

# Pandotopia

## **PANDOTOPIA BLITZ Participating Organizations and Speakers | July 17-18, 2018 Produced by Plante Moran and Pando Populus at Maryknoll Monrovia.**

### [Plante Moran, Religious Institutes Services Group](#)

Plante Moran has been serving religious communities through audit, tax and consulting services since the early 1950s. Since approximately 2010, the firm has had a group solely dedicated to serving religious institutes and their sponsored ministries. To date, the members of this group have served over 200 communities in approximately 40 states and beyond the US. Their planning, organizational and operational experience includes working with a variety of ministries including higher and secondary education, health care, senior living, and human service organizations. They have a particular focus on assisting communities discern the future of their mission and charism in order to align their resources consistent with that imagined future and to develop realistic implementation plans. Plante Moran has approximately 3400 staff members located in offices in the US, China, India, Japan and Mexico.

### [Pando Populus](#)

Pando Populus is connecting change makers to create a more ecologically balanced future. We focus on ecology, social justice, and the big ideas that unite and underlie them. Our inaugural event in June of 2015 brought together 1,500 people from around the globe to rethink civilization in explicitly ecological terms. John B. Cobb, Jr., pioneer at the intersection of philosophical theology and the environment, served as intellectual architect. Since then, we've put shovels in the ground for an eco-homeless shelter. Developed community gardening and urban farming initiatives in the cities of Carson and Ontario. Helped launch a field-based education program related to the region's great watersheds. Brought LA County's architecture and design schools together to take on SoCal waste. And deepened interfaith collaboration for the Earth. In 2017, we launched the Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) Strategic Taskforce for LA County, in collaboration with Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz and Caltech CSO John Onderdonk. We're currently deepening our collaboration with Maryknoll Monrovia to incarnate Pope Francis's vision of integral ecology. In all these initiatives, we create capacity for our partners and help them accomplish work together that is difficult to pull off alone. Think old-fashioned barn-raising, with an urban and eco twist. We are named for the largest organism on Earth: Pando, a 106-acre one-tree forest in south central Utah that grows from a single root. It is a profound symbol of interconnection.

## Presenters (in speaking order) and Facilitators

**Joy Esmenda is Coordinator for the Maryknoll Sisters in Monrovia.** Sr. Joy worked in the design and architecture field for four years prior to entering the Sisters. Her mission work in Bolivia was spent in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, where she worked in a variety of positions – from children and youth ministries and women’s leadership to pastoral outreach for frontline communities, including indigenous Quechua communities and communities of garbage collectors. Among the projects she organized and helped create was a farming initiative using sustainable and traditional methods.

**Eugene Shirley is founding president of Pando Populus.** Eugene spent most of his career as an entrepreneur across the spectrum of media initiatives motivated by big ideas, first in print, then for 25 years in independent documentary film production, then in text analytics. He focused on human rights issues early in his career, becoming the first U.S. independent filmmaker to film officially in the former Soviet Union; the resulting film premiered at the White House on International Human Rights Day and showed in 25 countries. His four-part series on Soviet foreign policy for PBS and BBC was nominated for a BAFTA Award for best documentary series. His last film was about modernity and tradition in China as seen through the eyes and work of architect I.M. Pei; it showed in the U.S. as part of the PBS American Masters series, as well as internationally. For nearly a decade, he served as founding CEO of the text analytics firm, Alexandria Technology, focused on the instantaneous understanding of text and the analysis of its sentiment. In 2014, he co-founded Pando Populus with John Cobb, John Bielenberg, and others. For two years, he was a Jennings Randolph Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace.

**John B. Cobb, Jr. is founding chair of Pando Populus.** John is a leading philosophical theologian and is often regarded as the preeminent scholar in the field of process philosophy and process theology—the school of thought associated with the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead. He is a founding pioneer at the intersection of philosophy, theology, and the environment. In 1971, he authored the seminal book, *Is It Too Late?*, focusing on the environmental crisis. In 1989, he co-authored the book *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, Environment, and a Sustainable Future*, which critiqued current global economic practice and advocated for a sustainable, ecology-based economics. In 2015, he co-edited the first volume of commentaries to appear on *Laudato Si’*.

A unifying theme of John’s work is his emphasis on ecological interdependence—the idea that every part of the ecosystem is reliant on all the other parts. He has argued that humanity’s most urgent task is to preserve the world on which it lives and depends, an idea which Alfred North Whitehead described as "world-loyalty."

