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# COMMUNITY GEMS: St. Anne's Hill woman takes on trafficking

Jen Morin-Williamson helps people, planet in roles with the Sisters of the Precious Blood and local organizations



## COMMUNITY CONTENT

By Diane Erwin - Dayton Daily News

June 1, 2023

Issues like human trafficking and sex trafficking can feel far away, Jen Morin-Williamson knows.

But the 60-year-old woman from the St. Anne's Hill neighborhood takes on these and other concerns as the peace, justice and ecology coordinator for the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

"There are so many people who are being oppressed," she said. "There's so much pain and destruction of people's lives and our planet."

When Morin-Williamson began in her position last year, she was introduced to Abolition Ohio, which works to prevent human trafficking, as well as the Dayton chapter of Save Our Adolescents from Prostitution. She now is a co-chair of the SOAP chapter.

Earlier this year, the chapter delivered thousands of bars of soap and makeup removers with the National Human Trafficking Hotline phone number to 82 hotels in the Dayton area. Incidents tend to increase before large sporting events, and the distribution was done before the March Madness college basketball tournament began.

The hotline receives a rise in calls after events like these, Morin-Williamson said.

"That is a good sign that people are aware," she said.

The organization also funded two digital billboards and asked hotels to hang missing children posters where staff could see them, she said.

Morin-Williamson is the type of person who can take the lead to accomplish goals, but she also makes others feel involved and listens to their suggestions, said Cheri Overholser, who also is a co-chair of the Dayton SOAP chapter with Morin-Williamson and nominated her as a Dayton Daily News Community Gem.

She is kind, organized and a great leader, yet she never tries to

stand in the limelight, said Overholser, of Riverside.

"I think she's a great person all around," she said. "I love her passion."

In her position with the Trotwood-based Sisters of the Precious Blood, Morin-Williamson calls herself an animator and an amplifier. She animates the various justice issues that are the focus of the sisters, including trafficking, gun control, the environment, peace and the repeal of the death penalty. She also amplifies the work that has already been done on these issues.

For example, the congregation has built a solar field and installed solar panels to help combat climate change. To continue its efforts on the topic, Morin-Williamson helped to pilot a project in three local Catholic elementary schools, giving special awards to science fair projects that focused on environmental issues, including a \$500 scholarship to one student.

In addition to specific projects, Morin-Williamson does advocacy and legislative work. Her job gives her the opportunity to move the needle on significant issues.

"It allows me to continue doing work that is meaningful," said Morin-Williamson, who previously worked in campus ministry at the University of Dayton.

Many issues demand attention nowadays, and it can be difficult to figure out what to do, Morin-Williamson said. She urges others to find the issue that is important to them and take action.

"Get on a mailing list and do something," she said. "You don't have to reinvent the wheel."

Above, **Community Gem** — Jen Morin-Williamson