

# Quaker Action



## PEACE WORKS

Demonstrating the power of nonviolence to overcome injustice

Working in North Korea p. 7

Using art to expose and oppose militarism p. 8

Standing up to xenophobia in the elections p. 17



American Friends  
Service Committee

[afsc.org](http://afsc.org)

## WHO WE ARE

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace with justice as a practical expression of faith in action. Drawing on continuing spiritual insights and working with people of many backgrounds, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.

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*Alix Nguéack speaks out for immigrant rights at a protest in front of a detention center in Elizabeth, New Jersey.*

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Over the past century, AFSC has worked to change the thinking that allows war and violence to persist.

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## CONTRIBUTORS



**Willie Colón**, writer and editor with AFSC, profiles two longtime AFSC supporters in this issue (page 18). Willie has worked for newspapers, magazines, and nonprofits in New York, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania. He also teaches computer skills and conversational English to recent Latin American immigrants and volunteers with a Philadelphia nonprofit that uses media to bring together and amplify movements for social and economic justice.



**Caroline Isaacs**, AFSC Arizona program director, shares a recent victory in the movement to stop prison privatization (page 5). The Arizona office works on criminal justice reform, including prison conditions and policy change at the state level to reduce the number of people incarcerated in Arizona. Under Caroline's leadership, the office has organized public hearings, mobilized constituents to speak out, and done extensive media work on the issue.



**Hector Salamanca Arroyo** talks about his experience as grassroots engagement coordinator with AFSC's Governing Under the Influence project (page 17). Originally from Puebla, Mexico, Hector has lived in Iowa for the past 20 years and is a graduate of Drake University, where he created a campus organization to improve access to higher education for undocumented immigrants. Hector has also interned for Organizing for America.



**Andrew Tomlinson**, director of the Quaker United Nations Office in New York, updates us on the new U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (page 5). Andrew joined QUNO in 2008 after working in international finance and socially responsible investing in London and New York. A Quaker since he came to the United States from the U.K. on an exchange scholarship, Andrew is now a member of Chatham-Summit Monthly Meeting in New Jersey.

## LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL SECRETARY

**"All bloody principles and practices ... we utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; this is our testimony to the whole world. ... Our weapons are spiritual and not carnal."**

—A DECLARATION FROM THE QUAKERS TO CHARLES II, 1661

This first recorded "peace testimony" from the young Quaker movement encompasses a few key commitments. Quakers refuse to bear arms or take part in military service, we accept an obligation to help the victims of war and conflicts, and we make a commitment to active peacemaking. We don't shy away from conflict, but seek to transform conflict and build a just peace with tools that are infused with the spirit of caring for all God's children.

The work of active peacemaking isn't for the faint of heart. We must be willing to speak and act in ways that challenge the narratives of nationalism, fear, and hate that inevitably accompany war. We must be ready to accept censure. We must be steadfast even when suspected of being enemies of the state—as AFSC and its leaders were when we provided humanitarian support to German children and later to "communist" Russian children in the aftermath of World War I.

Working for justice also requires developing effective ways to challenge and change narratives that inflame fear by scapegoating one group—in different

times and places, Jews, communists, Muslims—to justify war and violence. Once we are at war, the culture of militarism sweeps away our most basic values of human compassion, equity, and justice. It can be hard to find the courage to speak out for Americans of Japanese ancestry who were sent to internment camps in World War II or to provide medical treatment for Vietnamese children who have lost limbs to landmines during the U.S. war in Southeast Asia.

But this compassionate witness is necessary, holy work to prepare the ground for peace with justice. When we are living examples of the alternatives to war and violence, even amid war and violence, that is when we are most effective in helping others embrace a new narrative of a world built around shared humanity and shared security.

As Nelson Mandela said, "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner." Not only must we lift up the voices of the oppressed and embattled, we must also address the oppressors.

This is the role AFSC plays in so many places around the world—opening the

vision for alternatives through a thoughtful, holistic approach to peace that engages people at many levels. In this issue, you'll find examples of how we lay the ground for peace by standing up for justice—using art to expose and oppose militarism, working alongside farmers in North Korea to demonstrate that partnerships are possible in even the most unlikely places, successfully advocating at the United Nations to ensure that the devastating link between war and poverty is addressed in the newly adopted sustainable development goals.

In all of this work, AFSC stands with individuals and communities who work courageously in the gap between what is and what could be, knowing that their inspiring witness will change hearts and minds, paving the way for peace with justice.



In peace,

Shan Cretin  
General Secretary

## Readers respond to our last issue

[Two of] your subscribers ... gave me their copy of the Fall 2015 edition of Quaker Action featuring the movement to end mass incarceration. The articles are impressive and I am pleased (and thankful) that you are so actively involved in the national movement to reform our prisons and criminal justice system. Keep up the good work!

Bill Trine  
Boulder, Colorado

In the spirit of respect, I would like to comment on several recent editions of Quaker Action. The content has been excellent, highlighting important political and social issues. The one suggestion that I would offer would be to include a little more inspirational, practical and/or light-hearted commentary. Most of the recent issues seem to have a lot of “doom and gloom;” overwhelming problems with limited solutions.

This approach offers a limited perspective and could lead to apathy or a sense of helplessness (and a reduced subscription base). How about including some uplifting Quaker meditations, or some practical tips for organic gardening to wrap around the “Slavery to mass incarceration” articles?

Richard Sheridan  
Wilberforce, Ohio

I have been quite impressed with previous copies of Quaker Action and especially with the current edition about Healing Justice.

As a member of a senior men’s discussion group that reads and discusses articles on world and national issues, the articles in your Fall 2015 edition of Quaker Action provide an excellent background for our discussion.

Our men’s discussion group met yesterday. Numerous comments were made regarding the stories in Quaker Action including: “eye-opener,” “I didn’t know,” and “very profound.”

So much discussion was generated that the meeting extended beyond its usual ending time, a rarity.

It is a pleasure to be a partner with AFSC and FCNL. Keep up your great work.

Jay Owens  
Chicago

I want to warn you of the possibility that programs to end incarceration of segments of prison populations, which are not sufficiently transformative, may fail and lead to public pressure to go back to lengthy incarceration to reduce urban crime.

