

# Teachers as Allies and Advocates

Federico Salas-Isnardi

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning  
at Texas A&M University



*“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”*

Emma Lazarus, The New Colossus



# What is a Teacher Ally?

- ▶ Go to the chat room and answer the question What is an Ally?
- ▶ This is a brainstorming exercise. Not a test of your readiness.

**“The trouble is that once you see it, you can't unsee it. And once you've seen it, keeping quiet, saying nothing, becomes as political an act as speaking out. There is no innocence. Either way, you're accountable.”**

**Arundhati Roy, Power Politics**

# Allies...

- ▶ “[are] partners in empowerment who speak out against injustice and support marginalized groups and individuals on their own terms.”
  - ▶ [recognize] oppression broadly and standing in solidarity with anyone who experiences oppression—whether or not the ally also belongs to a targeted group.
- ▶ **Teaching Tolerance, 53, Summer 2016 - Anatomy of an Ally**

# Allies...

- ▶ An ally is a member of the advantaged social group who takes a stand against social injustice directed at targeted groups (Whites who speak out against racism, men who are anti-sexist).  
When a form of oppression has multiple targeted groups, as do racism, ableism, and heterosexism, targeted group members can be allies to other targeted groups they are not part of.
  - ▶ Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Appendix 6

# Allies

- ▶ Must be comfortable in their own skin (social group membership or identity)
- ▶ Acknowledge the problem and learn the *facts*
- ▶ Be willing to be taught and to learn
- ▶ Be willing to *listen* in order to understand the experience of the targeted group
- ▶ Must be committed to making a difference
- ▶ Understand that acting against social injustice is in her/his own self-interest

# Social justice teachers

- 🌀 **Are aware of own social identities**
- 🌀 **Confront our own prejudices**
- 🌀 **Respond to biased comments in the classroom**
- 🌀 **Are open to some degree of personal disclosure (our experience as an example)**
- 🌀 **Must deal with emotional intensity and fear of losing control**

# Teacher Allies

“...an ally takes responsibility for learning about his/her own target group heritage, culture and experience, and how oppression works in every day life. Allies listen to and respect the perspectives and experiences of targeted group members.”

Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, p. 529

# Teacher Allies

**Acknowledge unearned privileges and work to eliminate or change privileges into rights that targeted group members also enjoy. They are willing to take risks, try new behaviors, and act in spite of their own fear and resistance from other advantaged group members.”**

(Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, p. 529)

# Resources

- ▶ Adams, M., Bell, L. & Griffin, P. (2007). *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition*. New York: Routledge.
  - ▶ Appendices 6 G, H, I

# Resources

- ▶ [http://unitedwedream.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BeingAnEducatorActivist\\_2Pager\\_11102015.pdf](http://unitedwedream.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BeingAnEducatorActivist_2Pager_11102015.pdf)
- ▶ <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-53-summer-2016/feature/anatomy-ally>
- ▶ <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-55-spring-2017/feature/immigrant-and-refugee-children-guide-educators-and-school-su>
- ▶ <http://sandiego.adl.org/news/immigrants-and-refugees-a-jewish-call-to-action/>
- ▶ [http://mashable.com/2016/05/15/undocumented-immigrants-allies/#9z\\_0XibrImqR](http://mashable.com/2016/05/15/undocumented-immigrants-allies/#9z_0XibrImqR)
- ▶ [http://www.aijustice.org/the\\_truth\\_on\\_immigration](http://www.aijustice.org/the_truth_on_immigration)

# Legal/Advocacy Resources

- National Immigration Law Center: [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org)
- Catholic Immigration Network: [cliniclegal.org](http://cliniclegal.org)
- United We Dream: [www.unitedwedream.org](http://www.unitedwedream.org)
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center: [www.ilrc.org](http://www.ilrc.org)
- National Immigrant Justice Center: [www.immigrantjustice.org/](http://www.immigrantjustice.org/)
- American Immigration Council: [americanimmigrationcouncil.org](http://americanimmigrationcouncil.org)
- Immigration Advocates Network: [immigrationadvocates.org](http://immigrationadvocates.org)

