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The Edmund Rice Christian
Mission Frère -

Brothers North America
Advocacy Newsletter



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The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America
Mission Frère-Advocacy Newsletter

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The Mission of the *Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Mission Frère-Advocacy Program* is to create an awareness of and to advocate for the needs of those most marginalized in our society. Our goal is to create a more just, peaceful and equitable world by being faithful to the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice. We foster presence, compassion and liberation in collaboration with the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province, the members of the Consortium of Edmund Rice Schools and all who are inspired by the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice in the North American Edmund Rice Network.

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Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America

A Province of the Congregation of Christian Brothers

February 28, 2018

Dear Friends,

On September 17, 2017, Hurricane Maria decimated the Commonwealth of Dominica in the West Indies. Shortly after, on October 1st, I wrote a letter to all those connected to our North American Edmund Rice Network, asking for assistance in helping the people of Dominica rebuild their lives, homes, schools, etc. The **Dominica Relief Fund** was established to assist with repairs for the Christian Brother Community, St. Mary's Academy and the Alpha Centre – all entities associated with the Christian Brothers in Dominica. Funds were also requested to assist families of students attending St. Mary's and the Alpha Centre.

The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province began the funding with a gift of \$10,000.00 Canadian. To date, gifts received have come from: 35 individuals, 8 Christian Brother Communities, 7 Edmund Rice Schools, and 5 Religious Organizations. These gifts have totaled \$38,274.00 US and \$50,000 Canadian. All money has been sent directly to Dominica and is in the process of being distributed to the aforementioned entities.

Please know how grateful we are for your generous response to our call for assistance. Your gifts are helping the families of our students, our Christian Brothers and our school ministries to rebuild their lives and homes. May all those who have contributed to this cause be blessed with an abundance of God's peace and love. On behalf of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province, I offer a heartfelt thank you for your generous support.

God bless,

Bro. Kevin M. Griffith, CFC
Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America, Province Leader



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Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America

A Province of the Congregation of Christian Brothers

February 26, 2018

Dear School Leaders,

Each year, the Lenten season offers us a unique opportunity to reflect on the life, passion, death and Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ in light of our lived present day realities. This year is no different. The recent school shooting in Parkland, FL has once again given us pause to step back and wonder how our society has gotten to the point of allowing senseless killings in schools across the United States to go unchallenged.

The 2014 Christian Brothers Congregation Chapter in Nairobi, Kenya calls upon us ***“to engage in advocacy with the voiceless, the marginalized and all that are oppressed.”*** In recent days, young people have taken up the task of speaking out against gun violence and the deaf ears of our President, members of Congress and the NRA who seemingly ignore the cries of our children to curb the gun violence that mars our society and threatens their pursuit of an education without fear of being attacked in what should be a sacred and safe environment for them.

The mass shooting in Florida has ignited calls for action by young people aimed at encouraging lawmakers to pass tougher gun laws that can serve to deter such violence. At this time, I am aware of three such calls to action. The organizers behind the recent Women’s March have called for a 17-minute walkout on March 14th to protest Congress’ inaction concerning the gun violence plaguing our schools. *A National Student Walkout* is being planned for March 24th so that students can participate in *A March for Our Lives* on that day in Washington, DC. And finally, the Network for Public Education announced a national day of action, saying: “on Friday, April 20th, we want students to attend school and then promptly WALK-OUT at 10:00 am. Sit outside your schools and peacefully protest. Make some noise. Voice your thoughts - We are students, we are victims, we are change.”

As Province Leader of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province, I am encouraging our school leaders to allow the students in our Edmund Rice Schools to participate responsibly in the planned events for these dates. I call on our schools to take advantage of this opportunity in allowing our children to be heard. With proper guidance, these days can be a great teaching moment for our students in understanding how our democracy works and in allowing their voices to join in with their peers across the United States. By doing so as a Consortium of Edmund Rice Schools, we speak as one voice in advocating for our greatest asset – the young people in our care.

Lenten blessings,

Bro. Kevin M. Griffith, CFC
Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America, Province Leader



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Mission Frère-Haiti

The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Mission Frère-Haiti program and its partners continue to make impacts on Haiti by advocating for its people through a variety of different ways.