John is well known for his transdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from many different areas of study and bringing different specialized disciplines into fruitful communication. Because of his broad-minded interest and approach, Cobb has been influential in a wide range of disciplines, including theology, ecology, economics, biology, and social ethics.

John has written extensively on religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue, particularly between Buddhism and Christianity, as well as the need to reconcile religion and science. The author of more than fifty books, he is a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**John Bielenberg is founding creative director of Pando Populus.** Designer, entrepreneur and imaginative advocate for a better world, John is recognized for innovative investigations into the practice and understanding of design and leadership in the “design for good” movement. He is an AIGA Medalist for Lifetime Achievement (2013). John co-founded Future Partners, a Silicon Valley Innovation firm, in 2012 to teach Think Wrong Practices to individuals, teams, and organizations around the world. In 2003, he created Project M, an immersive program designed to inspire and educate young designers, writers, photographers and filmmakers that their work can have significant positive impact on communities. With Alex Bogusky, he founded COMMON, a community for change. At the California College of the Arts in San Francisco, he launched Secret Project, a new Center for Thinking Wrong, and has most recently created the Think Wrong Institute at the University of Kansas. John has won more than 250 design awards. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has acquired six of his design projects and staged a solo exhibition of his work. He holds an honorary doctorate degree from Maryland Institute College of Art.

**Bill Vitek is Professor of Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York.** With Wes Jackson, Bill co-edited *Rooted in the Land* and *The Virtues of Ignorance*. Bill is working on a book of his own inspired by his philosophical-agricultural collaboration with Jackson titled *The Perennial Imagination: Hardwired for Eternity*. He is a founding project team-member of The Land Institute’s Ecosphere Studies program and directs the New Perennials Project, housed at The Rockefeller Family Fund.

**Erin George is a Principal within the P & M Religious Institutes Services Group.** In her role, she is responsible for leading the firm’s initiatives related to serving religious institutes. She has assisted numerous communities on a variety of projects including strategic and financial planning, organizational analyses, and operational reviews. She has a particular interest in promoting member well-being and in how services are provide to older members. She was the chief financial officer of the largest Area Agency on Aging in Michigan, focused on providing home and community based services to older adults. She was also the Executive Director of a family violence agency.

**Jerry Gumbleton is a Principal within the Group.** He has been serving religious congregations and their sponsored ministries for over 35 years. During that time he has been involved in wide range of services including planning processes for large communities seeking to reconfigure and restructure, assisting international congregations understand and project their demographics and finances in order to support growth in the developing world, conducting organizational and operational reviews to enable communities to steward their resources more effectively, assessing the effectiveness and sustainability of sponsored ministries, and facilitating leadership development activities. He served as the chief financial officer for a subsidiary of a religious sponsored health system during the planning and development of a continuing care retirement community and has significant experience in the senior living and care industry.

**Tom Zimmer is a Senior Vice President in the Firm.** Tom is an attorney and has over 30 years of experience working on complex real estate projects and transactions. He has extensive knowledge and expertise in real estate development including structuring real estate partnerships, entitlements, tenant representation, financing and the build-to-suit process. He has assisted numerous religious congregations with real estate matters including alternate use of space for ministry, determining highest and best use and value of property, surveys, title work, appraisals, and the entire lease/sales process including negotiations. Prior to joining Plante Moran, Tom was the president and owner of Cornerstone Real Estate, Inc. a development and tenant representation brokerage company.

## Attending Communities

### **Maryknoll Sisters – Ossining, NY**

<https://www.maryknollsisters.org>

Our mission began in 1912, when we became the first group of Catholic Sisters in the United States founded for overseas mission.

Today we have approximately 400 Sisters serving in 24 places around the world. Related to Maryknoll Society of Men and the Maryknoll Lay Missioners.

*Sponsor of:*

*Maryknoll Mission Institute* - provides continuing education and renewal programs for missionaries and others engaged in cross-cultural ministries in their local churches along with one-week residential programs which explore in-depth the key dimensions of current mission studies with programs in Ossining, NY, Monrovia, CA and Los Altos, CA

### **Sisters of St. Dominic of Amityville, Amityville, NY**

<https://www.sistersofstdominic.org/>

Our story begins in 1853 with four young women who journeyed from Regensburg, Germany to Brooklyn, New York to teach the children of German immigrants.

