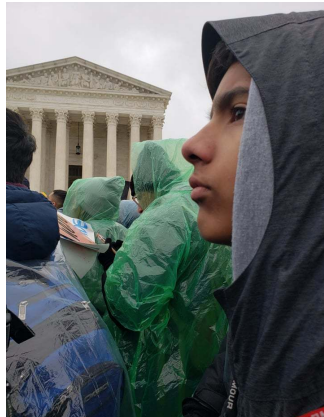




# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



IFCLA

The St. Louis  
Inter-Faith  
Committee on  
Latin America

## OUR TEAM

Sara John  
Executive Director

Carly Garcia  
Operations Manager

Allie Seleyman  
Accompaniment Coordinator  
& 2019-20 Loretto Volunteer

Lindsey Faust  
2018-19 Loretto Volunteer

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ellen Ziegemeier  
Convener

Rev. Tyler Connoley  
Co-Convener

Leonel Medina  
Secretary

Geraldine Germain  
Treasurer

Sr. Rosario Bobadilla, CSJ  
Amanda Tello  
Rabbi Daniel Bogard  
David Roberts  
Marissa Ornelas

*IFCLA Board & Staff are supported throughout the year by a vibrant team of practicum students, college interns, and office volunteers. In 2019, this team included:*

Becky Harszy, Volunteer  
Ramona Marshall, UMSL  
Michelle Manivel, WUSTL  
Lexie Salamone, Webster  
Joanna Williams, CSCE-SLU  
Marissa Ornelas, SLU  
Ro Sandoval, SLU

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What a year it has been; what an impossible task to be working for justice in this era. The sentiments of the prophet Elijah have felt closer than ever: "I have had enough! It is too hard to serve God, too exhausting to work for love, dignity and justice." My heart feels heavy, my brain exhausted, and my body out of breath.

Yet, I am challenged and inspired by the words of Toni Morrison: "The only grace you will receive is the grace you can imagine; if you can not see it, you will not have it."

The resilience this movement demands of us comes from a prophetic imagination strong enough to fuel our creativity, persistent enough to outlast the

tireless frenzy of the oppressor, and committed enough to pursue hope collectively.

Though we feel tired, we are not defeated; we might feel spent, but we are far from finished.

May we continue to pick each other up, to hold one another closer in compassion, and feed each other's souls, so that together, we may sustain this struggle until we are all free.

With hope,



Sara John



**THROUGH EDUCATION AND ORGANIZING, WE CONVENE AN INTER-FAITH COMMUNITY TO ACCOMPANY THE PEOPLE OF LATIN AMERICA IN THEIR WORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

**DIGNITY ✦ INTEGRITY ✦ SOLIDARITY ✦ DIVERSITY ✦ COMMITMENT**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE GARCIA FAMILY

After over 2 years of living in sanctuary at Christ Church UCC with no end in sight, we would like to express our deep appreciation for the support you have offered to our family. Without your support, we know that we would not have been able to stay strong throughout the injustices over the years. We are blessed to be able to fight alongside you today, for the opportunity to show what our family is made of and to show that we will not give up. Your support makes that possible.

We need you to continue supporting our family more than

ever, as our fight will get harder and harder the longer we suffer the separation from Alex, unable to provide for our family and create beautiful memories with our children. Thank you so much for all that you do!

With heartfelt appreciation,  
Alex & Carly Garcia





# THANK YOU TO THE 2019 SUSTAINERS, DONORS, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS WHO GENEROUSLY FUND OUR MISSION

