



**American Friends
Service Committee**

Quaker values in action

South Star

Newsletter of the South Region, American Friends Service Committee • SPRING 2019

“Nothing will change until we change—until we throw off our dependence and act for ourselves.” — MYLES HORTON

PROGRAMS ACROSS REGION SUPPORT #LOVEKNOWSNOBORDERS CAMPAIGN

Right, clockwise: AFSC South Region staff organize in San Diego, CA; Miami, FL; and Washington, D.C. as part of Love Knows No Borders, a nationwide call for migrant justice. Photos: AFSC/Jacob Flowers; TGimmy Photography; AFSC/Carl Roose



On December 10, 2018, more than 400 individuals of faith from all over the country joined in a nonviolent direct action at the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego, California. The event kicked off a week of actions in communities across the U.S., calling for an end to border militarization and demanding humane immigration policies that respect the rights and dignity of all people.

Since mid-October, large groups of migrants have been traveling north from Central America through Mexico. The groups include people of all ages—families and children—many of whom are attempting to escape violence and poverty and are seeking asylum in the U.S. and Mexico.

Instead of responding with compassion and humanity, President Trump is portraying migrants as a security threat to advance his anti-immigrant agenda. Trump has

deployed thousands of military troops to border communities and attempted to further restrict migrants’ ability to apply for asylum.

In reaction to the administration’s harmful actions and rhetoric, the American Friends Service Committee enacted an emergency response and collaborated with faith groups across the country to make demands for migrant justice.

In the South Region, AFSC staff led meetings, marches and vigils with communities in Washington, D.C.; Miami, FL; Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Chapel Hill, NC; and Charleston, WV. By signing up through the AFSC’s website, supporters were able to organize additional acts of solidarity in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia—a total of 14 gatherings in our region to reinforce our commitment to migrant rights.

The actions sparked conversation

and calls for humane treatment of immigrants as officials attempted to spread fear about the arriving caravan.

Lucy Duncan, AFSC Director of Friends Relations, felt that her belief called her “To stand against actions that deny that migrants at the border are our neighbors—our kin. I believe our government’s militarization of border communities and attempts to keep out asylum seekers is in conflict with my deeply held belief in the worth and dignity of all people.”

Duncan’s account was published in [Yes! Magazine](#), and more coverage of the border action can be found in [The Nation](#), [NBC News](#) and the [Associated Press](#). *The Nation* also placed the AFSC on its 2018 Progressive Honor Roll, marking Love Knows No Borders as the [most valuable protest of the year](#). You can learn more about the AFSC’s response to this issue by visiting <https://www.afsc.org/migrantcaravan>.

SEEKING PEACE AND JUSTICE IN A NEW YEAR

Friends,

From start to finish, 2018 was a year of unexpected challenges—one that forced the AFSC to shift strategies, but also brought out the best from organizers and supporters across the South Region who are determined to seek peace and justice for targeted and marginalized communities.

In North Carolina, we continue to work on the forefront of the Sanctuary Movement, acting to protect immigrants who are under daily threats of inhumane policies.

Our longstanding connections in New Orleans and Baltimore are helping to cultivate economic development and sustainability literally from the ground up, providing space for communities to grow together.

In West Virginia, we watched young leaders stand up for public school employees in a 55-county strike and advocate for progressive legislation



AFSC South Regional Director Jacob Flowers and staff marching with the Poor People's Campaign, June 2018

as the state attempts to cut benefits that families need.

Our D.C. program formed new alliances with human rights educators and activists in the District, and planned for the next phase of work in a Human Rights City.

Florida's large population of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders made themselves heard loud and clear this past year in the fight for permanent residency; we are so proud

of those who joined with us to speak out from Miami to D.C.

Finally in Atlanta, we shielded victims of housing injustice, fought for community representation in city planning and kickstarted what we know will be exciting work with promising young changemakers.