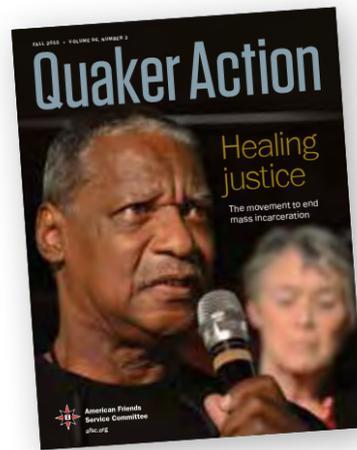
I worked as an attorney-adviser in the federal government, where I saw myself as practicing “preventative” law—trying to stop legal problems from occurring in the first place, rather than dealing with them after they occurred. I’m also motivated by the Apostle Paul’s statement, in First Corinthians 13:6b, that, “love ... rejoices in the

**Our men’s discussion group met yesterday. Numerous comments were made regarding the stories in Quaker Action including: “eye-opener,” “I didn’t know,” and “very profound.”**

truth.” Even when that truth is uncomfortable or potentially discouraging.

The California approach, under a voter-approved Proposition 47, has resulted in release without any attempt at a transformative type of program like yours. I believe the drug courts that existed previously are gone, or do much less. Consequently, some crime rates have gone up.

So my purpose is to encourage you to

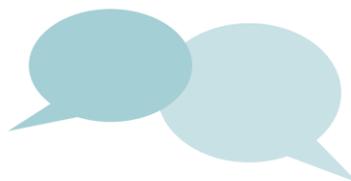


“Healing Justice: The movement to end mass incarceration,” Fall 2015

do more than set up the transformative programs. I hope you will also advocate for governments to do more than simply release prisoners to reduce the expenses of incarceration. Urge them to set up their own programs where yours or others do not already exist or cannot help the number of prisoners being released. The initial costs to governments will be higher, but the long-term results will be better. Without effective programs before or immediately after release, the movement to end mass incarceration may become subject to intense public opposition. Neither you nor I want that to happen.

Donald M. Malone  
Washington, D.C.

### WE’D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Tell us what you think about this issue by contacting Ronna Bolante, managing editor, at [quakeraction@afsc.org](mailto:quakeraction@afsc.org) or AFSC, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

## News from around AFSC



### Pushing back against prison privatization

When prisoners rioted at a privately run prison in Kingman, Arizona, last summer, AFSC helped shine a glaring light on the true cost of locking up people for profit—and the governor took notice.

For years, prisoners had endured abuse and inhumane conditions at the facility, operated by Management and Training Corp. (MTC). Among the issues: insufficient medical care, mistreatment by guards, inadequate cooling (even when temperatures rose above 100 degrees), and chronic understaffing—problems that are pervasive in privately run prisons across the U.S.

Fed up by years of mistreatment, prisoners rioted last July, causing serious damage to the facility. AFSC published an investigative report based on interviews with prisoners and guards, detailing how mismanagement by MTC had driven prisoners to riot. Our report also revealed that the riot’s only injuries resulted from brutal treatment by the state Department of Corrections’ Tactical Response Unit.

After we released the report, the governor canceled the contract with MTC—a small victory here in Arizona, thanks largely to calls for accountability by a range of supporters. But our work is far from over. AFSC is continuing to push for an end to prison privatization while advocating for changes to the system that drives the creation of new prisons to begin with.

—CAROLINE ISAACS, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, AFSC ARIZONA

### Putting peace on the agenda

Last fall, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—17 goals and 169 targets for wiping out poverty, eliminating inequality, promoting sustainability, building peaceful and inclusive societies, and tackling climate change. These Sustainable Development Goals expand on the Millennium Development Goals, which expired at the end of last year.

It’s important that these new goals are not just about development. They cover areas like economic inequality, access to justice, inclusion, and violence—recognizing that issues of peace and justice are critical to sustainable development. Over the past four years, the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), AFSC’s sister organization at the U.N. in New York, has worked to ensure that the goal of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies was included in the final version of the goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals apply to all countries—from the wealthiest to the poorest, from fragile states to robust democracies—challenging them to translate these aspirations into real strategies. Although they aren’t binding, every country in the world has signed up to make them happen, to put together national implementation plans, and to provide data on how well they are achieving them in the years ahead.

—ANDREW TOMLINSON, DIRECTOR, QUNO, NEW YORK

### Investors: Are you supporting private prisons?



Use our new online tool to screen your investment portfolio for corporations that profit from mass incarceration.

MORE: [investigate.afsc.org](http://investigate.afsc.org)



Photo: AFSC/Emily Verdugo

## Delegation to Palestine/Israel builds solidarity

Last September, AFSC staff took part in a delegation to the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. They met with local farmers, business people, politicians, and activists, to learn how Israeli occupation impacts daily life for Palestinians and motivates Palestinian and Israeli activists to work for justice and equality. Participants drew parallels with their own work—from immigrant rights in Colorado to economic equality in West Virginia—and documented their experiences in writing and photographs.

“The delegation was distinctive because we were a group of diverse U.S. activists from many communities where the Israel/Palestine issue is not at the center of their program work,” says Jennifer Bing, AFSC’s Palestine-Israel program director in Chicago. “The delegation’s experience helps us as an organization to deepen our analysis of how our issues intersect and complement each other in our work for peace, justice, and reconciliation.”

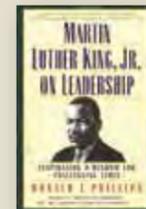
 **MORE:** See photos and reflections from staff at [afsc.org/palestine-delegation](http://afsc.org/palestine-delegation)

# What we're reading



**WAGE THEFT IN AMERICA**  
by Kim Bobo (2011)

“Before I read this book, I had no idea how widespread across class and race wage theft had become. An urgent read to understanding today’s economy and the easily addressed erosion of the middle class.” *Recommended by Jennifer Piper, program director for interfaith organizing, Denver.*



**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP: INSPIRATION AND WISDOM FOR CHALLENGING TIMES**  
by Donald T. Phillips (2000)

“The book tells the story of how an individual can lead powerfully yet peacefully in the midst of heightened tension and conflict. It also looks at the kind of bridging leadership model and the qualities required to bring about conflict transformation. Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us of the fundamental truth that ‘the best way to solve a problem is to remove the cause.’” *Recommended by Alice Anukur, associate regional director, Africa region.*



**TOWARDS THE ‘OTHER AMERICA’: ANTI-RACIST RESOURCES FOR WHITE PEOPLE TAKING ACTION FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER**  
by Chris Crass (2015)

“The most read entry on our Acting in Faith blog in 2015 was “Note to Self: White people taking part in #BlackLivesMatter protests,” and Chris Crass dives deeply into that topic in his latest book. Featuring lots of interviews, essays, and photographs, reading this book is like entering into the middle of a conversation and a movement. This beautiful book, designed by artist Aisha Shillingford, is welcoming to the beginner and the advanced and is free to download at [chalicepress.com](http://chalicepress.com).” *Recommended by Greg Elliott, Friends Relations associate, Philadelphia.* ■

PEOPLE

## Q+A: Linda Lewis

Country representative, China and DPRK (North Korea)



**L**inda Lewis first visited the Korean peninsula in 1970 as a Peace Corps volunteer in a small farming village. Today, she oversees AFSC’s work in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea).