Jean Abbott  
 Rev. Mary Albert  
 Kendra Alison  
 Rita Andres  
 Marie Andrews  
 Daniel Axelbaum  
 Sr. Clare Bass  
 Jerre E. Birdsong  
 Susan Binvs  
 Rabbi Daniel Bogard  
 Andy Bredemeyer  
 Barry Buchek  
 Amanda Buehrig  
 Judith Campbell  
 Trent Chambers  
 Linda Chapleau  
 Christy Chassere  
 John Christensen  
 Joseph Cistone  
 Peter Clarkson  
 Lisa Cohn  
 Mirjam Collegeman  
 Rev. Tyler & Rob Connoley  
 Joseph Connolly  
 Nicole Cortes  
 Gary Cozette  
 Rev. Dr. Teresa Danieley  
 Sharon & Richard Danyluck  
 Amy de la Hunt  
 Stephanie Dering  
 Amy Diemer  
 Pat Dougherty  
 Amanda Doyle  
 Clare Duffy  
 Karen Edge  
 Michele Emmett  
 Mark & Terry Etling  
 Kevin Farrell  
 Christine Fischer  
 Joan Fitzsimmons  
 Wendy Flusser  
 Charlie Fogleman  
 April Foster  
 Amanda Fulbright

Paula Fulks  
 Dorothy Gannon  
 Carly Garcia  
 Chris & Geraldine Germain  
 Francine Glass  
 Sarah Glenn  
 Joseph & Pamela Goldfeld  
 Rabbi Andrea Goldstein  
 Brett Goldstein  
 Felix Gonzalez  
 Shannon Grass  
 Kristin Groetsch  
 Robin Hannon  
 Rev. Betsy Happel  
 Rebecca Harszy  
 Daun Hashbarger  
 Kathy Heffern  
 Dan & Joann Hellinger  
 Vanessa Henriquez-Pimblott  
 Stephen Hoepflinger  
 Mike & Linda Holdinghaus  
 Astrid Homan  
 Gwynnette Jackson  
 Karen Jaques  
 Sara John  
 Gihan Kader  
 Judith Kamper  
 Emma Kenyon  
 Marie Kenyon  
 Robyn Keough  
 Lisa Kientzel  
 Fr. Gerry Kleba  
 Sr. Barbara Koch  
 Harriet Kopolow  
 Marc & Prudence Kramer  
 Rev. Dr. Deb Krause  
 Laurie Lakebrink  
 Andrew & Karen Leonard  
 Jane Levdansky  
 Allen Love  
 Debra Lovell  
 Katherine Lucas  
 James Luepke  
 Kim Madden

Kathleen Manganaro  
 Judy Mantych  
 Marilyn Lorenz-Weinkauff  
 Christine Marshall  
 Romona Marshall  
 Margot Martin  
 Monica Matthieu  
 Colleen McConnaha  
 Connor McFarland  
 Maureen Anne McInnis  
 Leonel Medina  
 Doris Meinerding  
 Brayan Mejia Hurtado  
 Katherine Meola  
 Katie Meyer  
 George Mills  
 Mary Mohl  
 Leta Moore  
 Julia Murphy  
 Julie Murphy  
 Juan Narvaez  
 Anna Navarro  
 Mimi Newsham Mahoney  
 Susan Nichols  
 Thomas & Maureen Nolan  
 Julia Nouse  
 Alex O'Brien  
 David O'Brien  
 Margaret O'Brien  
 Angela O'Gorman  
 Robyne O'Mara  
 Jeff Ojemann  
 Olmedo & Alice Serrano  
 Jill & Terry Orr  
 Denise & John Pahl  
 Elena Pahl  
 Kathy Peterson & Dan Mosby  
 Margaret Pride  
 Katrina Priese  
 Jan Pryibil  
 Rick Ragsdale  
 Steven & Susan Rakel  
 Gary Ratkin  
 Gerry Rauch

