

Volume 2 Issue 1

December 2016

NorAm

The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers
North America Mission Frère
Advocacy Newsletter



Advocacy Logo designed and created by Matt Horton, Art Chairperson, Iona Prep

NorAm

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

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 charisma of Blessed Edmund Rice in the North American Edmund Rice Network.

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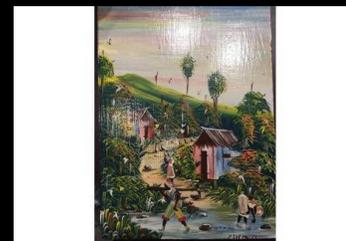
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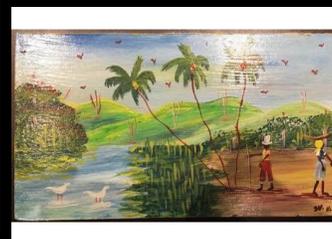
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MISSION FRÈRE-HAITI

The Mission Frère-Haiti Program continues to have great success in its first year, and looks forward to great things to come in 2017. Through a number of recent events, the Mission-Frère Haiti program raised funds for a variety of initiatives to support the poor in Haiti. In 2017, Mission Frère-Haiti will continue to advocate for Haiti by coordinating the first immersion program to Cap-Haitien between Iona Prep and Archbishop McCarthy High School. Please read below to find out about the great programs going on to benefit Haiti.



Art and crafts from local Haitian artists were auctioned off at Iona Prep's 100th Year President's Dinner. All profits benefitted education programs in Haiti.



For the past year, the Mission Frère-Haiti Program has sought out ways to advocate for the people of the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Through a number of initiatives in 2016, and many more in 2017, the Mission Frère-Haiti Program has been able to support Haitians most in need.

The Mission Frère-Haiti Program first recognized students from Haitian-born families in need of assistance within Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Schools. In October, Archbishop Curley-Notre Dame in Miami recognized three students who received a total of \$9,000 in financial assistance from the North American Province.



ACND scholarship recipients (l-r) Raphael Moise, Christie Etienne, Tontyana Francoeur and Principal Doug Romanik

After a February, 2016 trip to Haiti introduced us to a number of excellent initiatives advocating for the poor on the ground in Haiti, the Mission Frère-Haiti program returned home to partner with several organizations. The first initiative was run by two Sisters of the Order of Jesus and Mary, who through the sale of art from local Haitians, were supporting a variety of schools and initiatives centered around children.

In November 2016, Iona Preparatory celebrated the start of its 100th year anniversary at the school's President's Dinner. Here, three pieces of art from this program were auctioned off to support the Sister's works in Jean-Rabel, Haiti. The \$350.00 profit from this auction will benefit education programs in Jean-Rabel. In 2017, Iona Prep students will travel with students from Archbishop McCarthy High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida to serve and advocate for the poor in the Mission Frère-Haiti Program's first student immersion trip to Haiti.

This trip will allow students to learn more about Haiti and the many ways in which they can advocate for some of the world's most vulnerable persons.

November also saw the annual Gala for the Center of Hope-Haiti Inc, which was held in New York City. Center of Hope-Haiti Inc. (COHH) operates a school and orphanage in Hinche, Haiti. The gala raised more than \$170,000, which will go to support the operational costs of feeding, clothing, and teaching the four orphaned children, and 83 students at their new school. 2016 was a banner year for COHH, as they opened a new wing of their school, which is the first phase of a large expansion process for their education program. Bergen Catholic alum Bob Micera is a Board Member for COHH and has been instrumental in the organization's great success. The NA Province will be sending \$350.00 to Jean-Rabel to help with the purchase of a pressurized water tank to be installed in one of the schools.

To learn more about COHH and their work in Haiti, please watch the video below:



COHH VIDEO

ADVOCACY @ ACTION 2016

Each year, students from ERCB Schools come together in Jacksonville, Florida to participate in the Student Leadership ACTION Workshop. At ACTION, students from each school share the incredible things that they and their classmates are doing, as well as sharing their common bond as ERCB peers. At this year's ACTION Workshop students participated in an Advocacy Fair, where each school presented the advocacy projects their schools are engaged in. The article below comes from the perspective of community members of Catholic Memorial and their experiences this year.