As members of the Worldwide Order of Preachers, the Sisters live according to the Four Pillars of Dominican Tradition: Prayer, Ministry, Community and Study. The Four Pillars are a daily witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As daughters of St. Dominic, the Sisters live among God's people sharing hope and joy as Dominic did in the thirteenth century, striving to live in a way that calls others to know, love and follow our brother Jesus.

Today there are approximately 360 members serving primarily in and around Long Island and Brooklyn, NY. In addition, there are approximately 20 sisters ministering in Puerto Rico.

*Sponsor of:*

*Homecoming Farm* - one of the earliest certified organic farms on Long Island. Their workshops, offered both off-site and on-site at the organic Sophia Garden, enable members and visitors to grow food for themselves and for those in need through their partnership with The Interfaith Nutrition Network (The INN).

*Opening Word* - addresses the interconnection between literacy, economic self-sufficiency and self-esteem, and unlocks the language ability of immigrant women.

*Dominican Village* – residence for seniors providing independent and assisted living services

*St. Agnes Academic High School* – a culturally diverse Catholic high school for young women that develops a strong foundation for lifelong learning, located in College Point, NY.

Bethany House – a residence for women and children caught in the crisis of homelessness.

### **Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, Allegany, NY**

<https://www.alleganyfranciscans.org/>

Beginning in 1859 in Allegany, NY, approximately one hour from Buffalo, the Allegany Franciscans began schools, hospitals, and foreign missions (Jamaica<sup>16</sup>, Bolivia<sup>2</sup>, and Brazil<sup>47</sup>). There are approximately 140 sisters and members currently minister in 5 states, with a significant presence in New York and New Jersey. There are approximately 47 sisters ministering in Brazil, 16 in Jamaica, and 2 in Bolivia. The Community has an active relationship with St. Bonaventure University, Allegany, NY.

We witness to God's Love in the Franciscan tradition by living as sisters with all creation and by joyfully serving others, especially those who are poor or marginalized.

*Sponsor of:*

*Canticle Farm* - a community-supported agriculture (CSA) farm, is committed to connect all peoples, to practice Earth friendly habits, and to come to a realization of a Creation centered spirituality. Canticle Farm is a local, non-profit, Certified Naturally Grown vegetable farm located in Allegany, NY. We are a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm that sells farm shares to members of the local public.

*Allegany Franciscan Ministries* - is a catalyst for systemic change by committing resources and working collaboratively with others to promote physical, mental, spiritual, societal, and cultural well-being in communities served.

*The Franciscan Center* - In the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, we welcome everyone who seeks spiritual growth through a deeper relationship with God in a place of peace, community, healing and joy. Throughout the year we offer team and hosted retreat programs, private and directed retreats, and a place for workshops and meetings.

### **Dominican Sisters of Hope, Ossining, NY**

<http://ophope.org/>

As 140+ Catholic Dominican Sisters, we have committed our lives to living and preaching the Gospel message of Hope. Founded in 1995 from three communities in Newburgh, NY, Fall River, MA, and Ossining, NY, we now live in thirteen states and are based out of [The Mariandale Center](#) in Ossining, NY. We minister in a variety of unique ways, including community organizing, social work, education, environmental advocacy, and retreat ministry, among others. The three areas of focus are Action for Justice, Spirituality, and sustaining the Legacy of mission and charism. Poverty, eco-justice, civil rights, access to healthcare, and access to education are among our top priorities.

*Sponsor of:*

*Mariandale Center* - The Mariandale Center is an ecumenical retreat and conference center conveniently located 35 miles north of New York City. Mariandale is situated on 61 wooded acres on the eastern bank of the Hudson River. Mariandale welcomes organizations of all kinds for day or overnight workshops, conferences, and spiritual retreats.

### **Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Donaldson, IN**

<http://www.poorhandmaids.org/>

In 1868, eight Sisters accompanied by Catherine Kasper, foundress of the congregation, and her assistant, left the small village of Dernbach, Germany for America. They had been requested to minister to the German immigrants in the diocese of Fort Wayne, IN. Today, the sisters minister in education, health care, childcare, retreat, pastoral and social work. There are approximately 80 sisters located in the United States; the international congregation also ministers in Brazil, England, Germany, India, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands and Nigeria. Our core values are: Openness to the Spirit, Community, Simplicity, and Dignity and Respect for All.

