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know, to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside."

Amanda Gorman, Inaugural poet, reciting her poem "The Hill We Climb"

"In these dark months of the pandemic, let us listen to the Risen Lord as he invites us to begin anew and never lose hope."

Pope Francis's Easter Tweet (@Pontifex)

"We need to be a Church that rejects the very public displays of whiteness that our Church associates with being Catholic and centers Catholics of color, in order to become the universal Church we think we are."

Olga M. Segura, speaking to Commonweal Magazine about her new book, "Birth of a Movement: Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church"

"This moment invites us to finally address pervasive, institutionalized anti-Black racism. It calls us to transform our society, our laws, our systems, including the immigration system."

NETWORK Strategic Advisor Joan Neal, writing in a NETWORK blog during Black Immigrant Advocacy Week

"Wrapping my Asian siblings in my arms today. You should not live fearing unspeakable horror. We must root out the white supremacy this nation let fester."

Rev. Jacqui Lewis, PhD tweeting (@RevJacquiLewis) after the murders of six Asian women in Atlanta Georgia

"Transforming our personal ways of thinking, praying, acting, as well as transforming our politics, requires clearing space to imagine."

Sr. Tracey Horan, SP, writing about building our immigration system anew in NETWORK's Lent series

"We will not rest until the voices of every woman and girl is heard, respected, and empowered."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (CA-12) in her International Women's Day message

Celebrating Sister Simone Campbell's TROUBLE-MAKING FOR JUSTICE

From health care to immigration to economic justice, in her 16 years as Executive Director of NETWORK, Sister Simone traveled thousands of miles across the United States and spent hundreds of hours lobbying in Washington, D.C. to build support for legislation that makes our country more equitable and inclusive. Friends and fellow justice-seekers came together to honor her commitment to advancing the common good.

Watch video tributes to Sister Simone from Members of Congress: www.networklobby.org/CelebrateSrSimone



Rep. Chu speaks at a 2018 Nuns on the Bus Town Hall in Pasadena, California.



Senator Markey and Sister Simone discuss the NETWORK 2016 Congressional Voting Record with former NETWORK lobbyist Sister Marge Clark, BVM.



Sister Simone and NETWORK staff meet with Rep. Jayapal to celebrate her 100% score on NETWORK's 2018 Congressional Voting Record.

Over the past 16 years as the Executive Director of NETWORK and as the founder of “Nuns on the Bus,” Sister Simone Campbell has fought tirelessly and passionately for the most marginalized among us, and has helped create a more just, equal, and compassionate America. Through her work in helping pass and preserve the Affordable Care Act, her advocacy for a progressive tax system to support America’s working families, and her efforts to protect voting rights and civil rights, Sister Simone has left a legacy that won’t soon be forgotten. And during the past year in particular, Sister Simone has been a fierce advocate for low-income families and communities of color that have been devastated by the crises of COVID-19, structural racism, and economic inequality. We have been fortunate to have had Sister Simone in our corner to advance progressive policies.

Rep. Judy Chu

CALIFORNIA'S 27th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sister Simone embodies all of the values that 20 years of Catholic school taught me a person ought to strive for: grace, advocacy, and service. For decades, Sister Simone’s work has touched millions of Americans. Her leadership is deeply rooted in her faith and she is a powerhouse who has helped advance progressive policies that have lifted up so many across the country.

She was instrumental in the passage of the Affordable Care Act, bringing together religious leaders on behalf of the belief that health care is a right and not a privilege. Her Nuns on the Bus tour showed us all what it meant to truly live your values. I will forever admire Sister Simone’s bravery and leadership.

Senator Ed Markey

MASSACHUSETTS

I want to recognize the incredible leadership and achievement of my fierce friend, our fierce champion, Sister Simone. Sister Simone, your 16 years of work with NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice has been transformative. Your clear, strong, and compelling leadership — on not just stating our values, but on taking action and organizing for what you believe in — has inspired people across our country. You have been crucial to changing the narrative and helping to advance important legislation and progressive ideas on health care, immigration, and fair tax reform.

Your career is like a visionary North Star for what is truly possible when you put your heart, your values, and your organizing muscle into achieving justice. It has been such an honor to be in these struggles with you.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal

WASHINGTON'S 7th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

(continued on page 6)



Sister Simone, you are one of my sheros! All of the work you did to help the Affordable Care Act pass and all of the work that you've done on so many critical issues like immigration, your leadership has been stellar. I want to tell you how much we have appreciated, admired, respected, and hope to emulate your wonderful leadership. Thank you for your leadership and thank you for all the work you have done.

Rep. Karen Bass

CALIFORNIA'S 37th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

A Letter from President Joe Biden

In a letter to Sister Simone, President Joe Biden wrote, "As Catholics we are called to serve rather than be served, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers. You exemplify these tenets of our faith and I am so grateful for the passion you bring to everything you do. Your support and friendship mean the world. God bless you."



Stepping forward as a person of faith and putting yourself in the arena of public policy I know at times is not easy, but it has made such an incredible difference for our country. That is undeniable.

I feel privileged that you and I had the chance to work together to advance democracy reform because you appreciate that lifting up the voices of every person in our country — and in our democracy — is a matter of morality. I want to thank you for your great work there. It has made a huge difference to getting us to the point we are at right now, when the prospects of broad, meaningful democracy reform are within our reach. Thank you so much for that. Thank you for all that you've done.

Rep. John Sarbanes

MARYLAND'S 3rd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Sister Simone, you have spent 16 years being the guiding star at NETWORK. Thank you so much for everything you have done to advance the cause of social justice and to preach the Gospel - not just through words but more importantly through deeds and actions. For decades, NETWORK has been a shining example of how to bring people together, to make change happen at the grassroots level. Under Sister Simone's leadership, the Nuns on the Bus campaign launched tours across America to fight Paul Ryan's cruel budget, to raise awareness against the forces of bigotry and racism in America, and to make sure that people had their voices heard in 2020, even in the middle of the pandemic.

Pope Francis says that good Catholics "meddle in politics," so Sister Simone, and all of you at NETWORK: Thank you for meddling.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer
NEW YORK



Rep. Clyburn participates in a community roundtable and rally with the Nuns on the Bus in Columbia, South Carolina in 2018.