After the creation of the Mission Frère-Haiti program in 2015, the ERCBNA Province's goal was to create programs to advocate for the poor and marginalized living in Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. After a 2016 trip to Haiti to explore the possibility of a student immersion trip, a group of students from Iona Prep in New York and Archbishop McCarthy in Florida participated in the Inaugural Mission Frère-Haiti Immersion trip in July of 2017. On this trip, students visited a number of sites in Borgne, Haiti to learn about the

culture of Haiti. Students also worked alongside Haitians to repaint and refurbish a local Catholic school in Borgne. Students on this trip were inspired to return home to the U.S. to begin advocating for Haiti. On the 2017 Mission Frère-Haiti Immersion trip, the

ERCBNA Province purchased a number of pieces of artwork from the Haiti Artisans Program. This program, which is facilitated by the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, is a collaboration of Haitian Artists whose artwork is sold to benefit housing, medical and educational initiatives in Jean-Rabel, Haiti. The

Iona Prep students Michael Kang (left), Robert Keane (center) and Josiah Osbourne (right) spoke with visitors about their experience on the Mission Frère-Haiti immersion during an art gallery opening at Iona College's Kenneth Chapman Art Gallery.





During Iona College's Black History Month exhibition at the Brother Kenneth Chapman Art Gallery, artwork purchased from Haiti was displayed and sold.

artwork purchased was framed by Iona Prep art teacher Brother Tony Reynolds, and was sold at the Black History, "Black Culture, As Is: Ya Feel Me?" exhibition in February. Three Iona Prep students who participated in the 2017 immersion to Haiti attended the exhibition (pictured on page 3)

and spoke with guests about the art and their experiences on the immersion trip. The art will remain on display for purchase until the end of the academic year at Iona College. All of the funds from artwork sold will be given back to the Sisters of Jesus and Mary in Jean-Rabel, and will be used to fund the various programs that the Sisters support in Jean-Rabel.

The Center of Hope Haiti Inc. is a partner of the Mission Frère-Haiti program and one of its board members, Robert Micera is a Bergen Catholic alumnus. COHH, which operates a school and orphanage in Hinche, Haiti, provides an education, meals and

shelter to its students, most of whom would never receive these at home. This winter, the ERCBNA Mission Frère-Haiti program donated \$400.00 to help fund the purchase of a hot water heater for the dormitory at COHH's orphanage.

The 2nd Annual Mission Frère-Haiti Immersion trip will return to Borgne in August of 2018 to run a camp for children.

A scene from the 2017 Mission Frère-Haiti Immersion trip to Borgne, Haiti.



ADVOCACY AT IONA PREP

▶ Through the Human Rights Club at Iona Prep, students and staff are bringing awareness and action to needs around the globe, both in and out of the Edmund Rice Network.

"I am here tonight because I recognize that thousands of people are suffering as a result of religious persecution, and that the entirety of the Assyrian community faces extinction." Iona Prep senior Matthew Multari's Assyrian heritage has been a huge part of his life and is something he has always taken great pride in. In the wake of the devastating effects that ISIS and civil war have had on Assyrian Christian communities in Iraq and Syria, Multari wanted to organize an event that brought awareness to the issue. On February 28th, Multari did just that. With the help of Iona Prep's Human Rights Club, he organized an event that featured the screening of the acclaimed documentary *Our Last Stand*, which details the story of an Assyrian-American school teacher, Helma Adde, who traveled to Iraq and Syria to help raise awareness of the plight of Christian communities living there. On February 28th, Multari arranged for Adde to speak at the conclusion of the documentary, as she answered questions from the more than 100 guests in attendance.

Multari's family and church community were instrumental in helping organize and contribute to the event, and even provided an assortment of Assyrian food items for guests to sample prior to the screening. Many members of Multari's

Church, Mar Mari Parish in Yonkers, New York, supported and attended the event.

At the conclusion of the screening of the documentary, Adde answered questions from attendees, providing details of her experience filming the documentary while visiting Syria and Iraq. She also described her efforts to visit Capitol Hill and other organizations in an attempt to advocate for support for the Assyrian Community and to inspire others to take action. She expounded on the great need for raising awareness of the violence and atrocities being committed against the Assyrian community, something that is often overlooked and passed on by lawmakers in the U.S and beyond.

Of his own Assyrian roots, Multari said "the core of what it means to be Assyrian



is not about a country or region, or a language or cuisine, or even religion. It is about people and the character of people. Growing up, I witnessed the communal nature of the Assyrian people. They take care of one another... and the Assyrian community that I know is like family... how could we turn a blind eye to their struggles?

