



American Friends  
Service Committee

Quaker values in action

# South Star

Newsletter of the South Region, American Friends Service Committee • Spring 2017

“To be afraid is to behave as if the truth were not true.” – BAYARD RUSTIN



machine that Donald Trump seems so ready to vigorously employ was created by President Obama. Yet, it seems clear that undocumented immigrants, refugees, Muslims, LGBTQ, and Black communities will be increasingly under attack during a Trump administration.

We are already seeing an impact. An undocumented friend of mine, I'll call her Mary, has lived in North Carolina for more than 15 years. Her hardworking and talented husband wants to sell their house to have extra money in case they need to move back to Mexico quickly. A friend at a local mosque reports major feelings of anxiety and uncertainty about what's to come, and about comments from schoolmates toward their children. What is my role with my friends?

For as long as there has been oppression, there have been movements of resistance and protection of targeted communities, like the Underground Railroad during slavery, Kindertransport during the Holocaust, and the protection of conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War. The [Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s](#), led by faith communities, offered safe-havens to refugees fleeing war in Central America but who were unable to get asylum in the US. More recently, the [New Sanctuary Movement](#) and [#Not1More](#) campaigns have worked with individuals and families to protect them from deportation.

We don't know yet what the coming attacks will look like, but we

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## #SANCTUARYEVERYWHERE

*Text and photo by Lori Fernald Khamala*

*Note: This post introduces a thread of AFSC work under the title #SanctuaryEverywhere. Lori Fernald Khamala is the director of the North Carolina Immigrant Rights Program for the American Friends Service Committee in Greensboro. A native of North Carolina, she grew up in the Charlotte Friends Meeting and later studied Spanish at Guilford College and spent time in Guadalajara, Mexico. She spent nearly eight years advocating for the rights of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in North Carolina and mobilizing the faith and secular community to support farmworker justice.*

“Would you harbor me? / Would I harbor you? / Would you harbor me? / Would I harbor you? // Would you harbor a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew / a

heretic, convict or spy? // Would you harbor a runaway woman, or child, / a poet, a prophet, a king? // Would you harbor an exile, or a refugee, / a person living with AIDS? ...”

These words from a [Sweet Honey in the Rock song](#) have been haunting me for the last couple of months. I want to be a refuge to those who need it, but when it really comes down to it, who would I harbor? Who would my Quaker community harbor? What does it mean to keep someone safe? What does it mean for targeted communities to keep themselves safe?

Communities of color, religious minorities and LGBTQ individuals have already been targeted for years, and in North Carolina, protections have been significantly weakened in the last five years. The deportation

## A MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

It's not enough to say that I am excited and grateful to be on the staff of the American Friends Service Committee. To start this chapter in my life at such a time is both an honor and a challenge. This is a time filled with anxiety and anger, but also with opportunity and resistance. There is no place I would rather be than right here, right now, because the AFSC is ready to resist alongside you.

It is a hard time for our community. The words of Dr. Martin Luther King come to mind when thinking of this moment in our movement. Dr. King talked of the three evils that plagued society: the systems of racism, materialism, and militarism that have grown stronger since he originally wrote of their dangers.

Often in work that struggles against great wealth and physical power, we find ourselves offering the alternate vision of what is possible if we rely on the wealth of community



over the wealth of materialism. This wealth of community is like the currency of movements. It is what demonstrates alternatives to materialism, militarism and systemic racism. It is the manifestation of the beloved community, that vision of how we make this world better. It is what drives us to take action every day to defend people that are under attack from these systems and build the alternatives with community so that we never have to look back.

The culture of resistance in the South is as deeply ingrained as the systems from which it was born. Our communities have confronted overtly racist systems throughout our existence and we will continue to get in the way of people and policies that benefit from materialism, are rooted in racism, or support militarism—whether abroad in our military or at home in our police and prison systems.

This issue of the South Star is a glimpse into the communities that are working to protect the people and the environment around us. There is information on programs that you can get involved in and individual opportunities for action. I would also invite you to also follow us on Facebook and keep up to date via our

[website](#) and [email alerts](#). Our commitment is to work with you to provide steps that any individual can take to resist.

Dr. King also famously said that “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” The arc lengthens and shortens in our eyes as we move through time. I find energy in the belief that we will win. That the vision of peace through justice will be realized in our lifetimes. That the days of injustice are numbered. Those numbers may be in the thousands, but they are numbered just the same. Let's all do what we can to shorten the number of days until we all get free.

