



# GRANITE STATE ORGANIZING PROJECT

Champions of Advocacy and Social Justice!

## Message from the Executive Director

It's that time again! No, I don't mean time to get out our jackets and check our heating systems, although those may be wise steps to take. I mean it is time to get out and vote! Vote for President and State Senator and Representative and Congressman of course, but it is also time to vote for new GSOP officers!

Join us at the GSOP Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at St. Lawrence Parish, Goffstown.

We will gather for fellowship and refreshments at 9:30 a.m. Our meeting will begin promptly at 10 am. The agenda includes an update on our Strategic Plan and its progress, reports on work in the Chapters, the Secure Retirement campaign, Young Organizers United, legislative issues and discussion about the burning issues facing our state in small groups.

Democracy needs participation to keep it vibrant and healthy and GSOP needs you to be a part of our democratic process - hope to see you on November 10<sup>th</sup>!

Sarah Jane Knoy  
Executive Director

# ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday,

NOVEMBER 10<sup>th</sup> AT  
10 AM

St. Lawrence Parish, 1 East Union Street  
Goffstown

**GSOP is your**  
organization –get involved, help  
choose new issues and  
campaigns!

Refreshments and fellowship at 9:30 am

Keep up with GSOP happenings!  
Check in with [www.grantiestateorganizing.org](http://www.grantiestateorganizing.org) regularly.  
While you are there – consider making a donation on PAY PAL!  
We appreciate your support!

## YOU ON THE MOOOVE!



YOU members meeting with Keith Catone and Alexa LeBoeuf at U-TEC in Lowell to analyze the surveys.

GSOP has focused on improving the overall climate at Central High School for all students, particularly students of color and increasing in college aspiration and attainment for all students as we expand the dialogue at the high school to include creating a more student centered climate.

We are working with Mr. Mailhot, the principal at Central, on a plan to host four professional development opportunities for educators at the school. The in-service training will be throughout this academic year. We will be bringing trainers from Harvard University, Annenberg Institute and The Nellie Mae Education Foundation!

YOU members wrapped up the ELL campaign they worked on and have moved on to guidance issues. They designed an 11 question survey and surveyed more than 400 Manchester high school students from two high schools. YOU primary leaders spent the summer working with the Annenberg Institute to analyze and unpack the data from the surveys. While the survey did not result in a campaign for YOU it was an extremely valuable learning experience for YOU leaders.

At the end of summer YOU, together with AFSC and NH Peace Action hosted a successful "Peace of Mind" conference, for young activists to deepen and share their activism skills for the new academic year. Facilitators included: Brenda and Woullard Lett, Sarai Roby, Ajok Akot and Lwoki Loki.

Now that the school year has started, the youth are collecting stories, and will decide on what issue to tackle next!

## GSOP CHAPTER REPORTS

*Nashua:* The Nashua Chapter continues to follow up with Bronstein tenants and the Nashua Housing Authority. While plans to demolish Bronstein have not yet been filed, they are expected soon. The Nashua Telegraph ran an excellent series of articles on housing issues in Nashua and invited GSOP to participate in a community forum on this important topic. Look for the Beyond Bronstein series on the Nashua Telegraph website.

Chapter members continue to be concerned at the lack of low cost quality housing in Nashua. A recent chapter sponsored education session on bed bugs drew more than 20 attendees, many of whom are suffering from bed bugs and other housing conditions issues. The Chapter meeting is on the third Monday of the month at the Adult Learning Center, 4 Lake Street at 7pm.

*Souhegan Valley:* Ruth Heden and friends continue to gather on the Milford Oval week to show their support for Social Security, Medicare and other support systems used by every day people. They plan to resume monthly meetings after the election.

*Manchester:* The Chapter meetings have been changed to the first Tuesday of the month. The Chapter continues to focus on housing issues, education issues and legislative issues.