Advocacy Fair projects (Archbishop Curley Notre Dame, Miami (top left); Damien Memorial School, Honolulu (bottom left); O'Dea High School, Seattle (right)

ACTION 2016

Kevin Durazo, Campus Minister at Catholic Memorial School, Boston, MA

Each year members of ERCB Network schools send a delegation of student leaders to the ACTION Leadership Workshop. Catholic Memorial School selected juniors Kevin Dugue, William Padden, Kieran Tuomey and Vice Principal Gloria Riley to represent CM at the September workshop. "One of the most important things I took away from ACTION, is that no matter where we come from, whether that be Boston, Chicago, Hawaii, or even Canada, we are all students and believers of the ideals of Blessed Edmund Rice," says Kieran Tuomey.

In addition to growing a deeper understanding of their shared identity as students of ERCB schools, student participants engaged in a variety of activities, workshops, and small group reflections. Each of these were designed to challenge students to think deeply about their unique gifts and talents, and how leadership is all about sharing these with others. "At ACTION, I learned that we have been gifted with specific talents. It is our duty to find those talents within ourselves and put them to good use. We can't let them go to waste because there are plenty of people in the world that can benefit greatly from them," says Will Padden '18.

One of the highlights of the program is the relationship and community building amongst students and moderators. Reflecting on his experience, Kieran Tuomey '18 says, "I think that after my time in Florida with like-minded individuals and leaders from other schools, I have a better idea on how to act as a leader both inside and outside the classroom. I can recall the respect that we all had for one another. There was no competition to see who was the best leader, we all just understood that each of us had something to bring to the table." According to Kevin Dugue '18, "One of my favorite activities at the ACTION Workshop was the leadership interview. Everyone was paired with someone to think deeper about what kind of a leader they are, what they stand for, and how they handle themselves in certain situations. Talking to my partner felt natural, as if we've known each other for years."

The hallmark of a CM education, and an ERCB education in general, is not only that our students are prepared for life beyond high school with a strong academic foundation, but that they are also guided by an eagerness to love God and serve others in all that they do. The importance of this educational mission is examined at ACTION through the lens of *advocacy*. Padden says at ACTION he learned that, "Advocacy is the use of the talents that we've been gifted with to bring awareness to the challenges that the least of our brothers and sisters face. It is the mission to give a voice to those who do not have one." The relevance of advocacy to the mission of Catholic education was highlighted throughout the past year with Pope Francis' declaration of the 2016 liturgical year as a *Jubilee Year of Mercy*. The purpose of this declaration was to invite the whole Church to more fully embrace its essential responsibility to continue Jesus' mission to preach the good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, and free those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).

CM's ACTION students continue to seek to both personally live out their ACTION experience and share it with our school community. Our boys have focused this effort on building an overnight service-retreat experience that will offer their classmates an opportunity to stand in solidarity with those who suffer from hunger and homelessness in the greater Boston area. "I discovered the Hunger Fest at the ACTION Advocacy Fair and knew that it would be a perfect fit within the CM community. I, along with teachers at CM, have been collaborating with students and faculty at Archbishop Curley-Notre Dame in Miami to bring the Hunger Fest to life," says Padden. Thanks to their efforts, the program is scheduled for the first week of February. According to Tuomey, "We plan on getting as many CM Students involved as possible and hope that this tradition given to us by a fellow Christian Brothers school can become a tradition here at Catholic Memorial as well." Summing up his experience, he says, "We now understand what Edmund Rice's mission for us was all those years ago in Waterford, and we will continue to push forth his legacy for as long as we know the response to, 'Live Jesus in our Hearts...'



