

**NOVA'S SOCIAL JUSTICE REGULAR COMMITMENT PROJECTS  
OTHER COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS INVOLVING MONEY  
COMMUNITY MEMBER COMMITMENTS OF TIME AND RESOURCES  
2023**

**With inflation raising prices for basic necessities such as food and housing, and with covid continuing to take lives and disrupt financial security for many around the world, 2023 offers no let-up in the need for NOVA's continuing generosity.**

**In January, NOVA held the Social Justice Meeting on Zoom to decide on the projects for our regular commitments for the year. They are listed below. It was also decided to distribute the money to these projects in 2 payments - January and July. Each project has a NOVA member who brought the need to the community and "watches over it" and brings us news.**

**Our theme, in the words of South African Rector Xolani Dlwati: "We do not do outreach. Everything we do is worship."**

**NOVA'S SOCIAL JUSTICE REGULAR COMMITMENTS 2023**

<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>
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**ACTION AFRICA**

Jeanne Clarkson

Action Africa helps newly arrived, lawful African immigrants in the Washington area obtain housing, education, employment and health care. It also works to increase sustainable economic self-sufficiency for rural sub-Saharan youth and families through medical, educational and business development activities. Hundreds of children who go through these programs in Nigeria are gaining admission to higher education, and so are able to aim for better livelihoods. In Sierra Leone, the emphasis has been on health, wellness and nutrition programs. Half a dozen retired nurses in the town of Lunsar are ready to open a wellness and health program for young people who otherwise would be drawn into illicit drugs and dangerous living. Chris Egbulem, founder of Action Africa, is a long-time NOVA member, serving in our Padre Cadre, marrying our children, journeying with us through life's joys and sorrows.

**AFAC**

Dianne Carroll

Arlington Food Assistance Center provides dignified access to free groceries, allowing families to devote their limited financial resources to obligations such as housing, utilities, medication and other basic needs. Those served are elderly residents, families and individuals with disabilities. Clients work at a low-wage job, are unemployed, have applied for assistance, have lost a job, are not eligible for food stamps, and families whose child care costs and rent leave little left for food. AFAC operates under the Choice Model to give clients as much choice as possible. They are committed to distributing as much nutritious food as possible. AFAC has plenty of volunteer opportunities, and currently volunteers donate 40,000 hours annually. NOVA members donate food each week: cereal, tuna, peanut butter and other non-perishables.

**BREAD FOR THE WORLD**

Peggy Meyer

Bread for the World is a nationwide Christian citizens movement seeking justice for the world's hungry people by lobbying our nation's decisionmakers. BFW Institute seeks justice for hungry people by engaging in research and education on policies related to hunger and development. Jesus told us to feed the hungry, and more and more people are suffering from hunger.

**BRIDGES TO INDEPENDENCE**

Kopp Michelotti

Bridges to Independence operates the Sullivan House homeless shelter and provides training, counseling and referral services to shelter families and other families in danger of homelessness and in poverty. Two years ago, Bridges merged with the Bonder and Amanda Johnson Community Development Corp., a small nonprofit that serves the Nauck community of Arlington. One of Bridges' signal accomplishments has been the integration of the two operations and the development and expansion of a community services center in Nauck. With the addition of these services, Bridges doubled the size of its youth development program to serve 200 children and teens. Overall, Bridges served about 1,000 people. Among the most serious problems for Bridges during the covid pandemic was low employment for its clients; only about 20% had jobs. With schools now open, employment of clients has improved substantially. The staff continues to educate and encourage clients to get vaccinated. NOVA was one of the original founding congregations of Bridges (then Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless.)

**CO-PARTNERS OF CAMPESINAS** Archer Heinzen

Co-partners of Campesinas is a 501(c)(3) organization that works with women and youth in rural communities in El Salvador and Guatemala using a motto of "Learn, earn and lead." Co-partners offers scholarships, supports income-generating projects and gives women the opportunity to practice leadership through having their own organization. In 2021, in the face of pandemic job loss, Co-partners asked NOVA to support an income-generating, pig project in Guatemala; and in 2022, a chicken project for rural residents in El Salvador. The goal of the pig project was to increase family income. The goal of the chicken project was to improve family nutrition and increase mothers' income through egg sales. This year NOVA supports a turkey project in Guatemala. Turkeys are popular in Guatemala at Christmas. They are also used in restaurants in a dish called "pan con pavo." The establishment of a flock of turkeys, if maintained, will provide a family with income for years. Four NOVA members serve on the Co-partners board.

