

## SUMMARY – WMM4A GENERAL ASSEMBLY – FEB. 12, 2020

### Local Updates

Sean and Judi ran the **WMM4A table at the Women's March Activist Fair in Springfield** on Jan. 18. Sean reported moderate foot traffic at City Hall and good conversations including some children who asked about M4A and took literature for their parents.

Barbara and Diana tabled at the Amherst Farmers Market recently. They will also be making **two presentations for the Amherst Senior Center** at the Bangs Center, 70 Boltwood Walk: Feb. 27, 1:00-2:00 p.m and March 11, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Diana: [dstein@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:dstein@mtholyoke.edu)

Jon reported on a **recent meeting with Rep. Aaron Vega and Spiros Hatiras, the CEO of Holyoke Medical Center**. Deborah also attended, along with two members of the Springfield Area Hub. Hatiras is supportive of Single Payer healthcare and will review the state bill. The group also discussed some follow-up steps to help spread the word among other safety-net hospitals in the state.

Several folks in the Pittsfield area will be setting up a **meeting soon with Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier** to ask her to co-sponsor the Mass. M4A bill. Farley-Bouvier is the co-chair of the Progressive Caucus in the Mass. Legislature but is the only Berkshire rep. who has not yet signed on to the M4A bill. Contact Jon: [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org)

Indivisible Northampton is hosting a **discussion about Medicare for All and other avenues of healthcare reform – Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at Pathways Cohousing**, Mountain Laurel Path in Florence, 7:00 p.m. Deborah will speak for M4A and Joel Rosen, M.D. will present other avenues, followed by Q&A and general discussion with those present. Contact Deborah: [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org).

Deborah is representing WMM4A on the planning team for a **Forum on M4A and Public Health at UMass Amherst on Friday March 27, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** The UMass School of Public Health is hosting the event. The purpose is to explore the impact of Single Payer healthcare on public health issues, with an emphasis on equity and social determinants of health. The panels will include policy experts and Mass. legislators, with plenty of time for Q&A and discussion. **Space is limited - register here.** Contact Deborah: [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org).

The Mass. chapter of the American Nurses Assn. is sponsoring a forum titled **Healthcare Reform Efforts: Applying a Health Equity and Social Justice Lens** on Wed., March 25, 8:30 a.m. – noon at the UMass Center at Tower Square in Springfield. This event is cosponsored by the UMass College of Nursing. Presenters will discuss various health care reform efforts and legislation, including M4A, and equity implications. Contact Christine: [schraufc@elms.edu](mailto:schraufc@elms.edu)

Stephanie will be coordinating **WMM4A outreach to faith-based communities**. If you would like to be involved with this important new initiative, contact Stephanie: [strandfamily01075sh@gmail.com](mailto:strandfamily01075sh@gmail.com)

## Statewide Updates

Jon is our representative on the Board of the statewide coalition, Mass-Care. He reports that Mass-Care is **identifying several legislative districts to run non-binding ballot questions** about Single Payer this year, using the same question that we used here in Western Mass. in 2018. They are also identifying organizations to recruit for the coalition.

Sen. Eldridge and others presented a **program about M4A in Jamaica Plain** recently, with Rep. Nika Elugardo as the moderator.

## National Notes

Discussion about the impact of M4A on the Democratic primaries and vice versa. Some comments included how far the issue has come in the past couple of years to be at the center of national debate; how much is the conversation about M4A itself and how much about how we get there; more needs to be done to explain the details, including transition for vulnerable populations; regarding “public option” proposals – misleading effort to have one’s cake and eat it, too, trying to avoid conflict with vested interests (insurance industry, big pharma).

## Training Segment

Stephanie facilitated this month’s peer-to-peer training discussion about **how we bring our values to the campaign for Medicare for All**. She led us in a series of exercises to identify why we ourselves are involved in this work and how to listen for and discuss M4A values when we reach out to other people. Here is the initial list of values we generated: justice, sustainability, human rights, humanity, fairness, basic security, not being exploited, compassion, empathy, efficiency, freedom, democracy, fulfillment of potential, pursuit of happiness. We also discussed how some of these directly contradict the fear-mongering tactics against M4A – such as having more choice and freedom with M4A, not less.

**NEXT MEETING: Wed. March 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. - 100 Bigelow Street in Holyoke**