ACTION participants from Catholic Memorial:

Kevin Dugue,
William Padden,
Kieran Tuomey

BROWNSVILLE IMMERSION 2016

CREATING LEADERS:

The Power of ERCB Education

One of the most powerful aspects of the Brownsville Immersion trip is the visit to Guadalupe Regional Middle School (GRMS), the only tuition free Catholic middle school in Texas, where the ER Christian Brothers, Marist Brothers and the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament serve as strong advocates for Catholic school education. What makes this advocacy so powerful is seeing the incredible education that 6th, 7th and 8th grade students are receiving at the school, and the huge impact that their graduates go out and make on the world around them. Many of these students' families would otherwise not have the means to send their children to such an excellent school. GRMS truly advocates for their students by providing them with the skills, talents and faith to help them succeed in today's world.



David Castillo '09 was the first of several GRMS graduates to be accepted into the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) A-Prime Time program.

"My parents established a future for us here in the United States because they believed in the importance of educational opportunity. GRMS has not only provided my siblings and me with a quality Catholic education, but it has also been a huge system of support in the college application and financial aid processes. As a first-generation college student, I've had access to a variety of resources thanks to GRMS."

According to its website, the A-PRIME TIME Program at UTRGV's Brownsville campus offers accessible and affordable pre-health professional education of high quality that addresses the regional and national need for physicians who are not only capable clinicians but also empathetic healthcare providers. A-PRIME TIME is an innovative pathway for Texas students seeking admission to medical school. The program offers an innovative and rigorous curriculum designed to fully integrate academic and clinical experiences necessary for success in medical school in a three- to four-year period.

A-PRIME TIME students who successfully complete all program requirements at UTRGV matriculate into Univ. of Texas Medical Branch or Univ. of Texas Medical School at Houston for three years. Upon the successful completion of the first year of medical school, students will receive a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree from UTRGV. With continued success, the M.D. would be conferred at the completion of medical studies at UTMB or UTMS-H.

For the second year, students from Bishop Hendricken (Rhode Island), Brother Rice (Michigan), Catholic Memorial (Boston) and Iona Prep (New York) came together in Brownsville, Texas to serve the poor and learn about the realities of living on the U.S.-Mexico border. In the midst of a great time of uncertainty regarding immigration, students learned more about it at ground zero, Brownsville, Texas. Below, students from ERCB schools reflected on their experiences there and how they plan to reconsider their own views on such an important topic.



Students from Guadalupe Regional Middle School share lunch with high school students visiting from 4 ERCB high schools across the U.S.

The Brownsville, Texas immersion opens the eyes of students from different areas of the United States to the harsh, oftentimes brutal realities of immigration on the U.S.'s southern border. Through direct service at resettlement centers and community outreach programs, as well as through a visit to ERCB school, Guadalupe Regional Middle School and classes centered on the facts about immigration, students from these four schools came to better understand the realities of an often slanted topic.

When reflecting on his trip, Iona Prep senior James Bonanno said, "Brownsville was by far one of my favorite service trips I have ever been on. Seeing what I saw while I was in Brownsville really opened my eyes to the pain and suffering that some immigrants go through."

Bishop Hendricken senior Alex Carrillo wrote, "we can see glimmers of hope in even the bleakest of conditions, because for every one of those moments there were times where I felt more satisfied with myself than I ever have before. The smile of a child when they received a clean new shirt, the look of gratitude on the faces of weary mothers and fathers, and the laughs shared with Eliseo, a man from Mexico whom I tutored; each of these experiences made everything worth it."

The Brownsville immersion also helps students to understand their mission moving forward. Carrillo added, "seeing firsthand the good that this community of schools can do reaffirmed my belief in the mission of Blessed Edmund Rice and made me want to effect change in my own community. My time in Brownsville was quite literally life changing; I cannot even begin to put into words how much I have grown just as a person from this experience. I truly believe that I was the one that was bettered by the amazing people that I served as well those who shared in this journey."

To learn more about the areas where the students worked, click here (courtesy of CNN):

[CNN IMMIGRATION](#)



Alex Carrillo (3rd from bottom left) shared lunch with fellow ERCB students at Guadalupe and reflected on his experiences in Brownsville (left)



Students from Brother Rice Michigan pose in front of a mural at San Juan de Valle Basilica

Campus Ministry: Feeding Those Who Feed the World

Roger Rybkowski

The following article comes from The Palma School, where a focus on knowledge, service and leadership continues to drive their push towards advocating for those around them.