I celebrate the legacy of Sister Simone. It is a legacy I started to share back in 2009, when I began working with her on the Affordable Care Act. I remember many of those discussions very well, and when that Act was finally signed into law, we continued that relationship in my work as Chair of the Democratic Faith Working Group. Working with Sister Simone throughout all of this has been a pleasure.

Sister Simone has been a blessing to me and so many others. It's also said, we are but the sum total of our experiences; it frames who and what we are. We can be no more and no less than our experiences allow us to be. My experiences with Sister Simone allow me to be a better person, and I'm sure there are hundreds and even thousands of people who can testify to the same.

Rep. James Clyburn
SOUTH CAROLINA'S 6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Rep. DeLauro speaks at the 2015 Nuns on the Bus Lobby Day on Capitol Hill.

Sister Simone defies all attempts at categorization. She is a religious leader, a sublime poet, a high-flying attorney, a fearless advocate, and an indefatigable campaigner. Throughout her life, Sister Simone has made an indelible mark on the lives of millions – in the United States and around the globe.

She is a woman of God – and by so a woman of the people, who understands that the Church is not simply comprised of people. She understands that the Church *is* the people – the People of God.

Sister Simone will always be a champion for social justice, consistently advocating for women's rights, affordable health care, and systemic change. I will forever cherish you and your unwavering commitment to helping others.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro
CONNECTICUT'S 3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Those who need protection don't have a limousine lobbyist, but thanks to Sister Simone, they have a bus. With Sister Simone at the wheel, the destination has been economic and social justice, more health care, and peace in our world. Her drive is an inspiration. And the nuns and their allies have not just been on the bus, but out in the community to listen, to learn, and to respond.

Having Sister Simone as a partner sometimes meant that we delivered relief from Congress, and often just meant that we prevented more harm from being done. We always saw her assure that every member of Congress was being monitored on the most significant social justice issues. While no single person could take her place, she has inspired many to step up.

Her work, her vision ensures that we can continue to close the economic gap, the healthcare gap, and the justice gap in this country. I'm inspired by Sister Simone's work lifting many out of hardship, awed by her leadership, and honored by her friendship. All the best.

Rep. Lloyd Doggett
TEXAS'S 35TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Senator Brown speaks at the 2020 closing national Rally for Spirit-Filled Voters.

Few people understand the connection between our faith and workers' rights and civil rights as deeply as Sister Simone. My favorite Bible verse is Matthew 25, when Jesus said "When I was hungry you fed me, when I was thirsty you gave me something to drink, what you did for the least of these..." and then I realized, that just doesn't sound right. Jesus didn't think — nor did Muhammad, nor did Buddha, nor did Maimonides — think that some people are worth more than other people. So I came upon a few years ago on a different translation of the Bible, The Poverty and Justice Bible, and it went like this, "Jesus said 'When I was hungry you fed me, when I was thirsty you gave me drink, when I was in prison you visited me. What you did for those who seemed less important, you did for me.'" And I think that is such an important difference. We know that for Sister Simone and her vision of the world, no one is worth less than any other to Sister Simone. You live those values every day.

You've organized people of faith around compassion and progressive policies. You've always fought for the most vulnerable among us. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Sister Simone.

Senator Sherrod Brown
OHIO

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Sister Simone and NETWORK staff meet with Rep. Lofgren.

I want to thank Sister Simone for your leadership that has engaged people of faith as they advocate for just and compassionate policies. Over the past decade the Nuns on the Bus campaign has accomplished a lot. You helped advocate for and defend the Affordable Care Act, you brought attention to fair tax reform, and you worked to protect the most vulnerable members of our community.

Nuns on the Bus has consistently helped raise the voices of people who have been ignored for too long. As chair of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, I have to specifical-

ly thank you for your work for pursuing humane immigration policies. People of faith, led in no small part by the Nuns on the Bus, played a critical role in denouncing the Trump administration's cruel family separation policy. Your voices brought moral clarity to the obligations we have to asylum seekers, to refugees, and to other immigrants fleeing violence and looking to build a better life for their families. Your thoughtfulness continues to inform my ongoing work to make our nation's immigration system more fair.

I'd also like to thank you for your strong support of H.R.1, the For The Peo-

In December 2017, Sister Simone stood by my side as I spoke at my first "big" press conference with then-Leader Nancy Pelosi. Sister Simone nodded in quiet encouragement as I asked Congress to protect our children with complex medical needs and disabilities. She later invited us to her office at NETWORK Lobby, and asked us to teach her organization about our children and what they needed. Over the next four years, we found there was always room for our families on NETWORK Lobby's national "Nuns on the Bus" tours, and at stop after stop Sister Simone lifted our families' voices on her platform. She lent us her strength and amplified our message, adopting our cause as one of her own.

In our quest to make this world a better place through the work of Lit-

tle Lobbyists, Sister Simone has been a constant support and source of inspiration. Though I know we Little Lobbyists and so many others will miss Sister Simone's leadership, I also know she will always be with us. I can think of no better way to honor her than by recommitting ourselves to following her charge –

"So my friends, can we commit in this moment to exercise joy, to claim our passion, to have curiosity about our neighbors and then, share it around. Because if we each do our part, we the people will triumph, we the people are what our nation needs, and we the people will make the difference. Let's do it together."

Thank you, Sister Simone.

Laura LeBrun Hatcher

SIMON'S MOM AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR LITTLE LOBBYISTS

ple Act. As I shepherded the package of pro-democracy and anti-corruption reforms through the Committee on House Administration in both the 116th and 117th Congressional sessions, I was fortunate to have you fighting to eliminate barriers to the ballot box. You were fighting alongside me.

Throughout your 16 years with NETWORK, you've consistently highlighted how our often miscommunicated and ethical debates can be quite simple and quite aligned with religious fundamentals: 'honor thy neighbor'. I've long been inspired by your tireless work to protect those who are marginalized in the United States and around the world. I join so many in celebrating and honoring your decades of service. Thank you, thank you, for fighting to make the world a better place.

Rep. Zoe Lofgren

CALIFORNIA'S 19th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Laura LeBrun Hatcher speaks at a press conference in the Capitol with her family on one side of the podium and Sister Simone, Elena Hung (co-founder of Little Lobbyists), and Ady Barkan (healthcare advocate) on the other.



NETWORK Annual Report 2020

NETWORK educates, organizes, and lobbies for social and economic transformation. We are rooted in Catholic Social Justice and open to all who share our passion. We value women's leadership, welcome people from secular and religious backgrounds, affirm LGBTQ+ identities, and engage in the ongoing work to become an anti-racist organization.