As we reflect on our successes in 2018, we know that we will need your help to carry that momentum through this year. We want to counter systemic racism, expose and counter militarism, and support immigrant rights—all to the best of our ability. Our programs work tirelessly to provide resources, train allies and advocate for our friends and neighbors, who need us now more than ever. [Will you stand with us as a partner for peace and justice today?](#)

Yours in struggle,
Jacob Flowers

AFSC South Regional Director



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SOUTH REGION ONLINE



Above: *Peace by Piece New Orleans* shares a new video featuring their work in Hollygrove, where community members are creating sustainable food options for their neighborhood. Watch here: <https://youtu.be/Hg9V9V-BqJ8>

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CALL TO ACTION: TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

TELL CONGRESS TO SAVE TPS AND CREATE A ROADMAP TO CITIZENSHIP FOR ALL IMMIGRANTS!

Over the past year, the Trump administration has ended Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for immigrants from Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nepal, Honduras, Sudan, Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, putting over 300,000 people at risk of deportation. President Trump has also rescinded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) for more than 600,000 young people, many of whom have lived in the U.S. for most of their lives.

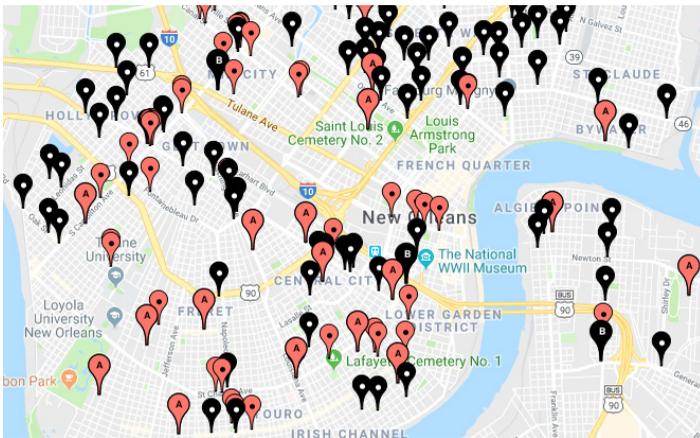
Ending these vital programs would devastate families and communities and is a cruel attack on immigrants in the U.S.

Tell Congress: Pass legislation to protect these programs and create a roadmap to citizenship for all immigrants!
Sign the petition here: <https://tinyurl.com/y58yoveu>



Above: TPS recipients march in the rain from the White House to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. during the TPS People's Summit on February 12, 2019.

PEACE BY PIECE ANNOUNCES #STOPWATCHINGNOLA



Above: an interactive map on StopWatchingNOLA.org shows specific locations of surveillance devices.

The AFSC New Orleans' Peace by Piece (PxP) program has created a new resource in the interest of city residents concerned about increased levels of surveillance in their communities.

#StopWatchingNOLA was created out of necessity, after the city installed an undisclosed number of cameras—about 1,500 total—in the city of New Orleans, despite many objections from residents. More cameras continue to be set up. This is not only a violation of privacy, and in some cases the Fourth Amendment, but the cameras also enable the city to unfairly track and target people under the guise of 'security.'

Additionally, there are no publicly accessible maps of

surveillance camera locations, which speaks to the city's lack of transparency about the subject. PxP firmly believes that New Orleans residents deserve to know where the cameras are, what they are being used for, and who is using them.

While working to create awareness around New Orleans' aggressive surveillance practices, PxP has also expanded its Hollygrove Garden project, which broke ground in the summer of 2017. The program has shared produce with neighbors, the Carrollton-Hollygrove Senior Center, a local business and the monthly food pantry at St. Peter A.M.E. Church. The garden not only provides nourishment to the collective mind, body and soul of the community, but is also an outdoor teaching space for young people that has literally become a sanctuary space.

With the help of supporters, PxP can increase the capacity of the garden space. However, the garden and community gathering space are under attack by law enforcement agencies. The city has installed a camera that directly overlooks the garden, where PxP holds community events, popular education sessions, and summer and afterschool activities. That's precisely why PxP young adult members launched the #StopWatchingNOLA campaign—to combat overreaching surveillance and profiling of Black and Brown communities.