**DREAM PROJECT** Emma Violand-Sanchez

The Dream Project empowers students whose immigration status creates barriers to higher education. We work to ensure that our students not only enroll in college but thrive in higher education and beyond. In 2022, we helped over 200 immigrant students, including 100 Scholars, 28 mentees and more than 100 alumni. We awarded 100 students (Dream Scholars) with record-breaking renewable scholarships of \$3,000. In addition to scholarships, we provide mentoring to high school seniors, Beyond12 coaching for first-year college students, mental health counseling through a partnership with George Mason University's Center for Psychological Services, emergency funding, scholar support, and connections to community resources for students and their families by our case manager. We aim to increase our scholarship awards to \$3,250 in 2023. With rising tuition costs, our students struggle to balance college with basic needs, such as food, rent and health care. This past year, we have also seen an increase in the requests for counseling by our Dream Scholars.

**EDUCATE THE GIRLS** Nancy Veldhuis

NOVA's financial contribution to ETG, a 501(c)(3), enables girls in the rural village of Kanoni, Uganda, to obtain primary and secondary education by providing for their school fees and school supplies, and helping them to overcome obstacles, i.e. the need for shoes, feminine hygiene products, etc. that would keep them from attending school. 2022 has been another challenging school year. There have been nationwide school closures with the outbreak of Ebola in other parts of Uganda. Science teachers went on a nationwide strike for higher pay, which left an educational gap for the girls. The supply of covid vaccines remains limited. Inflation

in Uganda is approximately 60% and has increased the costs of scholastic materials, food and other basic needs. There are 19 girls eager to continue their education in the 2023 school term, all in secondary schools. When NOVA started its support of ETG, \$750 was sufficient for three trimesters of tuition and fees at the secondary level. Today the cost is approximately \$500 for one trimester.

**ELDERS CLIMATE ACTION** Gloria Mog

ECA has been able to increase its staffing to 1½ FTEs and is attracting university interns to help with the overwhelming workload. ECA has increased its membership in 2022 to 26,000, up from 15,000. It is forming partnerships with major environmental organizations. Several of us, including 10 NOVA members who have become increasingly active in the ECA Virginia Chapter, are also involved with area climate faith affiliates: Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, Interfaith Power and Light and the Catholic Climate Covenant. ECA will focus in 2023 on the most effective use of money recently released for climate mitigation in the Inflation Reduction Act. This innovative and energetic organization can do a lot with funds NOVA provides.

**EMMAH'S GARDEN** – KENYA Clyde Christofferson

The project was formed to help a village of about 2,300 people, mostly farmers, in Nyandoche Ibere in western Kenya. The concept is not to provide assistance from the outside but for the villagers themselves to own the project. The initial focus on providing clean water has expanded to support what are now five kitchen gardens. Emmah, who has a degree in agribusiness, and her brother Alloys organized the first four groups of about 10 (mostly) women, providing each group with land to learn and practice better farming techniques. A fifth group has organized on its own. A high-capacity water filter system installed at the high school is working well. In the coming year we will continue to train the kitchen garden groups in intensive but small-scale techniques modeled after [Neversink Farm](#), including development of a curriculum for these and additional kitchen gardens.

**GREENWELL** John Tarrant

The Greenwell Foundation continues to provide therapeutic riding for children and wounded veterans in Greenwell State Park in Hollywood, MD.

**HOMELESS RETREAT PROJECT** John Mooney

This project, the [Ignatian Spirituality Project](#) retreats for homeless persons in recovery, offers four retreats/year and weekly and monthly follow-up spiritual accompaniment to about 250 homeless brothers since its start in 2008. NOVA's donation helps cover the cost of one retreat. John Mooney serves on the ISP leadership team.

**JOE K FUND** Cece Michelotti

Joe, a therapist in Baltimore, helps families get in touch with the social services they need. Many come to Joe with emergencies such as health issues, a need for food, or help paying a utility bill. But the greatest needs he finds are from families who are about to be evicted unless they can pay at least a part of their monthly rent. He occasionally is approached by someone who just needs \$5 for a local bus pass. "These folks are the easy ones." Joe said. He reflected for a moment before adding, "There are so many needs, so many. The money that NOVA provides me serves many people in this very poor area. There are so many drugs out there and so many people who are trying the best they know how to survive doing the right thing."

**JUST NEIGHBORS CLIENT ASSISTANCE FUND** Joe Keyes

This fund directly helps very low-income immigrant families pay fees needed to successfully apply for legal status. These required expenses (USCIS application fees, medical exams, country-expert reports needed for asylum seekers, court documents, etc.) often stand in the way of a family's ability to obtain a green card, citizenship or work permit. As prices of food and basic necessities continue to rise, Just Neighbors has seen it become harder for families to pay these fees. One recent family had to pay \$2,450 to USCIS plus \$500 for medical exams to apply for green cards, even though their kids qualify for free lunch at school. NOVA is one of the only groups that provides funds for these fees for Just Neighbors clients.

