



## RIGHT TO LIFE – LIFESPAN

### Summaries from Young People Who Attended the Protect Life Michigan Life Advocate Intensive (LAI) Training the summer of 2025



**Samuel Lustyk attended the July training in Detroit**

I am grateful to have been sponsored to go to LAI. It was a good experience, and I feel like I have learned a lot from apologetics to the human body. Outreach was a rather unique experience for me being taken out of my comfort zone and bringing the pro-life message to the people of Detroit. And learning how to talk and hold conversations with strangers. Overall, it was a wonderful weekend that I am proud to have been a part of. The speakers were amazing, and the interns were a lot of fun to talk to and work with. Thank you to LAI for an awesome weekend and thank you to Right to Life - LIFESPAN for sponsoring me!



**Ana Mata attended the July training in Detroit**

First, I want to start by saying thank you to Right to Life - LIFESPAN for the sponsorship that allowed me to attend Protect Life Michigan's Life Advocate Intensive (LAI) Training on July 24-26, 2025. It was all I could have hoped for and more.

I attended LAI 2 years ago, so it's been a while since I've gone. The last time I went, I didn't know what I was getting myself into. My brother Luis knew most of the people there, so he invited me to go with him. I have always been pro-life, but this conference struck me like no other. Especially going out of my comfort zone and talking to strangers about abortion, it was very new to me. I was moved by this experience, but it wasn't until the 2nd time I went that I felt the Lord really moved my heart.

Moving forward to this past LAI. I wasn't planning on going, but Rebecca Wolf, who is an Intern for Protect Life Michigan, kept insisting that I go. I wasn't originally going to go, but I felt in my heart that God was speaking to me through her, and this was something I needed to do.

When I got there and started meeting people, everyone seemed so genuine, and I knew this was the community I needed to be around. We started doing outreach and talking to strangers on the sidewalk, and I realized that even if I talked to a few people, I still helped make an impact on these babies' lives. Even the littlest thing, such as holding up a sign and asking people what they think about these images can change hearts and minds. But it wasn't until now that something clicked in me and I knew this was something I wanted to keep doing. I can't imagine having other plans that day, other than standing up for what I believe in. I know that abortion is wrong but if I just stood by the sidelines knowing that it was wrong without doing anything to help is just unbearable. We weren't just given the gift of life for nothing; we were given it to make an

impact for those whose lives are taken without remorse. I tell the people around me, if you're pro-life, don't just say that you are, but show it. Even if it's talking to a friend who has mixed feelings about abortion. Because I've been there and I understand that it can be uncomfortable to talk about sometimes, but it's well worth it in the end.

I've been spreading the word about this training and will be bringing people next time to really be moved in the way that I was. I recommend teens and young adults to really consider joining. Every one of us is called to speak up for the voices that can't be heard. We need to be their voice.



**Abigail Ries attended the July training in Detroit**

This was my first time participating in a Life Advocate Intensive training program with Protect Life Michigan. I went into it not knowing what to expect but came out of it changed and inspired.

Throughout the three days of training and outreach on the streets of Detroit, I encountered a wide variety of people all in various stages of their lives, each grieving from different wounds. People who were curious about why I, a 19-year-old girl, was out there preaching the message that abortion is wrong and not the only choice. People who wanted to have a civil conversation and discuss both of our conflicting opinions with respect and dignity for each other. People who would call me names, yell at my face, stomp on our literature, call the cops, and aggressively say that what I do is disgusting. As a person who doesn't like confrontation or conflict, this pushed me out of my comfort zone but into a place of personal conviction to continue this work with PLM.

In only a few days, we impacted 57,374 people with the pro-life message. We had 494 conversations, 87 of those being partial mind changes and 99 full mind changes. Almost 10% of the population of Detroit was reached within those three days! If I don't continue to be a voice for the unborn, who will.

Thank you, Right to Life - LIFESPAN, for letting me know about this training program and for sponsoring me to be a part of it.



**Miriam Ellis attended the August training in Grand Rapids**

Growing up I have always been passionately pro-life, in a passive way. I would, of course, pray for the protection of the pre-born, think about how horrific abortion was, and maybe even have conversations about abortion. I have attended a decent number of pro-life events where I realized "abortion is terrible and **someone** needs to do something to stop it." Conversations I had, often, had me stumped on how to even explain the pro-life position. Most events inspired me to think about abortion but never to **do** anything. After all, I doubted I could do much anyways.

However, after attending the Life Advocate Intensive training, my perspective has changed. I now realize that we are the **someone** who need to do something to help save these children. Of course, each in their own way. Even if it seems small, it can change and save lives!

At LAI, we were taught how to explain and defend our pro-life position. We learned about complicated situations that are especially hard to defend and how to respond with empathy while still holding the pro-life position. We saw pictures and videos of real-life abortion victims and how immensely their right to life had been violated. We were shown the statistics and number of children who lose their lives in such a violent manner each day. Then we were given the opportunity to **do** something about it. Equipped with our training, we went out to the streets. We were met by a wide variation of responses...some encouraging, some discouraging, and some heartbreaking. We had many conversations, and at the end of the day were blessed with stories of people on the streets who were now pro-life!

In addition to learning and doing outreach, I was so grateful to be surrounded by so many amazing people. Everyone one was inspiring as individuals and taught me even more than I expected to learn.