**- JACOB FLOWERS, REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
AFSC SOUTH REGION**

*Note: Jacob Flowers is a native of Memphis, TN where he served for 10 years as the Executive Director of the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center, a southern multi-issue organization dedicated to building power and furthering peace with justice through organizing and grassroots leadership development. He serves as the co-chair of the Board for Grassroots Leadership and on the Leadership Team for Showing Up for Racial Justice Memphis. Most recently, he served as the TN State Director for Enroll America, a national organization working to engage the community in affordable health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Him and his partner have three children and enjoy spending time together having fun and building for social change.*



**American Friends  
Service Committee**

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#### **Editorial Committee**

Bryan Vana  
Jacob Flowers

Design by Beth Spence &  
Bryan Vana

Photography by Bryan Vana  
unless otherwise noted

**Atlanta Regional Office**  
75 Marietta St., Suite 501  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Phone: (404) 586-0460  
Fax: (404) 586-0465

**Regional Director**  
Jacob Flowers

**Associate Regional Director**  
Ann Lennon

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# 100 YEARS OF WAGING PEACE: AFSC 2017 CENTENNIAL EVENTS

## GREENSBORO, NC GALA CELEBRATION SEPTEMBER 9, 2017

This summer, the AFSC will celebrate decades of work pursuing peace with justice in our South Region. Guilford College in Greensboro, NC will host a month-long gallery exhibition featuring stories of AFSC programs that have helped create opportunities for communities striving to prevent violence and overcome oppression. Join us at the gala celebration of the exhibit to interact with AFSC staff, alumni and supporters who have made this history of work possible!



**"From the depth of need and despair, people can work together, can organize themselves to solve their own problems and fill their own needs with dignity and strength."**

—Cesar Chavez, AFSC staff and civil rights activist

**What will you do for Peace?**

**WAGING PEACE**  
**100 YEARS OF ACTION**  
August 27 - October 29, 2017  
Guilford College Art Gallery

Gala Celebration of AFSC's Centennial  
September 9, 2017

This must-see exhibition showcases powerful stories of standing up to injustice, overcoming oppression, creating opportunity, speaking truth to power, and preventing violence. See what courage and love can do.

## PHILADELPHIA, PA APRIL 20-23, 2017

As part of our 100th anniversary celebration, AFSC will host a summit articulating a vision forward for peace and justice by joining movements that are reaching out to make the connection between militarism, racism and materialism. Please join us by registering [online](#).



## JOIN THE AFSC ALUMNI NETWORK

The AFSC Alumni Network is a new initiative which invites organization alumni to join a network of former AFSC staff, volunteers, interns/fellows, and other supporters who have been instrumental in making the Service Committee what it is today. The network aims to connect and support AFSC alumni by drawing on their shared expertise to take targeted actions and educate our communities.

In these deeply troubling times, it's more important than ever that we stay connected and support one another in providing more hopeful and inclusive alternatives to the xenophobia and hatred that have been unleashed in recent months. The network will draw on the shared expertise of AFSC's alumni to take targeted actions and educate our communities.

The Alumni Network will have its official kick-off event on Friday, April 21 during AFSC's Centennial Summit in Philadelphia. To register for the Alumni event, check the Alumni box on the [centennial registration form](#).

# REPEALING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: VOICES OF WEST VIRGINIA

“If you’re going to get rid of it, start digging graves because people are going to die.”

That’s what one West Virginian told AFSC West Virginia Economic Justice Project staffers Lida Shepherd and Rick Wilson about the repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). His words were echoed by many others in interviews held at health clinics in southern West Virginia. AFSC has been interviewing those whose lives were impacted by the ACA in an effort to educate lawmakers and the public about what’s at stake with its repeal.

Some of those interviewed received coverage under Medicaid expansion, which now covers around 175,000 West Virginians. Others purchased coverage on the exchange. Some were fairly healthy, while others were in wheelchairs, or on oxygen, or both. While most believed the law could be improved, none supported repeal without replacement by something at least



*Above: WV resident Maria Shamblin shares her experience with the ACA  
Videograb: Andy White*

as comprehensive.

In interview after interview, even those who had complaints about premiums and co-pays agreed on one thing: do not take this away. According to Shepherd, “People told us over and over again, ‘If you take this away, I’ll die.’”

Health care has been a key concern of the WV Economic Justice Project since its founding in 1989. According to Wilson, “Some of our earliest struggles were supporting working people in strikes or lockouts that revolved around health care.”

