



Granite State Organizing Project
A Voice For Justice

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Winter 2019 Newsletter



From left, **Habiba Hassan, Zeynab Osman and Charity Kabari**, accept the Vanessa Johnson Award on behalf of Y.O.U.. Presented only in years in which it is merited, this award is presented to emerging leaders in movements for social justice. Photo/Arnie Alpert

Director's Corner

Welcome back to the GSOP newsletter! Our new look is only one of the changes happening across the state and within GSOP. We are excited to announce the opening of Centro Latino de Hospitalidad, a collaboration with St. Anne St. Augustin Parish. This new drop in center serves the immigrant community 1—5 pm Tuesdays & Thursdays. We are also partnering with the Episcopal Dioceses of NH on Courageous Community Conversations and facilitating conversations on white privilege and racism.

On a personal note, as of February 15 I am on a 3 month sabbatical. Through a combination of rest, travel and study I hope to improve my Spanish, visit our sister Faith in Action Group, CeFe, at the border and reinvigorate my self-care practices. I know you will support Viola, Aron, Iliana and Sudi as they keep our work going strong. And I will see you at our Micah Dinner in June.

Sarah Jane Knoy
Executive Director

Around GSOP....

Y.O.U. — Our Young Organizers United (Y.O.U.) program continues to work on strengthening students' voices in the decisions that affect them, including strong support for student representation. We will be hosting forums for school board candidates.

Immigration Rights— The NH Immigrant Solidarity Network (ISN) (GSOP, the American Friends Service Committee and over 50 congregations) holds interfaith prayer vigils at 9am on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at I.C.E. headquarters at 275 Chestnut St. in Manchester. We stand in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors facing separation from their families, and we stand in opposition to the inhumane nature of our current immigration system. The ISN meets at the Blessed Sacrament Parish at 10am on 1st Tuesdays . All are welcome. All vigils and meetings are on the GSOP calendar and the Interfaith Prayer Vigils for Immigrant Justice Facebook page.

Manchester Chapter— We support the Y.O.U. program. Our legislative work includes paid leave and increasing the minimum wage. Our members support immigrant rights through the vigils and calling about important legislation as well meetings with members of congress. Join us from 6 – 7:30 pm on 2nd Tuesdays at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Manchester at 669 Union Street.

Nashua Chapter— We work on affordable housing for Nashua and immigrant rights. We meet on 3rd Mondays from 6 – 7:30 pm at 4 Lake Street in Nashua, and would love to see you there.

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**Granite State
Organizing Project**

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—Legislative Action—

Minimum wage —

There are 3 NH State House bills (HB178, HB186, HB731) to raise the minimum wage.



The House Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services Committee hearing will be **11am, Wednesday, on February 20**. Contact violakat@granitestateorganizing.org to confirm details, share your story, or testify at the hearing.

Drivers' licenses without a social security card – HB 397 would allow individuals without a SS card to get a driver's license. Call your rep to encourage them to vote Yes on this bill and ask them how they are planning to vote. Then call us to let us know!

You can find your reps and their contact information at: www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/

The People of GSOP

Everyone who calls GSOP or walks into our office



meets **Iliana Barreto**, our office manager. She has been with GSOP for 3 years. In addition to answering phones and greeting members and visitors, she manages our data, organizes meetings, and makes sure we have what we need to work toward our goals. She also represents GSOP on the state-wide Bedbug Action Committee. Born in Puerto Rico, she translates for Spanish-speaking members of our community.

Life with a Low Wage Job

Monyoor Teng, Manchester: I am a husband and father of 4 kids. I graduated with a Diploma in Medical Assistance and an Associate Degree in Psychology, I work as a Caregiver, and I have been in this job for 5 years. I work for one of the big agencies in this field earning \$13 per hour. As you can imagine, I can't support a family of 5 on \$13 an hour. I have to choose what bills to pay. So I focus on paying bills that affect my family first such as heat, electricity, and rent. I have to let other bills go to collectors. For example, I have had medical bills that we just couldn't afford to pay even though we have insurance.

My wife and I have had to take second jobs working alternate shifts; We are constantly working so we don't have time to spend with our kids. If my kids don't have time with me, who are they going to follow? Sometimes, when I get home they are sleeping, the next morning they are off to school, and this routine continues. If the minimum wage was raised, I could work one job and have time with my family.

As Pastor of a Manchester church, I have seen this scenario play out too often in families in my congregation. This is immoral and we must act on it.

Upcoming at GSOP

GSOP is a busy place, with Y.O.U., chapter, and immigration rights meetings, vigils, clergy conversations, and many other events such as bystander trainings and conversations on race.

Check our calendar (granitestateorganizing.org/calendar/) for updated information.

Granite State Organizing Project unites religious, labor, and community groups to shape the decisions that affect our communities and quality of life. Guided by faith and democratic values, we mobilize many voices on issue oriented actions; strengthening our organizations and our leadership while building community. GSOP was incorporated as a non-profit, non-partisan organization in 2002.

We believe in the transformational power of relationships based on mutual trust and accountability.

You can support our work through [donations](#), group, or [individual](#) membership. Click on the previous links or call 603.668.8250 for more details.