**Q:** How did AFSC get involved in North Korea?

**A:** In 1980, AFSC was one of the first U.S. organizations to send a people-to-people delegation to North Korea. In the 1990s there was a serious famine, and the country opened up to lots of nongovernmental organizations that supplied food relief. Most of those organizations left, and AFSC stayed on to do agricultural development work. Feeding its people is still one of the biggest challenges North Korea has today.

**Q:** What does the agricultural program look like?

**A:** The main point of AFSC’s program is to introduce sustainable technology and raise productivity on the farms. In 2007, we introduced plastic trays for seedling cultivations and helped partner farms increase yields by 10 to 15 percent. Now we’re working on supporting greenhouses,

which will help them grow vegetables in the winter.

**Q:** AFSC isn’t an agricultural organization, so how does this work support the organization’s mission of building peace?

**A:** Food security is central to peace building. People must be able to meet their basic needs to achieve what we call shared security and to make it possible to pursue peace. The U.S. government has for quite a while treated North Korea with what it calls “strategic patience”—basically, they won’t engage with North Korea until they give up their nuclear program. If you’re not engaging with someone, how are you ever going to make peace with them? We work together in a space that’s outside of politics. We’re demonstrating that engagement is possible, that it’s possible to have productive partnerships.

**Q:** For most people, our knowledge of North Korea is limited to what we see in the media. What’s missing in this coverage?

**A:** The media presents a picture of them as being monolithic, like they’re in a prison camp, starving—a drab, dull place with robots who wear uniforms. But that’s not

the Korea I know. Koreans are really quite funny. We joke about the fact that we’re supposed to be enemies. Pyongyang is a modern city. Koreans take their children out to walk along the river, go boating, play basketball. There are a lot of restaurants. I have a list of 15 restaurants that we regularly go to, including two pizza parlors, and we have a very active debate about which one is the best one. And there are more than 2 million cell phone users. Koreans can be just as rude as the rest of us in talking on their cell phones in public.

**Q:** Considering the state of U.S.-North Korea relations, what gives you hope as you continue to work in this country?

**A:** What gives me hope is that we have partners inside North Korea who care about the same things we do—their families, their jobs, having enough food to eat. The farm managers and agricultural workers I work with work hard to improve the lives of the communities they live in. They’re concerned about the well-being of their country. They would like more engagement with the U.S. and to see peace on the Korean peninsula. ■

Photo: AFSC



## Meet seven artists pushing back against militarism as part of AFSC's traveling exhibit "Humanize Not Militarize."

Immigrants locked up in detention centers to meet government quotas. Protesters confronted by police officers with automatic rifles and armored vehicles. Men, women, and children forever changed by a war that has become the longest in U.S. history.

Across the United States, it's clear how militarism affects millions of people every day—without making them any safer.

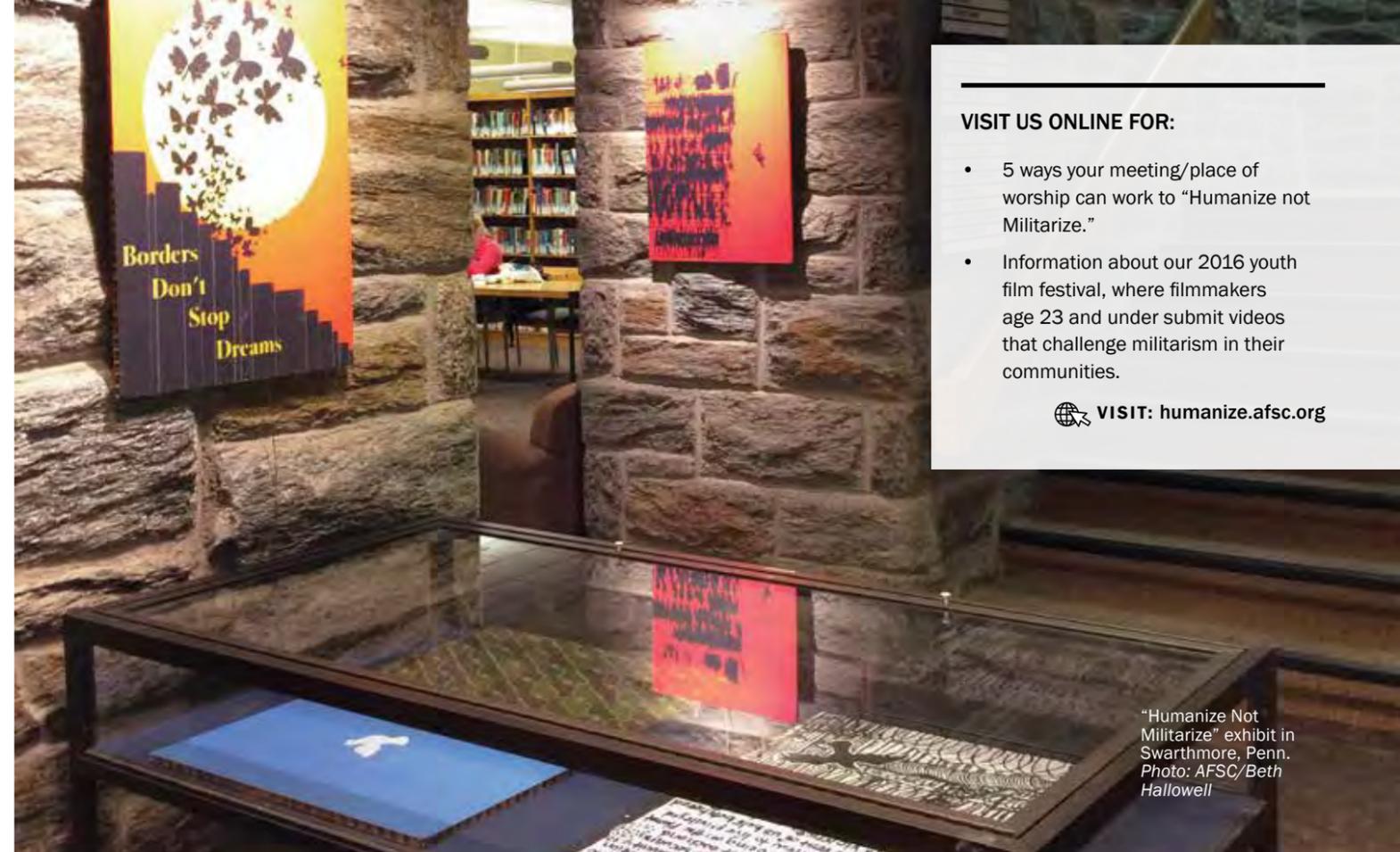
AFSC's latest exhibit, "Humanize Not Militarize," features works from nearly 50 artists that portray the effects of militarism and imagine nonviolent alternatives for a more just future. "AFSC is on a mission to change the narrative around war and militarism, and art is a great way to begin that conversation around the country," says Mary Zerkel, organizer of the exhibit and