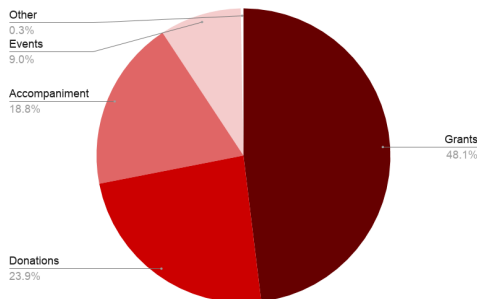
Carol & David Rauh  
 Pearce Reding  
 Linda Reynolds  
 Elizabeth Ritterloos  
 David Roberts  
 Jan Roddy & Julie Sutfin  
 Carlos Ruiz Martinez  
 Sr. Denise Sausville  
 Theresa Schafer  
 Anne Schappe  
 Joyce Schramm  
 John & Nicole Schuler  
 Lyndsie Schultz  
 Ann Marie Schutzius  
 Mary Jane Schutzius  
 Karen Selboe  
 Stan Shanker  
 Debra Smith  
 Kim Song  
 Nancy Spargo  
 Mike & Kathy Squires  
 Bethany Stepleton  
 Robert Stolte  
 Florence Streeter  
 Rabbi Susan Talve  
 Jessica Trout  
 Rev. Rebecca Turner  
 Joan Turnure  
 Georgia Uodike  
 Janelle Velten  
 Ben & Jenna Voss  
 Kristine Walentik  
 Christopher Webb  
 Joseph Welling  
 Teri Wells  
 Fr. Donald Wester  
 Lola Wheeler  
 Judith Williamson  
 Troy Woytek  
 Maria Yaksic  
 Gregory Zensen  
 Arlene Ziegemeier  
 Ellen Ziegemeier

Adorers of the Blood of Christ  
 Archdiocese of St. Louis  
 Association of United States Catholic Priests  
 Catholic Campaign for Human Development  
 Central Reform Congregation  
 Christ Church United Church of Christ  
 Communication Center #1  
 Congregation Shaare Emeth  
 Marillac Mission Fund

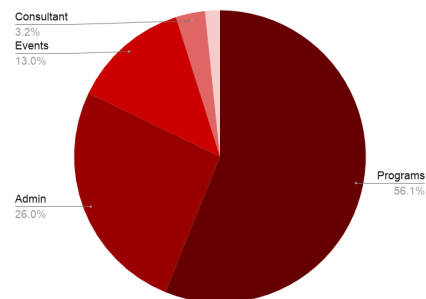
Justice & Peace Shares  
 Kirkwood United Church of Christ  
 Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis  
 Nerinx Hall Student Association  
 Network for Good  
 Plowsharing Crafts  
 Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet  
 St. Anselm Parish  
 St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

St. John United Church of Christ  
 St. Louis Community Foundation  
 St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship  
 St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon  
 Therese of Divine Peace  
 University United Methodist Church  
 Webster Groves Christian Church  
 West Central Conference (ELCA)  
 ZeeBee Market

## INCOME



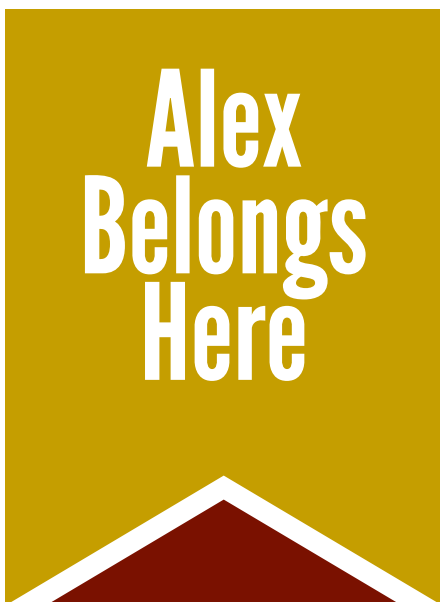
## EXPENSES



## PROGRAM EXPENSE DETAIL

■ Alex Belongs Here ■ Other ■ Accompaniment ■ Education ■ DACA





As part of our ongoing efforts to support Alex Garcia, who has been living in sanctuary at Christ Church United Church of Christ in Maplewood since September 2017, we strengthened our



collaborative efforts with the National Sanctuary Collective. In March, we welcomed Congressman Wm. Lacy Clay, Jr., to Christ Church for the second time, and requested that he sponsor private legislation that would enable Alex to leave the church and reunite with his family on a pathway to citizenship. Four months later, Representative Clay introduced H.R. 3750 - the fourth private bill this session for individuals living in sanctuary.

Once again, September was a difficult month for the Garcia family. To honor their 2-year sacrifice, more than 50 individuals and a dozen congregations made a 7-mile pilgrimage from the ICE Office in Downtown St. Louis to Christ Church, where Alex and others

waited in prayerful meditation to welcome the pilgrims. Two weeks later, a team of volunteers traveled to Washington DC to advocate on Alex's behalf.

