



ATD

FOURTH WORLD

SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER

Stay in Touch



- Visit 4thworldmovement.org
- Sign up for our e-newsletter
- Like us on Facebook [ATD Fourth World USA](#)
- Write to us at PO Box 1787, Gallup NM 87305
- Or e-mail us at: nationalCenter@4thworldmovement.org



Summer News 2018

July 2018

Wondering what to do? Me too.

Faith Lemon is a consultant to the Siloé Project supporting the PAPAZA Center in Haiti and to Stone Pier Press, an environmental publisher. She serves as Vice-President of the ATD Fourth World Movement Board of Directors in the United States.

I grew up in Southwest Colorado, surrounded by rich American Indian culture and a beloved mountain wilderness that is currently on fire. About an hour south of my hometown lies a corner of the Navajo Nation, America's largest reservation that occupies 27,000 miles of the largely rural Four Corners area.

That expanse and the communities within it seemed like a different world when my family would drive through the reservation on our way to camping trips in Utah, green chili harvests in New Mexico and soccer tournaments in Arizona. I was mesmerized by the beautiful but unforgiving landscape, punctuated by roadside rainbows of textiles and turquoise as the inviting aromas of Navajo Tacos wafted past.

We learned a few things in school about the Navajo Nation. That code talkers made it possible to win a war. That mining companies had spent decades ripping uranium ore out of the reservation, leaving behind contaminated water, a cancer epidemic and economic depression when the end of the Cold War shut the mines. We learned that the Navajo Nation has a very high rate of poverty.

Through the backseat window, I didn't yet grasp that ideologies like Manifest Destiny continue to distort dynamics on the reservation. **That poverty is not just about money, nor is it neatly captured by statistics.** Although obvious to many, it took me years of bearing witness to appreciate the sheer complexity of it. How an enslaved child in Haiti and a Rohingya mother in Burma might both live in extreme poverty, but the factors that make and break their experiences of exclusion (and the ways in which outside help is helpful) are vastly different. That even within our national borders, living below the line might be the only thing shared by an American in Indian Country with one in Appalachia.

Faith with ATD Team Member Erick Sanders in Gallup, New Mexico



Fact #1

The US Census Bureau defines poverty for a family of two adults and one child as earning less than \$19,730. A recent study found that 14.1 million children in the US are growing up in poverty, and rural households are hardest hit – in 41 of America's 47 states with rural designated areas, rural child poverty is higher than in urban areas.

One thing's for sure: it's tough out there and rural America is bearing the brunt.

On a windy Saturday this spring, I sat with a book against a winnebago repurposed as the ATD Fourth World Movement Gallup Story Garden, a part of our Street Library program. I'd just realized that I had never seen more than a few words of the Navajo language despite growing up in the Nation's backyard. I was there to visit with the FWM team, to learn from the families, to check out the team's science exhibits that are bringing STEM education to isolated rural schools. But all that left my mind as I sat with that book and wondered what to do. **How could someone like me — an outsider born into a reality that's geographically close but still worlds away — be of any use accompanying rural communities in their struggle to survive and thrive?**

ATD Fourth World Story Garden in Gallup, New Mexico



Fact #2

New Mexico, with a population that's predominantly Native American and is significantly more rural than most states, was recently **ranked 49th in poverty overall**. The picture is similar for related metrics like unemployment (51st), high school graduation (50th), and food insecurity (48th).

I've been asking that question a lot lately, and Henry Rael at the McCune Charitable Foundation recently suggested: **"Make a commitment to where you live, and let yourself be shaped by the place and people, not the other way around."** It's difficult for me to resist coming at my new Southeastern community as a bull would a china shop, and Henry's words guide my intention to focus instead on listening and learning. I'm inspired that this aspiration is realized every day through ATD Fourth World Movement's work in many of the regions left furthest behind throughout the world — including the Southwest and Southeast. **We hope you'll continue walking with FWM in accompaniment of vulnerable but valuable communities, in rural America and everywhere that human rights are violated.**

In solidarity,
Faith Lemon
Vice President, ATD Fourth World USA Board of Directors

Fact #3

Education and Labor Force data from Dickenson County, Virginia where ATD Fourth World's Appalachia team is located, compared to the state and national average (2012-2016).

From U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

	County	State (VA)	National
Percentage of persons over 25 years old with a Bachelor's degree or higher	10.7%	36.9%	30.3%
Percentage of population over 16 years old in the civilian labor force	42.7%	64.5%	63.1%
Percentage of persons under 65 years old with a disability	19.0%	7.8%	8.6%

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT #2 SISTER BERNIE KENNY



A unique look at health care from a rural experience:

"It's not about pills. In most health care the emotional part is ignored. Health care is social; it's a way of identifying what's inside a person."

Meet Sister Bernie Kenny! Among the many hats she wears, Sr. Bernie is a member of the religious congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary. She is also a nurse practitioner and worked for several years in Tanzania. Forty years ago she came to Dickenson County, Virginia where members of ATD Fourth World met her in 1992. Soon after, she and fellow Dickenson County resident, Ray Mullins, attended the ATD Fourth World Family Congress in New York and Washington, DC in 1994.

When her friends in McClure, VA had to leave their home and preferred not to sell, Sr. Bernie asked ATD Fourth World if this was the right time to fulfill a long-held hope of being present in Appalachia. The timing was right. Vincent and Fanchette Fanelli, ATD Fourth World Volunteer Corps members, moved into that house and began what would be a 23 year presence in the county and the creation of the Appalachian Learning Co-op.



As access to medical care was difficult to obtain in this rural area, Sr. Bernie started a mobile health unit which came to be known as the Health Wagon. With Sr. Bernie at the wheel, this big camper rode the winding roads of the county, often getting stuck behind slow moving coal trucks. Folks knew what day and where to find Sr. Bernie who stopped the Health Wagon in strategic locations and changed from a driver to a caregiver. She initiated the Remote Area Medical project (RAM) coming to the region, an annual three-day open air medical clinic drawing people from three states.

Today, as a Certified Family Nurse Practitioner and Licensed Massage Therapist, this friend of ATD Fourth World Movement speaks of her practice and hopes for the future of healthcare and how we care for people. In a recent conversation with Susie Devins, ATD Fourth World Regional Delegate for North America, she talked about her vision for comprehensive health care.

"It's not about pills. In most health care the emotional part is ignored. Health care is social; it's a way of identifying what's inside a person. In the area, diabetes and hypertension are the two biggest health issues people face. The good news is that the state of Virginia has just agreed to Medicaid expansion, meaning more low income and working people will have some access to health care. There is a great need for more nurse practitioners and I hope they won't become technicians. In nearby Happy Valley, a low income health clinic is being built as an outgrowth of the Health Wagon which is financed by federal and church funds and donations. My hope is for a single payer—national health plan."

Sr. Bernie is co-authoring a book with Tauna Gulley that explores the concept of care and caring among residents in central Appalachia. The book explores what health care means in the families and culture of Appalachia. The interviews begin with the question, "Can you recall when you really felt cared for?"