In the wake of welfare reform, AFSC in WV supported the

enactment and expansion of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and transitional Medicaid. It joined with allies to successfully resist state efforts to weaken the program in the mid-2000s.

The project also worked to support the passage of the ACA and to urge then Governor Early Ray Tomblin to expand Medicaid. As a result, West Virginia has seen some of the greatest decreases in the number of the uninsured.

AFSC and allies have participated in several recent rallies and press events aimed at preserving key aspects of the ACA. In the months ahead, the project will work with allies to hold town meetings across the state aimed at moving WV’s congressional delegation in a more positive direction.

The struggles of the past are likely to be small in comparison with the current effort to save what can be saved.

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## ATL MARCH FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE & WOMEN: BLACK MOTHERS, DAUGHTERS, SISTERS ON NEED FOR ACTION

On the morning following the inauguration of Donald Trump, soon to be marchers of Atlanta’s March for Social Justice & Women woke up to pounding rainfall and gusting winds clamoring against their windows. The downpour flooded nearby towns, felled trees, wreaked havoc on traffic. What it did not do, however, was interrupt the plans of 60,000 mothers, daughters, sisters, and

their supporters that would soon swell the downtown Atlanta area that afternoon.

Armed with ponchos and umbrellas, the marchers gathered in peaceful protest of the incoming Trump administration and the threats to women’s rights that are mounting as new forces take control of American government and look to stifle abortion funding, gay rights,

healthcare, and human rights.

“I have two black sons and I’m married to a black man,” said Kimberly Manning, a sign-wielding marcher, “and just knowing that I’m in a climate in my country right now where an already hostile place has become more hostile really has me down here to make sure my voice can be heard.”

Manning is a physician at

*continued from page 4*

Grady Memorial Hospital, the the state's single most important healthcare center that is the go-to hospital for the region's poor and undocumented. "I spend all my time thinking about and working with the people who are forgotten about and disenfranchised, and so far this new administration has not given me confidence that they'll be thinking about those individuals."

Shanell Langham, mother of two daughters, showed a sincere focus on her children and their future, asserted, "I don't want [my daughters] to worry about getting paid equally for doing the same job as a man with the same qualifications. I don't want anyone telling them or me what to do with my body."

Langham and her sister, Fanell Sawyer, brought their daughters along with them to the March, complete with crayon-colored signs that read, "Girls Matter 2" and "Women have rights too!"

"We teach them to love all people, and I don't think the current administration even knows what that looks like," Langham challenged. "I want [my girls] to be an example of that, no matter what someone's sexual orientation is, no matter what their race is, their religion, your job is to love them, your job isn't to judge them or try to change them."

Fanell Sawyer echoed her sister's feelings about love and the feeling that Trump is not intent on unifying.

"I want [my daughter] to know what love is and about accepting everybody for who they are," Sawyer explained. "[Trump] will not be my president until he is a

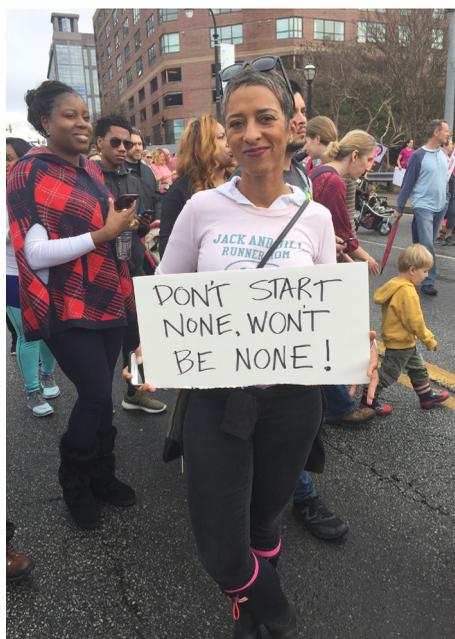
president for all people and all religions and all races."

Marchers throughout the protest showed signs of solidarity that were inclusive of the diversity of which Sawyer speaks. Chants of



*Above: Shanell Langham with her daughters Sayuri and Akira; Fanell Sawyer with her daughter Nyah; and Kimberly Manning (below) show their personalized posters during Atlanta's March for Social Justice & Women.*

*Photos: AFSC/Peace ATL*



"Women's rights are human rights!" and "Love trumps hate!" carried from the mouths of women black, white and everything in between.

