Loyola SSW and SSWSO Hold Inaugural Social Justice Summit

The Social Justice Summit, a collaboration between Loyola’s School of Social Work Student Organization (SSWSO) and Loyola’s School of Social Work (SSW) took place on Saturday, March 25th at Loyola University Chicago’s Water Tower Campus. Students and faculty together from various departments, as well as members of the community, joined together to facilitate and participate in interdisciplinary conversations focused on an array of social justice topics. The vision of the Summit was “to build a community that will work toward reclaiming power through dismantling systems of oppression through collaborative action.”

The Summit began with an inspiring keynote speech by Jesus ‘Chuy’ Garcia, Cook County Commissioner in the 7th district, in which he shared about his journey as a politician, and how he incorporates social justice into his work on a daily basis. The keynote was followed by a series of educational and interactive breakout sessions focused on issues ranging from racial justice to immigration to LGBTQIA rights.

During lunchtime, an interdisciplinary panel spoke about their understanding of power dynamics in their work to further social justice. The panelists were David Olson, Loyola Professor of Criminal Justice, Marjorie Baltazar, immigration attorney at Baltazar Global LLC Principal, Dan Rhodes, Loyola Clinical Assistant Professor in the Institute of Pastoral Studies, and Kelly Howe, Loyola Assistant Professor of Theatre.

The Summit concluded with a call to action. Participants were encouraged to fill out “Commitment Cards” highlighting the specific actions they would take to further social justice in their community. The Social Justice Summit was a great opportunity for students, faculty, and community members to commit themselves to the cause of social justice, and continue to “Resist, Collaborate, Act.”