**LITTLE FRIENDS FOR PEACE** Scott Spaine

NOVA's support has helped Little Friends for Peace run its virtual Peace Academy every Friday on Zoom. The 90-minute to two-hour sessions are rich as we share tools and practices with the adults and children. LFFP Director MJ Park consults with Daniel and Victor, site leaders in Uganda, during the week. It has been amazing to see the changes in the people as they learn the tools – Rewire Your Brain, Stop Think and Act, The Wellness Will, Attitude Tool Card, Connect Before You Correct – and how to use them in their daily lives. Also a big gift is the spirit and motivation that is generated from the sessions. This is so important to mental health and inner peace.

**MALAWI JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL** Eric Carroll

This project, sponsored by Fr. Pete Henriot, former NOVA padre, provides infrastructure support for the school, which is now graduating students. The school is up and running and expanding its facility.

**NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE** Pat Sodo

Network is a known presence and a voice on Capitol Hill. The religious and lay staffs are engaged in/have had success at molding federal legislation and policies that reflect the teachings of Catholic social justice. It has never been more important for NOVA members to actively advocate for the health, safety and welfare of all, for immigration reform, and racial justice. Following Network's lead and prompting, NOVA members are positioned – on a daily basis – to transform our political system into one that supports the dignity of all people and creates an economy of inclusion. Simply put, Network works on our behalf and summons us to be involved. In addition, as a supporter, the NOVA community has the benefit of Network-produced educational materials and workshops.

**OAXACA SCHOOL PROJECT** Raquel Pastor

Teachers at the school in Quiegolani, Mexico, go out into the remote local mountainous villages to train parents how to detect disabilities and how to value and care for their children with disabilities, which is considered a curse or at a minimum shameful. Nearest medical facilities are hours away and the poverty level is so severe that families cannot pay for medicines. The work has been strengthened with the collaboration of specialists and institutions that – knowing our remoteness, the high number of needs and the degree of exclusion that still prevails – have joined us with their presence and professionalism. Work in 2022 included sensitization and awareness of adolescents and high school students to the fact of disability in the community, involvement of nine teachers from the Marist Community Schools in a week of community inclusion, and visits from specialists to work with mothers, midwives, and people with physical disabilities, including the deaf. Teachers also took an online course on the rights to equality, nondiscrimination and inclusion of persons with disabilities. They shared the information with their students.

**PATHFORWARD (Formerly A-SPAN)** Meg Tuccillo

PathForward (formerly A-SPAN) and NOVA Catholic Community have been connected since the founding of the organization in 1993, with numerous NOVA members serving meals and helping at the shelter in our younger days. PathForward has expanded its services with the goal of not just meeting immediate and emergency needs but helping individuals toward permanent housing and long-term support as needed. The recent addition of the Mobile Medical Unit has nurses going out to meet our friends where they are – on the street, in tents, in encampments and in more permanent housing situations. This year marks the 30th anniversary of PathForward, and Meg serves as chair of the 30th anniversary celebration May 11. The theme: There's No Place Like Home (you got it, The Wizard of Oz theme!).

**SALOMON KLEIN ORPHANAGE** Emma Violand-Sanchez

Salomon Klein Orphanage in Cochabamba, Bolivia, serves as a loving, safe haven for abandoned or orphaned or abused children from newborn to age six. This year, Emma Rojas, the long-time director, reports that inflation is hurting Bolivia, and the cost has increased for everyday needs, such as food, energy and medicine. Additionally, the cost of living is increasing, so the staff have been asking for an increase in wages to match the increasing cost of living. Emma also reports that SK has received more children who are victims of abuse, and that the abuse they have experienced is worse than ever. She attributes this to the isolation and stress of covid. Additionally, more children are coming into the orphanage malnourished. Emma is paying very high costs for medical care for these children.

**STREET SENSE MEDIA CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM** Brian Carome

The program helps our corps of vendors – men and women who are homeless – navigate to subsidized housing, health and mental health care, and employment and income support for persons with disabilities. The program provides services to over 60 individuals a month, and since its start in 2017, has helped over 62 people secure permanent housing. In 2023, the program, which costs about \$90,000 annually, will have no dedicated grant funding and therefore relies on a patchwork of donations from individuals and groups like NOVA.