Dear NETWORK Supporters,

What a historic year 2020 was for NETWORK and our country! Little did we know what the year would hold for us in January and February, when, among other things, I testified in front of the House Oversight Committee on child hunger and poverty, and rolled out our Rural Roundtable report. Then, as we began planning the rest of the year, BOOM...the devastating COVID-19 pandemic struck, and the entire world changed. As we struggled to keep our staff and families healthy, work from home, conduct virtual lobby visits, and do workshops via Zoom, our teams were amazingly nimble, and the work continued.

Most of our year was focused on the presidential election. Not since the early founding of NETWORK has our Board of Directors taken a position on a presidential candidate – but this year was different! We were called to speak out against the re-election of Donald Trump to a second term. Our Nuns on the Bus tour went virtual with the message “Who We Elect Matters,” and we launched the Equally Sacred Priorities scorecard – training hundreds of people to become multi-issue voters. With our new Pope Francis Voter campaign, we expanded our reach to 2.3 million Catholic voters through social media ads and learned that when the Spirit moves us to take bold actions, resources and support follow. **We made a difference by helping to shift the Catholic vote by as much as 7% in critical states.**

So to the NETWORK community I say: celebrate your successes this year. Let us re-commit to working together with even more vigor to make systemic change by rooting out the racial inequity and economic divides that have been made so clear in this pandemic. As 2020 showed us, we can make change happen if we work together.

Thank you!

S. Simone Campbell, SSJ

Reaching Catholic Swing Voters: Be a Multi-Issue Voter

Our “Pope Francis Voter” digital ads were seen 8 million times by 2.3 million targeted moderate and conservative Catholic swing voters in key districts, directing voters to our new website with a quiz.

On popefrancisvoter.org, we signed up 5,193 people for election emails, gaining new supporters.

EQUALLY SACRED PRIORITIES
FOR VOTERS IN THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Equally sacred are...	
TRUMP	BIDEN
Protects the Affordable Care Act	Protects the Affordable Care Act
Opposes cuts to anti-violence programs	Opposes cuts to anti-violence programs
Supports the right to choose	Supports the right to choose
Opposes discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and disabled people	Opposes discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and disabled people
Opposes the death penalty	Opposes the death penalty

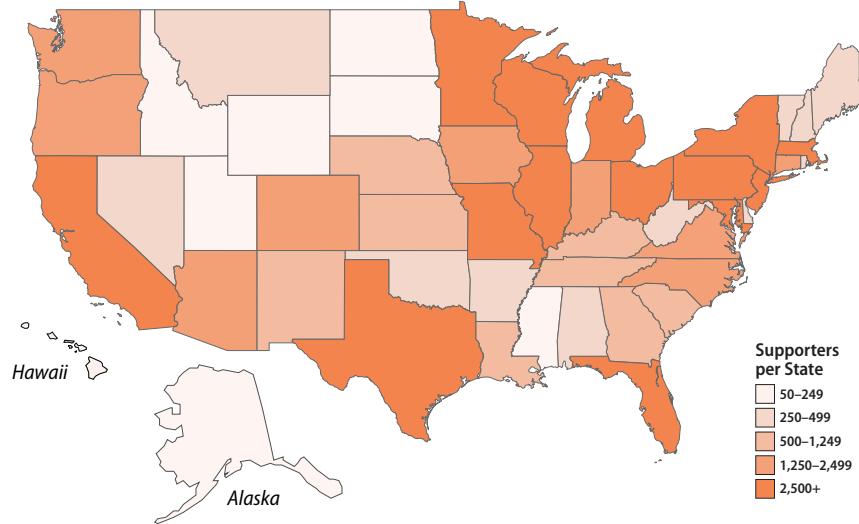
6:51 PM · Oct 30, 2020 254 Retweets 49 Quote Tweets 794 Likes

We also connected with Catholic voters through our Equally Sacred Scorecard that was published in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese — and had over 50,000 views online.

NETWORK is two organizations with one mission: NETWORK Advocates is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible organization and NETWORK Lobby is a 501(c)(4) organization. The two sister organizations work closely together to further our movement for justice and peace.

OUR NETWORK Community

We were honored to have more than 95,000 supporters across the country in 2020

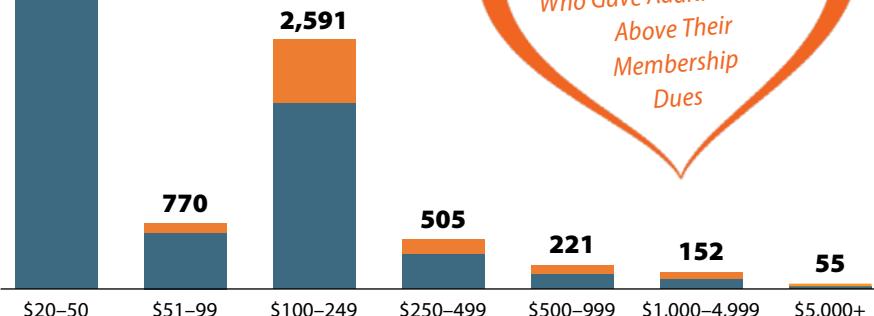


5,447

Thanks to our 9,741 members* in 2020

*Basic Membership is \$50 (\$20 if senior, student, or limited income)

- NETWORK Lobby
- NETWORK Advocates



3,276 first-time donors

A Sister-Spirit welcome to our newest members!