**'Today we pray with our feet. We offer 14,000 steps of joyful resistance.'**

We built power for this family's reunification in many ways: we sent teams to Washington DC three times, questioned Presidential candidates in Iowa, gathered over 1,500 signatures on a national petition for sanctuary liberation, sent over 500 postcards to Congress during August recess, and made financial contributions to eliminate the family's crippling credit card debt incurred since



their sanctuary sacrifice began. Though exhausted, the strategies, relationships and energy invested this year propels us into the work for Alex's freedom in 2020, together with other families fighting through sanctuary.



# Education

## Fostering greater awareness of the policies and laws that connect the United States and Latin America.

### IMMIGRATION 101, 201 AND MORE

More than 530 volunteers participated in over 37 educational events IFCLA offered in 2019. We continued to offer the Immigration 101 multi-week course, which discusses sending, transit and receiving community history and details, identifying root causes of immigration in order to imagine how we will build community today. In response to demands from 101 participants, IFCLA designed and launched the first of a series of 201-level courses, exploring details like profit in immigrant incarceration, enforcement in Missouri, and a Honduras case study of US intervention.

### AYOTZINAPA: 5 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Five years after the forced disappearance of 43 Mexican students from the town of Ayotzinapa, their families

continue to fight for justice, transparency or accountability. Through a series of presentations, film discussions and a webinar with student organizer, Omar Garcia Velasquez, IFCLA kept their memory alive and continued the joint struggle to resist the spread of militarization and unchecked state violence everywhere.

### PUBLIC THEOLOGY & RACIAL JUSTICE

As IFCLA seeks to equip leaders that will bring about social change, we sent a team of 17 volunteers to the Public Theology and Racial Justice Collaborative's Summer Institute at the Vanderbilt University Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee. The team was challenged by this year's theme: "Policy, Politics, and Privilege: The Prophetic Response to Racist Governance". The agitational and transformative experience developed deeper relationships among IFCLA leaders and staff as well as offered opportunities for personal growth while we decolonize ourselves, our work, and our world.



### HONDURAS DELEGATION

Ten years after the violent coup in Honduras, IFCLA sent two representatives to the country as part of a human rights defenders

delegation comprised of roughly 20 people from the US and Canada. There, accompanied by many resilient and inspiring Honduran community leaders and activists, we witnessed firsthand the heartbreaking, anxiety-inducing, anger-bubbling realities of life in Honduras. The team of defenders:

- Supported daily marches, protests and strikes in El Progreso;
- Learned from Garifuna leaders about land reclamation projects they lead in Trujillo;
- Visited a community project in San Pedro Sula;
- Honored the continuation of Berta Caceres's work in La Esperanza with COPINH leaders;
- Witnessed the experiences of political prisoners Edwin Espinal and Raul Alvarez in the US-style military-run "La Tolva" prison;
- Remained present during the boiling point of a two-day national strike led by the Honduran people.

These experiences once again affirm our convictions and renew our commitment to accompany the Honduran people. The US is complicit in the abuse of the Honduran people and peaceful protesters who demand a better life and government for themselves. The US is complicit in the murder of Berta Caceres and countless other human rights defenders. The US had a direct role in the 2009 military coup d'état that led to the current dictatorship of Juan Orlando Hernandez; the migrant caravans denounced by the US only exist because of this pattern and history of intervention.

The US's involvement in Honduras is malicious, unjust and immoral. We will not be silent. Honduras, we are with you. ¡Berta vive y la lucha sigue!



# Organizing

**Building relationships to support partners in Latin America and effect change in US law and policy.**

## **ICE RAPID RESPONSE COLLABORATION**

Amid increasing threats for widespread immigration enforcement and an increased ICE presence in communities across the country, IFCLA joined with local partners to create a rapid response network. Led by several Latino/a/x leaders, the 24-hour volunteer-run hotline and team of volunteers came together in order to ensure that all immigrants have access to accurate information and

immediate community support.

