

Nov. 20, 2018

Hi friends,

I'm so excited to be working with you as the Social Justice Fellow for the Austin Reform Jewish Community. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the upcoming year and working together on efforts to truly repair our world. I want to share just a little about the work I'll be guiding and well as some of our congregations' short- and long-term goals.

Our community is already a wealth of resources. We range from life-long advocates to beginners looking for guidance. We fall all along the political spectrum and our interests are varied. Some of us are very active with advocacy organizations and some of us act on our own to make our voices heard. We work on local, state, and federal issues. Some of us are even elected officials. And for some of us, this is all brand new, and all we know is we need to do...something. Fantastic, all are welcome.

Long-Term Goal

Our long-term goal is to create a sustainable organizational structure for members from different congregations to come together and work on shared policy goals and advocacy initiatives. We want to work for social justice from a Jewish perspective and lend the weight of our shared community to those efforts. To the extent that these issues overlap with what you're already doing, let's collaborate; there is strength in numbers. If we decide to work on an issue that's not what you're passionate about, that's ok too. Issues evolve over time and maybe the next one will be something that grabs you. As any of us who have served on a temple committee already know, building consensus can sometimes take a while, even when we all have the same end-goal in mind. We want to compliment and supplement the good works the members of our community are already doing, not replace it.

Long-term actions:

- Identify lay leaders to guide our social justice work;
- provide education and training to those newer to public policy and advocacy both on subjects and on advocacy itself;
- identify issues common across our congregations on which we can work together;
- form or solidify partnerships with allies working on similar issues; and
- do the work, do more work, then work a little more.

Short-Term Goals

Participate in the Texas Legislative Session

One of the great things about living in Austin is that we are in the capital. With apologies to *Hamilton*, we're in the town where it happens, and our legislative session starts in less than two months! In the short-term, while we're building our foundation, there's still work to be done at the Capitol.

MLK Weekend programming

We're building on the success of last year's Welcoming the Stranger event and planning a great program for this year's MLK weekend themed, "Justice, Justice, You Shall Pursue." This year's

event will focus on justice, both from the perspective of addressing anti-Semitism against our community to learning about how to be a meaningful participant in pursuing racial justice.

Short-term activities:

- Identify people willing to have meetings with the state senators and representatives to establish a relationship going forward;
- identify people who want to know about social justice issues happening at the Capitol that they can participate in, either by contacting their elected officials, testifying at a committee hearing, or participating in some other event; and
- join together over MLK weekend, January 18-19, 2019 for community-building, education, and inspiration for moving forward.

If any of this sounds good to you, please, I want to meet you! My email is Lori.AustinSocialJustice@gmail.com and my phone number is (512) 387-1727.

Best,

Lori Adelman