623 GEMs

People who participated in the **Giving Every Month** program

2,262 Loyalty Society

People who have given consecutively for five years or more

Our Work By The Numbers

3.67 million emails sent to NETWORK supporters in **177** email blasts

653,217 visits to the NETWORK websites by **553,718** visitors

260,210 NETWORK text messages sent to advocates

33,673 Connection issues mailed to NETWORK members

13,608 calls to Members of Congress by NETWORK activists

9,037 additional actions taken (emails to Congress, petitions signed) by NETWORK activists

13,208 new followers to NETWORK, Nuns on the Bus, and Sister Simone social media accounts

2,660 press hits highlighting NETWORK's work/positions

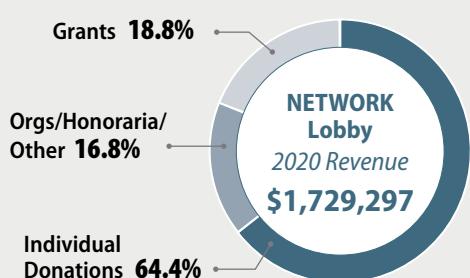
1,080 activists attended trainings, presentations, and webinars given by NETWORK staff

392 meetings with Congressional policymakers (including **132** in-district by NETWORK activists)

231 pieces of legislation supported/opposed through sign-on letters, bill endorsements, and vote recommendations

115 blogs published on NETWORK's website

Where Our Financial



In 2020, NETWORK Lobby investments had \$82,182 in unrealized gain and \$206,120 in a PPP loan, not included in this chart

Bread & Roses

~ S O C I E T Y ~

Members of NETWORK's Bread and Roses Society play a vital role in building the justice movement for many years to come. By planning to remember NETWORK in their will or estate plans, members make substantial, enduring commitments to our community's long-term work to create a society that promotes justice and the dignity of all in the shared abundance of God's creation.

For more information on how to make a planned gift to NETWORK,
please contact us at
development@networklobby.org.

Alice and Robert Beezat

Kim+ and Stephen Benoit

Margaret Betz

James Biechler

Carol Ann+ and Lee J. Breyer

Derek Coelho

Susan Doherty

Albert Eisch

Jean Hamann

Jane Houtman

Mary and Calbert Hubbard

Alice Kitchen

Dr. Norma LaSalle

Anne Laurance

Sarah Marin

Rita Middendorf

Elizabeth Morancy

Fr. John Oesterle

Rosemarie Pace

Suzanne Polen

Bernadette Powell

Noraleen Renauer

Linda Rich

Barbara and Brian Roos

Jean Sammon

Fr. Tony Schumacher+

Imelda Smith

Rev. Charles Topper

Bernadette Tourtual

Carol Watchler

Francine Wickes

Amy and Stephen Zeder

Dr. Jerome Zurek

+ deceased



IN MEMORIAM

We honor the memory of those whose estates supported NETWORK in 2020. We also recognize those who were remembered in 2020 through gifts from relatives and friends.

We are honored to be entrusted with their legacies, which will sustain our work for many years to come.

Estate Gifts

Rev. Daniel Flaherty

Roberta and John Hydar

Rev. Robert J. Jones, C.M.

In Memory

Maureen McGrath Aggeler

Ralph J. LaFave

Anna Amendola

James MacDevitt

Rev. John B. Barasinski

Carole Marchesano

Hester Book

Barbara Marquardt

Noah Brisson

Pete McClernon

Nora Cahalane

Patricia Moore

Bill Cole

Robert X Morrell, Jr.

Nicolás Colón

Barbara Munjas

David Creps

Kathleen Murphy

Carl DeVivo

LuAnn Muzio

Eileen S. Dorman

Elena Natalizia

Rick Doyle

Charles P. Paley

Joseph Fein

David Perlman

Sr. Patricia Fillenwarth, SP

Eileen Shea

Martha Gardner

Virginia Shea

Stephen Groch

Ken Staack

Rose Heck

Philip Stephan

Carol Hession

Nancy Thomas

Michael Mark Hobson

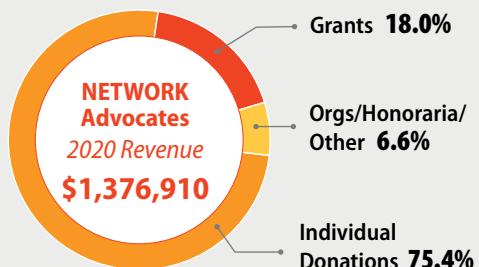
Ruth Young

Shirley Katz-Cohen

Sr. Carole Marie Kelly, OSF

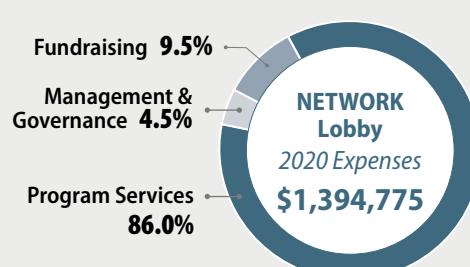
Sr. Catherine Marie Kreta, CSJ

Support Comes From



In 2020, NETWORK Advocates investments had \$218,388 in unrealized gain, not included in this chart

How Your Financial Support Impacts Our Mission





Nuns on the Bus 2020 The Virtual Tour

By the Numbers

55 Catholic Sisters involved in Nuns on the Bus 2020

63 Events: **5** Rallies, **25** Site Visits, **5** Dialogues Across Geographic Divides, **28** Town Halls for Spirit-Filled Voters

Majority of site visits conducted with organizations led by people of color

EARNED MEDIA



Weekends with Alex Witt



AM Joy

3 Appearances on MSNBC

423 Articles

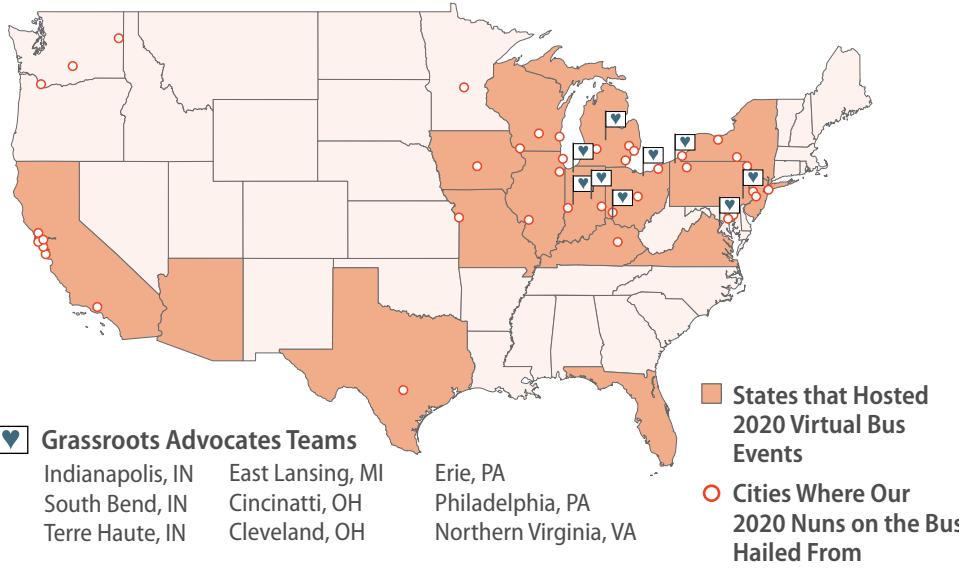
405.6K Social Shares

8.44M Journalist Reach

NETWORK and Nuns on the Bus were covered in:

The New York Times, the Associated Press, NPR, Forbes, The Hill, Sojourners, Global Sisters Report, the San Antonio Express-News, and the Kansas City Star

Where We Worked and Traveled (Virtually) This Year



Guests "On the Bus"

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Senator Cory Booker
Senator Sherrod Brown
Rep. James Clyburn
Rep. Rosa DeLauro
Mary Kay Henry (SEIU)

Randi Weingarten (AFT)
Valarie Kaur
Lisa Sharon Harper
Rabbi Jonah Pesner
Protect Our Care
Health Care Voter

Little Lobbyists
Center for American Progress
UnidosUS
Sr. Helen Prejean
Sr. Joan Chittister

TOP 5 SITE VISITS BY LIVE VIEWERS

- Homeboy Industries, LOS ANGELES, CA
- Angry Tias and Abuelas, RIO GRANDE VALLEY, TX
- Saint Joseph's Neighborhood Center, ROCHESTER, NY
- New Hour for Women and Children, BRENTWOOD, NY
- Progress Iowa, DES MOINES, IA

Nuns on the Bus: The Interactive Experience

More than 1,300 registered participants!



NETWORK
NETWORK LOBBY FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

NETWORK
NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice

820 First Street NE, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20002-8065
202-347-9797 (main)
202-347-9864 (fax)

info@networklobby.org
f NETWORK LOBBY • @NETWORKLobby
www.networklobby.org
www.networkadvocates.org

(Envisioning, continued from page 3)

One of my favorite recollections from NETWORK's year-long series of Rural Roundtables happened in Poetry, Texas, in a Methodist church built in 1845. The story is a long one, but it starts with a woman who came in telling me, "I don't agree with you on anything." My response was: "Great! This should be a good conversation!" By the end of our hour and a half round-table discussion, we were talking together about a shared sense of "communal duty." We met in a sense of shared responsibility to build bridges to include and care for everyone. She ended our time together by sharing her heartbreak: two of her sons had died by overdosing on opioids. We shared heartbreak, but managed to build bridges.

Another surprising encounter occurred during the 2018 Nuns on the Bus "Tax Justice Truth Tour" in Beaver, Pennsylvania. After a short rally, I joined several local constituents on a lobby visit with their now-former House member's office. The constituents were upset because this Representative had consistently refused to meet with them. Only when our unmistakable, 45-foot bus rolled into Beaver were these dedicated constituents finally granted their meeting with a member of his staff. Together, we planned to ask why this Representative had voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and to cut taxes for the wealthy. During the meeting, the families spoke about the need for access to good health care and about how hard it was for ordinary folks to get by while the ultra-wealthy were flourishing. Finally, they asked directly: "Why won't our Congressman meet with us?" The staffer answered that it was because the Congressman was really very shy! A member of our delegation questioned this, pointing out that the Representative was comfortable meeting with his donors. The staffer replied it was different because he knows them! As we left the meeting, these advocates decided that they needed to support someone who took the time to get to know all of their constituents, not just their donors. Shortly after this meeting, voters replaced the shy Representative in the 2018 election; our little team had made a difference.

There are so many stories like these. Together we created the "culture of encounter" through our shared passion for meeting one another and working together for the common good. I know NETWORK will continue this critical work of listening to stories and advancing just legislation in Washington. But as these experiences from all over the country illustrate, there is room for each of us to do something. We all need to do our part. Let us continue to work together to seek out points of connection, build bridges, and plan projects that include everyone along this path to justice. In this way we will become the faithful community that we seek. Together we are on the road to care for the 100% ☀

Mary J. Novak Accepts the Call to Serve as NETWORK's Next Executive Director

After months of interviews and discernment, the NETWORK Boards unanimously, and confidently, chose Mary J. Novak, a lawyer, educator, chaplain, and activist with a passion for justice, to lead NETWORK into the future. Mary accepted the call to serve and began serving as NETWORK's sixth Executive Director on April 1, 2021.



Mary has worked among Catholic Sisters and Jesuits for decades, most recently serving the community of Georgetown University Law Center and she was also the founding Board Chair of Catholic Mobilizing Network. Mary is also a Lay Associate of the Congregation of St. Joseph and served the Leadership Conference of Women Religious as they navigated the Doctrinal Assessment with the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, described Mary Novak saying, "Mary is the living embodiment of 'faith that does justice.'"

When speaking to the NETWORK community, Mary said "We need federal policies that name and dismantle systemic racism, eliminate the wealth and income gap, and allow all people to thrive so that we truly are a 'more perfect union.' I'm excited to educate, organize, and lobby with you, the NETWORK community."

Sister Simone worked closely with Mary during the transition period and said, "Mary is the perfect choice to lead NETWORK in the next step to ensure the well-being of those most marginalized people among us. This is the mandate as we build this nation anew."

On the day of NETWORK's announcement, an exclusive interview with Jack Jenkins was published in *Religion News Service*. It read in part: "Novak said she and Campbell are also 'contemplatives in action. ... (My spirituality) is grounded in the Ignatian tradition, which is also the spirituality of the Congregation of St. Joseph, of which I am an associate.'

It continued, "Novak said she hopes to bring unique attributes to NETWORK, which often forges close connections with public officials and lawmakers. She pointed to her experience as a spiritual director and a peace builder, saying, 'That kind of presence could be helpful on Capitol Hill these days.'



| our spirit-filled network |

NETWORK Virginia Advocates Team Lobby for COVID-19 Relief

I am a longtime supporter of NETWORK with financial contributions, prayer support, and occasionally (pre-pandemic) attending in-person witnesses in Washington, D.C. I am also a longtime admirer of the women religious and the lay leaders at NETWORK.

For many years, I have been immersed in advocacy for justice, especially in state and local organizations in my home state of Virginia. Like so many other justice-seekers, the dawn of 2021 and the inauguration of our newly elected president brought rays of sunshine and hope that We the People were embarking on a new journey replete with reform and improvement for all, but especially for people struggling on the margins of our great country.

