



Dateline

Monthly News Bulletin

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DignityUSA works for respect and justice for all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy and support.

National Board of Directors Meet

The **DignityUSA** National Board of Directors met July 5-6, 2005, in Philadelphia, PA. The meeting began with welcoming new director Gene Corpuz and our new executive director Debra Weill. The directors then celebrated the work and accomplishments of **DignityUSA** over the past three months:

- Hiring of new Executive Director. Deb is glad to be on board. Thanks and praise were given to search team made up of 3 board members and 5 non-board members.

- Membership growth committee targeted private and public colleges and universities in the Greater Philadelphia and nearby areas prior to the July biennial convention. Hoping it would draw attention and attendance to the convention, 240 mailings were sent to Catholic Campus Ministers, leaders of GLBT student groups, faculty who teach GLBT courses, and leaders of Catholic student groups at public universities.

- Upgrade to QuickBooks Online has been successful, giving the treasurer more day to day access to accounts.

- **Dignity/Dayton** (OH) celebrated 30th anniversary. Two chapter members were grand marshals of Dayton, Ohio's Pride parade.

- History of **DignityUSA** project complete and will be shown at membership meetings.

- Hits on **DignityUSA**'s website very high during selection of new pope and preparations for convention. (2,680 hits during April 2005, 490 hits July 1-3)

- New "LIVE PROUD DignityUSA.org" wrist bands are available for fundraising. (Contact the national office at info@dignityusa.org or 1-800-877-8797 to order yours!)

- Our media team covered 96 interviews on the death of Pope John Paul II and the announcement of Pope Benedict XVI as the new pope. Great press releases were issued on these topics and many more. Getting good response from media on our releases.

- Thanks given to Convention team for their hard work in preparing a great convention.

- Celebrated the successful completion of elections. Committee reports and strategic plan updates were presented and discussed.

The board discussed strategies for advocacy actions especially during, but not limited to, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) meetings in November 2005.

Plans were made to develop a long term strategic plan for **DignityUSA**. The board will meet in August 2005 with a group of past leaders within **DignityUSA** to start this process.

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The board approved the appointment of incumbent directors Marty Grochala, Mark Matson and J. Montoya for additional two-year terms. Incumbents Chris Lawrence, Treasurer, and Paula Lavallee, Secretary, were also appointed for additional two-year terms.

The board concluded by setting up the schedule for meetings for 2005-2006. The next Board of Directors' meeting will be held Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 2005, in Washington, DC.

Any **DignityUSA** member desiring a copy of the minutes from the Board of Directors meeting can contact the national secretary at secretary@dignityusa.org.

Membership and Volunteer Surveys

DignityUSA asked its members to participate in a survey to help us with our long-range planning. As of July 16, 2005, 164 surveys were completed online via the Internet and 129 were completed at our biennial convention in July.

In preparation for the long range planning, the **DignityUSA** Board of Directors is working to assess the current state of the organization and, more importantly, the future opportunities and challenges the organization is likely to face. The Board will be meeting in Chicago the first weekend in August 2005 to begin their planning.

The National Board values your thoughts. We appreciate and thank all who answered the survey questions.

Culture of Leadership

Over 100 members filled out volunteer sheets at the convention in Philadelphia. Over 200 members completed the online survey.

The Board wishes to thank all who are willing and able to give of their time and talents.

DignityUSA national committee chairs will be in touch with members over the next couple of months in order to discuss how needs may be met, both by the committees and individuals.

The firm of Martin & Wall is providing CPA services for DignityUSA. For information about their services, visit www.martinwallcpa.com

DignityUSA Vision Statement
DignityUSA envisions and works for a time when Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Catholics are affirmed and experience dignity through the integration of their spirituality with their sexuality and, as beloved persons of God, participate fully in all aspects of life within the Church and Society.

Awards Presented at Convention 2005

On Saturday, July 9, 2005, during our convention's 50's Dinner Dance, Marianne Duddy, of Boston, MA, was presented with the Kevin J. Calegari Award and Bob Mialovich, of Arlington, VA, with the Michael Bushek Award. These are **DignityUSA's** two most prestigious biennial awards.

DignityUSA's *QV* (Quarterly Voice) will contain a longer article about Marianne and Bob.

Several individuals and chapters were honored on July 10, 2005 during the final ceremony in recognition of their outstanding service to **DignityUSA** and the broader community.