To learn more about the documentary *Our Last Stand*, click here:

[**OUR LAST STAND**](#)



(above left) Helma Adde, Co-Director of the Documentary *Our Last Stand* (cover above right), speaks to a crowd of over 100 guests at Iona Preparatory in New York. Adde spoke to guests regarding her experiences in raising awareness of the plight of and advocating for an end to atrocities committed against the Assyrian community in the Middle East.

Beyond Borders

In September of 2016, Iona Prep English teacher Mrs. Patricia Gray traveled to India to participate in the Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders (EREBB) International Congress. This was an opportunity for educators, from around the world, who are inspired by the Charism of Edmund Rice, to gather together and establish connections that would lead to future collaboration between these international schools. The Congress was comprised of two parts: a pre-congress/immersion and the Congress itself. Teachers were assigned various cities in India for the first week and then all the educators traveled to Kolkata for the second. Mrs. Gray was sent to New Delhi for immersion. Upon arrival, one of the first people she met was Mr. Victor Sekakatlela, principal of St. Mary's Primary School in Bloemfontein, South Africa. During immersion in New Delhi, which according to Patricia was "powerful and sometimes overwhelming", the two often discussed their shared experience as well as their schools back home. While on a ferry in Kolkata, an idea was born. Mr. Sekakatlela, suggested that Iona Preparatory "Adopt-a-Learner". He asked if Iona Prep could contribute \$50 annually to send a student to St. Mary's from his very first year until graduation. While Mrs. Gray believed it was a possibility, it did not come to fruition until over a year later. This February, with the approval of administrators and the dedication of the Human

Rights Club, Mrs. Patricia Gray and Mrs. Christine Chana felt it was imperative that the entire school community be involved in this endeavor. As Mrs. Gray stated, "It is not enough to simply write a check and send it off to South Africa. It's about awareness. It's about educating our own students, faculty and staff about the plight of others who are deprived of a right guaranteed under the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to an education." With that in mind, the members of the Human Rights Club decided that a bake sale would be held to raise funds. An all boys' school, Iona Prep's young men got creative. They created posters, baked and spread the word! Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Chana let the faculty and staff know about this worthy cause by speaking at a faculty meeting and sending out emails. Some teachers and staff members baked for the fundraiser and some offered donations. In the end, the Human Rights Club and the Iona Prep Community raised \$600; and President, Brother Thomas Leto matched that figure. Iona Prep is now sponsoring four students and working with Mr. Victor Sekakatlela to determine how Iona can best meet the needs of the students of St. Mary's with the additional funds raised. The Iona Prep Community looks forward to watching the progress of the four students, Hlomedl Reamohetswe, Norman Galeswe, Ken Leornarda and Ken Sthembiswe, via report cards, emails and Skype. The goal is to go "Beyond the Borders" and connect these

though they are on separate continents. As Victor Kekaklela told Patricia Gray, "You see, it works to meet people like you in Kolkata, on the ferries and to start developing an unforgettable life-giving relationship".



Mrs. Gray and Mr. Sekakatlela on the EREBB International Congress in India



Iona Prep Human Rights Club moderators Mrs. Patricia Gray (left) and Mrs. Christine Chana (center) with club member Matthew Rodrigues during their Beyond Borders Bake Sale in February.



A HERO'S LAID TO REST

(story and photo credit: CBS Boston)

In November of 2017, after homeless U.S. Army veteran John Fitzmaurice passed away on the streets of Boston, students at Catholic Memorial took action. After learning that the veteran would have no one in attendance at his funeral, CM students worked to celebrate John's life by organizing a funeral with full military honors.



Catholic Memorial students understand the importance of serving those marginalized in our society, particularly those who dedicated their life to serving and protecting our country. After learning that a homeless U.S. Army veteran, then only known as "John," died and would have no family members or friends at his funeral, Catholic Memorial students worked to organize a Mass and a funeral with full military honors in John's memory.



Catholic Memorial students join with members of the U.S. Army to carry the casket of Veteran John Fitzmaurice.

"For us paying homage to a veteran, to bring him to our campus, to provide the burial rights he deserves, and to honor his legacy and to help our boys realize we have to stand with those who are marginalized," said the school's president, Peter Folan.



Rev. Chris Palladino presides over the funeral mass that Catholic Memorial students organized for homeless Army veteran John Fitzmaurice.

