



Granite State Organizing Project
A Voice for Justice

A Voice for Justice

Fall 2019 Newsletter



2019 MICAH Dinner (Photos I. Barreto)

Director's Corner

As we piled out of our cars, lit our candles and walked over to the fence outside the Strafford County Detention Center, we wondered if our vigil would have an impact. This had never been tried before, never at this location. Would the people incarcerated there be able to see us or hear us? Would they welcome our witness?



Photo K. Elliott Greisdorf

Fifty of us held our candles aloft, the clergy shared some prayers and scripture and we began to sing. Suddenly, a whisper of awe raced through our circle as a rhythmic banging rang out from the walls of the jail. "They hear us!" We continued singing and held our candles higher. Suddenly "look, they see us! And look, we can see them!"

We stood in communion with our immigrant siblings, awed by their determination to signal to us that they heard, saw and welcomed our love & witness. A powerful night I will remember for the rest of my life.

Sarah Jane Knoy
Executive Director

Around GSOP

Our June, 2019 **MICAH Celebration of Community in Action Heroes** was a great success, with almost 200 people honoring those who serve the community in the spirit of MICAH.

The **Immigrant Solidarity Network**, including members of GSOP, and allied groups from New England met at the Strafford County Detention Center on August 24th to spotlight "the moral crisis we face as our country targets and expels immigrant families."



(Courtesy photo)

More than 500 people walked, marched and biked a combined 280 miles from Concord, NH; Boston, MA; Montpelier, VT and Kittery, ME to Dover, NH, where ICE uses the Strafford County jail as a detention center for people it intends to deport. The 4-day walk included educational events on the inhumane nature of our immigration policies and the need for real reform.

Final report on the 2019 legislative session

Minimum Wage: SB10 was passed by the House and Senate but vetoed by Governor Sununu. Though we lack the votes for an override, a similar bill, HB731, was retained in 2019 and will be brought forward again in the next session.

Driver's License: Drive Safe NH-GSOP, AFSC, UVIP and other individuals are organizing meetings with Senators to educate them about the bill and hear their concerns.

**Granite State
Organizing Project**

383 Beech Street, Manchester, NH 03101
603.668.8250, GSOPSTAFF@granitestateorganizing.org
Website: www.granitestateprogress.org
Facebook: Granite State Organizing Project

Upcoming at GSOP

AROS-NNE, Sept. 14th in Biddeford ME. GSOP is partnering with Community Change Inc. to offer Anti-Racism Organizing in the Suburbs in Northern New England (AROS-NNE). Anti-racist activists from NH, VT, and ME will network around regions and topics of interest. [Register here](#) or call Aron at GSOP.

YOU continues to strengthen students' voices, including getting a non-binding referendum strengthening student representation on the November Manchester ballot. (click [here](#) for news on this exciting work.) In the fall we will host school board candidates forums in Manchester and start the YOU program in Nashua.

We are offering an **Active Bystander training** this fall, in [Manchester on Sat Nov 16](#) from 9am to noon. Click on the date to register, or call Aron at our office.

The People of GSOP

Zeynab Osman has been with YOU since she was a high school freshman. In the 4 years since, she has gone from not knowing what the school board was to campaigning to strengthen board student representation. She has protested gun violence in schools and challenged stereotypes. She has learned that youth can and must work for change in the world.



Photo S. Lett

"My parents brought me here from Africa to make a difference," she says, "and being part of YOU helped me decide majoring in pre-law is the best way for me to do this." As Zeynub leaves us for her freshman year of college, we know her impact on the world will continue to make it a better place for all of us.

Getting Involved with GSOP

The Manchester Chapter meets from 6 – 7:30 pm on 2nd Tuesdays at the UU Church, 669 Union Street.

The Nashua Chapter meets on 3rd Mondays from 6 – 7:30 pm at the Adult Learning Center at 4 Lake Street in Nashua.



From left, Nonny Egbuono, Jessica Price, Sarah Jane Knoy, Samba Halkose, Robert Kambo at a Nashua meeting. (Photo B. Knickerbocker)

Centro Latino de Hospitalidad is a drop in resource center run by

GSOP and the St. Anne-St. Augustin Parish to provide information on immigration, housing, culture and other topics to the Latino community. Drop in at 189 Spruce Street in Manchester any Tuesday or Thursday between 1 and 5.

Immigrant Rights — GSOP convenes the NH Immigrant Solidarity Network (ISN), bringing together faith communities and others to support our immigrant neighbors. Along with the American Friends Service Committee we participate in prayer vigils 9am on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at I.C.E. headquarters at 275 Chestnut Street in Manchester. The ISN meets at the Blessed Sacrament Parish at 10am on 1st Tuesdays. All are welcome.

Individual Membership: GSOP now accepts individual members!! For \$10 to \$30 a year, you can support GSOP's work reducing hate and increasing justice. For more details click [here](#) or contact Aron at 668-8250 or adibacco@granitestateorganizing.org.

To be kept up-to-date on actions you can take, email GSOPStaff@granitestateorganizing.org to sign up for GSOP's Five-Minute Friends alert email list.

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.