I am so deeply grateful to have received the sponsorship through Right to Life-LIFESPAN to attend LAI. I can truly say that it has been life-changing for me. I left the training able to have conversations that I could not have before. I also left with a plan and conviction to be active whereas before I had been passive.



**Ava Ellis attended the August training in Grand Rapids**

Due to this being my first time attending the Life Advocate Intensive training, I was unsure what exactly to expect. After attending, I can honestly say it was such a formative experience. I was completely pro-life with absolutely no exceptions, before LAI, but I learned so much more about why I am pro-life. LAI gave me solid reasoning and effective ways to use that reasoning.

My favorite part was undoubtedly the outreach we did during LAI. After we were instructed in the apologetics, we went out to have real conversations with individuals on the street. These conversations were so eye-opening and truly challenged my knowledge in the best way. It has been such a blessing to have had this opportunity to talk to people about the issue of abortion,

After attending LAI, I have decided that I need to do more to be a voice for the voiceless. Every single person can have an impact and can save lives; it is so important that we all do what we can for the pro-life cause. I cannot recommend LAI enough and am so thankful to Right to Life - LIFESPAN for sponsoring me so I could attend. I certainly plan on going again!



**Mary Wolf attended the August training in Grand Rapids**

The pro-life movement has always been something that I supported and believed in. I felt that just by simply stating I was against abortion was enough to keep it at bay. However, I didn't truly understand what being pro-life meant and I was intentionally blind to the murder that occurred 90 times a day in my own state. I didn't realize that to be pro-life means to fight for the change that each one of these innocent children and their devastated mothers deserved. Thanks to the sponsorship from Right to Life – LIFESPAN, I was able to attend the Life Advocate Intensive training which opened my eyes to the reality that I subconsciously sugar-coated for so long, and it gave me something to be passionate about.

We started off our days with lectures and training to prepare us for outreach later. After these trainings, we went out on the streets of Grand Rapids and sought out conversations with those blind to the reality of abortion. Many times, we were ridiculed and mocked; however, there were also times when someone shared their hurt with us and we were able to show them the love they longed for and deserved! It was so beautiful to see so many hearts and lives changed because of the

courageous work we did. The people running the intensive were so inspiring and I was given the opportunity to meet so many new friends!

The biggest takeaway from these three days was that if we all choose to turn our faces from those whose silent cries echo through the halls of the clinics where they are discarded like waste, who will fight for them? Who will be the voice that is louder than the hurt that moves our society to resort to violence instead of peace, comfort instead of change, and who chooses murder instead of life?

### **Taken from an email LIFESPAN received from Protect Life Michigan's Executive Director, Trevor Polo**

I want to thank you for your prayers for the students who attended the Life Advocate Intensive. It truly made a difference. These two events had an incredible impact!

Each year, these life-changing three-day retreats bring Michigan's brightest, boldest students together to be immersed in pro-life strategy, trained in real-world outreach, and sent out to nearby communities to practice what they've learned -- having conversations that change lives.

**This is our single most effective tool for transforming students from "interested" to "unstoppable"**. It's where we find our future club leaders, interns, and full-time staff. Students leave this event with a fire in their bones that they carry back to their campuses and their peers.

At our two events in Detroit and Grand Rapids, **over 150 students** were trained to defend their pro-life beliefs and headed to the streets to take action.

Their influence will be felt across Michigan for years to come!

Together between the two events, we saw...

- We reached **114,293 people** with the reality of abortion
- **1,301 conversations** with pro-choice people
- **202 people** verbally confirmed that they became *more* pro-life
- **258 people** verbally confirmed that they are now *completely* pro-life (opposed to abortion in all cases & believe it should be illegal)!
- We also heard from many students who left deeply inspired and empowered.

I want to share another powerful moment from our Grand Rapids Life Advocate Intensive.

One of our students met a woman who vulnerably shared that **she had an abortion at 16**. She spoke about the deep grief it brought her but shared that she is working toward healing.

Our student was honored to listen as the woman opened up with honesty and emotion. By the end of their conversation, the woman said she felt a sense of peace she hadn't felt before.

**She told the student, "I feel like God sent you here to speak with me. Thank you."**

While the world might have told her to celebrate her abortion and move on, our student offered something different: compassion, understanding, and space to grieve the loss of her child.

**Over 150 young people witnessed firsthand during these two weekends that they can be catalysts for real change.**

We're excited to see what's next for these young people; many have signed up to intern with us next summer, while others head back to share the pro-life message with their college or high school.

**This event has truly transformed them, and we can't wait to see the impact they'll make in their communities.**

I hope this update gives you hope in our young people and our stated and gives you yet another reason to give thanks to God for His goodness!



*I totally agree with Trevor's last sentence!*

Right to Life – LIFESPAN is very pleased to sponsor young people each summer like these you heard from. With your help, we will keep doing this and will be ready for the 2026 Life Advocate Intensive training!

If you are a high school student or young adult under 25 years old, or you have a son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, Godson or Goddaughter, nephew or niece, or any other young person you know from school or church or your neighborhood who would interested in learning more, please contact Lynn Gura, Youth Director, at [oakmac@rtl-lifespan.org](mailto:oakmac@rtl-lifespan.org) or 248-816-1546 and she will provide information about the 2026 training when she receives it.

There were 33,000 petals inside of the casket, meant to represent each of the preborn children who are killed through abortion in MI each year. A very moving visual display used at the training.

