



**Representative Engagement Program Group (REPG):
Activity Report for 2016
Chuck Schobert, Co-Clerk, 1/10/17**

The year 2016 was one of strong growth for the Representative Engagement Program Group (REPG). Communication and collaboration have markedly improved between our program group and the rest of the Section. I contacted all regional coordinators via email and phone. We attempted to contact all the representatives in the Section. The clerk of REPG had several phone meetings with clerks of other program groups to trade ideas and support each other. This was an example of horizontal communication or “tunneling” as Benigno refers to it. We hope to continue this practice. We organized several webinars during the year. REPG collaborated with another group to create a training for World Quaker Day using curricula for several new FWCC-related QuakerSpeak videos

In late 2015 we organized two webinars, one in Spanish and one in English to help representatives prepare the January 2016 World Plenary Meeting in Peru. These well-attended webinars helped increase the depth of the Peru gathering.

We held two webinars, one in English and one in Spanish, to focus on resources and planning for representatives on October’s World Quaker Day. During these webinars, Beth Collea of the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative demonstrated an easy to use curriculum developed by her and Melinda Wenner-Bradley, easily used by representatives to present and teach the FWCC-related QuakerSpeak videos. Five videos with associated curricula will be available when the project is completed in early 2017. What our program has learned to do: Communicate. Collaborate. Be a conduit for ideas to the Representatives throughout the Section. We still have much to learn here, but this is exciting to me and it is clearly energizing our Program Group. When these collaborations occur, we spread our knowledge around, we support each other in this work, we are energized, and we do not feel isolated. We engage the representatives!

Together with Nominating Committee, the REPG met face to face in November, which energized us, as we are heading into 2017 and the Section meeting. We spent half our time together sharing personal stories of our work with FWCC, worshipping together and enjoying each other’s fellowship. Building sharing those stories, building relationships between us enable us to craft a work plan through April 2018, outline some ideas for our role at the Section meeting in March, and begin the process of major revisions to the Representative’s handbook. Friends on the committee felt that meeting together like this not only energized us, but also marked the true beginning of our work together as a program group. Prior to that, we had met at FWCC gatherings, talked on phones or webinars and emailed. This was all good but much stronger going forward since we have now spent rich time together, face-to-face. Also, having a chance to share our knowledge of the Section and representative needs and gifts with Nominating Committee was useful for both committees.

We had the gift of a wonderful interpreter and translator for our program group, Sara Palmer. Friend Kat Griffith of Winnebago Worship Group and Mollie Minden, a member of Madison Monthly Meeting also shared their interpretation skills. With a rising attention to being bilingual, we now have a co-clerk who speaks Spanish, Julie Peyton of Northwest Yearly Meeting.

The feeling is that our program group is better connected, has better communication, and is looking forward to the exciting things that can happen in 2017! In 2016, we built a launching pad for exciting new possibilities in representative engagement. And we now better understand our role as a program group and the role of the strategic plan as part of a process.