After the funeral Mass, while taps played, a group of Catholic Memorial seniors assisted in carrying John's casket to the waiting hearse.

To view a video of this story, click here:
(courtesy of CBS Boston)

VIDEO

BLESSINGS IN BAGS



Senior students at All Hallows in the Bronx, New York have not only been learning about homelessness and social justice in their classes, but have been taking action on the streets of New York City by delivering “Blessing Bags” to those experiencing homelessness.



Through the Blessing Bag program, All Hallows students have been taking what they learn in the classroom out into their neighborhoods in the Bronx.

Students at All Hallows High School are combining what they learn in the classroom with taking direct action to serve those in need. The Blessed Edmund Rice Society of All Hallows has begun their monthly "Blessing Bag" program. Students prepare plastic bags which contain water, juice, snacks, hand sanitizer and other personal items. These bags are then delivered to Lamp Ministries in the Bronx. Lamp Ministries is part of the Office of the Propagation of the Faith and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York. This organization has a food truck which they station at various Catholic parishes in the Bronx and distribute food and the blessing bags to the homeless. The volunteers of Lamp Ministries serve those experiencing homeless by providing comfort, prayers and the Good News, in addition to food and other items.

The program helps to educate students about the challenges of homelessness, particularly with those who experience it right in our own neighborhoods. Our goal is to build up the Blessing Bag Program and provide education about being an advocate for the homeless while meeting the immediate material needs of those suffering from homelessness in the Bronx.



Senior students at All Hallows show off their Blessing Bags before taking them out to those experiencing homelessness.

COMING HOME

-Juliana Diaz (GRMS, '11)



The 2011 Guadalupe Regional Middle School graduate reflects on the power of Catholic education and the importance of her Christian Brothers' education and the profound impact it has had on her and countless classmates.



Watching my mother struggle as I grew up was heart-wrenching. Being a single parent was not easy for her, and my questions like, "Where's my dad?" or, "When will dad come back?" did not make the situation any easier. Although the pain was tough to endure at times, she always aimed to set an example of strength and perseverance. Often, it was impossible for her to give me what my heart most desired as a little girl. However, she took care of me when I'd get sick and provide me with a great abundance of love. As her only child she wanted the best for me; from the best pediatrician to the best education.

On a chilly winter evening, she found out about the "little blue building." This little blue building known as Guadalupe Regional Middle School (GRMS) had been established in 2002 and ever since then, it had been receiving high praises. My mom had heard about Guadalupe through word of mouth and decided this place would be where I'd receive the best education.

This tuition-free, private Catholic school is located on the corner of 14th Street and East Lincoln -- transforming eighty lives at a time.

"Before taking the admissions exam my mother had stocked up on practice workbooks from Gateway Printing. For three months I practiced and studied as much as I could; attending GRMS had become a goal of ours."

"I am proof of the positive results of the eleven year commitment GRMS makes to students."

"To this day, the friendships I made at GRMS have followed me all through my high school and college careers."

Juliana Diaz, left, graduated from Guadalupe Regional Middle School (GRMS) in 2011. Crediting GRMS for much her success, Diaz now studies Education at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley.

On the day of admissions exam, there were about fifty eager, yet nervous, fifth grade students gathered for the same cause; being admitted into GRMS. Months passed by, and I hadn't heard back from the little blue building. Later that spring, I finally received the letter in the mail from Guadalupe I had been hoping for. Luckily, I was one of the 32 to become part of the legendary "Bobcat family."



The summer rolled on and August arrived only to increase my nerves. It was not only my first day of middle school, but the first day of a new and improved education. Once I got familiarized with the transition from elementary to middle school and from a public education to a private one, I realized how blessed I was. The faculty and staff was extremely supportive and they offered spiritual and personal guidance to help us grow into successful citizens. The education I received at Guadalupe went beyond the classroom; it was also about teaching us, the students, morals and values.

My experience at GRMS was a blissful one. Because the campus is small and cozy, students get attached to teachers and staff, but also to one another. At Guadalupe, I learned the meaning of friendship and how to look after one another.

Aside from the education received and friendships created, Guadalupe opens doors of opportunities for their students. I was one of the few students who received a scholarship to attend Camp Marist in Ossipee, New Hampshire, where the sunsets and environment were majestic. At the end of the two weeks, I received a trophy from my cycling class, where we went on trips off of the property. In this class, we took on "Big Mama" -- one of the steepest roads in town. Being away from home for two weeks, at the age of fourteen, helped me slowly learn skills of independence through Camp. Although I felt homesick at times, nothing compared to my experience there. I met children and teens from (literally) all over the world.