co-coordinator of AFSC's Wage Peace campaign. "The power of the exhibit is it doesn't silo these experiences of militarism—it gets at the systemic connections between border issues and war and policing and prisons."

The artists behind these works are as diverse as the pieces themselves—members of prolific artist collectives, grassroots activists, as well as high school and college students taking part in their first public show.

We asked seven of these artists to tell us about their contributions to the exhibit and to share their thoughts about the power of art in promoting alternatives to militarism and violence.

*See their responses on pages 10–11.*



### VISIT US ONLINE FOR:

- 5 ways your meeting/place of worship can work to "Humanize not Militarize."
- Information about our 2016 youth film festival, where filmmakers age 23 and under submit videos that challenge militarism in their communities.

 VISIT: [humanize.afsc.org](http://humanize.afsc.org)

### JOIN OUR ONLINE CONVERSATION!

**March 30, 2016**

Register to take part in our live-streamed conversation about art and activism in communities around the U.S.

AFSC staff members Minerva Mendoza, Tabitha Mustafa, and Erin Polley will discuss local efforts to develop a cultural strategy to achieve social change.

 **SIGN UP TODAY:** [afsc.org/cultural](http://afsc.org/cultural)

### Audience response

Since last summer, "Humanize Not Militarize" has traveled to more than 10 cities throughout the United States, reaching thousands of people who are encouraged to create their own posters on site and share their responses through social media.

There's also an accompanying curriculum for the exhibit, which programs have adapted to help students discuss their personal experiences with militarism and connect them to a larger analysis.

Toni Etheridge, AFSC program associate, helped coordinate a showing at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and talked with high school and college students about their impressions. "The conversations reminded folks of experiences—some extremely personal—in their neighborhood with police," Toni says. "The posters pushed forth difficult, candid talks on how people of color, particularly Black males, are over policed. The seriousness of overt police contact can impose direct psychological damage in our developing young people—fear."

Mary Zerkel, co-coordinator of AFSC's Wage Peace campaign, says the exhibit and curriculum are designed to spark conversations like these—conversations that can inspire young people and others to get involved in working for alternatives to militarism. "We're hoping that as the tour moves on, people will use it as an opportunity to have workshops and events that advance work in the community and help local organizing," she says. ■

*To find out how to bring the exhibit to your town, contact Mary at [humanize@afsc.org](mailto:humanize@afsc.org).*



◀ **MARCELLOUS LOVELACE | “I CAN NOT BE MOVED”**



Marcellous is a mostly self-taught mixed-media painter, writer, and musician.

“I paint from my experience living on the South Side of Chicago and living in poverty in the state of Illinois. I was born and raised in a community called Roseland. This segregated, poverty-stricken environment helped me to develop over 400 images a year over the last 25 years of my life. My environment is so negative it helps me to create beauty from this struggle. I paint because it’s the only thing that feels good after feeling like I’m trapped in a world that has no hope. For most of my adult life, I have worked on art regardless of the situation, and I always will because these colorful problems help me to continue to see through the blight.”

[marcellouslovelace.com](http://marcellouslovelace.com)

▼ **AARON HUGHES | “TRANSFORM”**

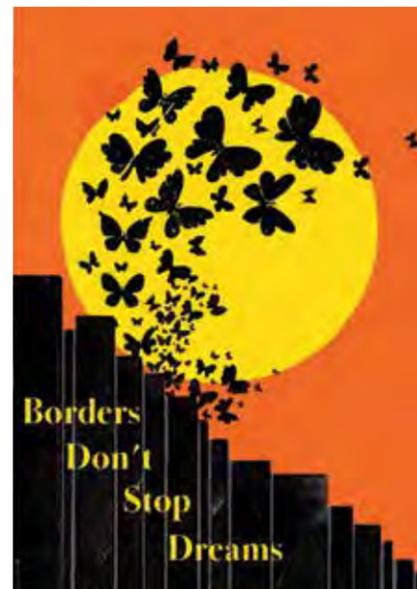


Aaron is an artist, activist, and Iraq War veteran. The medium for this piece is “combat paper,” created out of military uniforms that were transformed through the papermaking process.

“During my deployment, I felt like I was surrounded by destruction and in the

heart of a system that did not value my life, the life of my fellow service members, or the lives of Iraqis and third country nationals. In the midst of this dehumanization, I sought out a counter point and what I found and clung to were the desert flowers, dusty sunsets, little birds, and creative works (poetry, novels, and art) that fundamentally countered the destruction of a military occupation. This experience is why I believe art is fundamental to transforming American militarism. However, that creative work is most successful when it is aligned with people’s movements and in solidarity with the communities that are most impacted by U.S. militarism.”

[justseeds.org/artist/aaronhughes](http://justseeds.org/artist/aaronhughes)



▲ **RAUL VAZQUEZ LOPEZ | “BORDERS DON'T STOP DREAMS”**



Raul is an elementary school art teacher, tattoo artist, and a former intern in AFSC’s Chicago office.