I was invited to join NETWORK advocates in northern Virginia to advocate for President Biden's legislative initiatives to rescue the American people from the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic and to restore many of the basics of our country's democratic systems fractured under the previous administration. NETWORK provided me with a unique opportunity to learn about proposed legislation and why it was critical to persuade Congress to pass it. As a NETWORK Advocate, I received resources that explained the problem, proposed solutions and gave me tips for how to present it to my Members of Congress. NETWORK also provided materials ("leave behinds") to share with our legislators and their staff.

Our small group of enthusiastic advocates for justice met in advance (virtually) to discuss the legislation we planned to raise with the Senators, choose the specific issue on which each of us wanted to focus and outlined a strategy for our meet-up. We took a couple of days to study our focus-areas in the legislation and then had a final brief meeting (virtual) for a practice lobby meeting. By the time we met with our Senators' staff, I felt like I was sufficiently knowledgeable to share my concerns for struggling people and why the proposed legislation would help solve the problems we wanted addressed.

Now, I am more attentive to what is happening on the federal stage and am looking forward to further collaboration and participation with NETWORK Advocates.

Anne Murphy

New Member of the Virginia NETWORK Advocates Team

Join a NETWORK Advocates Team in Your State

NETWORK has or is building Advocates Teams in 12 states. Teams gather monthly to build community, dream together, and do the work of advocacy, including preparing for lobby visits, writing letters to the editor, planning public events, and more. If you want to learn more about a NETWORK Advocates Team and you live in...

- Ohio
- Michigan
- Virginia
- California
- New York
- Texas

Email Catherine:
cgillette@networklobby.org

- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Illinois
- Missouri

Email Emily:
etekolste@networklobby.org



Spirit-filled activists conduct a virtual lobby visit with Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) in support of just immigration legislation.

Virtual Conversations Keep the NETWORK Community Connected

While traveling on the virtual "Bus" last year, our biggest learnings were first, that our Spirit-filled network is hungry for community and second, that technology offers a powerful opportunity to bridge geographic divides. On Election Night 2020, as we awaited to hear results, NETWORK members and supporters gathered for a time of conversation, reflection, and prayer. As people responded with great enthusiasm, we decided to continue these virtual conversations on a monthly basis. While each monthly conversation has had a different theme (ranging from reflecting on racism in our faith communities to advocacy in a new administration), the basic premise remains the same: to bring people together for reflection, community, and conversation.

For upcoming community conversations, visit
www.networklobby.org/communityconvos



Honoring the Legacy of Black Sisters during Catholic Sisters Week

Sister Anita Baird Shares History of Black Sisters in the United States

MEG OLSON, GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION DIRECTOR



In honor of this year's Catholic Sisters Week, Sister Anita Baird, DHM spoke to the NETWORK community about the history of Black sisters in the United States and their work today. Sister Anita is a recognized religious leader, community leader, and racial justice activist

in Chicago. While the hour-long talk was only enough time to brush the surface of the rich and complex legacy and the often painful history of Black women religious, Sister Anita told the stories of several sisters and the 53-year history of the National Black Sisters' Conference, as well as her personal journey of becoming Catholic and a member of the Religious Congregation of the Society of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary.

As Sister Anita remarked, "500 years of Black Catholic faith and presence in what is now the United States... is a history that was not just erased, but rather, it was often never documented or recognized by the larger Church, even to this day." Sister Anita went on to share a wealth of insights into both this history and the Church today. While Black Catholics are sometimes seen as "recent newcomers" to the faith, that is an inaccurate and uninformed assumption.

Sister Anita explained that Black Catholics had an active presence in the United States and in the U.S. Catholic Church for more than two centuries before Declaration of Independence was even written. This began in 1526, when the first enslaved African people (who were Spanish-speaking Catholics) were brought by force to what is now the U.S. by Spanish colonists, all with the blessing of the Catholic Church.

As Sister Anita's description of the history of early U.S. Black Catholics continued, including instances where religious conversion was held as a price for freedom from enslavement, I was reminded of Cardinal Gregory's February 2021 reflection on Black Catholics in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. He named the often-unspoken truth that many Black Catholics' ancestors did not come to their faithfulness by choice, but by cruelty. Sister Anita and Cardinal Gregory's truth telling led me to reflect on how often white people are encouraged to *not* name racism in our history or the current reality of race in the Catholic Church and in the U.S.

Sister Anita named the three Black Catholic Women included in the group of six Black American Catholic candidates for sainthood, including Mother Mary Lange, O.S.P. She noted that in 1829 when Mother Lange founded the first African-American religious congregation, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, in Baltimore, Maryland, it was still legal to enslave people in parts of the United States and named some of the challenges and tragedies the Oblates faced. Even Sister Antona Ebo's story, shared by Sister Anita, illustrated the racism present in the Church for Sister Antona and the two other Black sisters who joined the Sisters of Mary in 1946. When Sister Antona Ebo marched alongside Congressman John Lewis in Selma following "Bloody Sunday" and spoke out for racial justice in the years following the Civil Rights movement, she was bearing witness to racism that infected even her religious life.

"In this moment of dual life-threatening epidemics: COVID-19 and racism, the voice of the Church in America is eerily silent when it comes to the racial unrest in this country."

— Sister Anita Baird, DHM

For herself, Sister Anita knew she wanted to be a sister since she was young, but as a Black woman was discouraged from considering religious life. Sister Anita spoke about the day when she saw two Black nuns at a department store and followed them around, in awe. After that, Sister Anita says, "I knew I could be a Black woman religious. I had seen them with my own eyes."

Today, Sister Anita and the sisters and associates who comprise the National Black Sisters Conference continue to grapple with what it means to be Black Catholics, and continue to take their place at the table. Faithful and prophetic, they expose the racism of the Catholic Church and hold the hope that it can change.

Watch Sister Anita Baird's talk:

www.networklobby.org/sistersweek2021

Learn about the National Black Sisters' Conference:

www.nbsc68.com

Building Support for Just Policies through your Local Paper

Have you ever written and submitted a Letter to the Editor (LTE)?

When you want to make your voice heard on an issue, writing a letter to the editor is a highly effective advocacy tactic. LTEs are a good avenue for getting your point across and pressuring elected officials because they are widely read local content and Members of Congress pay attention to them – especially when the LTE explicitly names them.

