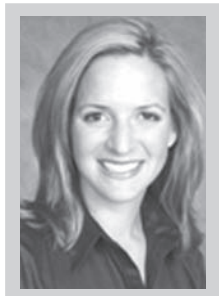


A Compassionate Warrior

By **Mary Golden** WOMEN'S COMMITTEE CHAIR

Jocelyn Benson is a person who has been influenced by women and the civil rights advocates who fought for equal rights, risking their lives to achieve a much greater goal. The result is a compassionate warrior motivated to ensure that, our most precious right – the right to vote – is safeguarded. I hope that you are as inspired after getting to know her as I was.



Mary: "Women's History Month," what comes to mind when you see that statement? Why do you think it's important to recognize it?

Jocelyn: The more people who are at the table and involved in the political process the better off we all are, and anytime that any group is excluded all of us miss out on their ideas and perspective. So from a Women's History standpoint, because we once were a country that excluded women from participating in politics, I think it's important to remember how far we've come and also be very thankful that we are a country that has requirements in the law that women and everyone else should be participating and making decisions that guide us in our democracy.

Mary: Have there been any influ-

ential women in your life?

Jocelyn: I must start out by talking about my mother. She has been a

very influential person early on and throughout my lifetime. She was a Special Education teacher and she was always talking about her students. She taught us how important it was to work together, and talked about how everyone needs

access to education and taught us to treat everyone equally.

The second woman is Viola Liuzzo; she was from Detroit and also from Wayne State University. In 1965 she drove down, along with some other volunteers, to march in the Selma to Montgomery Civil Rights March. They marched for equality and to ensure everyone would have the right to vote. On their way back home, some Klansmen surrounded her car, ambushed her and killed her. She is an example of someone literally sacrificing her life to ensure everyone would have the right to vote. She is a figure who has lead and inspired me to do my work.

Mary: What do you think your greatest accomplishments have been?

Jocelyn: Directly out of college I moved to Montgomery, Alabama

to work for the Southern Poverty Law Center. I spearheaded an investigation, in South Carolina to uncover a Neo-Nazi white supremacist organization called, 'The Knights of Freedom.' During the investigation, we uncovered a white supremacist calling himself the second coming of Hitler. Through our action with the FBI, we brought this whole organization down. It was very gratifying.

I also led a coalition of several attorneys, working with the Justice Department, to try and keep the Buena Vista Secretary of State branch office open. The Secretary of State was trying to close it and I argued that it violated a provision of the Voting Rights Act. It has never been used before in Michigan's history to block the closing of a Secretary of State branch. In 2007, the Justice Department stepped in and blocked the branch office from being closed, concluding that closing the branch office violated the Voting Rights Act.

Today, as an educator and a teacher I am blessed every day to see my students as we go

through and learn about the law and how powerful the law can be used to protect people. To watch students grow from coming into law school, to graduating from law school, and to empower them to become advocates for justice – that is an ongoing gratifying aspect of my job.

Mary: What are your goals for the future?

Jocelyn: I want to use my life to continue on the path of opening the doors of access to ensure that everyone is participating in the political process, and that we're reducing or eliminating barriers that are erected to make it harder to participate in our democracy."

Currently, Jocelyn is an Assistant Professor at Wayne State University. She holds a B.A., Wellesley College, M. Phil., Oxford University and a J.D., Harvard Law School and the Founder of Richard Austin Center for Election Law and Administration.

To find out more about Jocelyn, check out her websites:

<http://www.votebenson.com/>, www.richardaustincenter.org and www.law.wayne.edu/faculty/bio

Local 598, UAW Date _____

CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Did you know that when you change your address at the plant – we have no way of knowing that at the Union Hall? You must either stop by or call the Union Hall and give us your new address.

NAME: _____

OLD ADDRESS: _____
House number and street

City State Zip Code

NEW ADDRESS: _____
House number and street

City State Zip Code

Telephone # _____ Social Security# _____

Production _____ or Skilled Trades _____ Active _____ or Retired _____