“I was born in Durango, Mexico, and traveled with my family to the U.S. as a child. As a person with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status, I wanted to raise the issue of immigration, because lots of undocumented people feel like they can’t do anything because of their status. But since I’ve been working with AFSC, I’ve seen that undocumented people can achieve many things. The slogan, ‘Borders don’t stop dreams,’ is something I’m living out in my own life. There are so many great people out there who are undocumented who can contribute so much.”

► **ANNIE BANKS AND MUTOPE DUGUMA | “EACH OF US”**



This poster is a collaboration between Annie Banks, a printmaker in British Columbia, and her friend and pen pal, Mutope Duguma, a New Afrikan author who is incarcerated at Pelican Bay State Prison in California.

ANNIE: “To me, art plays an immense role in working for alternatives because it accesses a

critical component of any movement—creativity. It inspires imaginative response to catastrophic realities and re-educates me every time that each of us holds immense power to imagine ourselves and the world differently. And collaborations multiply our power!”

MUTOPE: “My values are rooted in the New Afrikan principles that teach me how to treat fellow human beings. My strength is rooted in being educated in truth; I study the world and people. I establish balance by mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially understanding that we have to nurture our being by exercising these four areas in order to achieve growth in our lives. It is the strengthening of these four areas that will bring about political and ideological development.”

[anniembanks.wordpress.com](http://anniembanks.wordpress.com), [mutopeduguma.org](http://mutopeduguma.org)



▼ **MONICA TRINIDAD | “THE DREAM IS REAL”**

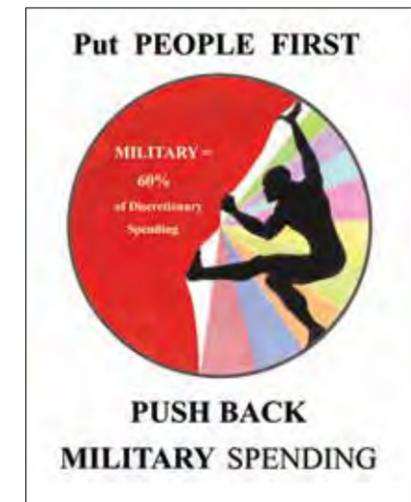


Monica Trinidad is a queer Xicana artist and organizer, and co-founder of Brown & Proud Press.

“‘The Dream Is Real’ was created when I was approached to design a poster by Moms United Against Violence and Incarceration. They were having their annual Moms in the Struggle awards dinner, and they wanted to honor 20 mothers who were

formerly incarcerated or who have lost their child at the hands of the police. I wanted the viewer to register the reality that there are actually places that exist where Black mothers are systematically locked away from their children for simply trying to survive in a society that they were never meant to survive in. I wanted to invoke the reality that is often forgotten, that these places, called prisons, at one point in time did not exist, and that I believe that with a little imagination, that world can exist again.”

[monicatrinidad.com](http://monicatrinidad.com)



▲ **LILLIAN MOATS | “PUSH BACK”**



Lillian is a writer, artist, and filmmaker who became involved in doing graphic work for AFSC shortly after 9/11.

“I created this piece in response to the misguided discretionary spending by the

U.S. government. The piece is meant to suggest that we are not helpless and can push back against the irrational proportion of military spending. I’ve observed that in an age when we are bombarded with more written words than we can possibly take in, images and other forms of art often reach hearts and minds more directly and memorably. The challenge is to give exposure to visual art, films, and drama that run counter to the commercial, high-budget productions which suggest militarism and violence are answers to societal problems.”

[threeartspress.com](http://threeartspress.com)

# Organizing against intolerance

In Indonesia, a community-led campaign succeeds in protecting houses of worship from closure by extremist groups.

BY RONNA BOLANTE

Indonesia is one of the most diverse countries in the world, with 250 million people representing over 300 ethnic groups. The country is home to the largest Muslim population in the world and also has a proud tradition of tolerance and inclusion.

But today, this diversity faces its greatest threat since Indonesian independence—the rise of extremist groups, which have spurred communal conflict and intolerant public policies.

Places of worship across the archipelagic nation have become frequent targets for extremists, who have used violence and intimidation to close down spaces belonging to minority communities—including Christian, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and minority Muslim sects. In a village in West Timor, the Muslim community faced years of opposition from predominately Protestant residents in their plans to build a new mosque. In Papua, Indonesia's easternmost province, residents set fire to a mosque during the month of Ramadan.

Even the city of Yogyakarta in Java—considered the cultural capital of the country and home to the Sultan and his family—has seen a wave of attacks on houses of worship. “Yogya is known for its pluralism and tolerance, and it occupies a special place in the Indonesian psyche—fundamentalists target it for those reasons,” says Jiway Tung, AFSC's country representative in Indonesia. “If you can affect civil life in Yogyakarta, you can do it anywhere in Indonesia.”

## A community stands against extremism

In the district of Gunung Kidul in the greater Yogyakarta region, community members have organized against extremists working to shut down houses of worship and fuel intolerance among neighbors.

In recent years, extremist efforts led to the shutdown of three houses of worship and targeted others for closure. In one instance, extremists pressured public officials to close a church and drove its priest out of the village. In another case, groups held



Agnes Dwi Rusjiyati has helped organize community members in Gunung Kidul to protect houses of worship. Photo: Ninik Sri Suryandari

demonstrations outside of a church, caused damage to the building, and threatened to return with even larger crowds.

These closures had to be stopped, says Agnes Dwi Rusjiyati, coordinator with the National Unity and Diversity Alliance (ANBTI), an AFSC partner in Indonesia. For the past year, Agnes has worked with community members in Gunung Kidul to protect houses of worship.

What's happening in Gunung Kidul is personal to her. The district is her birthplace. And although she grew up learning about Indonesia's diversity, as a member of a minority religious group, her childhood experiences sometimes showed her a different side of her beloved country.

She remembers being asked to leave the classroom and play in the schoolyard during religion classes. And the times she was teased and bullied by other students and even teachers. “Even back then, I told myself that that pressure or intimidation should not happen to anyone based on any religious difference,” she says.

Today, Agnes is fulfilling that promise to herself, helping Gunung Kidul in its struggle to hold on to its values of tolerance and inclusion. To reopen these houses of worship and defend against threats to others, Agnes and others at ANBTI developed a comprehensive public education and advocacy campaign that involved members of affected congregations, residents of surrounding communities, and local policymakers.