Letters to the editor can change public opinion and shape legislation. When you coordinate on an LTE campaign with other advocates, LTEs can even drive a movement change.

Over the past few months, NETWORK advocates across the country participated in online trainings to learn about writing and submitting letters to the editor. During these trainings, advocates drafted an LTE about one of NETWORK's Build Anew policy areas, which they were encouraged submit to a local paper.

NETWORK activists' powerful messages calling for democracy reform, a humane immigration system, and just taxes have been published in papers across the country. Your voices are powerful and it is important to make them heard in our nation's political debates!

LTEs from NETWORK Advocates

On Immigration:

"It's time for Congress to be realistic and provide the path to citizenship for Dreamers who support our economy by working and whose hopes have been deferred for too long."

By Lenore Navarro Dowling

Published in the *LA Times* on February 14, 2021

On Democracy:

"As a life-long voter who believes in the importance of free and fair elections, I am concerned about the new redistricting occurring in our state this spring. Federal reforms are needed for basic accessibility standards to protect voters in every state."

By Tricia Massa

Published in the *Chicago Tribune* on February 19, 2021



Letters to the editor are short (150–200 words), and it is best if you can connect your letter to a recent story published in the same newspaper where you submit your letter. There are three steps to remember when writing your letter to the editor:

1. Start with your qualifications.

Explain who you are and why you care about this issue. "As a multi-issue Catholic voter ..." or "As a life-long Ohioan ..."

2. Tell the reader what you think!

Share your thoughts on the issue. "Dreamers and undocumented immigrants deserve access to COVID-19 relief and citizenship" or "We must reverse the 2017 Republican tax law for the long-term economic health of our country." Check out NETWORK's website for more ideas about what to write.

3. Close with your legislative ask.

Finish by addressing your elected official(s) by name and asking them to support a specific policy. "I pray that our Senators open their hearts and listen to their constituents. Voters like me urge Senator Portman to support the Dream Act."

Submitting Your Letter

When your letter is ready, search for "letter to the editor submission guidelines" on your local paper's website and submit it according to their instructions.

Additional Tips

- ✓ Use local information or impacts of policies as much as possible.
- ✓ You can write about the same issue to multiple papers in your area if you personalize each letter.
- ✓ Wait a short time before submitting another LTE to the same paper, around 3-4 weeks.
- ✓ Speak from your own perspective and keep your message focused on the issues.

Watch a virtual LTE training from NETWORK:

www.networkadvocates.org/LTE



Build Anew Agenda Launched for 117th Congress

Moving Forward Together with New Imagination

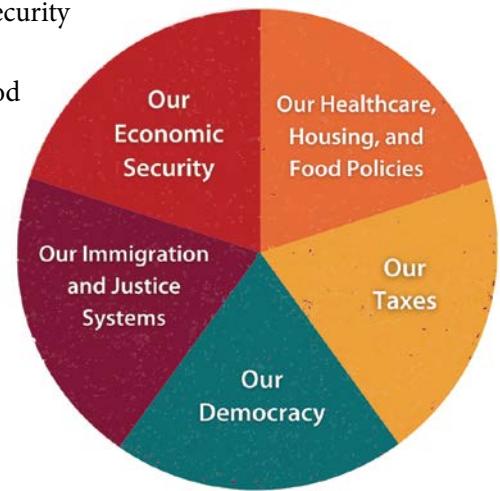
With the start of a new Congress in 2021, NETWORK launched our *Build Anew Agenda* calling for federal policies that dismantle systemic racism, eliminate the wealth and income gap, improve the well-being of our communities, and allow all people to thrive — especially those most often left out: women, people of color, and people on the economic margins.

Emerging from encounter with families and communities across the United States, the *Build Anew Agenda* is a pathway to realizing our vision of a just and inclusive society that is built upon **four Cornerstones**:

- ✓ Dismantling Systemic Racism
- ✓ Cultivating Inclusive Community
- ✓ Rooting Our Economy in Solidarity
- ✓ Transforming Our Politics

We build our country anew by prioritizing racial equity, caring for the Earth, and improving the well-being of all people and communities through legislative advocacy in **five Policy Areas**:

1. Our Economic Security
2. Our Healthcare, Housing, and Food Policies
3. Our Immigration and Justice Systems
4. Our Taxes
5. Our Democracy



Join NETWORK's Virtual Lobby Day

On May 12, NETWORK is organizing its first Virtual Lobby Day on Capitol Hill where activists from across the country will introduce their elected officials to NETWORK's Build Anew Agenda and advocate for the House to pass the EQUAL Act, legislation that addresses systemic racism in our nation's justice system by ending sentencing disparities for drug use.

Ahead of Virtual Lobby Day, NETWORK will hold a virtual policy briefing on the EQUAL Act and lobby prep trainings, so you will ready and fully prepared to lobby your Representative. NETWORK staff will schedule your lobby visits and, when possible, accompany you on these meetings.

We look forward to advocating with you virtually for policies that build our country anew!



Visit www.networklobby.org/virtuallobbyday to learn more and to register for Lobby Day.

Common-Good Immigration and Democracy Bills Pass House, Advocating for Equal Sentencing Policies

An update from D.C. on key votes held during the past quarter and social justice issues on the horizon



Key Votes: House Passes Policies to Build Anew

The House of Representative moved a number of Build Anew policy areas forward in the first quarter of 2021, including common-good immigration and democracy bills.

- **Immigration:** The House of Representatives took their first steps toward a pathway to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented Americans by passing the Dream and Promise Act (H.R.6) and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R.1603). The Dream and Promise Act provides a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers as well as people with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). When this legislation becomes law, Dreamers will be eligible for Conditional Permanent Resident (CPR) status and a roadmap to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status and, eventually, citizenship.
- **Democracy:** The For the People Act (H.R.1) was passed by the House. It is the most significant democracy reform bill in more than a generation. This hugely popular legislation would expand and protect voting rights for all, end partisan and racial gerrymandering, get dark money out of politics, and restore transparency and accountability in our government. Moreover, it would dismantle the racist and systemic barriers intentionally built over decades to exclude Black and brown voices.

On the Horizon: Sentencing Reform

The Eliminating a Quantifiably Unjust Application of the Law (EQUAL) Act (H.R.1693/S.79) is bipartisan, bicameral legislation that seeks to eliminate the disparity in sentencing for cocaine offenses, a major contributor to mass incarceration, and apply retroactively to those already convicted or sentenced.