This time around, a few things had changed at the school. The campus now had a fan on the courtyard's

ceiling, they have gotten 2 buses, and incorporated multiple activities, like the House System, I wish were available in earlier generations. However, one thing hasn't changed -- the faculty's heart-warming welcoming and support. As the semester progressed, at times I found myself overwhelmed with school and work. Though I felt stressed, each time I stepped foot on campus, the little blue building instantly flooded me with serenity; I suppose it is something that naturally comes with the package. I was home.

Guadalupe Regional Middle School has become my home away from home, my safe haven, and an important part of my life. My mother and I have come a long way since we first heard about Guadalupe. It is because of the help and support of donors and the community that an education is made possible to families who desire a Catholic education but cannot afford one.

Juliana Diaz '11 is an Education major at The University of Texas - RGV and has completed her internship with GRMS. She works at the Brownsville Aquatic Center as a lifeguard, is an intern at the Brownsville Historical Association, and is the Chair of GRMS's inaugural Alumni Service Board through our Graduate Support Program.

To learn more about GRMS, click here: [GRMS](#)

Jericho House Hosts Eighth Annual Leadership Symposium

-Brother Bill Carrothers



Jericho House, located in Port Colborne, Ontario, Canada, welcomed 10th and 11th grade student participants while hosting its Eighth Annual Leadership Symposium on Friday, January 12.

This year's keynote speaker was Tori Badawey, a graduate of École Élémentaire Saint Joseph in Port Colborne, École Catholique Jean Vanier in Welland, and West Virginia Wesleyan University. Presently, she is a law student at Columbia University in New York.

It was at West Virginia Wesleyan that her interest in law and human rights came to light. During Tori's four years at the school, she sought to ensure that all vulnerable communities and those at risk had access to basic services such as sanitation, education, health facilities, etc., and that the peoples' rights to these services were being respected without discrimination. She worked tirelessly with local community leaders as West Virginia Wesleyan's student leader for the Our Children, Our Future Campaign to help end childhood poverty.



The keynote speaker for Jericho House's Eighth Annual Leadership Symposium, Tori Badawey.

In addition, Tori was the Student Ambassador for the West Virginia Women's Commission and also tutored students, acted as a translator for French students, and volunteered at the local Ronald McDonald House and the parish house.



Students listen to keynote speaker Tori Badawey during Jericho House's Eighth Annual Leadership Symposium.

During her fellowship position with the West Virginia State Senate and West Virginia Supreme Court, she conducted research and presented at senate committee meetings and to the Supreme Court Justices, West Virginia's juvenile's basic rights and how to ensure the protection of these rights under the juvenile justice system.

Tori's life story, passion for social justice, and engaging personality made her a very popular and inspiring

keynote speaker. According to Sister Jacqueline Keefe, co-director of Jericho House, the high school students in attendance as well as the adults present found the lecture sessions and the question and answer interaction very interesting and worthwhile.

Prior to the culminating prayer and ritual service, Jericho House presented a cheque in Tori's name for \$500 to the L'Arche Daybreak Community located in Richmond Hill, Ontario. As the students left Jericho House, they talked about how much they enjoyed the day and how encouraged and inspired they were to engage in social justice concerns both at home and abroad.

Brother Rice High School's 12th Annual "Souper Bowl" Dinner



On February 28, 2018 Brother Rice High School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan joined together with Marian High School for their 12th Annual "Souper Bowl" Dinner. The dinner raised awareness for hunger issues in the community and money for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and St. Leo's Soup Kitchen, both in the city of Detroit. More than 300 people gathered together to feast on a simple dinner of soup, salad and bread that were donated by local restaurants and shops.



Students serve food at Brother Rice Michigan's "Souper Bowl" Dinner.

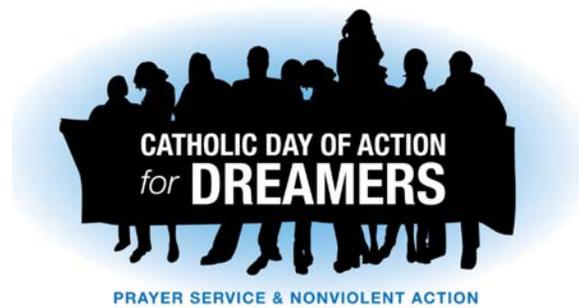


Student participants at Brother Rice Michigan's 12th Annual "Souper Bowl" Dinner.