The group provided support to congregants of the closed churches, urging them to unite in their advocacy efforts. “They had the same fears, and we encouraged them to have the same voice so they would have more strength,” Agnes says. “One of the strategies we applied was accompanying them in their meetings with local government, so they wouldn't be intimidated. We were there for them.”

ANBTI also brought together members from diverse faiths and community organizations for trainings on the law and human

rights—facilitating dialogue and building understanding among diverse groups while educating them on the challenges they face against extremism.

Education took place on the political level, too. ANBTI members met formally and informally with local government officials to get them to understand why the closures were unconstitutional. At issue was a joint decree that the country had imposed in 2006, placing stricter requirements on building houses of worship. Based on ANBTI's interpretation, the decree gave local government the discretion to recognize houses of worship built prior to 2006.

ANBTI members worked with congregations to collect and provide proof that their houses of worship had been established before 2006, including historical documents and interviews with community figures. That documentation meant approval from local officials was all that congregations needed to reopen their doors.

“It was not easy—we faced objections, but continued to have many conversations with regional government,” says Agnes. “We built those relationships so these officials could come to share our perspective and influence their colleagues. It took quite a long time until the regional government was able to accept the basis of our argument.”

## A model for organizing

In June 2015, officials agreed to allow the three closed churches to reopen. What's more, the advocacy campaign led the government of Gunung Kidul to grant official recognition to more than 1,600 houses of worship, providing legal protection against extremists challenging the legality of Catholic and Protestant churches, Hindu and Buddhist temples, and mosques.

“This is groundbreaking work,” Jiway says. “I can't recall

## INDONESIA: BY THE NUMBERS



**Motto:** “Bhinneka tunggal ika,” or “Unity in diversity”

**Population:** 250 million, the fourth most populous country in the world

**Number of islands:** 14,000

**Number of officially recognized languages:** Over 700

something of this magnitude happening to protect houses of worship. This effort has reset community relationships by consolidating congregations, organizing at the grassroots level, and cultivating relationships with local government in a way that encourages them to make decisions that benefit the community as a whole.”

ANBTI is sharing their strategy with minority groups in other areas of Indonesia also advocating for legal recognition.

“Intolerance is happening all over the country and affecting our way of life as citizens,” says Agnes. “As intolerant groups are mobilizing more people, we need to create a movement that is even more massive than theirs to counter what's happening.” ■





**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

# Moving away from militarism

Over the past century, AFSC has worked to change the thinking that allows war and violence to persist.

BY RONNA BOLANTE

In the 1970s, AFSC began organizing opposition to the huge nuclear weapons plants at Rocky Flats in Denver, which was finally closed in 1997. Photo: AFSC

War is not the answer. Violence doesn't work. Militarized responses hurt our prospects for peace. Since our founding in 1917, the American Friends Service Committee has been unwavering in promoting nonviolence as the only path to overcoming injustice and achieving lasting peace. Through the years, we've worked with individuals, communities, partner organizations, and policymakers

to defy the social logic that has justified war and violence for far too long. The work of peace education has taken many forms over the past century—from sponsoring peace caravans to publishing reports that exposed the true cost of war to advocating alongside affected communities for policies that address the root causes of conflict. At times, AFSC's work has been influential in shaping public opinion and policy – and often we have been among the few voices representing peace.

"It's a tremendous challenge to go beyond educating people and reach much deeper to get them to listen to you, to change their mind about something," says Shan Cretin, AFSC's general secretary. "How do you grab people and get them to see the world they know differently?"

**Strengthening antiwar efforts**  
Some of AFSC's earliest work to promote peace through education took place at Quaker international centers in Paris,

Berlin, Geneva, Vienna, Warsaw, and Moscow in the early 1920s. Following extensive relief efforts by Friends during World War I, the centers provided a neutral space for individuals and institutions from around the world to convene, discuss political issues, and foster understanding.

Around the same time, AFSC trained young pacifists to form "peace caravans" and spread messages of peace throughout the United States. Teams of young men and women traveled from town to town, speaking at churches and community gatherings, and canvassing door to door. The caravans were international and interracial, providing many participants their first opportunity to work with people whose backgrounds differed from their own.

The 1940s saw the beginning of AFSC's decades-long involvement in the nuclear disarmament movement. Within days of the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which killed 200,000 people, AFSC and other organizations sent a letter to President Harry Truman calling for a ban on nuclear weapons. Large-scale campaigns to prevent nuclear annihilation began in the 1950s and peaked with the No Nukes and Nuclear Freeze movements of the 1970s and '80s. Since then, tens of thousands of people have worked with AFSC to halt weapons testing, arms acceleration, and the spread of nuclear technology.

Over the years, AFSC's peace education efforts have expanded to reach government officials, academics, and community organizations as well as members of the general public. Most importantly, we support those most affected by war and violence in leading efforts to change the conditions that affect their lives.

Throughout its history, AFSC has facilitated exchanges between people on all sides of a conflict—bringing speakers from Vietnam and Russia to the U.S. to share their expertise and experience during and after wartime; connecting American schools with those in conflict areas in Europe, Asia, and Africa; and sponsoring international work camps, which sent Americans to volunteer in devastated areas from Cuba to the Middle East. All to build understanding between people who might



**CALLING FOR PEACE**

AFSC publications and resources have played a critical role in influencing public opinion and policy. Examples include:

- **"Speak Truth to Power: A Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence,"** which popularized a phrase now widely used in social movements. The 1955 publication, written by a group that included civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, called for nonviolent alternatives to ending the Cold War.
- **"Peace in Vietnam: A New Approach in Southeast Asia"** sold nearly 100,000 copies in the first year after its 1966 publication, generating widespread media coverage and serving as a tool for the coalitions challenging U.S. policy in Vietnam.
- **"Search for Peace in the Middle East,"** which amplified local voices in outlining the root causes and needed solutions to regional conflict. At the time of its publication in 1970, AFSC was one of the first groups to publicly call for an end to Israel's occupation of all territories, creating inroads for dialogue on this issue.
- Starting in the mid-'70s, Bill Sutherland, AFSC's southern Africa representative, dispatched frequent **reports to U.S. audiences on African liberation struggles**. His speaking tours across the U.S. raised public awareness and support for anti-apartheid efforts.
- Founded in 1969, AFSC's **National Action/Research on the Military Industrial Complex (NARMIC)** fueled antiwar campaigns by serving as a resource for activists, journalists, and others. Through widely distributed slideshows, documentaries, and reports, NARMIC provided critical facts and analysis to expose the human cost of war and confront corporations profiting from U.S. military campaigns around the world.