Some appeared as if it's been some time since they dusted off their protest boots. For others, the experience was brand new and an introduction to the new movement toward human right and justice for women. But they all joined in measured and positive resolve, calmly energizing each other in preparation for the road ahead.

Peace ATL attended the march to document and lift up the voices of African American women—especially those of young women. Capturing the energy of young people is essential to the mission of Peace ATL in empowering the next wave of advocates for social justice.

Two millennial generation attendees of the march, Aleah Bouie and Emilia Ndely, offered meaningful insight to young black girls like the daughters of Langham and Sawyer on the challenges they may face ahead.

"It's going to be hard, but that's life and not a reason that you can't do anything you want to do," Bouie declared. "Nothing, kid—nothing great comes from just doing things easy, so just do it. It's going to suck and there are going to be people against you, but find a good support system that can big you up when the world is tearing you down and get it done."

Good advice for whenever the rain pours.

**- JOEL DICKERSON  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, PEACE ATL**

*#Sanctuary continued from page 1*

know what communities are already experiencing. In the month following the election, the Southern Poverty Law Center documented [1,094 hateful incidents](#), the majority of which were anti-immigrant, followed by anti-black incidents, then anti-Muslim, then anti-gay. We don't know which policies may be enacted first, but we know what was promised in campaign speeches over the last year: mass deportations, a Muslim registry, the end of the Deferred Action program for young immigrants, stop-and-frisk policing targeting African American communities, and more.

In an environment in which the attacks may look different, what does Sanctuary look like? How do we create a community that protects many different targeted groups?

The American Friends Service Committee is starting a new initiative called #SanctuaryEverywhere to explore and identify ways to create safe/safer spaces wherever we are and whatever level people are ready to engage at. We know there already a lot of fantastic resources that already exist and we want to lift those up, like [Sanctuary Not Deportation](#) for congregations and [Sanctuary Campus](#) and [Every Campus a Refuge](#) for colleges. We recognize that we must take the lead from directly impacted communities, and find ways for allies to engage on many different levels. We will start out by creating a “one-stop-shop” website with lots of resources for whatever level of action you are ready to engage in. Eventually, we hope to equip thousands of people across the country with tools and training to interrupt hateful acts and government actions that put our communities at risk, and to encourage the adoption of concrete policies and practices that create greater safety and a welcoming environment for all.

#SanctuaryEverywhere is inherently intersectional, or in less

# SANCTUARY SANTUARIO

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## #SanctuaryEverywhere

jargony terms: “your struggle is my struggle.” We believe that we are all in this together and that we must ensure that all residents of our community are safe, welcomed and included by:

- Welcoming immigrants and refugees: working to halt deportations to keep families together, and interrupting police and local collaboration with immigration authorities
- Standing with Muslim and Jewish communities: protecting all targeted religious groups from attacks
- Supporting the Movement for Black Lives: interrupting anti-Black violence and the “War on Black People,” including stop-and-frisk policing
- Protecting LGBTQ North Carolinians

We believe that you can work to create a welcoming, inclusive and safer environment wherever you are. Here are some examples of the kinds of resources we hope to offer:

### **Individual, family, neighborhood**

- Interrupting hateful speech or violence
- Accompanying a targeted individual

in their daily errands

- Attending a “Crisis Scenario Community Response” training to practice how to respond to hateful acts
- Holding #SanctuaryEverywhere conversations in your neighborhood

### **Institutional (School, campus, church)**

- Creating institutional policies that ensure safety for campus residents
- Training colleagues in how to create a safe space at work
- Creating a team at your child's school to ensure all children are safe at school
- Holding Know Your Rights trainings at your mosque or community center
- Sheltering of individuals or families

### **City/State**

- Working with your City Council to ensure that the rights of all residents are protected.
- Strengthening our communities to prepare for further attacks

Sometimes I hear people say, “If I was alive during the Civil Rights Movement, I would have been marching with Dr. King!” This is our moment now. What will you do?

## AFIS: SUPPORTING HAITIANS VIA BRAZIL

Haiti's massive earthquake in 2010 forced an evacuation of many of the island's residents to seek a better life abroad, where those able to work could find jobs in more stable economies. Thousands of Haitians settled in Brazil, where migrants searching for relief were welcomed.

But visas and plane tickets cost some their life savings, and even though identification documents and labor permits were easily obtained due to the country's relaxed policies, the promise of work faded after Brazil's economy took a severe downturn.