Student leaders for this event contacted and asked for donations from local restaurants prior to the event. Students also went into classes prior to the dinner to speak on issues of hunger in their community and challenged their

fellow students to join in the dinner. At the event students served food, bussed tables, washed dishes and joined in conversation with the guests that were in attendance. The dinner helped to raise over \$1500 for local soup kitchens with all leftovers being donated to a local veterans' shelter.

Supporting the Dreamers



As recent news and events surrounding action on DACA and the “*Dreamers*” have been disappointing, the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers and CMSM (the Conference of Major Superiors of Men) stood with and supported those adversely affected by both the actions and inactions of the US Government. In support of all affected, particularly the *Dreamers* and those affected by DACA, the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers supported a Catholic Day of Action for *Dreamers*, organized by CMSM and other religious groups in the United States and around the world. On February 27th, CMSM organized this event, which took place

in Washington, D.C. The event focused on a “just and loving solution for all *Dreamers* and those who seek to make a better life



for themselves and their families in our great country.”

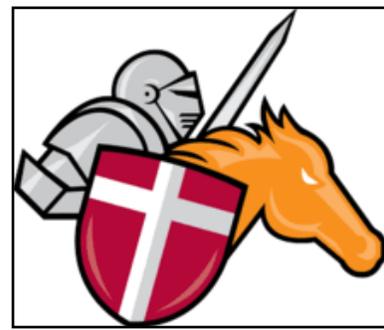
The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province joined the list of religious organizations supporting this event and continues to support and keep in prayer the *Dreamers*, their families, and all adversely affected by the current climate on immigration policies.

To learn more about this event, [click here](#):

[CATHOLIC DAY OF ACTION FOR DREAMERS](#)

LENDING A HELPING HAND

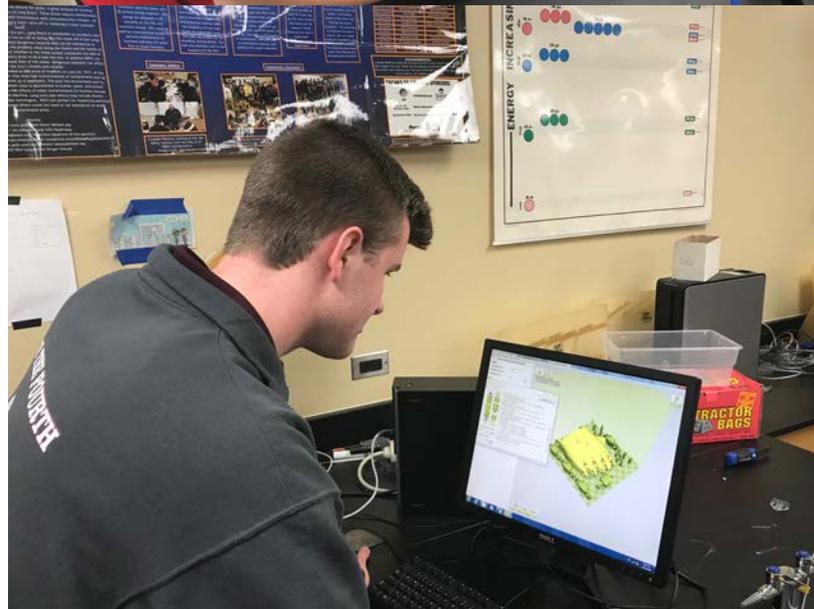
Brother Rice Chicago



In connection with the Brother Rice's Engineering Club and Underwater Robotics team, The Brother Rice Chicago Advocacy Club started the Helping Hands project. They are using 3-D printers to create plastic parts to make prosthetic hands to give to children worldwide, through a website known as The Prosthetic Kids Hand Challenge (www.handchallenge.com). This organization provides the instructions for creating and assembling each hand. The cost is approximately \$25 per hand for the material.

