

Dear Friends,

What a blessing it is to work at a non-profit whose sole mission it is to protect the defenseless and provide for those in crisis. That being said, the real heroes of this story are those who make it all possible, providing the monetary support and manpower needed for such a daunting task: namely our sponsors and volunteers. These two groups of amazing people are the reason this fight will eventually be won. Regardless of the method of help provided, these are the people who pull it all together for the greater glory of God.

Twice a year, we ask area businesses and individuals to become financial sponsors for the Southwest Catholic Youth Conference and our Annual Fundraising Banquet and Auction. Through the generosity of these donors, we are able to keep the office open and to help the young women who come through our doors. Quite literally, there is no way we could do what we do without these donors, and we are more grateful than words can say.

So many of you faithfully contribute each month, year after year. With each check, we feel gratitude for the work involved and the sacrifice made in order for that donation to be placed into our hands. In return, we can assure you that your money is being well used to fight the plight of abortion, and to insure a better future for the young women and babies that we are privileged to assist.

Behind the scenes there is a group of very dedicated volunteers that provide the “boots on the ground” part of LifeGuard’s mission. Their names are likely never mentioned individually and they seek no reward for what they do, yet they show up, rain or shine, week after week.

If you’ve passed by Planned Parenthood on a Friday, you’ve likely seen some of these people, standing outside the fence with encouraging signs, offering help to the young women who come for abortions. Some bring young children or grandchildren as a visual reminder of the lives lost inside Planned Parenthood. These children leave an indelible impression as they stand with their parents and grandparents or play at their feet.

As cars pass by, some drivers will wave or give a thumbs up, while others yell out their windows, emphatically offer a one finger salute, or purposefully look the other way. It’s not comfortable. But, these volunteers continue to come because they know that they’re making a difference. Their presence is ALWAYS felt even if the impact of their actions isn’t realized for weeks or months on end. The chance to occasionally speak personally to one of the young moms, to change a mind, to save a life is what drives them. They realize that the work they’re doing will be done in God’s timing, so they don’t allow themselves to be defeated by those who are not ready to hear their message of hope, or who meet their kindness with anger.

Some of these volunteers have been coming to pray outside Planned Parenthood every Friday for nearly 10 years without fail. When the sunny warmth of summer wanes and the rain or snow begins to fall, they appear in warm layers, rain ponchos, gloves and hats to stand and pray. It’s a humbling thing to watch. That kind of dedication to the cause of saving babies from abortion is beyond admirable, it is absolutely heroic.

So, as the year begins, I want to take a moment to thank these two champions of LifeGuard’s work. Thank you, faithful sponsors, for the financial donations that enable us to keep up the fight, and to provide for the young women who need our help. Thank you too for your dedication to the preservation of life. There is no nobler or more important cause. To those volunteers who make the trek to LifeGuard on Fridays, you are the hands and feet of Jesus, offering consolation and guidance while enduring the judgement of others. Together we can envision a day when all life is again cherished and protected.

God bless you all,

Martha



2017

SWCYC

SOUTHWEST CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE

“LEADERSHIP”



Have you ever been so moved by the Holy Spirit that you just had to dance and sing? Multiply that feeling by 500 youthful souls and you will have some idea of the energy in the room at the 6th annual Southwest Catholic Youth Conference, held at McGee Park Convention Center in Farmington, New Mexico, on October 28th.



To the youth at SWCYC, there is no greater way to kick off a conference than with some great theme music and a priest riding in on a unicycle! Fr. Carl Wertin was back by popular demand as MC, and had the attention of the youth from the get go. This epic entrance was followed by the teaching of some great dance moves set to Christian rap, leaving everybody feeling fully energized. Fr. Carl kept the day moving while taking the time to offer a great message, an examination of conscience, and a vocation blessing.



If you’ve never looked at the names of the composers of the music in your weekly missal at Mass, you might be surprised to see that a huge number of those songs were written by Steve Angrisano. We were blessed this year to have Steve, a singer, songwriter, and storyteller, as our musician and keynote speaker. Revving up the crowd with high energy songs, hand motions, and plenty of movement one moment, and asking them to reverently “pray” the lyrics while searching their hearts the next, Steve’s inspirational songs and stories touched the hearts of all.



Female keynote, Kelly Colangelo came to us from Florida where she works as a youth director. With gentle insight, Kelly called on the youth to be open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in everything they do. Her experience as a retreat leader and guest speaker made Kelly an easily relatable figure, especially to the young ladies in the crowd.

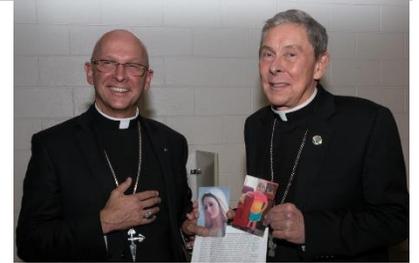


What a blessing it is to have the involvement and presence of two Bishops

each year at SWCYC! Bishop Stephen Berg brought with him a beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and spoke of his journey from youth and family life to the priesthood and eventual appointment as Bishop of the Diocese of Pueblo. At the request of the youth who have attended previous conferences, Bishop Berg was gracious enough to share his musical talents with a piano piece that had everyone applauding and on their feet.



Bishop James Wall of the Diocese of Gallup has been involved with SWCYC since its inception and continues to inspire the youth year after year. This year he told the stories of St. Maria Goretti, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and Blessed Stanley Rother as examples of leadership at all cost. All three showed selfless love as they sacrificed themselves for the safety and redemption of others in need of protection or forgiveness. SWCYC features Mass and Adoration, concelebrated by the Bishops, with priests, deacons, and seminarians assisting, and Knights of Columbus in full regalia leading the procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Ending an intense day of worship in this way leaves everyone feeling ready to take on the world.