It seems odd, almost unthinkable, that those who plant, cultivate, pick and process the food grown in abundance in the Salinas Valley need assistance to live. Such is the plight of many migrant farm workers.

Farm workers have been coming to California since 1942, when federally enacted and administered farm labor programs recruited workers from Mexico to harvest crops. The workers, most of whom came from the states of Michoacán, Oaxaca and Guanajuato, arrived with knowledge of farming and the skills required to earn a living in the US. Despite most of these programs ending by 1964, the lure of a better life continues for many who come from regions plagued by economic instability, political unrest, population growth and scant employment opportunities.

Many come because it's the only way of life they know. They are following in the footsteps of their parents and grandparents, having been raised themselves in labor camps. For them it is an inescapable but familiar way of life. Their existence is transient as they follow the growing seasons up and down the state, moving from camp to camp. The work is hard, laboring for hours in the sun, but is only seasonal so the average farm worker has little chance of affording to stay in one place. The wages are low and the undocumented workers stay in the camps because they are affordable and offer shelter to remain unnoticed.

They come for a variety of reasons, but all share the same goal — to earn enough money to support their families here and/or back in their country of origin.

Bitten Falge Farm Workers Program

Bitten Falge was an inspiration to those who knew of her and her work.

For 18 years, until her death in 2007, she drove to the Salinas Valley once a month to deliver rice and beans to farm worker families living at or below the poverty level. The program, now known as the St. Vincent de Paul Society Bitten Falge Farm Worker Program, continues to provide food, clothing and blankets on a monthly basis, along with school supplies as needed, to farm worker families living in south Monterey County.

Every month, Chieftains trek in several vans to St. Theodore's Catholic Church in Gonzales to load more than a ton of rice, beans and household items supplied by the Food Bank of Monterey County. They deliver to families living in Camp Jimenez, a farm worker camp located just south of Soledad. The young men carry food and sundry other gifts directly into the workers' homes. Donated clothes and toys are also delivered.

"The farm worker is our brother in need," said Jim Micheletti, Palma's Director of Campus Ministries. "Chieftains, who are always willing to help, embrace this program and are awed by the conditions in which this hidden population lives...right in our own backyard. Essential Element number three compels us to stand with them in solidarity."

Since 2007, Chieftains, often accompanied by parents and siblings, have delivered food and household items to migrant worker camps, including presents at Christmas time.

What's just as important as the sustenance the Chieftains provide is their company. It's difficult to imagine the totality of love and hope their kindness brings, especially to people who live in the shadows out of necessity and fear. The outstretched Chieftain hand offers more than something to eat. It offers an invitation to share in a sacred relationship, a solidarity of spirit in Christ that is timeless, whereby fostering and invigorating a community of faith. ●



Riley Corner '18, Omar Garcia '17, Jake Ottone '18, Oliver Mirassou '17, Michael Perez '18, Isaac Escobar '16, Mark Beach '16 and Kevin Beach '19



Mark Beach '16 (standing in truck) off loads bags of food to Riley Corner '18, Michael Perez '18 and Jake Ottone '18



Omar Garcia '17 and Mark Beach '16 bring a doll house donated by Mr. Tim Martinez



Riley Corner '18, Isaac Escobar '16, Kevin Beach '19, Michael Perez '18 and Jake Ottone '18

ADVOCACY IN ACTION: OCEANIA PROVINCE

The following article comes from our Brothers in Oceania, from Christian Brothers High School: Lewisham in Australia. Here, students are deeply involved in advocacy projects, particularly with supporting the rights of indigenous groups in Australia. Their involvement with advocacy in Australia and Peru highlight the great ways that they are promoting advocacy in action at their school and across the global Edmund Rice Network.

BROTHERS FOR THE WORLD- PAUL CONN

The Call of Our Way Into the Future is a call for all Brothers to transform our spirituality so that our lives as Brothers become more relevant, vibrant and real, especially to people who are poor and marginalised. As Christian Brothers in the 21st Century we must, through the prism of a broken and hurting world, provide Gospel centred hope, a hope that has as its foundation a response to the urgent and confronting needs of the poor and a commitment to awareness, solidarity and action with the whole Earth community.