The Elmwood Tenant Leadership group hosted Gov. Lynch on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2012. The Elmwood residents came and spoke about issues and concerns they have with safety and the need for more services in their community. This is a culmination of the weekly and sometimes twice weekly leadership training sessions, meetings, community dialogues, and neighborhood walks.



Elmwood Tenant Meeting with Gov. Lynch

**WELCOME, ANGELA MERCADO**

New part time tenant organizer Angela Mercado is working in Manchester and Nashua to support the work of our healthy housing committees. She, along with Maggie Fogarty of American Friends Service Committee and members of Young Organizer United spent the last weeks of summer going door to door in Manchester, searching out problem buildings and sharing information with tenants on their rights.

In Nashua, Angela is bringing low income tenants together to meet weekly to discuss housing issues and learn how to file building complaints with the City. She is also available to set up information session on bed bugs and other housing issues. Welcome Angela!



Maggie Fogarty and Lwoki Loki discuss a door knocking strategy, while conducting tenant outreach with other YOU members and Angela Mercado.

Please let us know if you want to contribute to our newsletter. Contact Thato Ramoabi at [thato.gsop@comcast.net](mailto:thato.gsop@comcast.net) or call 603-668-8250

**WELCOMING AMERICA!**



Eva Castillo and Nabil Migalli give the first ever Welcoming award to Zane Knoy (yes, Sarah Jane's dad) for his work to welcome all.

Congratulations to GSOP Vice President, Eva Castillo for organizing a successful Welcoming America event! Eva is the organizer for the NH Alliance for Immigrants and Refugees, and the leader for the New Hampshire initiative. WELCOMING AMERICA is a national movement to help change attitudes toward new immigrants, and has come to New Hampshire.

Meetings are being organized to give newcomers an opportunity to tell their stories and show that while there are differences, there is fundamentally a lot that is the same among us in the human family. If you would like to host a Welcoming event at your congregation or organization, please contact Eva Castillo at [ecastillo@miracoalition.org](mailto:ecastillo@miracoalition.org) or call the GSOP office to arrange. A welcoming event can be a panel discussion, a round table, a movie screening, a photo exhibit or whatever else you can dream up that gets people talking and thinking together about welcoming the stranger.

## Retirement Security Campaign

As long as the Presidential Candidates and their surrogates keep coming to New Hampshire – we will keep on bird dogging! Nowadays the candidates are not talking one to one with voters or taking as many questions as they did during the Primary, but every time they are here it is still a chance for us to get our message out about the importance of social security.

Social Security does not add a penny to the deficit and should not be a part of any deficit reduction talks. Social Security and Medicare are successful programs with proven track records and conversations about strengthening them must be thoughtful and non-partisan. It is our commitment to seniors, the poor and the disabled that makes the USA a great nation. Let keep that commitment. Call or email Rachael Denault at [gsopstaff@comcast.net](mailto:gsopstaff@comcast.net) if you want to help with the last few weeks of social security bird dogging!



YOU members taking a break from handing out social security post cards at a political event.

*Remember to vote NO on CACR-13, question one on the ballot!*



*“...The General Court shall not have the power or authority to impose and levy any assessment, rate, or tax upon income earned by any natural person...”*

Our position is based on the belief that a fundamental moral measure of any economic policy is the extent to which it ensures concern for those most vulnerable, protects and nurtures the life and dignity of all, and serves the common good. And in our mission to protect justice, equity and the democratic process for all NH citizens, we believe:

- A vote against CACR-13 is NOT the same as a vote for a state income tax. By voting against CACR-13, we’d affirm our belief that our state can treat all of its citizens in a fair and just manner.
- CACR-13 is unfair to future legislators—it would tie their hands to solve problems of their day. How can we predict what situations they may be confronting?
- As it is, NH taxes are very lopsided—more on property and business tax. NH Elders pay the highest property taxes in the nation. Many citizens favor tax reform to meet the needs of NH residents and reduce the burden of property and business taxes. But CACR-13 is a barrier to future tax policy solutions.

Let’s go out and vote!