**UPPER-NILE ORPHANS CARE ORGANIZATION** Scott Spaine

Our Hand of Hope Community School, a home+school in war-torn South Sudan, is building latrines, and we are hoping to add a water catchment system. This would allow student residents and staff to wash more easily, at least in the wet months, and is especially important as our girl students mature. We have 27 children now, with more children on the waiting list, pending funding. We hired our first female teacher in May. Nyachanguoth is Nuer, so she is part of the local community. It is especially important to have a female teacher for these vulnerable and traumatized girls and boys, as in rural South Sudan the illiteracy rate for women is a stubborn 98%. Though all of the children and staff survived the April attack on the village where the school is located, all the supplies were looted. Since that time, to increase security, the school was moved to a more secure area, metal fencing was added and there is both a day guard and a night guard. NOVA's is our first grant and is a crucial support.

**VOICE** Nancy Veldhuis

Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE) is a nonpartisan citizens' organization of over 50 interfaith and civic institutions in Northern Virginia of which NOVA is a member. VOICE organizes to build power and do justice in middle- and low-income communities in Fairfax, Prince William and Arlington counties and Alexandria City. With its continuing focus on ending mass incarceration of the mentally ill and those suffering from addiction, VOICE is working successfully for the creation of Crisis Receiving Centers and Crisis Stabilization Units to ensure these individuals get treatment, not jail. VOICE continues its work

with underserved residents, empowering them to speak out to dismantle old zoning structures that restricted minority home ownership and to increase affordable housing units. VOICE's seven-year effort just enjoyed success on behalf of hundreds of senior citizens who had been faced with displacement from their Fellowship Square Senior Housing at Lake Anne. HUD also increased the residents' housing vouchers.

**WEEKEND FOOD PACKS 4 KIDS** Cathy Showalter

Crossroads Connection is a community service organization that provides a weekend food program for food-insecure children in the public schools of Gainesville and Haymarket, VA. The goal is to eliminate hunger as an obstruction to classroom learning. Donors and volunteers operate as a chartered club of Heritage Hunt and the ministry of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church of Haymarket. The 2022-2023 school year commitment is to serve 305 students selected by school counselors at 12 schools. Bags of supplemental food is provided monthly to the schools, and the school staff distributes food on Fridays to the identified students.

**WOMEN'S ORDINATION FUND** Nancy Veldhuis

The Women's Ordination Conference is the world's oldest and largest organization working solely for the ordination of women as priests, deacons, and bishops into an inclusive Catholic Church. WOC is dedicated to renewing church governance to be inclusive, accountable and transparent; bringing about justice and equality for Catholic women; and incorporating women-centered theologies into everyday Catholicism. Women's ordination is no longer the taboo subject it once was within the church, but is now a matter of discernment for the global church, according to the Vatican's Synod Office.

**ZIMBABWE CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP & FOOD PROJECT** Pat & Don Sodo

Our scholarship project has resumed in the aftermath of covid. We continue to raise funds separately for student scholarships. However, food insecurity remains an issue because of changing economic and environmental conditions. Zimbabwe's rainy season is less predictable than years ago. Drought occurred in 2022 with very diminished rainfall. As a result, families became dependent on food aid provided by our program through our in-country partner agency, Children in the Wilderness. In 2022, NOVA-donated funds provided monthly food packages for the families of 17 children participating in our school program. We estimate that more than 1,000 meals were provided for about a six-month period in 2022. In 2023, we are adding about 10 new students to our program, bringing the total served to almost 30.

**NOVA'S OWN PROJECT**

**RENTAL ASSISTANCE TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS** Dianne Carroll

The NOVA program provides rental assistance on an emergency basis for families in need in the Arlington Public Schools community. School social workers screen the requests and send the request on a form designed by NOVA.

**ONE-TIME GRANT**

**JOBS GUARANTEE CALL-IN** Tom Clarkson

NOVA plans to provide a grant to hire Daniel Sanchez to create an online call-in campaign to promote a federal Jobs Guarantee. Daniel has a business that creates videos and websites that advertise for businesses, and he knows how to communicate with a younger audience. The call-in campaign would take the form of a live, weekly online show that encourages listeners to call their congressional representatives and ask them to pass a federal Jobs Guarantee. If possible, this promotion would be organized in cooperation with the [National Jobs For All Network](#), an organization that NOVA endorsed a couple of years ago. NOVA spends lots of money on social action projects that alleviate the symptoms of poverty. A federal

Jobs Guarantee would eliminate poverty at its source for tens of millions of people in the United States.