The following individuals were honored:

- Peggy Hayes for her work with media relations,
- Steve Forst for his work at National Call to Action (CTA) and the *Chicago Tribune*,
- Bob Pacitti for his help in creating the History of Dignity project,
- Linda Rieder for her work with **CTA San Diego** and her contributions to the **DignityUSA Journal**.

Chapters honored for hosting Membership Meetings during the past two years are: **Dignity/Los Angeles (CA)**, **Dignity/Columbus (OH)**, **Dignity/Dayton (OH)**, **Dignity/Northern Virginia (VA)** and **Dignity/Washington (DC)**.

Convention 2005 Experiences

We asked two of our Convention 2005 attendees to share their convention experiences with us and you. In an attempt to get different perspectives, we invited experiences from a first-time attendee and from a person who has attended multiple conventions. Our first-timer's report will appear in a subsequent issue of *DATELINE*. We are happy to bring you the following report from Kevin Shellooe of **Dignity/San Jose (CA)**.

"As a person attending my seventh biennial **DignityUSA** Convention in Philadelphia, I am sure I am not alone in feeling like I was at a big family reunion. It was wonderful to catch up with the many friends my life-partner Wayne and I made at past conventions and form a few new friendships as well.

"It was great to see so many of our younger members in attendance, since they are the talent and energy of our organization for the future.

"The keynote address by Chrissy Gephardt, daughter of former presidential candidate, Richard Gephardt, was so personal and moving. She talked about how her father, during his presidential primary, encouraged her to be open about her sexual orientation, even if it might have negative repercussions on his own campaign. Such a great story of unconditional love and support by her family should give us all encouragement that the best way to live our lives is with integrity — being honest, respectful and supportive to ourselves and our loved ones.

"Each convention has special moments. I particularly enjoyed the eloquent panel discussion by Bishop Gene Robinson, Chrissy Gephardt, Tom Fox (past Publisher National Catholic Reporter) and Harry Knox (Human Rights Campaign Religious Outreach). Each had a unique perspective on a variety of issues. All are gifts to our community.

"All the workshops I attended were informative, pertinent and provided tremendous insight on a variety of religious and social topics. Each convention I have attended has assisted me in further developing my spirituality and given me a renewed commitment and energy in fighting against social injustices.

"Despite the busy convention agenda, Wayne, and I made it a point to stop by the chapel which was professionally decorated and assembled for private reflection and smaller group liturgies. I am always impressed with the creativity of our membership in developing such innovative and inclusive liturgies which take so many hours to develop.

"Very much evident at our biennial conventions, we are blessed to belong to an organization with so many uniquely talented individuals.

"As much as my partner and I enjoy the educational programs and spiritual activities at **DignityUSA** conventions, we also go for the FUN. The convention committee did a great job in preparing the "sock-hop" themed dinner-dance party which featured a variety of great dancing music. Jason and deMarco's musical performance at the opening ceremonies was fantastic and set the tone early for a memorable convention experience.

"As you may have guessed, we have already pre-registered for the fun and events at the next convention in Austin, Texas in 2007. Perhaps we will meet you there."

Happy Anniversary & Congratulations to:

Nassau (NY) - 26 Years
San Antonio (TX) - 29 Years
Denver (CO) - 31 Years
Metro New Jersey (NJ) - 31

CTA National Conference Discount

Call to Action's (CTA) 2005 Conference will be held in Milwaukee, WI, November 4-6, 2005. This year's theme is "Religion, Money, Politics: What's God got to do with it?"

CTA's annual national conference is a celebration of over 3,000 people creating "the church they want to be." Presentations focus around the themes of spirituality, church reform, and peace & justice. The conference liturgy and a variety of daily prayers are often a highlight.

We are able to make use of a group discount rate for **DignityUSA** members who wish to attend this Conference if we have 10 or more registrants, the charge will be \$145 per person. If you wish to take advantage of this discount, please send your check, made payable to CTA-USA and the registration form to our national office, DignityUSA, 1500 Massachusetts Ave. NW #8, Washington, DC 20005-1894, by September 20, 2005. At that time, if we have at least 10 registrants, we will send the registration forms and checks to **CTA**.

If you don't have a registration form, you can go to <http://www.cta-usa.org/conference2005/registration.pdf> and print one.

For further information on **Call to Action** and details on the 2005 national conference. Go to www.cta-usa.org.

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