All Christian Brothers, regardless of age, locality or ministry are called to embrace the spiritual core concepts of Our Way Into the Future and ensure that these are lived out in their own spirituality journey and own ministry.



Christian Brothers' High School Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Kaleb Taylor, CBHS students and local Elder, Uncle Max lead the school in a smoking ceremony to honour NAIDOC Week

CBHS Student, Blake Griffiths, leads his fellow Aboriginal students in an Acknowledgement of Country dance



In our awareness of our brokenness, God is calling us to be compassionate people transforming old structures, cultural mindsets and practices, ushering in a new way of being for the world." Our Way Into the Future is being lived out at Christian Brothers' High School Lewisham, (a multicultural and working class school for 1,370 young men) in many ways, especially as an integrated approach to our living out of our faith experiences, and in the following two very practical ways:

One of the most urgent justice issues in Australia is supporting, affirming and empowering Indigenous people so that they can live lives of dignity and experience a proud resurgence of their culture and spirituality. CBHS Lewisham has an Aboriginal Program that genuinely values Right Relationships and the importance of significant and measurable processes of reconciliation. Approximately 40 Aboriginal young men (who are on Edmund Rice Bursaries at the school) are closing the educational and social gap that all too often exists between the Aboriginal community and mainstream society. Their Aboriginal identity, culture and spirituality is shared and celebrated and the story of our country's first people is recognised in many meaningful

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BROTHERS FOR THE WORLD- PAUL CONN (pg. 2)

and life giving ways. When one of the first Aboriginal families within the school community to receive the Edmund Rice Bursary arrived at CBHS they listed as their home address the local hostel for homeless men. This family was truly poor in many ways. The bursaries are not about “charity” but allowing Aboriginal young people to share their story, culture and spirituality with the school community, knowing that it is always honoured and valued. The school’s NAIDOC Assembly, in particular, is a great celebration of Aboriginal pride as our multicultural school embraces the wonderful meaning of Aboriginal spirituality and commits to significant reconciliation that names and recognises the injustice of the past and then provides meaningful action to a hope-filled future.



CBHS students carry the materials for a new house to the poorest area of the neighbourhood



CBHS students with the host family in front of the newly built house

This year I accompanied 10 senior students and four staff to Lima, Peru where we were involved in an immersion program. All participants were challenged to understand that each person has the ability and opportunity to improve their future and as guests in Lima we were challenged to share our story and listen to the stories of the locals as they share how they are empowered to promote resilience and sustainability in their own community.

Central to the immersion experience was building a home for a very poor family whose mother has cancer. The group was able to work with Br Steve Casey and Br Paul Keohane to form a wonderful relationship with the father and two children, meet the mother and fulfil the mother’s wishes of accommodation for her children before she dies. The poor in Lima live on top of hills.

The students carried all the building material required for the house up 264 stairs and laboured for two solid days to ensure this family would no longer live on the streets.

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BROTHERS FOR THE WORLD- PAUL CONN (pg. 3)

The second part of the immersion experience included developing our ongoing relationship with our partner school Fe y Alegria No. 26. This school is a beacon of hope and opportunity in a very poor area of Lima. Our group shared stories, cultures and spirituality with the school and explored how much the charism of Edmund Rice can unite people, even through adversity and diversity. The experience deepened the spiritual journey of all the group especially the young men and provided a great opportunity for faith in action.

Significant to both the Aboriginal Program and Peru Immersion is the idea that our physical presence as well as the allocation of substantial resources is essential if a positive impact is to be made in the life and well-being of poor people. Mission oriented and vision centred leadership is needed if Our Way Into the Future is going to succeed in providing a holistic, spiritual, social and faith and values based framework for the life of every Christian Brother and our ministries. Global interconnectedness challenges all of us to value and celebrate diversity whilst never losing focus on the person of Jesus, the values of the Gospel and charism and presence of Edmund Rice.