F. S., who attends sessions with AFSC's American Friends Immigrant Services program, was able to find a job quickly but later had to work multiple extremely low-paying positions in order to meet inflated rent. "Every day, I had two jobs from 6:00 AM to midnight during my last 16 months in Brazil," explains F. S. "My



*Above: AFIS Haitian community organizer Paul-Andre Mondesir with Haitian migrants from Brazil  
Photo: AFSC/AFIS*

goal was to save enough money and organize my trip to [the] United States ... I worked 50 hours weekly at a wage of U.S. \$1.25 per hour."

F. S. is one of thousands from Haiti who were forced to consider the option of migrating once again to another country. Now about 35% of Haitians who moved to Brazil have left, and roughly 7,000 of them have made their way to the U.S.

Many others head to Chile, or Costa Rica, but face similar economic hardship—lack of work, or predatory employers where work exists.

After three years in Brazil, F. S. was able to enter the U.S. via California in 2016 to mixed treatment by immigration offices—which according to him varies greatly from city to city. Attitudes toward refugees can shift between checkpoints and between officials. Each migrant's experience is unique.

Of their stories, AFIS Haitian community social advocate Paul-Andre Mondesir claims, "Each one of them could write a *New York Times* bestseller book."

In the wake of increased migration from Brazil, AFIS continues to assist Haitian migrants moving into Florida communities by addressing educational needs related to citizenship and workers' rights.

## HONORING ANN LENNON



In April 2017, South Region associate regional director Ann Lennon will retire from the AFSC after more than 20 years of service as a programmatic and administrative staff member.

Lennon's time as director of the Orita program in High Point, NC from the 1990s through the early 2000s showed her commitment to creating opportunities for at-risk youth, a consistent focus throughout her career.

Orita, an African word which means 'crossroads,' represented the change in direction the program offered for young people who wanted to pursue community building and leadership roles through assisting underprivileged students.

In her own words, Lennon's goal was to empower interns to "become better equipped to work for progressive social change," and to realize their potential as essential components of the projects Orita developed.

But Lennon's work has reached far beyond North Carolina—across the world to Africa and Asia, where

she participated in work benefitting communities in Rwanda, Zambia and Indonesia. As an avid traveler, her interest in AFSC's international programs allowed her through the years to collaborate with diverse staff who still reference her contributions.

As interim regional director in the South, a position twice she filled, Lennon became a stronghold for programs who faced increasing challenges in their work.

The AFSC would like to thank Ann for her unwavering dedication to the organization, especially the South and former Southeast (SERO) regions where as area director of the Carolinas she consistently advocated both for the well-being of youth participants and interns as well as her colleagues, to whom she became a great mentor. Her presence in the AFSC will be irreplaceable.



**American Friends  
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## South Region

3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 212  
Baltimore, MD 21211-1848

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## SOUTH REGION PROGRAMS



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 Find us on  
**Facebook**

### ATLANTA

75 Marietta St., Suite 501  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone: (404) 586-0460

#### Regional Director

Jacob Flowers

#### Associate Regional Director

Ann Lennon

#### Atlanta Economic Justice Program

Tim Franzen

#### Georgia Restorative Justice Program

Mason West

#### Peace ATL

Joel Dickerson

### BALTIMORE

3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 212  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
Phone: (410) 323-4200

#### Friend of a Friend Program

Dominique Stevenson  
Phone: (240) 707-0110

### GREENSBORO

529-D College Rd.  
Greensboro, NC 27410  
Phone: (336) 854-0633

#### NC Immigrant Rights Program

Lori Fernald Khamala

### MIAMI

1175 NE 125th St., Suite 417  
North Miami, FL 33161  
Phone: (305) 600-5441

#### American Friends Immigrant Services

Lucio Perez-Reynoso

### NEW ORLEANS

PO Box 4155  
New Orleans, LA 70178

#### Peace by Piece New Orleans

Dee Dee Green  
Phone: (504) 418-5070

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

1822 R St. NW, First Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20009  
Phone: (202) 544-0324

#### DC Peace & Economic Justice Program

Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana

### WEST VIRGINIA

#### Appalachian Center for Equality

Liz Brunello  
2207 Washington St. E  
Charleston, WV 25311  
Phone: (727) 455-2137

#### WV Economic Justice Project

Rick Wilson  
1201 Porter Creek Rd.  
Milton, WV 25541  
Phone: (304) 743-9459