If you would like to report a camera in your area, please visit StopWatchingNOLA.org to submit and explore the interactive map with confirmed locations.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS HOLDERS JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE



Left: (top) American Friends Immigrant Services (AFIS) TPS committee member Umaine [shares her story](#) during the TPS Journey for Justice; (bottom) AFIS Community Organizer Paul-Andre Mondesir speaks during one of the journey's stops. Photos: National TPS Alliance; AFSC Miami. Right: TPS advocates march through the rain during the TPS People's Summit in Washington, D.C. Below: AFSC Policy Fellow Peniel Ibe (bottom left) joins TPS recipients after a day of lobbying for permanent residency on Capitol Hill. Photo: AFSC/Carl Roose



During the past year, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders in the United States have been forced to consider that they may no longer be protected from the threat of deportation. The Trump administration has ended TPS for several countries, and more lie at risk as their status approaches expiration.

TPS recipients are foreign nationals who are allowed to stay in the U.S. if they are unable to return to their country because of war, natural disaster or other conflict. Many have been driven out of their country of origin and have been in the U.S. for years or decades, where they have built homes and families.

In the fall of 2018, the AFSC's American Friends Immigrant Services in Miami, FL helped shuttle more than 50 TPS holders with the National TPS Alliance across the country to inspire local communities to connect and mobilize with the national campaign for permanent residency and protections for immigrants.

Called the Journey for Justice, the tour from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C. brought attention to the urgent issues TPS holders face. While temporary extensions provide minor relief for immigrants who are trying to find stability, there is no guarantee that another extension will come—at



which point they could be forced to return to a country that has not recovered from economic devastation or is unsafe due to violence.

Umaine Jean, a TPS committee member with AFIS, may be separated from her children if an agreement on a permanent solution is not reached. Umaine has been active with AFIS in speaking out against the termination of TPS, and agrees that the issue requires immediate action.

"We need to be unified, and to stay together, to get what we need," she said about her time with the Journey for Justice. When asked about what it is TPS recipients are looking for, her answer was simple: "Residency—now!"

The National TPS Alliance and AFIS have kept the pressure on in the fight for residency. In February 2019, TPS holders from all over the East Coast again brought their voices to Washington, D.C. for the TPS People's Summit. Hundreds gathered in front of the White House to speak

out against the Trump Administration's unwillingness to acknowledge the humanity of TPS holders.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY) and Rep. Ayanna Pressley (MA) each voiced their support for a permanent solution. "From Nepal to Honduras, we made a promise that we were going to be a safe haven," Ocasio-Cortez said. "We need to make sure that, as a nation, we honor our promises."

Marching in slickers through the rain and cold, TPS recipients and their families filled the street from the White House to the U.S. Capitol, waving heavy flags and banners soaked from the weather.

AFIS and partners of the AFSC accompanied TPS holders to meetings with representatives for the rest of the day, asking that Congress take action to keep immigrant families together; to allow them to continue the lives they have built in the U.S.

The AFSC is calling on Congress to enact a permanent solution that grants lawful permanent residency and a roadmap to citizenship for all immigrants in the country. Join us in demanding relief for TPS, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) by [signing our petition here](#).

RED LIGHT THE GULCH: AFSC ATLANTA RALLIES AGAINST DEVELOPMENT

Right, below: the AFSC's Atlanta Economic Justice Program and supporters gather at City Hall to demand more say in the city's Gulch agreement. Photo: AFSC Atlanta

On the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., organized labor joined community groups on the steps of Atlanta's City Hall to appeal to the mayor and other city leaders who often invoke the name of Dr. King but pursue policies and projects which continue to widen the gap between the rich and poor in Atlanta.

On the steps was an expanded Redlight the Gulch Coalition. In addition to its several community groups, the crowd was joined by a number of labor unions including the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 77, the Laborers International Union of America, Local 515, the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Local 33, the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 136, Unite Here, and Teamsters local 728.

The proposed Gulch development would be a major loss to our communities in Atlanta: a portion of downtown Atlanta would essentially be sold to Los Angeles-based billionaire developers CIM who are known for predatory practices. The public would lose at least \$1.9 billion in taxes, only to receive \$100 million at most back in benefits. There would also be zero public ownership of the new development. The city has felt our pressure and made a few changes to the deal, but it's not enough. We need to apply pressure now more than ever.