A new web-based project entitled “Get Real” was unveiled at SWCYC this year and is designed to be a way for youth to ask questions and get answers about the things that are of concern in their lives. Please keep your eyes open for our once a month webinar series that will feature many of the speakers from this year’s conference as well as a variety of others. The “Get Real” series began on November 1st, with Kelly Colangelo and will continue on the first Thursday of each month, beginning in December. Check out SWCYC on Youtube and Facebook to participate.



We would like to especially thank St. Mary’s Church in Farmington for housing those who traveled from long distances, and the Knights of Columbus (Councils 1407, 1408, 3443), Catholic Daughters (Court St. Anthony), and Chef Marc and Anne Weigel for providing delicious meals. Additionally, our thanks goes out to Sr. Giovanni Paolo, Seminarian Joseph Baltz, and Students for Life Regional Director Bethany Janzen for addressing the crowd. Volunteers make the day happen and we are most grateful for everyone who shared their talents and energy to make the day a success. Youth ministers who gathered groups, priests who traveled to hear



confessions, sisters who took an active part in the day, parent drivers and chaperones, sponsors, vendors, donors, and those who just showed up to help out – we are blessed by each of you and so grateful for your contribution to our youth.



Appreciation Strategy Humility
 Commitment Responsibility
Leadership
 Integrity Honest Communication Listening
 Values Purpose Determination
 Passion Principles



10th Annual Banquet & Auction

February 24th, 2018

Doors open at 5:30, dinner at 6 p.m.

Fort Lewis College Ballroom 1000 Rim Drive, Durango, CO

TICKETS: \$45 (\$55 after February 12, 2018)

Exciting live and silent auction items

Plus a 50/50 raffle jackpot

CALL 970-385-8451 for tickets & information

Guest Speaker: **Alexis Walkenstein** - Emmy award winning journalist, radio show speaker, Hollywood promoter for movies including Soul Surfer, Courageous, Little Boy, and The Shack, and promoter for actor Kevin James and others.



LIFEGUARD

Protecting, and loving the "least of these" - Matthew 25:45

Sponsorship opportunities available

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
2018**

Happy 2018! If you're like me, it will take several weeks before writing that new number becomes automatic. But, there's something about a new year that causes a person to reflect, reassess, regroup, and to look for the deeper meaning. Any given year rolls us along like a small boat that sometimes rides gloriously atop the swells and other times gets swamped beneath the crashing waves. All the more reason to rest in the knowledge that God will be there to weather the storms with us and will provide us our greatest joys. As we begin this new year, our prayer for you is one of health, hope, peace, happiness, shared time with family, and deepening faith. God bless you for all you do to keep LifeGuard's mission alive.

A message from intern, Ana Rodriguez Aramburo...

Hi. My name is Ana Rodriguez Aramburo, and I am currently a Senior at Durango Big Picture High School. A requirement for graduation is to complete a 12 week internship at a chosen company. For my internship, I chose Lifeguard because, as their mission statement says, "LifeGuard is an organization that has been dedicated to education for individuals and the public on human reproduction, adoption, the effects of abortion on women and children, strengthening the institution of marriage through Natural Family Planning and promoting civil rights for all people." Through the help of Lifeguard, I'll be gaining useful communication skills as well as leadership skills that will continue to be useful in all aspects of life. I was lucky enough to get the help of LifeGuard not only to graduate in May of 2018, but also as a great learning experience that will open up several opportunities for my future.

Please consider becoming a liaison between LifeGuard and your church. We would love to improve our outreach, but can't do it without the help of many hands. Contact us for details about this simple, but important way to help.

 **Like us on
Facebook**

May we have your email address? Occasionally there is a need for a quick "blast" of urgent information. We promise not to overuse or share your email.

Check out LifeGuard on Youtube or at lifeguardaplata.org

Looking ahead...

We are currently working on another awesome Bar D Wrangler concert this spring. If you



missed it last year, don't make the same mistake again! Arrangements are still pending, so stay tuned for more information.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SWCYC SPONSORS

Gold Sponsor

Diocese of Pueblo

Silver Sponsors

Merrion Family Foundation

Coleman Oil and Gas

Anonymous donation in thanksgiving to our Blessed Mother

Mesa Family Practice

Marc & Anne Weigel

Ticket Sponsors

Mary Ann Hiller

Overright Trucking

Additional Sponsors – Mary Ann Webster; Knights of Columbus Councils 1407, 1408 & 3443; Catholic Daughters Court St. Anthony 1248; Joel Krueger; Larry & Linda Lutz; Joe & Lois Zuber; Dr. Laura & Sam Jaquez; James & Marie Strickler; Dean & Shelley Moltrier

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK...

Bishop Wall; Bishop Berg; Fr. Carl Wertin; Steve Angrisano; Kelly Colangelo; Courtyard Marriott; Doug Eagle; Paulette Arizmendi; Vicki Velez; Kroeger's Ace Hardware; Fort Lewis College; Gundrey Family; Theresa & Larry Rockett; Sandner Family; Cameron & Linda Stevens; O'Hare Family; Richard & Barbara Shellbourne; Patrick & Melisa Dillon; Elizabeth Munro; Jessie Joseph; Jacob Branch-Boyle; Brie Banowetz; Christina Stanton; Joseph Baltz; Sr. Giovanni Paolo; Ana Rodriguez Aramburo; St. Columba School; Volunteers; Priests; Staff; Deacons; Sisters; Youth Ministers; Sponsors; Parents. **We would like to extend a very special thank you to Bonnie Gallegos and St. Mary's Church in Farmington for providing lodging for weary travelers. We are also especially grateful to the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, and Chef Marc & Anne Weigel for the delicious meals!**