

*Remarks by Jennifer Bing at the AFSC Chicago Fundraiser as AFSC honored
Worldview with one of its 2019 Inspiration for Hope Awards.
October 20, 2019*

Last February when we brought Ahmed Abu Artema to the WBEZ studios to [speak](#) on Worldview about Gaza and the Great March of Return, senior producer Steve Bynum took me aside to say, “Hey this year marks Worldview’s 25th year anniversary of being on the air. But the prospects of our future on the station doesn’t look so good.”

My first thought was, wow, 25 years! How many of us remember what we were doing in 1994?

I do recall that even back in 1994, I was hustling speakers to be on the radio with Jerome McDonnell. I have heard that the Worldview staff instituted a habit of sticking pins on a world map hanging in their office, showing the locations of their radio guests. I’ve heard complaints that the spot for “Israel and Palestine” was pretty worn out – but actually, I think many of us in this room tonight probably think that it is a badge of honor for the show.

Many of us here were fortunate to sit across the table from Jerome as guests, and even more of us were daily listeners of Worldview.

As producer Steve Bynum has said about their work, “Worldview tried to champion the marginalized and represent those who often do not have a voice in mainstream media. We tried to speak truth to the powerful and live in truth at all times.”

Last Spring, I didn’t want to believe Steve’s suggestion that Worldview may no longer exist.

Then it happened. WBEZ announced this summer that they would be canceling Worldview in October of this year. Many of us here tonight were furious. Within 24 hours, many people called, tweeted and emailed the station demanding management change their decision.

In fact, I remember the day clearly that the announcement was made public – my colleague at Chicago Fair Trade, Katherine Bissel Cordova came screaming into my office and said, “We CAN’T LET THIS HAPPEN! It’s time to organize!”

Several of us here tonight – Adam, Ali, Mary, and Katherine – met right away and determined we would start a campaign called “Save Worldview.” Thanks to Adam’s ability to make a quick website and Katherine’s amazing organizing talents, we began to solicit testimonies from Worldview supporters – over 100 in fact – and posted them online. (I think my favorite day was when two testimonies were highlighted in the same page: that of US Representative Jan Schakowsky and Ali Abunimah, just one example showing the range of supporters for Worldview!)

Save Worldview hosted a petition that got over 2,000 signatures. We mobilized to attend the public “sounding board” meeting and official WBEZ board meeting over the summer. I have to admit, I was amazed to see the wide variety of supporters – from students at Whitney Young high school to a Ukrainian lawyer, artists and an owner of a local theater to fair trade vendors and climate justice activists all activated to support Worldview. 115 organizations in the city mobilized support for Jerome, Steve, and Julian.

If there was ever any doubt about the impact of Worldview on Chicago, it was made clear through the Save Worldview actions this summer. As one person said about Worldview, “We got to know ourselves better by listening to the show.”

On Jerome’s farewell speech the last day that Worldview aired on its mid-day slot, Jerome said that the guests on the show made him have hope that another better world is possible.

Tonight we are thanking you, Jerome, Steve, Julian and all those interns and former producers that made Worldview possible. Thank you for inspiring us to hope that stories like ours can be heard, that we can shift the discourse away from hatred and war, to one that supports activism for justice and peace.

We hope our journey together finds a new outlet in the months to come. With gratitude we all thank you for amplifying our voices and giving Chicago such a valuable radio program. We eagerly await Worldview 2.0!