



# Rebecca's Reflections



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## Only a Glimpse

Nine hundred and twenty-nine participants attended the *Abortion: From Debate to Dialogue* seminar from January through September of 2013. More than four hundred and fifty came out to participate in an outreach, many of them for the first time. Here is a glimpse of what a few of these participants had to say after their seminar and outreach experiences.



Like the participants featured in this newsletter, JFA participant Emma Dunphy (left) converses with a fellow student during an outreach on her campus this past September at the University of Georgia (UGA). I had the pleasure of mentoring her during the outreach.

I realized just how many people had never given the issue [abortion] any serious thought, and it makes me wish I could be out there talking to people every day!...I think a lot of seeds were planted over the past three days, and I have a feeling the dialogue will continue among some of the students after JFA leaves. I know I will do my best to keep the conversations alive.

- Christine Moran, Georgia Tech, 2013

I am not one to just go "out there" and begin persuasive dialogue with strangers...especially when it comes to the issue of abortion...at least that's what I used to think about myself.

...My confidence was missing and the fear of failure used to hold me back when opportunities arose; when I knew I needed to speak, I didn't...Now, I don't want to make this cheesy, or sappy, but the Justice For All seminar literally changed my life! I'm not saying that all my fears magically disappeared...I'm still learning...I learned so much in only one day of pro-life persuasion training (seat work) and I loved every moment of it. I was able to lovingly (and this time) effectively present the truth to several university students on campus during the seminar's outreach day (feet work) using the training I received the day before...

- Julia Reiss, Louisiana State University, 2013

The above participants have expressed confidence to engage others and create conversations now that they have received the Justice For All training, but what does it look like when a volunteer starts a conversation during an outreach with us. Is there evidence to show us that future conversations may be fruitful? The box below and on the back page includes snippets of a few encounters that Justice For All volunteers had during their outreach experiences.

Our first encounter was probably the most noteworthy. It was with a middle-aged Spanish man who spoke broken English. He insisted that he was personally opposed to abortion but didn't want to get into other people's private business. As we talked to him and showed him the fetal development "panel" you could really see him struggling with when it should be okay for other people to abort their children. We kept walking him backwards and then he would get really nervous and say, "it's their business!" We talked to him for a while and you could really see the struggle happening in his heart. He couldn't come to terms with abortion, but he didn't want to tell other people what to do with their lives. Cognitive Dissonance to the max :). Even though he wasn't "technically" a convert on the spot, I really think we got him thinking...

- Missy Martinez, Students for Life of America, Washington D.C., 2013



Another JFA training participant (right) engages with her peers at the most recent UGA outreach in Athens this September using one of JFA's newest kiosk banners and free speech board as a dialogue tool.



This summer at Wichita State University, I trained JFA participants to conduct surveys on campus as a tool to start dialogue. Above at right, one of the participants listens in.

The first person that I spoke to was probably around his mid-20s. I showed the man the brochure and went through survey. As we were going through everything, I could see the man's facial reactions change. At first, he had agreed to the statement "Abortions are okay at the 1st trimester." After he agreed to see the 3rd and 4th pages of the brochure, we showed them to him. After going through those stories, he stated "Wow! I think I'm wrong."

- Chelsea Nora, Joshua Leadership Institute, 2013

Another conversation...began with talking to a man who was very critical of the exhibit. However, as I began to talk with him, he stopped criticizing and really was interested in our conversation.

...his biggest hang-up was in the biological view of when a life becomes a life. We talked through things, and he would agree with [my thoughts, but not with my] conclusions. However, as we were talking, a couple others came and listened in on our conversation. When this man left, one of the students listening stayed back and was very interested in talking. He had a class to go to soon, but he stayed as long as he could to talk. He had heard us [me and the first man] talking, and had begun to see that life must begin at conception. He was not completely sure, but he thought that was probably right.

...This young man was very honest, and probably the biggest impact the exhibit had on him was to make him think about his own relationship with his girlfriend. As he thought about abortion, but also the implications of becoming pregnant, he realized that this was not a light thing to deal with. He began to see the consequences of his decisions, as well as the value of human life.

- Natalie Fear, Ellerslie Leadership Training, Colorado State University, 2013

I was able to speak with my friend of eight years, who was totally pro-choice, but during our conversation he has changed some of his viewpoints and thinks that certain laws should be enacted to stop the slaughter. I'm sure the training you gave me helped in softening his viewpoints.

- Stuart Lawrence, Colorado State University, 2013

Your support has helped these volunteers receive training to balance truth and love in a dialogue about one of the most, if not the most, controversial issue in our country today. Beyond the training, your support has equipped them to continue these conversations in their daily lives. Justin Vlosich's thank you note (below) should not be exclusively directed to the Justice For All staff but to **you** as well. Your support gives us the ability to train people like him.

Thank **you** guys so much for helping me, a guy who was so nervous to talk to people about this, become able to talk to anybody about it. - Justin Vlosich, Joshua Leadership Institute, 2013

*Rebecca J. Haschke*



Pictured to the left are multiple JFA participants that I helped mentor and train this past September on the University of Georgia's campus in Athens. Several participants even travelled from the Atlanta area to join us.