Millions of people saw AFSC's traveling exhibit "Eyes Wide Open." Photo: Jim Webb

not otherwise have learned how much they had in common.

### Militarism at home

Over the past two decades, AFSC's peace education work has shifted to respond to the impacts of war and militarism in the United States.

The best known example is "Eyes Wide Open"—a traveling exhibit that featured one pair of empty boots for each member of the U.S. military who died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Millions of people in the U.S. saw the exhibit, which started in Chicago in January 2004 when media coverage of war casualties was forbidden. As the number of dead grew, so did the exhibit, which eventually expanded to include shoes representing Iraqi and Afghanistan civilian deaths.

Today, as the U.S. remains involved in the longest war in its history—while waging military actions in other parts of the world—there's more urgency to searching for nonviolent alternatives. War after war has shown that violent approaches neglect root causes of conflict while creating more problems. And money used to wage war abroad is money that would be better

invested in the health and safety of communities in the U.S.

AFSC is engaging policymakers in the U.S. and around the world in efforts to

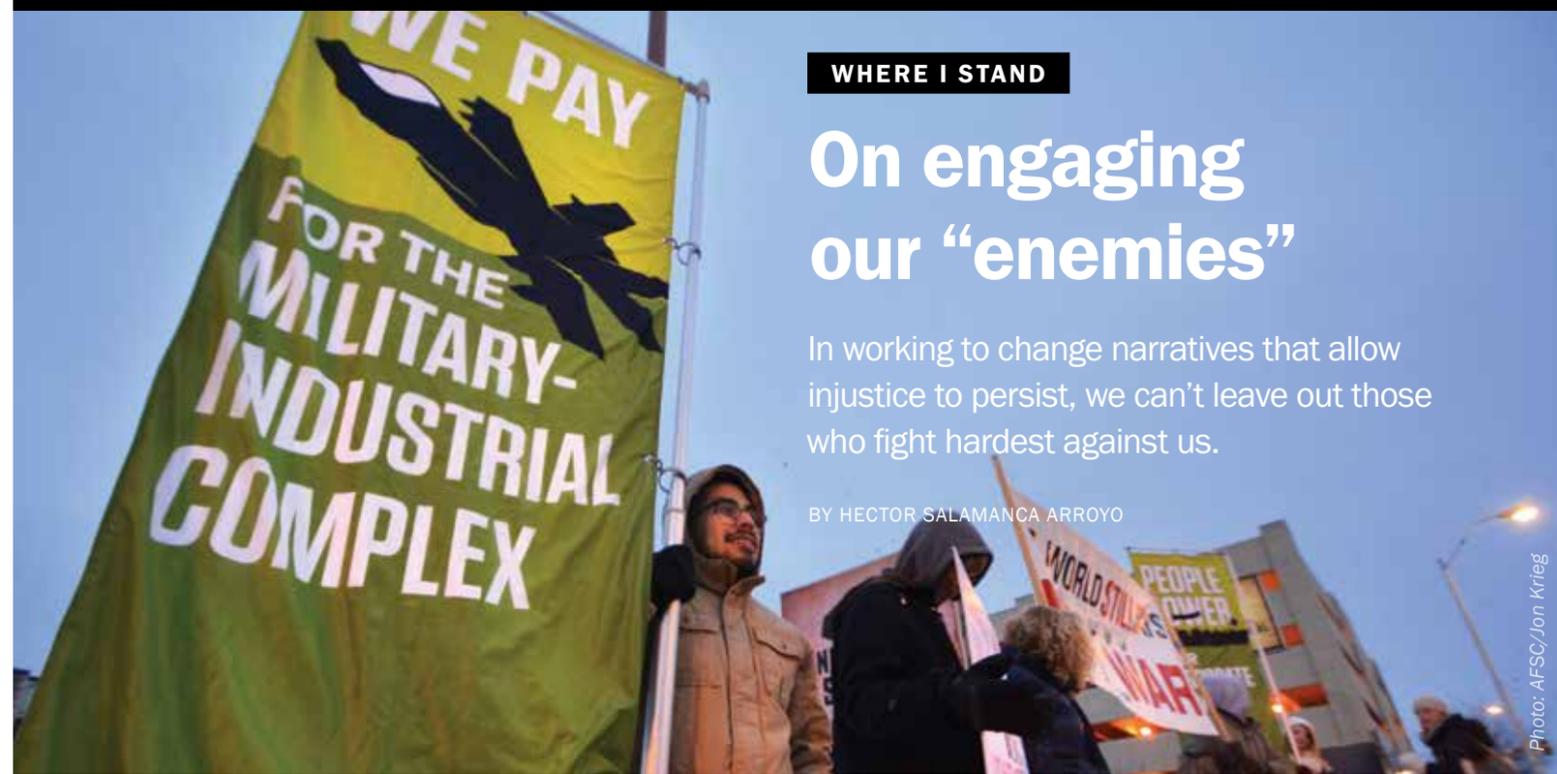


Many young people like Corinne Boothe (pictured) joined AFSC's peace caravans, spreading messages of peace in communities across the country. Photo: Campbell Hayes.

promote shared security, building on a body of research and experience that demonstrate the effectiveness of humane policies and nonviolent action. Our ongoing "Humanize Not Militarize" exhibit (see page 8) and youth film festival harness the power of art for social change, featuring videos by young filmmakers on the ways militarism affects their communities. And we've introduced a tool for investors that enables them to screen their portfolios for companies complicit in the ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories and companies that profit from mass incarceration.

In communities around the world, we're supporting individuals, meetings and congregations, grassroots organizations, and others using nonviolent action to redefine the future for themselves.

"It's hard to understand how anyone can think violence and militarism have contributed to our security," Shan says. "Efforts to break out of this thinking are hard, but we've had moments. We can't do this work alone. AFSC's ability is to be a seed for that change. We're building partnerships to make that happen." ■



### WHERE I STAND

## On engaging our "enemies"

In working to change narratives that allow injustice to persist, we can't leave out those who fight hardest against us.

