

# High school student's reflection on advocacy immersion in Washington, D.C.

*Agnes Boyer, student at Assumption High School in Louisville, KY*

*The Institute Justice Team hosted students from Louisville, Kentucky's Assumption High School February 23–26 in Washington, D.C. Over four packed days, the students met with the Institute Leadership Team; attended a presentation by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC); participated in [Faithful Resistance](#), an interfaith public witness on Capitol Hill; and met with staffers from the offices of Kentucky Senator Mitch McConnell and Representative Morgan McGarvey.*

*Assumption High School student Agnes Boyer wrote to express the students' gratitude for their time with the Sisters of Mercy and the lasting impact this trip will have on them.*



*The Institute Leadership Team and Institute Justice Team member Jean Stokan gather with Assumption High School students during the students' visit to Washington, D.C.*

We are seven students from Assumption High School in Louisville, Kentucky. This week, we visited Washington D.C. to learn about the current status of immigration in the U.S. The Sisters of Mercy shared their experiences at the southern border and in cities around the country. Stories of families being afraid to go to grocery stores forced us to face the violence that terrorizes our communities.

Institute Justice Coordinator Jean Stokan introduced us to immigration lawyer Tania Guerrero, who informed us how the current policies affect all migrants. Even when they follow legal procedures, people are still vulnerable to being detained because of how the system is organized. We then heard from Abel Nuñez, executive director at CARECEN. This organization provides direct support and civic engagement in support of the Latino

population. He explained the history of Latino immigration to the U.S., specifically in regard to D.C., as well as how it's becoming increasingly harder to become a naturalized citizen.

On Wednesday, we participated in the faithful resistance led by the United Methodist Church. Moved by words from bishops and reverends who urged us to reclaim our faith as we fight for human rights, we marched to ensure mercy for migrants. On Thursday, we spoke with [staff members from the offices of] Representative Morgan McGarvey and Senator Mitch McConnell in order to urge them to stop funding ICE.

We are extremely grateful to the Sisters of Mercy who welcomed us and provided us with valuable information and contacts. We have had the opportunity to learn and take a stand for an important issue, and we will continue fighting for human decency.