# Interfaith Immigrant Coalition

- ▶ **African American Ministers in Action:** Leslie Malachi, [lmalachi@pfaw.org](mailto:lmalachi@pfaw.org)
- ▶ **American Jewish Committee:** Chelsea Hanson, [hansonc@ajc.org](mailto:hansonc@ajc.org)
- ▶ **American Friends Service Committee:** Jessica Roach, [jroach@afsc.org](mailto:jroach@afsc.org)
- ▶ **Bread for the World Institute:** Andrew Wainer, [awainer@bread.org](mailto:awainer@bread.org)
- ▶ **Church World Service:** Jen Smyers, [jsmyers@churchworldservice.org](mailto:jsmyers@churchworldservice.org)
- ▶ **Disciples of Christ:** Ken Brooker Langston, [revkenbl@yahoo.com](mailto:revkenbl@yahoo.com)
- ▶ **Episcopal Migration Ministries:** Katie Conway, [kconway@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:kconway@episcopalchurch.org)
- ▶ **Franciscan Action Network:** Patrick Carolan, [pcarolan@franciscanaction.org](mailto:pcarolan@franciscanaction.org)
- ▶ **Friends Committee on National Legislation:** Ruth Flower, [flower@fcnl.org](mailto:flower@fcnl.org)
- ▶ **Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society:** Liza Lieberman, [liza.lieberman@hias.org](mailto:liza.lieberman@hias.org)
- ▶ **Interfaith Worker Justice:** Thomas Shellabarger, [tshellabarger@iwj.org](mailto:tshellabarger@iwj.org)
- ▶ **Irish Apostolate USA:** Geri Garvey, [administrator@usairish.org](mailto:administrator@usairish.org)
- ▶ **Islamic Information Center:** Hajar Hosseini, [hosseini@islamicinformationcenter.org](mailto:hosseini@islamicinformationcenter.org)
- ▶ **Jesuit Refugee Service/USA,** Shaina Aber, [saber@jesuit.org](mailto:saber@jesuit.org)
- ▶ **Jewish Council for Public Affairs:** Elyssa Koidin, [ekoidin@thejcpa.org](mailto:ekoidin@thejcpa.org)
- ▶ **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service:** Nora Skelly, [nskelly@lirs.org](mailto:nskelly@lirs.org)
- ▶ **Mennonite Central Committee:** Tammy Alexander, [talexander@mcc.org](mailto:talexander@mcc.org)
- ▶ **Muslim Public Affairs Council:** Hoda Elshishtawy, [hoda@mpac.org](mailto:hoda@mpac.org)
- ▶ **Sisters of the Good Shepherd:** Larry Couch, [lclobbyist@gsadvocacy.org](mailto:lclobbyist@gsadvocacy.org)
- ▶ **NETWORK:** Sr. Mary Ellen Lacy, D.C., [melacy@networklobby.org](mailto:melacy@networklobby.org)
- ▶ **Pax Christi:** Scott Wright, [scott@tassc.org](mailto:scott@tassc.org)
- ▶ **PICO:** Michele Rudy, [michelerudy@yahoo.com](mailto:michelerudy@yahoo.com)
- ▶ **Presbyterian Church, USA:** Melissa Gee, [melissa.gee@pcusa.org](mailto:melissa.gee@pcusa.org)
- ▶ **Sisters of Mercy of the Americas:** Regina McKillip, [rmckillip@sistersofmercy.org](mailto:rmckillip@sistersofmercy.org)
- ▶ **Sojourners:** Ivone Guillen, [iguillen@sojo.net](mailto:iguillen@sojo.net)
- ▶ **Union for Reform Judaism:** Amelia Viney, [aviney@rac.org](mailto:aviney@rac.org)
- ▶ **Unitarian Universalist Association:** Craig Roshaven, [croshaven@uua.org](mailto:croshaven@uua.org)
- ▶ **United Church of Christ:** Rev. Mari Castellanos, [castellm@ucc.org](mailto:castellm@ucc.org)
- ▶ **United Methodist Church:** Bill Mefford, [bmefford@umc-gbcs.org](mailto:bmefford@umc-gbcs.org)
- ▶ **UNITED SIHKS:** Harpreet Singh, [harpreet.singh@unitedsikhs.org](mailto:harpreet.singh@unitedsikhs.org)
- ▶ **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops:** Kevin Appleby, [kappleby@usccb.org](mailto:kappleby@usccb.org)
- ▶ **World Relief:** Jenny Yang, [jgyang@worldrelief.org](mailto:jgyang@worldrelief.org)