The Advocacy Club has begun to instruct the student body of the need for children across the world for new prosthetic hands. The reasons range from birth defects, to disease, to out-growing older limbs, to unexploded land mines. The club made posters that were placed around the school under the title of "Did You Know?" The posters told of the need for the hands, and how and why they are used. Other posters, titled "What Can I Do?," challenged students to participate in this Lenten project by collecting \$25 for each hand, then building each hand on an afternoon after school.

With an emphasis on building such personal items as prosthetic hands, the club hopes to strengthen Rice's students' understanding of the value of Christian sharing; they anticipate that their students will show compassion by helping children they will never meet. Their presence will be felt by young people all of the world who will never thank them in person, which they hope will impress upon their their students that they have the power to change lives and find liberation by building a better world...one hand at a time.



Brother Rice Advocacy Club students use 3-D printers to create plastic parts that are used to make prosthetic hands for children around the world.

The Advocacy Club's Goal is to build about 25 prosthetic hands this Lent. More importantly, the Advocacy Club expects to help students discern their responsibilities as global citizens and as participants in Edmund Rice schools.



ADVOCACY AT DAMIEN

Students at Damien Memorial in Honolulu, Hawaii recently participated in two important advocacy projects. In January, students and staff created signs and posters and took to the streets of Honolulu to participate in the Annual March for Life Rally. Students advocated for and voiced their concerns on a variety of Pro-Life issues affecting our country.

Damien students and staff also participated in the school's annual immersion trip to Kalaupapa on Molokai. Here, students learned about the ministries of Saints Damien and Marianne Cope, who worked with those suffering from Leprosy in the Kalaupapa Colony. On the immersion trip, Damien students visited with residents suffering from Hansen's Disease, cleaned Saint Philomena Church, and toured various historic sites to learn about the legacy of ministry set by Saint Damien.

Damien students are learning from and advocating for those most marginalized in our world, and hope to continue to promote the example of their school's namesake, Saint Damien, in all that they do.



(above) Damien Memorial students participate in the January March for Life in Honolulu, Hawaii.



(right) Damien Memorial students on the Kalaupapa Immersion on Molokai Island.

Bumpin Bakery: "Bump Out Hunger" - Vancouver College



Bumpin Bakery is a registered non-profit organization founded by three students from Vancouver College in 2014. Students bake about 150 muffins at Vancouver College each week, and the same amount of homemade muffins are donated to the organization weekly by students from elementary to senior school. Students and volunteers set up at the corner of Main and Hastings on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside at 10 am every Sunday morning where there is always a line up waiting for them. Coffee and muffins are handed out with a smile and volunteers are encouraged to make connections, talk to the people of the DTES community, learn at least one person's name, and most importantly remember to see God in everyone. Treating people living in the poorest neighbourhood in the country with dignity, respect, as well as showing them we care with a homemade muffin and hot cup of coffee is the mission of Bumpin Bakery. This non-profit organization has not missed a Sunday morning service in over three years and has given the opportunity for many students to volunteer and learn about service, community and making connections.



Students from Vancouver College volunteering to serve with Bumpin Bakery in downtown Vancouver.



Vancouver College's elementary school students are learning how to serve and advocate through the Bumpin Bakery program.



ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT: CLEAN POWER PLAN

With the current administration overlooking New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's request that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hold public hearings in New York on the proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan (CPP), the attorney general's and NYC mayor's offices held a "people's hearing" on January 9, to ensure New Yorkers' voices were heard. The country's reliance on dirty, non-renewable fossil fuels for power generation is a major contributor of climate change pollution and its impacts on the lives and livelihoods of New York's residents, including more frequent and intense storms, rising sea levels, higher temperatures and increased air pollution. The Clean Power Plan is a vital tool to slash greenhouse gas emissions from one of the leading causes of climate change pollution, fossil-fuel burning power plants. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under Administrator Scott Pruitt, has refused to schedule any public hearings east of West Virginia, despite the direct climate impacts facing residents of New York and other states on the eastern seaboard.

Br. Kevin Cawley, executive director of the Thomas Berry Forum for Ecological Dialogue at Iona College, participated in the session and gave public testimony on behalf of the Berry Forum and the NY Metro Catholic Climate Alliance. The afternoon session ran for nearly four hours as more than 50 public statements were delivered.



Brother Kevin Cawley speaks on behalf of Iona College's Thomas E. Berry Forum at the January 9th "People's Hearing" on clean energy in New York City.



