



AFSC New Hampshire Program Highlights

OCTOBER 2015 - OCTOBER 2016

Governing Under the Influence

By the time the NH Primary dust settled, we had trained more than 900 “bird dogs” in more than 50 workshops. Staff and volunteers asked candidates more than 300 questions about how corporate cash drives policies that give us more wars, more weapons, and more prisons. Together we changed the national conversation. Months later, references to our efforts are still popping up in campaign coverage of issues such as the plan to spend a trillion dollars on new nuclear weapons and the immigrant detention mandate which separates families while it drives up corporate profits.



State House Watching

Our weekly “State House Watch” newsletter went out by email just about every Friday from the beginning of January to the end of June, carrying news about hearings and votes on topics such as Medicaid expansion, death penalty abolition, and tenants’ rights. And our weekly radio show on WNHN-FM provided a platform for legislators and advocates to talk about the issues and the politics that drive the lawmaking process inside the State House. We also joined a complaint to the US Department of Justice concerning the unjust treatment of people with mental illness committed to the Secure Psychiatric Unit at the State Prison.

AFSC provided the spark to motivate members of the faith community to bring a prayerful presence to the State House in support of health care, living wages, and human rights.



Immigrant Visitation Program

With the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ, AFSC provides training and support for volunteers to make weekly visits with immigrants who are being held at the county jail in Dover. The volunteers help reduce the isolation that detained immigrants experience, and also arrange free consultations with immigration lawyers.

“We Are Concord”

Following incidents of public intolerance expressed toward refugee families in Concord, AFSC led an effort to convene “community conversations” and give more than 250 local residents an opportunity to share their ideas for ways to bring the community together. With our Grassroots Organizer Intern, Ayi D’Almeida, we are following up with workshops to help low-income residents – both immigrants and native-born – learn about their rights relative to voting, housing, employment, and more.



“We Are Concord” meeting. Photo: Becky Field

Strengthening Immigrant-Led Organizations

With an active presence on the Board of Directors for New American Africans, AFSC supported the organization’s transition to a new director in 2016, and worked to ensure African leadership on the Board.



New American Africans “Family Fun Night.” Photo: Becky Field

“Exploring Class and Classism”

In partnership with Class Action, NH Listens, and the Investing in Communities initiative, AFSC led the organizing of workshops in Claremont, Berlin, Manchester, and Pittsfield to explore why class is often so difficult to talk about in New Hampshire, and how we could better engage with others in our community with a different lived experience from our own to work towards shared goals. More than 80 participants discussed matters personal and political, laying the groundwork for a shared economic justice agenda.



During the long lead-up to the NH Primary, AFSC’s “Governing Under the Influence” project worked with dozens of groups to put on trainings, rallies, marches, conferences, and educational programs that directly engaged more than 1000 people. Our major partner groups included NextGen Climate, NH Peace Action, and Open Democracy/NH Rebellion.



NH Voices of Faith

The “NH Voices of Faith” were visible and audible in the hallways before hearings and votes, including every hearing and vote related to the reauthorization of the NH Health Protection Program.

As part of the NH Voices of Faith, AFSC and the United Church of Christ Economic Justice Mission Group spread the word about the “Higher Ground Moral Declaration,” a prophetic call coming out of North Carolina’s “Moral Monday” movement, and arranged for the “Nuns on the Bus” to visit New Hampshire.





Addressing the Housing Crisis

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

Nuclear Weapons Working Group

Following the NH Primary season success of getting attention to the ongoing nuclear danger, AFSC volunteers have continued a project of education and action. Over the summer and fall, the Nuclear Weapons Working Group, jointly sponsored by NH Peace Action, has provided briefings for more than 10 candidates in US Senate and House races.



Working in Partnership

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



The Martin Luther King Day Community Celebration always concludes with the singing of "We Shall Overcome."



Thanks to the generosity of AFSC supporters, our offices in Des Moines and Concord were able to staff up for the 18 months leading to the the first caucus and the first Primary election. We are grateful for the talents and dedication of Miranda Myers, Olivia Zink, and Eric Zulaski, who made it possible for us to involve hundreds of volunteers, reach thousands of people, and change the nation’s political discourse.

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



Maggie Fogarty and Arnie Alpert are Co-Directors of the New Hampshire Program. Ayi D’Almeida is the Grassroots Organizer Intern for 2016.



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