CBHS students sharing story, culture and spirituality with students from Fe y Alegria no 26, Lima, Peru

“If you have come to help me, then I do not need your help, but if you have come because you believe that your liberation is bound up with mine, then we can work together.”

ADVOCACY WORKSHOP UPDATE



From March 23-26, 2017, Advocacy Coordinators and leaders from around North and South America will meet at Jericho House in Wainfleet, Canada.



At this Advocacy Workshop, participants will hear from Christian Brothers and others working directly with advocacy initiatives at the U.N. in New York and throughout Canada.

Participants will also gain a better understanding of the Mission Frère-Advocacy Program and how they can get involved in their school and across the North American Province.

18 of the 22 spots have been reserved. If you are interested in attending, please contact:

**Sean D'Alfonso
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SOUTHERN JUSTICE: CONTINUING THE FIGHT



In the first issue of NorAm in December of 2015, we wrote about Brother Ed Begeron and his work with Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM). This multi-faith based community organizing group has been working for more than four years in the Charleston, South Carolina area to combat injustices in Charleston's school, prison and labor systems. The group consists of members of local Jewish, Catholic and Protestant congregations, and has been very successful in creating interfaith cooperation and by creating a more just community by working with local leaders in the area.

Recently, CAJM made headlines again, as they were working with the Charleston City Council to combat wage theft in the local community. CAJM's work paid off, as they advocated for and received \$144,000 to fund a Wage Recovery Program which will help to fight the many cases of wage theft found locally. Through this funding, CAJM was able to partner with South Carolina Legal Services to hire a full-time attorney and part-time paralegal to work solely on these cases.

To learn more about this story, click on the following link (courtesy of Live 5 News): [Wage Story](#)

To learn more about Charleston Area Justice Ministry and the work Brother Bergeron is involved in, please click here:

[Charleston Area Justice Ministry](#)

WE CRY OUT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE IN OUR LAND!

Over the past two years, racial justice has rightfully come to the forefront of the national discussion in the United States. The ERCBNA Mission Frère-Program recognizes the importance of this discussion and the following message that comes from the Catholic Coalition and CMSM. The ER Christian Brothers are members of CMSM, The Conference of Major Superiors of Men, which comprises the leadership of the religious institutes, monastic communities, and societies of apostolic life throughout the United States.



As a national Catholic organization committed to building God's beloved community, we confess our own complicity and that of our organizations and our Catholic Church in the institutional racism that continues to plague our society. We have failed our black and brown brothers and sisters. We are guilty of both conscious and unconscious discrimination and acknowledge that we have manifested racist attitudes and behaviors in our personal lives and in the structures, policies, practices and procedures of our organizations.

As organizations, we have been moved by the courage of high school and college students, parents, professional athletes, and others in local communities large and small who have taken a bold stand for racial justice. We support your commitment to justice and thank you for taking nonviolent action that has sparked important conversations about our struggle to recognize and value the dignity of each and every person in our society.

We thank you for inviting us to reclaim the values of human dignity and equality that are the foundation of our country. We admire your courage and creativity and for the challenge you offer to each of us. We know that Jesus modeled even greater courage and love for all, even his enemies. We pray for the strength to commit to living more fully the nonviolent love of Jesus especially in light of the racial and systemic injustice that continues to plague our communities.

We invite our communities to seriously reflect on making a commitment to 1) participate in racial solidarity training; 2) create spaces for truth and reconciliation in our homes, organizations, and parishes; 3) engage in training in nonviolent conflict transformation; 4) promote programs of unarmed civilian peacekeepers in our communities; and 5) require substantive ongoing de-escalation training for police officers.

It is time for a new paradigm that values cooperation instead of competition; that prizes transparent communication, accountability, shared power, and responsibility; and encourages holistic thinking that welcomes all points of view.

To you our brothers and sisters who resist the misuse of power—continue to demonstrate, to dialogue, and to embrace nonviolent action to bring attention to the injustices that have become too much a part of the fabric of our American way of life. We stand with you.