ADVOCACY LINKS

Edmund Rice School Network

This is a link to the School Network, which comprises schools from the ERCBNA Province and the Latin American Region. This link contains information regarding schools and the various programs and activities in which the Office of Educational Services (OES) is involved.

[EDMUND RICE SCHOOLS](#)

Edmund Rice Latin America (LATAM):

The link below is to LATAM, the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers' Newsletter in Latin America. The Latin American Region and North American Province work closely together to promote justice in the Americas. Click below to see the great work being done in Latin America.

[LATAM](#)

Edmund Rice International (ERI):

Click below to access the most recent issues of Edmund Rice International's newsletter. This newsletter highlights the various areas of advocacy that ERI is involved in at the U.N. and beyond. Mission Frère-Advocacy works in concert with ERI.

[ERI NEWSLETTER](#)

Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM)- Justice and Peace Alerts:

An association of the leadership of men in religious and apostolic institutes in the U.S. The link below is to the CMSM publication "Justice Alert," which highlights areas where justice is needed and proposes direct action through advocacy. The ERCBNA Province is a member of CMSM.

[CMSM ALERTS](#)

Carbon Rangers:

An e-newsletter published by Bro. Kevin Cawley, CFC, ERI Team and Executive Director of the Thomas Berry Forum for Ecological Dialogue at Iona College. Carbon Rangers creates awareness for climate change and advocates for responsible environmental stewardship.

[CARBON RANGERS](#)

Smart Justice Network of Canada:

Brother Michael Maher works with this organization to bring awareness to the criminal justice system. Brother Maher and his colleagues advocate for both offenders and victims through Restorative Justice, which advocates for the criminal justice system to address the harm(s) done through mechanisms of support, accountability and healing. Click below to learn more:

[SMART JUSTICE](#)

Edmund Rice Justice Desk South Africa:

A partner of Edmund Rice International, "The Justice Desk strives to advocate, educate and equip in the area of Human Rights, justice and advocacy." They operate in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe and offer support, expertise and educational materials to groups across the globe.

[THE JUSTICE DESK](#)

Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders:

EREBB advocates for the rights of children to receive quality Catholic school education and brings together Edmund Rice Christian Brother Schools from around the world. Click below to access their website:

[EDMUND RICE BEYOND BORDERS](#)



CONTACT US



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UPCOMING EVENTS



MARCH 19-23, 2018 - SEATTLE, WA
ERCBNA ANNUAL SCHOOL LEADERS MEETING



APRIL 20, 2018- 2:30 PM -NEW ROCHELLE, NY
THE CATHOLIC CAMPUS AND ADVOCACY FOR JUSTICE
CONFERENCE- MULCAHY GYM, IONA COLLEGE



AUGUST 5-11, 2018- BORGNE, HAITI
2ND ANNUAL MISSION FRÈRE-HAITI IMMERSION TRIP



SEPTEMBER 18, 2018- 12:00 PM- NEW ROCHELLE, NY
2ND ANNUAL BROTHER CORNELIA LECTURE
KEYNOTE SPEAKER JESSICA DEWHURST
(PLEASE SEE DETAILS ON NEXT PAGE)



OCTOBER 25-28, 2018- LOCATION TBA
ERCBNA ADVOCACY COORDINATORS WORKSHOP

2nd Annual Br. Cornelia Lecture



Jessica Dewhurst

Director and Co-Founder
The Edmund Rice Justice Desk

Jessica Dewhurst is a human rights defender, Edmund Rice International (ERI) United Nations (UN) Youth Ambassador from South Africa. She holds an undergraduate, honors and master's degree in Social Development, specializing in Children's Rights and human trafficking. In high school, she volunteered with non-governmental organizations (NGO's) working with children affected by HIV Aids, refugee children, and children who have been victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. In 2012, she completed the Edmund Rice International Human Rights training at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland and travelled the world as an ERI UN Youth Ambassador.

Jessica is the Co-Founder and Director of the Edmund Rice Justice Desk (ERJD). The organization focuses on advocating and educating society across South Central Africa in human rights, justice and advocacy.

She received numerous recognitions and awards. Among them are the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, and The Presidents Gold Award for Youth Empowerment from South African President Jacob Zuma; and HRH Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex and HRH Sophie, the Countess of Wessex. In 2016, Jessica received the Queen Young Leaders Award from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in Buckingham Palace.

Jessica has dedicated her life to the fight for human rights across the globe.

SAVE THE DATE

September 18, 2018 at Noon