IFCLA supported this effort through hosting trainings for the rapid response teams, sharing helpful information on social media, and quickly showing up on the streets as needed to evaluate reports of ICE activity.

This community-based collaboration seeks to ensure that unfounded fear isn't spread and to build powerful long-lasting relationships that can be activated in times of crisis.

## **FIGHTING RACISM IN MISSOURI**

IFCLA joined the MO Immigration Policy Table, a coalition of state-wide organizations and individuals advocating for issues impacting immigrants in Missouri, building a proactive policy platform that works toward cultural and legislative change. This coalition serves as a forum to share information and analysis, to develop and coordinate plans of action, and build further support for immigrant communities in the state.

During the legislative session, IFCLA sent volunteers to Jefferson City to testify against racist legislation like SB 64 and to fight for equal access to

higher education. Though the "Show Me Your Papers" bill was defeated, a conversation behind closed doors at the 11th hour reversed the hard work of the Coalition to protect students in Missouri: the legislature voted to continue its decade-long pattern of charging international tuition rates for some Missouri students, regardless of how long they've lived in the state.



## **MOVEMENT LAWYERING FOR JUSTICE**

IFCLA continues to deepen relationships with community partners, including the incredible leadership at the MICA Project. This year, Sara John and Nicole Cortes developed a training module on movement lawyering in an effort to build capacity in the region for collaborative efforts between attorneys and organizers, where voices of the directly impacted are centered and skills are pooled for the service of the common good.



# Accompaniment



**Recognizing the importance of and encouraging supportive partnerships that are responsive to the changing goals and needs of immigrants.**

### ICE ACCOMPANIMENT PROGRAM

The ICE Accompaniment Project continues to train teams of allies to be present with immigrants during mandated check-ins with federal authorities. Hundreds are placed into the Intensive Supervision Appearance Program (ISAP) while they await a court date; most are then required to wear GPS ankle monitors for years. IFCLA supports compas' efforts to have these ankle monitors removed through direct petition to ICE. Last year, 10 monitors were removed; in 2019, 26 monitors were removed!

Due to increasing demand among Latino/a/x neighbors (largely as a result of significant changes in federal asylum policies such as the immoral

Migrant Protection Protocols or "Remain in Mexico" policy), this program grew sixfold. In 2018, IFCLA sent accompaniment teams on 80 check-ins; this year, teams were present at over 480!

In collaboration with other members of the Immigrant Service Providers Network (ISPN), we developed a webinar for service providers as well as a workshop for compas on the rights, challenges and potential abuses of the ISAP program. We reached more than 60 individuals in these ways.

### DACA RENEWAL CLINIC

As the Administration continues to attack multiple immigrant populations, those impacted by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program also continue to fight for their right to stay. In November, the Supreme Court of the United States heard oral arguments in a case that will determine the future of this program and the status of the several hundred thousand of DACA recipients. The fight to

preserve DACA reminds us that we must remain focused on addressing root causes, which is the only path towards long term liberation.

In light of this and to support local DACA recipients with renewal, we once again partnered with the Scholarship Foundation, MIRA, the MICA Project and St. Francis Community Services to offer a free clinic and offered financial support for renewal filing fees.

### PRO SE ASYLUM CLINICS

To build community capacity to meet these increasing demands, IFCLA partnered with the MICA Project and St. Francis Community Services to offer a series of free asylum clinics to better equip immigrants to represent themselves in immigration court. Participants complete and file their asylum applications, are taught how the asylum process works, and are connected to accompaniment resources for the duration of their case. Clinics will continue in 2020.

483

ACCOMPANIED  
CHECK-INS

26

ANKLE MONITORS  
REMOVED

25

DACA APPLICANTS  
SUPPORTED

55

ASYLUM APPLICANTS  
SUPPORTED

232

TOTAL COMPAS  
SUPPORTED

208

ACCOMPANIMENT  
VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED





IFCLA

The St. Louis  
Inter-Faith  
Committee on  
Latin America

St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America

5021 Adkins Avenue, Room 122

St. Louis, Missouri 63116

ifcla@ifcla.net ✦ 314.721.2977

[www.stl-ifcla.org](http://www.stl-ifcla.org)

