

## Power Up!

... A newsletter filled with thoughts for powerful Planned Parenthood people.

June Edition



### What's happening in Michigan?

By Jenny Kinne, West Michigan Field Organizer

#### Celebrating Local Heroines & Heroes

*Jenison Calls for Love, not Hate.*

It is easy to get wrapped up in negativity when we talk about state policy harming women, but we need to remember that there are compassionate, smart, and giving people fighting for equality every day. Folks in Jenison, MI, proved that last week when protesters responded to local anti-gay voices.

After the owner of Grandville's Deiseltech Autos posted to his Facebook saying he would "refuse service to an openly gay person or persons," he invited national conservative speakers to speak at the Jenison Center for the Arts on Thursday for an event called "West Michigan God & Country."



Protestors stood outside of the Fine Arts Center with signs calling for love and equality. The group Jenison 4 Love organized the demonstration, and we are so inspired by their actions!

#### *Brilliant Teens!*

I had the pleasure of attending the Grand Rapids Peer Educators' end-of-school year party. The amazing young people who are a part of this program each did their own presentation, and topics included sexism in the media, the pornography industry, LGBTQ+ rights, and the female reproductive system (check out the craft I made!).



My hopes for the future are high after seeing these teens speak confidently about issues that matter to them. It was an honor to work with them through advocacy training, and I can't wait to see what they do next!

*We have Peer Educator groups across the state where Planned Parenthood staff teach teens how to be mentors to their schoolmates, friends, and family about issues relating to reproductive health, advocacy, and human rights.*

*Let's talk about sex, baby.*

Last week, Planned Parenthood of Mid and South Michigan's Education Director, Cherie Seitz, gave a full presentation to progressive legislators on the importance of abstinence-plus and comprehensive sex education. Did you know that sex education is not mandated in Michigan? And if schools want to have sex education, they need to form a Sex Education Advisory Board made up of at least 50% parents?

Be sure to learn about what your local school's sex education curriculum looks like – it might not be what you expect!

## A Legislative Storm

*“Religious Freedom” leads to discrimination.*

Last week, Gov. Snyder signed a law that will allow adoption agencies in Michigan to discriminate based on religious belief. This means that adoption agencies will be able to turn away people who they disagree with, namely LGBT couples. After all, what is more morally upstanding than protecting children from loving parents? In case the law isn't offensive enough, it is worsened given the fact that it was passed during Pride Month and in the wake of a Supreme Court decision on marriage equality.

*“Death Star Bill” threatens local fair wage ordinances.*

Our Senate has passed legislation that would prevent local governments from creating ordinances regarding wages and benefits. This means that any local ordinances that have increased minimum wage or benefits for employees will be stripped away. The hypocrisy of Michigan Republicans supposedly valuing local power is outstanding, and this bill could hurt many workers around the state.

*Truancy takes families off of welfare.*

Gov. Snyder signed a bill into law that will strip welfare benefits from an entire family if just one of the children in the family has a high truancy rate, or misses school too often. Because how should we improve school performance in Michigan? Punish children and families more! Sarcasm aside, this law will put many families in danger of losing life-saving benefits.

*Steal from the poor and give to the roads.*

The Michigan House passed a \$1.1 billion plan to fix our state's road that will eliminate the Earned Income Tax Credit for low and middle-income workers. Republican Representative Nesbitt called for an end to “handouts [and] giveaways.” Need I mention the extreme difficult families in Michigan have affording to live under minimum wage?



### What's going on across the country?

By Christina Soliz, East Michigan Field Organizer

**2016 Presidential Candidate Watch:** The list of candidates for 2016 keeps growing. Go [here](#) to check out who's in the running to be the leader of the free world.

**Federal 20 Week Abortion Ban:** Back in May, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the “Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act” which would prohibit doctors from performing abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. The bill that passed did include the exceptions in cases of rape, incest, or when the mother's life is in danger. Go [here](#) for more information. [U.S.](#)

[Senator Lindsey Graham](#) (R-South Carolina) has reintroduced a similar bill in the Senate. We are definitely keeping an eye on this legislation. Similar legislation has been introduced in a couple of states, most notably in [Wisconsin](#), where Governor Scott Walker said that he would support the 20 week abortion ban.

**Title X Money:** Title X is extremely important; it is the nation's family planning program and it helps nearly 4.6 million people annually. On June 16th, extreme Republicans in the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and

Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies offered a budget proposal that would end Title X funds. Ending Title X would leave so many people without access to affordable, quality, family planning care. Go [here](#) and [here](#) for more information, and we'll add this to the list of things to watch. .

### Important happenings in other states:

- [North Carolina](#) - The Supreme Court declined to hear a case involving an abortion law in North Carolina that forces abortion patients to view an ultrasound before an abortion. The federal appeals court found that the law violated the First Amendment rights of doctors and patients.
- [Supreme Court](#) - Speaking of the Supreme Court, we're still waiting to hear their ruling on marriage equality, Obamacare, and other important cases. We'll keep you updated.
- [Georgia](#) - A woman in Georgia was charged with murder for taking pills to end her pregnancy. She spent about three days in jail before being released. The malice murder charge against her was dismissed.

**New research:** [An Associated Press survey](#) has found that abortion rates across the U.S. are down since 2010, and both [anti-abortion activists and abortion-rights activists](#) are taking credit. The only states that saw an increase in abortions were Louisiana and Michigan. Abortion rates may have risen in Michigan specifically because state family planning funds have been under attack over the past decade. Another factor in the rise of abortions in Michigan could be that women from Ohio are coming to our state to access safe and legal abortions, because Ohio's state laws really restrict abortion there. It's hard to say with certainty what caused abortion to go down nationally, but it's clear that access to birth control and sex education are important factors in reducing unintended pregnancies.

**To Make You Laugh So You Don't Cry:** Tim Hunt, a Nobel Prize winning scientist, made some pretty [sexist remarks](#) about women in science at a conference a couple of weeks ago. The gist of the comments were: "Three things happen with women in science labs... You fall in love with them; they fall in love with you, and when you criticise them they cry." Umm? Luckily, badass women took to twitter to show everyone how ridiculous Hunt's comments were. Go [here](#) to read 16 of the best tweets. If you have twitter, go search for #distractinglysexy - they are genius!



### Getting to Work!

**By Lauren Bacans, Mid-Michigan Field & Online Organizer**

Happy summer from Team PPAM! We are so excited to announce that next month, we will begin to introduce a new volunteer activist training structure. This allows all activists the opportunity to become certified in the Planned Parenthood organizing model – the Path to Power – that will help us build our organizational power into the next election and beyond. Our activists are the key to our success here in Michigan, and we hope that you'll join us for

informational and skills building trainings.

In July, we'll continue our monthly tabling training webinar to introduce tabling best practices and basic messaging before you join us at community events like Eastown Street Fair, River Days, and the Ann Arbor Art Fair. This webinar isn't required, but it is recommended. At only 40 minutes long, it's a quick way to get comfortable with our current campaign and ask any of the questions you might have before you enter the community.

## **Webinar Trainings**

July 7, 7pm: Tabling Training Webinar. Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1612762923074542081>

July 14, 7pm: Planned Parenthood 101. Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4195587205275918849>

August 13, 7pm: Planned Parenthood 202. Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5317834534491157249>

August 19, 7pm: Tabling Training Webinar. Register:  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4021183770089997569>

Of course, you can find all of our events on our website at [www.miplannedparenthood.org/events](http://www.miplannedparenthood.org/events), and stay up to date with us on your favorite social networking sites!