*Sponsor of:*

*Ancilla Beef & Grain Farm* - attention is given to raising crops and animals without the use of potentially harmful additives

*Ancilla College* - a liberal arts institution of higher learning

*Ancilla Systems Incorporated* - mission is to enhance the PHJC ministries to the poor and underserved

*Catherine Kasper Life Center* - a skilled nursing care facility and Maria Center, independent-living retirement apartments

*Catherine Kasper Place* - provides programs, services and opportunities that advance the integration of immigrants, refugees and political asylees into the community of northeast Indiana

*Earthworks* - is an environmental learning center dedicated to demonstrating and teaching the interconnectedness of all species on our fragile Earth

*HealthVisions Midwest* - works in communities to reduce health disparities among the poor and underserved

*The Linden Houses* - The Linden House of Chicago, Gary, Hobart or Mishawaka is affordable housing for seniors and individuals with special needs

*Lindenwood Retreat & Conference Center* - provides an atmosphere of peaceful, quiet and sacred space in a natural setting for faith development, personal growth, team building and artistic endeavors

*MoonTree Studios* - through mindful participation in MoonTree experiences you're encouraged to fearlessly explore the interconnectedness of art, nature, and the Spirit within. Awaken your creative potential and sow the seeds for a more mindful, compassionate, and sustainable Earth Community

*Nazareth Home* - cares for poor and powerless children by meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of medically compromised individuals

*Sojourner Truth House* - provides hope and help for homeless and at-risk women and their children

*St. Joseph Community Health Foundation* - partners with over 70 agencies in Allen County, IN to improve the health and wellness of low income, vulnerable populations by providing grants and programming to enable everyone in the community to achieve wellness regardless of their ability to pay

### **Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, IL**

<http://www.fssh.net/>

In 1876, four Sisters set sail for America from Seelbach, Germany and settled in Avilla, Indiana, in the Diocese of Fort Wayne. The Sisters are faithful to God's continuous creative action in their lives. They joyfully embrace their vowed life and the Franciscan values of poverty, humility, contemplation and continual conversion. Their deep trust in Divine Providence continually supports their readiness to respond in a prophetic way to the needs of others through their varied ministries of education, healing and service. There are currently approximately 50 sisters living communally in convents located in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and California. In addition, there are approximately 7 sisters ministering in the Amazon area of Brazil, South America. With deep joy we awaken hope in our neighbors through works of love.

*Sponsor of:*

*Portiuncula Center for Prayer* - The Portiuncula Center for Prayer nestled in St. Francis Woods and rooted in the Franciscan tradition, is a sacred space of welcome for those seeking peace of mind, body, and spirit through day programs, retreats, hermitages and more.

*Poverello Holistic Center* - When the stresses and demands of life dim the luster of who we are, skillful touch and sacred bodywork encourage personal awareness and individual growth.

### **Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, PA**

<http://www.stjoseph-baden.org/>

In 1869, three sisters moved to Ebensburg, PA from their Community in St. Louis, MO. Five days later, they opened Mt. Gallitzin Seminary for Boys. In 1901, the Community moved to an area 30 miles north of Pittsburgh and became known as the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden. There are approximately 165 sisters today. We commit ourselves, our energies and our resources to serving God and the 'dear neighbor' without distinction. We believe that God is alive in our world, in the people whom we serve, and the people for whom we pray. While we continue to respond to the critical needs of these times, we are filled with hope for the future.

*Sponsor of:*

*St. Joseph Spirituality Center* - welcomes all people seeking a deeper and more profound love of God and neighbor by providing an environment of hospitality, community and prayer

*Justice and Peace* - Our advocacy efforts focus on the most poor and vulnerable of our dear neighbors, whether living nearby in Beaver County or across the globe in India. By working in partnership with our Associates, colleagues, friends and many collaborators, we believe we can make the greatest impact on peace and social justice

*Earth Tones* - committed to conserving resources and living in sustainable ways, especially when caring for our 94 acres in Baden. Includes Chickens for Change, Bees for Beauty, Gardens for Good, volunteer work days, consultations/presentations on sustainability, and nature retreats.

*Casa San Jose* - a community resource center that advocates for and empowers Latinos by promoting integration and self-sufficiency

*Girls Hope of Pittsburgh* - provides a nurturing home and quality education through college for academically capable girls; serves children between the ages of 10-18 who are at risk due to poverty, neglect or harmful neighborhood conditions.

*Sisters Place* - a supportive housing community assisting single parent families who are homeless in Southwestern PA; helps families move toward self-sufficiency by providing housing and supportive services. One of 14 Catholic religious communities in greater Pittsburgh that collaborated to found Sisters Place in 1993.