



AFSC New Hampshire Program Highlights

OCTOBER 2016 - OCTOBER 2017



Solidarity with Immigrants

When the threat to the security and well-being of immigrants rose dramatically after the inauguration, AFSC stepped up to convene regular meetings of immigrant leaders and advocacy groups. Together, we have promoted the concept of “sanctuary,” conducted workshops, accompanied immigrants to appointments with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, and organized interfaith prayer vigils at the ICE office. AFSC and the United Church of Christ continue to train and organize volunteers to make weekly visits to the county jail in Dover, where we help detained immigrants feel connected to the outside world and also arrange free consultations with immigration lawyers. We also continue to provide active support to New American Africans, a Concord-based group that seeks to promote self-advocacy and community engagement by African immigrants and refugees.



AFSC has worked with the NH Alliance for Immigrants and Refugees to organize May Day rallies for immigrant justice every year since 2006.

Grassroots Training

Following the 2016 election, AFSC responded to a surge in requests for training in topics such as active nonviolence, legislative advocacy, and ending the racial wealth divide. We worked with the ACLU and others to conduct “know your rights” workshops for immigrants and human service agencies that work with the immigrant community. And we partnered with the City of Concord and Welcoming Concord to put on the city’s first “Civics Academy,” a series of 6 weekly workshops on community engagement to an intergenerational, interracial group of 25 area residents.



Concord’s City Council listened to members of the AFSC-sponsored “Change for Concord” about the need to improve recreational facilities at Keach Park.

We're not just "Watching" the State House

The AFSC "State House Watch" newsletter went out by email just about every Friday from the end of December to the end of June, carrying news about hearings and votes on topics such as the state budget and threats to essential services, voting rights, and workers' rights. (Yes, most of our efforts this year were defensive in nature.) Over the course of the session, our subscriber list grew by 43%. Readers say the newsletter is "essential," "absolutely trustworthy," and even "funny."



Fred Portnoy, a longtime volunteer, is the producer for the "State House Watch" radio show on WNHN-LP.

Our weekly radio show on WNHN provided another platform for legislators and advocates to talk about the issues and the politics that drive the lawmaking process inside the State House.



Mary Boyle of Cornish, a NH Voices of Faith regular, talks with Secretary of State Bill Gardner about SB 3, a bill that placed new restrictions on voter registration.

Going back to 1979, AFSC has joined efforts to keep New Hampshire from becoming a "right to work" state. This year we succeeded again, despite the efforts of political leadership to impose the anti-worker measure. Other legislative achievements included blocking a bill that would have threatened food stamp eligibility for 17,000 families and defeating a bill to expand use of the death penalty. An effort to invest state funds in affordable housing was successful. We

will have to keep working on issues such as transgender equality, improved prevention of lead poisoning, and raising the state's minimum wage.



AFSC provided the spark to motivate members of the faith community to bring a prayerful presence to the State House in support of health care, living wages, and human rights. The "NH Voices of Faith" were visible and audible in the hallways every week.



NH Guns and Mexico's Human Rights Crisis



When we learned that firearms produced in New Hampshire were being exported to the Mexican government, which is complicit in high rates of murder and violence, we invited experts to visit. Maria Herrera Magdaleno, the mother of four sons who were “disappeared,” spent three days speaking to concerned citizens, journalists, and congressional staff members along with Carlos Pérez Ricart, a political scientist who studies the arms trade, and AFSC’s John Lindsay-Poland. The speaking tour generated an in-depth article in Seacoastonline.com.

Maggie Fogarty emceed the NH Unites rally in Concord on February 21.



Eva Castillo received the 2017 Martin Luther King Award. AFSC has been part of the Martin Luther King Coalition since 1984.

Photo by Beck Field

Change for Concord



Led by Ayi D’Almeida, AFSC’s grassroots organizing intern, Change for Concord is providing a voice for young adults concerned about police conduct, recreational opportunities, and other issues facing the community. Together they are learning about their rights and how to organize effectively for change. The fact that the City of Concord has upgraded its recreational facilities in Keach Park shows they are already having an impact.



AFSC lets our elected officials know what we think.

Addressing the Housing Crisis

As active members of the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness and Housing Action NH, AFSC lends active support to efforts that address the needs of people who can’t afford decent housing. This ranges from support for Concord’s Plan to End Homelessness to State House lobbying on bills to protect tenants’ rights and get state funds invested in affordable housing.

With the Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ NH Conference, Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service, NH Peace Action, and the Equality Center, AFSC marked the inauguration of Donald Trump with a silent vigil of “hope and concern” in Concord.



Working in Partnership

We rarely do anything all by ourselves. Instead, we work with lasting coalitions and informal networks. Some of the groups we work with most closely are the Granite State Organizing Project, United Valley Interfaith Project, NH Immigrants Rights Network, NH Alliance for a Moral Economy, Martin Luther King Coalition, NH Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, Housing Action NH, New American Africans, the United Church of Christ NH Conference, and NH Peace Action. AFSC and NH Peace Action jointly sponsor the Nuclear Weapons Working Group.



During the Global Week of Action on Military Spending, Will Hopkins of NH Peace Action leaflets on Elm Street in Manchester about excessive military spending. The leafleting was organized by AFSC, NH Peace Action, and the Nuclear Weapons Working Group.

The Support Committee and staff of the NH Program give sincere thanks to all the donors and volunteers who made our work possible in the past year. Our funders include the Clowes Fund, the Anne Slade Frey Charitable Trust, the NH Charitable Foundation, and several anonymous donors.



Maggie Fogarty and Arnie Alpert are Co-Directors of the New Hampshire Program. Ayi D'Almeida is the Grassroots Organizing Intern for 2017.



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Visit us in our new office! We have just moved from Suite 209 to Suite 304 at 4 Park Street in downtown Concord.

American Friends Service Committee New Hampshire Program

4 Park Street, Suite 304, Concord NH 03301

(603) 224-2407

afsc.org/nh