BY HECTOR SALAMANCA ARROYO

Photo: AFSC/Jon Krieg

At an event for a presidential candidate last summer, I had the opportunity to talk with Iowa U.S. Rep. Steve King. Even if you're not an Iowan like me, you may have heard some of the comments he's made about undocumented immigrants—comparing them to dogs, calling one person "a deportable," and insisting that many were drug smugglers with "calves the size of cantaloupes."

When I met Rep. King, I told him about my family here in Des Moines. I told him we had emigrated from Mexico when I was 2 years old for a better life. And that my parents had worked hard to support us while contributing to the community.

None of that seemed to faze him. We were here "illegally," as far as Rep. King was concerned, and had no right to be in the United States, even though, as a child, I had had no choice in the matter.

I've had several encounters like these during my time as grassroots engagement coordinator with AFSC's Governing Under the Influence project. In the year leading up to the earliest presidential primary contests, I worked with young people, particularly Latinos and other people of color, and encouraged them to question

candidates about excessive corporate influence on public policy, including immigration.

When I started, I knew I would meet those who didn't see eye to eye with me. But I wasn't prepared for the xenophobia and fear that candidates would stir up through rhetoric aimed at immigrants like me.

People ask me how I keep my composure in such hostile situations. Why I don't get upset or cause a scene that would draw more public attention to such hateful speech.

In these situations, I stay calm. I remind myself how important it is to engage with all people, including those who strongly disagree with me. I remind myself of the power of education to change hearts and minds. And I remind myself that I can't begin to educate people if I walk away. Or act in a manner that makes them push me away.

These people aren't my enemies. They're people who, through their own life experiences, have developed stereotypes and misconceptions that haven't been corrected. I think about what might have happened in this person's life that made them afraid of people like me. I recognize that they're probably generations removed from the immigrant process, that they don't understand the difficulties we face

just living our lives.

I think of these things because I want to understand where people are coming from. If I don't, I'm guilty of dehumanizing them as much as they've dehumanized me.

Sharing my personal narrative is the most powerful tool I have against statements like, "You shouldn't be here." My mother came to the U.S. with a law degree not knowing she'd have to work as a housekeeper. Being undocumented meant I couldn't get a driver's license, vote in elections, or qualify for financial aid for school. But I graduated from college, with honors, and am now making a life for myself the way my parents hoped I would.

Even those who yell at me at rallies or town hall meetings can relate to my story. I know some people will never change their minds, but I also see signs that some people can. And I'm putting in the work—and withstanding some difficult situations—to move us all toward a place where we respect the humanity and dignity of all people. ■

*Hector Salamanca Arroyo served as grassroots engagement coordinator with AFSC's Governing Under the Influence project in Des Moines, Iowa.*

MORE: [afsc.org/gui](http://afsc.org/gui)



**SUPPORTER PROFILE**

## Jean and Cliff Lester

BY WILLIE COLÓN

**B**efore they ever met, Jean and Cliff Lester felt a similar calling to help others, make a difference, and do good in the world. Along the way, they fell in love and made a connection with AFSC that has lasted more than 60 years.

They first got involved with AFSC a continent apart in 1952. Both were in their 20s and participating in AFSC-sponsored work camps, Jean in Alaska and Cliff in Germany. Jean worked with Native children, while Cliff helped at an orphanage.

The work was a perfect fit for both of them.

“I wanted to help, but I didn’t want to do missionary work,” Jean says. “I liked that there was a spiritual basis to the work but no proselytizing.”

Cliff agrees, adding: “The work was aimed at doing what the recipients wanted, instead of our deciding that we knew what was best.”

Feeling energized by the meaningful contributions they’d made, both signed up for a work camp in Tlaxcala, Mexico, in 1953. That’s where they met, and their personal connection grew as they taught English, helped with agricultural projects, and built and repaired village structures. They spent the following year in El Salvador as part of a work camp in a small village.

They married in 1957, settled in Pennsylvania and California, and raised four children, all the while maintaining close ties to AFSC. Both have served on regional and national AFSC committees and are longtime donors who recently made a generous gift to support AFSC’s Courageous Acts Campaign. The campaign

celebrates AFSC’s centennial year by giving young people more opportunities to grow as social change leaders; funding new initiatives to promote peace, justice, and security; and increasing the organization’s endowment.

Jean and Cliff’s Courageous Acts Campaign gift supports the Joe Franko Internship Fund, which will expand internship opportunities for youth throughout AFSC and continue the organization’s tradition of supporting youth development and leadership. The fund honors the memory of Joe Franko, a former AFSC staff member who was also a friend of theirs. The Orange Grove Friends Meeting, where Jean and Cliff are members and where Joe served as clerk, has also supported the fund by making the largest campaign gift to date from a Friends meeting.

Betty Ann Jansson, a member of the meeting, says: “We’re hoping that what we have done will influence other Friends meetings. We think it’s a good time for everyone to recommit themselves to AFSC and the fact that it’s living out its Quaker values.”

Given their own history with AFSC, Cliff and Jean underscore the importance of supporting the next generation of peace builders. “The work camps had a big impact on our lives,” Cliff says. “And in the end, if you want to get anything done, you need to get more young people involved.” ■

*Willie Colón is a writer and editor with AFSC in Philadelphia.*

**The work was aimed at doing what the recipients wanted, instead of our deciding that we knew what was best.**

— CLIFF LESTER



**SNAPSHOT**

### A look at AFSC around the world

AFSC-sponsored educational tour that brought North Korean farm managers to China. Photo: AFSC/Linda Lewis



Left to right, top to bottom:

1. AFSC Midwest Region staff retreat; St. Louis.
2. Exploring human rights through digital storytelling; North Carolina
3. AFSC Midwest Region staff retreat; St. Louis
4. Community violence reduction project; Haiti
5. Welcoming refugees; Portsmouth, NH
6. AFSC Middle East Region retreat; Jordan
7. Dialogue and Exchange Program; Panama
8. Bangladeshi refugees; Aceh, Indonesia
9. Cornel West and Governing Under the Influence; Des Moines, Iowa
10. Community violence reduction project; Haiti
11. Peace-building work; Burundi
12. Pro-refugee welcome rally; Concord, NH

Photos: AFSC/Jon Krieg, Haley Richter, AFSC/Jon Krieg, Louibert Meyer, AFSC/Arnie Alpert, AFSC/Ilona Kassissieh, AFSC/Monica Portilla, GEMPUR, AFSC/Jon Krieg, Louibert Meyer, AFSC/Burundi, AFSC/Arnie Alpert



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