### **OTHER 2023 COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS INVOLVING MONEY**

#### **GIFT CARDS PROJECT** Cathy Goldschmidt and Dianne Carroll

NOVA members donate gift cards or cash for gift cards at Christmas and the beginning of the school year. The cards are given to the families of Somali refugees long supported by NOVA and to Arlington school social workers who then distribute them to families in need. The two gift card programs were combined in 2022.

#### **KEN CHAISON FAMILY EMERGENCY FUND** Dianne Carroll

This provides funds for an emergency need of a family that cannot be met in any other way. School social workers screen the requests and send the request on a form designed by NOVA. Twenty families were helped in 2022. Money to that account has come from Ken's family, friends and NOVA members over the years.

#### **NOVA MARIE PINHO/MARIE KEEFE STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** Linda Christie/committee

This project, funded by the Marie Pinho bequest and the Marie Keefe Fund, provides up to \$300 a month during the academic year (nine months per year) to those who are granted the scholarship. As of December, two full-time students, one of whom was nearing graduation, received full scholarships, and two part-time students received partial scholarships.

#### **PATHFORWARD (formerly A-SPAN) HOMELESS WALKATHON** Meg Tuccillo

NOVA has participated in a PathForward walkathon to assist individuals experiencing homelessness for many years. In spring 2022, we decided to honor the legacy of our own dear Mike Timpane (former A-SPAN board member and longtime supporter) by naming our NOVA walkathon the "Mike Timpane Memorial Walkathon." We were thrilled to have Gen Timpane and her son Paul participate in the first annual Mike Timpane Memorial Walkathon and hope to continue it for many years to come.

#### **VILLA CANDELARIA SCHOOL, Cochabamba Bolivia** Dianne Carroll

Twenty-two NOVA members sponsor students at this school, which serves age 2 through 6th grade. They get a quality education, and low-income families are provided school materials and other items they need. This is sent to Cochabamba once a year - \$120 each student sponsored.

### **COMMUNITY MEMBER COMMITMENTS OF TIME AND RESOURCES**

#### **BOOK GROUPS**

Watch the NOVA Sunday announcements for the groups that are meeting.

#### **CARE FOR CREATION** Gloria Mog and team:

Kathy Scheimer, Richard Urban, Carmela Ormando, Rosemarie Annunziata, Scott Spaine, Carolyn Miller, David Mog, Jeanne Clarkson, Cathy Showalter, Markie Harwood, Judy Christofferson and Joe Keyes. The team was formed in March 2019 in response to the climate crisis and the growing realization that people of faith play an increasingly critical role in the worldwide response to this crisis. The team's mission:

- Provide education in the NOVA Community around environmental issues and actions needed to make progress on this problem.
- Develop concrete personal and communal actions that members can take.

- Integrate Care for Creation themes in the liturgical and prayer life of the community.
- Advocate for legislative progress locally, statewide and nationally.
- Engender hope and motivation by reporting on progress.

**CHRIST HOUSE EVENING MEAL** Tim White

During the pandemic, in lieu of preparing hot meals every other month, NOVA has been furnishing bagged meals. Once the pandemic has finally eased, NOVA will have to decide whether we still have the resources to prepare and serve hot meals.

**MY FRIENDS HOUSE INC** Teddi Ahrens

Teddi collects needed items for those Eve Birch serves in West Virginia including fresh food, blankets, clothes, building materials, sewing materials, paint, craft materials. Eve welcomes helpers to spend a few hours or even overnight to paint, organize, do yard work or other "handy" work.

**PAPER PRODUCTS FOR DOORWAYS** Cece/Kopp Michelotti

This project was started by deceased NOVA member Marie Pinho. On the first Sunday of each month, NOVA members bring paper towels, toilet paper, napkins and so forth to liturgy. NOVA members then deliver the paper goods to the women's shelter.

**PRAYER GROUP** Bill Meyer

NOVA members meet together to pray for intentions. A Prayer Book is available at liturgy for people to record an intention.

**TRINITY NOVA TOGETHER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE** Carmela Ormando

Dedicated to conversations, exploration and action toward creating a more racially just and inclusive community, the interfaith and interracial partnership of NOVA and Trinity Episcopal Church enthusiastically begins its eighth year. A third Sacred Ground study group begins in January 2023.

**WOMEN'S PRISON BOOK PROJECT** Pat Sodo

This project, based in Minneapolis, provides books to women across the country who are incarcerated (some states, e.g., VA, currently do not allow the program). NOVA members support WPBP by donating books. Some are traded at a used book store for requested subject matter, and then everything makes its way to WPBP as books or cash. The project is self-sustaining and beneficial to both NOVA members and WPBP.