HUMAN RIGHTS AT IONA PREP



L to R: Langston Morrison '17, John-Carlo Bautista '17, Anthony Rizzo '18, Sebastian Vitolo '18, Mrs. Christine Chana, Ryan Murphy '18, Kyle Vidal '18, Michael Kang '18, Brian Kelly '17, Michael Franceski '17, Ryan Billie '18, Iain Pile '17, Kenneth Hicks '20 Front Row: Rachel Carpitella and Katia Barker

Iona Prep's Human Rights Club Focuses on Sustainability

Alex Malecki - Iona Prep

After attending last May's Human Rights Training Course in Geneva, Iona Prep Campus Ministry Director Anthony Casella wanted to bring advocacy back to Iona Prep. His goal was to create a human rights group at Iona Prep where students could learn about and engage in advocacy projects aligned with the ERCB School Network and what he learned in Geneva. His hope was to connect this with what students were learning about in their classes at Iona Prep. This year, that goal was achieved, as the Human Rights Club at Iona Prep has been engaged in a number of human rights projects, which have included outside speakers teaching students about important human rights issues in the U.S. and across the world. The latest project revolved around water and sustainability issues in the U.S.

As part of its ongoing awareness and advocacy efforts, Iona Prep's Human Rights Club at the Upper School hosted two speakers focused on the topic of water bottle consumption during an activities period. [Greenburgh Nature Center](#) Sustainability Coordinator & Educator Rachel Carpitella led things off with a presentation on the environmental impact of disposable water bottles, along with the economic and marketing factors that led to their meteoric rise in popularity. She was followed by Katia Barker, a student at Convent of the Sacred Heart in Greenwich, Conn., who created her own fundraising organization, [GroundSwell](#), through the Thirst Project to raise money to drill a clean-water well in Africa. Through various fundraisers, she has raised more than \$16,500, well exceeding her goal of \$12,000.

The two speakers kicked off the Human Rights Club's campaign to reduce disposable bottle usage at the Upper School. The club is installing a second water fountain and water bottle filling station in the school. It is selling Iona Prep reusable water bottles in order to raise funds for the purchase of a third station.



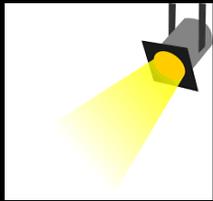
To learn more about the danger of disposable water bottles, [click here](#): (courtesy of Free Range Studios and Story of Stuff Project)

[Bottled Water Truth](#)

The reusable water bottle designed by Iona Prep's Human Rights Club.

The water bottle filling station that Iona Prep's Human Rights Club is installing throughout the school.





ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT: *The Edmund Rice Justice Desk*



The **Edmund Rice Justice Desk**

The Edmund Rice Justice Desk (formally known as the Social Justice and Advocacy Desk) of South Central Africa was launched in 2013 and is currently based at the Edmund Rice York Community in Cape Town, South Africa.

Their purpose is to advocate, educate and equip in the area of Human Rights, Justice and Advocacy. They operate in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe as well as offer support, expertise and educational materials to various other groups across the globe. They belong to a global network of human rights defenders; and form a part of the wider Edmund Rice Network, inspired by the charisma and ethos of Blessed Edmund Rice.

Their various programs operate under four key pillars: 1) Advocacy, 2) Education & Awareness, 3) Training and 4) Bridging.

To learn more about The Edmund Rice Justice Desk and their great work, click here: [JUSTICE DESK](#)

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.

<http://www.edmundriceschools.org>



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.

<http://www.cmsm.org/justice-alerts.shtml>



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](#)



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](#)



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.

<http://edmundricelatinamerica.org/latam-newsletter/>



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:

<http://smartjustice.ca>



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:

<http://erebb.org>

CONTACT US

We are always looking for submissions and links from across the network and beyond!



Sean D'Alfonso
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NorAm Editor



https://twitter.com/ERCBNA_ADVOCACY



www.ercbna.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



February 17-23, 2017

Innaugural Mission Frère-Haiti Immersion Trip



March 23-26, 2017

ERCB School Advocacy Coordinators Workshop
Jericho House, Wainfleet, Canada