Our communities can no longer survive the approach to development that sees our city leaders cutting



billion-dollar welfare checks to the super rich to develop luxury developments with little to no affordable housing, community benefits, or workforce agreements. The money the city spends on the Gulch isn't Monopoly money—it's real, and public funds are being diverted from other public needs in order to help rich developers build a city within a city.

Should the Gulch scheme succeed, CIM will own the sidewalks and the streets. Where is that money coming from? A very large chunk (over \$500 million) will come from a Tax Allocation District (TAD) that would otherwise go to already struggling public schools in Atlanta. The cruel irony is that communities that are being displaced are being forced to pay for their own gentrification through projects like the Gulch.

What adds insult to injury is that when Atlanta's current mayor, Keisha Lance Bottoms, was running for office, she committed to support legally binding community benefits agreements between developers and the communities, but has not made good on her statements.

The current City of Atlanta's

Gulch proposals *do not* include: community benefits agreements; community workforce agreements; real affordable housing; anti-displacement policies; certified apprenticeship programs; and community planning processes.

The Gulch development is simply not in the interest of city residents, communities and taxpayers. This remains true under the current revised deal despite the office of the mayor's attempts to disguise what the project would cost residents.

In November 2018, in a midnight vote, the Atlanta City Council approved nearly \$1.9 billion in public subsidies for the Gulch, pushing the project through with little public input. Despite significant concerns from residents, the city moved forward with multiple ordinances authorizing the allocation of massive amounts of tax revenue for the development.

We must continue to speak out to against this project which will not benefit the public. We're stronger than ever in the fight against unjust development and displacement. Will you stand with us? Learn more here: <https://redlightthegulch.com/>

FRIEND OF A FRIEND: UPDATE FROM THE HAMER-ACOLI FARM

Below is a neighborhood update by Tiffany DeFoe on behalf of Tubman House, a multi-service resource in West Baltimore. Photos: AFSC Friend of a Friend

The Fannie Lou Hamer - Sundiata Acoli Farm, founded in Baltimore by the AFSC's Friend of a Friend program and the Coalition of Friends' [Tubman House](#) in 2016, provides fresh and healthy food, free of charge, to residents of Sandtown-Winchester. It is named for civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, who founded the Freedom Farms Cooperative in 1967; and Sundiata Acoli, former member of the Black Panther Party and current political prisoner in the Federal Correctional Institution at Cumberland, Maryland. The Hamer-Acoli Farm is located on Presbury Street from Fulton to Mount and includes two lots of raised garden beds, an orchard, and a chicken coop. Neighbors are invited to see our new projects and pick up some fresh vegetables and herbs. We're on-site every Sunday from noon to 2:30 PM (weather permitting). We'll be happy to tell you more about the farm, help locals get involved, and share some of the produce we've harvested that day.

The Farm

We had a great summer season on the farm and our summer crops like tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, and eggplants are winding down. We have a few fall crops planted now like squash, beets, and greens. This year we started selling our produce at restaurants around Baltimore like Ida B's and at Goucher College. We're planning to expand the farm over the winter by building more raised beds. Next season we'll have community



beds that we'll cultivate for anyone to harvest from, beds for members of the community to cultivate and harvest on their own, and beds that we'll cultivate and harvest to sell. Next season we're also planning to use several lots nearby to grow and sell flowers. We're also building a new tool shed and we are hoping to build an aerated compost system this winter.

The Orchard

Our orchard is growing! Last season we planted two pear trees on the lot on the corner of Presbury and Fulton. This season we really stepped it up and planted two apple, one fig, two persimmon, and two serviceberry trees and we're planning on planting more next spring. We can't wait for the trees to grow and provide shade and fruit for the community.

The Chickens

We finished building a larger chicken coop and now have 15 chickens, so we'll have more eggs to share with the community. The coop already looks great but some Maryland Institute College of Art students are going to paint it and get it looking

even better. Come by and say hi to the chickens and get some eggs!