The EQUAL Act was introduced in the House on March 9, 2021 by Representatives Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY-08), Bobby Scott (D-VA-03), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND-AL) and Don Bacon (R-NE-02). Across the Capitol, Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Dick Durbin (D-IL), both members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, had previously introduced the bill on January 28, 2021.

While there are many provisions within the justice system that produce discriminatory and racist impacts, the differences in cocaine sentencing are among the most obvious and have had some of the most harmful impact on the growth of mass incarceration in this country. It is time to end this racism in sentencing.

Passing the EQUAL Act in both the House and the Senate is a necessary step towards dismantling white supremacy and will help us cultivate inclusive community, root our economy in solidarity, and ultimately transform our politics.



NETWORK—a Catholic leader in the global movement for justice and peace—educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation.

NETWORK LOBBY FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

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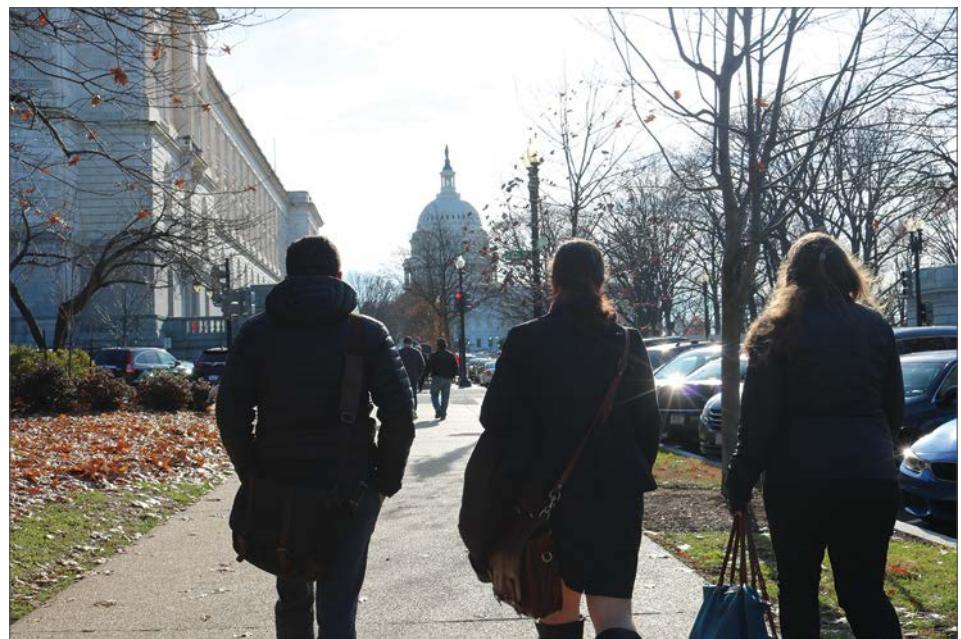
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Justice-Seekers, Use Your IRA Distributions to Work for Justice!

Did you know?
You can use your IRA distributions for justice!

Are you 70½ years of age or older and have an IRA account? Or did you inherit an IRA that you must withdraw from?

If so, you may be able to make a charitable gift with your required distributions.

The Charitable Rollover allows you to make charitable contributions directly from your IRA to charitable organizations like NETWORK Advocates, without claiming increased income for federal taxes. It also allows your gift to count toward your Required Minimum Distribution. A rollover can't be counted as a charitable gift for income tax purposes, but it does fulfill your obligation to withdraw funds from your IRA.

If you have the ability to comfortably designate some of your Required Minimum Distribution to NETWORK Advocates' mission of justice and peace, your gift will be put to work right away. Your gift will equip activists with the resources and platforms needed to meet the challenges ahead.

Questions? For assistance or more information, contact Maggie Brevig at mbrevig@networklobby.org or (202) 347-9797 ext. 217.



ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE, INSPIRED BY CATHOLIC SISTERS

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820 First Street NE, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20002
phone: 202-347-9797
fax: 202-347-9864
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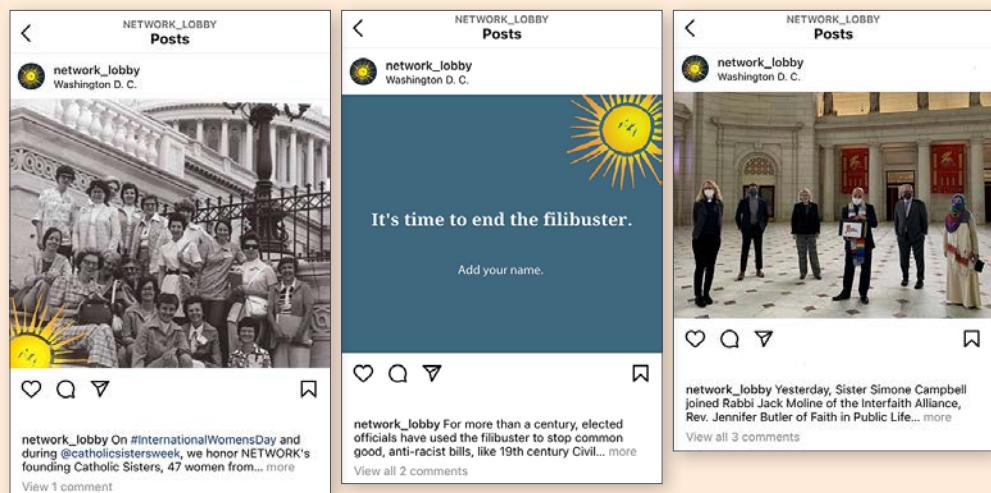
Follow NETWORK on Instagram

NETWORK is now on Instagram! On our new Instagram account, you will find exciting NETWORK content, from photos and live videos to legislative updates and more. This platform provides new opportunities to continue our education and advocacy by connecting with you (our members), advocacy partners, and new justice seekers!

To follow on NETWORK on Instagram follow these steps:

1. Download the Instagram app on your smartphone or tablet. Create an account if you don't have one already.
2. Click the search icon on the bottom of your screen (it looks like a magnifying glass).
3. Type "network_lobby" into the search bar.
4. Click the blue "follow" button.

* Click the bell icon in the right upper corner to turn on post notifications, so you don't miss anything!



Join our growing community on Instagram today!