Aquaponics

Now that the chickens have moved into their new coop, the shed they lived in before is free to start our aquaponics system. An aquaponics system grows fish and plants together in one integrated system, using fish waste to provide nutrients for the plants instead of fertilized soil. We've already started planning the design, now we just need to start building! Stay tuned for updates on the system and our first fish!

**- TIFFANY DEFOE
FRIEND OF A FRIEND VOLUNTEER**



Community Wealth in Freddie Gray's Neighborhood of Sandtown: Check out this profile of the Hamer-Acoli Farm from The Laura Flanders Show. <https://youtu.be/ADzJ4iJnQqg>

D.C. CELEBRATES 10 YEARS AS HUMAN RIGHTS CITY



Left to right: ONE D.C.'s Maurice Cook; D.C. Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh with AFSC DC Program Associate Rachel Bergsieker; former AFSC DC Program Director Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana



In 2008, the American Friends Service Committee was critical in leading efforts to declare Washington, D.C. a Human Rights City. Last month marked the 10th anniversary of that designation.

In honor of this milestone, the AFSC's [DC Peace and Economic Justice Program](#) organized a Human Rights Week of Action from December 10-14, 2018.

This week began on International Human Rights Day (December 10) and concluded with a community open house at [ONE D.C.](#)'s Black Workers and Wellness Center on December 14.

The open house event, "Celebrate & Renew: D.C. Human Rights 10th Anniversary," was both a celebration of D.C.'s human rights history and a renewed call to action for the next 10 years of human rights work in the city. Speakers included D.C. City Councilmember Mary Cheh, ONE D.C.'s Maurice Cook, and AFSC's General Secretary Joyce Aljouny, as well as spoken word performances by Dwayne B. Lawson (The Crochet Kingpin) and Morgan Butler (Momo the Mermaid) of Busboys and Poets.

During the gathering, Ward 3 Councilmember Cheh presented the group with a resolution recognizing the AFSC's collaboration offering education grounded in a human rights framework: "Whereas the District of Columbia Public Schools has partnered with the American Friends Service Committee to create courses that

teach our students about human rights values, increase their knowledge and understanding of human rights and empower them to become educated and engaged citizens."

The AFSC curated a [blog series from this week of action](#), featuring writing from partners including the [United Nations Association of the National Capital Area](#), [DC Jobs with Justice](#), [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#), [Empower D.C.](#), [Jewish Voice for Peace D.C. Metro](#), and [U.S. Human Rights Network's National Human Rights Cities Alliance](#). The series includes perspectives framing successes and demands for improvement in seeking human rights for all in a true Human Rights City.

Human Rights Week of Action Blog Series: Post 8 by Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana, former Director of AFSC's DC Peace and Economic Justice Program

Note from Program Associate Rachel Bergsieker: Jean-Louis is well-known for his dedication to advancing human rights locally and globally. In 2008, Jean-Louis led a grassroots coalition in successful advocacy to establish D.C. as the first Human Rights City in the United States. During his tenure at AFSC, Jean-Louis also established our Human Rights Learning Program, which seeks to expand human rights education to D.C. students. Through

this program, students use the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) as a framework to identify, define, analyze, and take action to address human rights violations in their own communities.

Having led DC's human rights city movement for its first nine years, the AFSC asked Jean-Louis to share his vision for DC in its second decade as a human rights city. Given his passion for education, it is not surprising that Jean-Louis's vision for D.C.'s future as a human rights city is centered around that topic. He writes:

My vision for D.C. in its second decade as a Human Rights City is a full realization of its real meaning: "A Human Rights City is one whose residents and local authorities, through on-going discussions and creative exchanges of ideas, come to understand that human rights, when widely known as a way of life, assist in identifying the issues and informs the actions in our DC communities, for meaningful, positive economic and social change." Furthermore, I dream of a city where every DC Public School student knows and understands the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is motivated to become an agent of peace and social justice.

Jean-Louis now serves as the Director of Partnerships for [TEACH-NOW](#).



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