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**American Friends
Service Committee**

Area Office of the Carolinas

APRIL 2016

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:
CITLALY MORA**

30th Anniversary Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace



April Quote:

*“When you’re
fighting for
economic and
social justice,
you’re always
fighting for the
minority”*

-Bob Kerrey



When Gail Phares first organized people to walk across the state for peace during Holy Week in 1986, she didn’t think it would continue for decades. “I had no idea what it was going to be,” she says. “The focus of our first Pilgrimage was on the Contra War. The U.S. was supporting the contras, who were bombing Nicaraguan clinics and schools. We walked into Raleigh from seven cities and we carried crosses with the names of people killed and their ages and their occupation, to make it real for people in the U.S.”

Gail continues, “Later, we focused on the School of the Americas, where the U.S. is training military operatives in Latin America. Since the 1990s, we have focused on immigrants because they are here in North Carolina, living among us. It helps people think about important issues during Holy Week.”

Gail has since retired, and now Ron Garcia Fogarty leads

the sponsoring organization, Witness For Peace Southeast, and the Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace, which tours different North Carolina cities every day during the week preceding Easter to lift up issues of social justice.

“We see our Pilgrimage as a way to connect foreign policy and the consequences that we see on a day-to-day basis in North Carolina,” Ron explains. “We see our immigration policies that are turning away those very same people that we have harmed in the first place with our policies in Latin America.”

In recent years, Ron says, the Pilgrimage has focused not just on policies impacting Latin America, but “also issues that have become more critically important in our lives, like the health of our planet, and the violence that African Americans have always experienced but are also experiencing in new ways from the police and the school to prison pipeline.”

On Tuesday, March 22, Pilgrimage participants walked through Greensboro and carried their trademark crosses lifting up Black Lives Matter, Citizenship Not Deportation, and Climate Justice.

AFSC has supported the Pilgrimage for many years, and AFSC staffer Lori Khamala also has a history with the walk: “I have participated in the Pilgrimage for nearly half of its existence, starting when I worked for the National Farm Worker Ministry from 2001-2007, highlighting farmworker justice. It has become a meaningful part of my spiritual practice, and a beautiful way to start Spring in North Carolina.”

Congratulations to Witness for Peace Southeast and we wish the Pilgrimage another 30 years!

*-Lori Fernald Khamala,
AFSC Staff*

COMMUNITY SEEKS TO HALT DEPORTATION OF WILDIN

On January 28th, 19-year-old Wildin Acosta was arrested at his house by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as he packed his book bag for school. ICE was waiting outside the house to arrest him, and took him into custody for deportation procedures. Wildin was scheduled to graduate this June from Riverside High School in Durham, N.C.

Sadly, Wildin's story is not unique. There have been several cases around the US and in North Carolina, where students have been arrested on their way to school. The strategically planned raids are part of the Obama administration's plan to find and deport undocumented immigrants who entered the US after 2014, when a lot of unaccompanied children and families crossed the border to escape the ongoing violence in Central America.

In Wildin's case, he was escaping from gang members trying to kill him for refusing to join their gang in Honduras. His deportation would endanger his life because gang members will immediately target him upon his arrival. As Wildin remains in a rural jail in Georgia, Alerta Migratoria – a local Durham, NC based group for undocumented immigrants- is working with Wildin's family, teachers, and students to organize vigils, protests, and other demonstrations to ask ICE to stop Wildin's deportation, and bring him home to North Carolina.

Teachers are sending letters of support and even homework to keep him up-to-date with classroom assignments. His departure has left an empty space in the lives of many. Other undocumented students at Riverside High School have stopped going to class too. They are afraid of being deported. This has led many teachers to join the fight to stop students' deportations.

Alerta Migratoria, among others, is currently asking elected officials and Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton to request Wildin's release from jail. Family, friends, and teachers hope Wildin can be home, and graduate from high school as he awaits the appeals process.

JOIN THE FIGHT TO BRING WILDIN HOME.

Ask Representatives G.K. Butterfield, David Price & Alma Adams, and presidential candidates to stop the deportation of Wildin Acosta.

Check Alertamigrantorianc.org for the most current action alerts!

-Jose Oliva, AFSC Intern



COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP SUGGESTS POLICING REFORMS

On Tuesday, March 22nd, Greensboro's Community-City Working Group convened a community meeting at Bethel AME Church to discuss solutions for improving relations between the Greensboro community and police. To accomplish this task, residents from varying backgrounds and areas of the city were intermixed and divided into eight groups to encourage a greater variety of suggestions. At the conclusion of this portion of the program, people reconvened so the small groups could share their thoughts with everyone.

In particular, one group's idea of forming a Citizen's Review Board found significant support. Residents felt it was vital that such a board possess subpoena powers and publicly elect its members. In addition to this, another group called for greater emphasis on the principles of community based policing. While it was acknowledged that requiring officers to live in the community they serve may be impractical, the overall consensus of the group was that more could be done to ensure police are invested in uplifting local neighborhoods. Residents also voiced concerns about the hiring practices of the Greensboro Police Department (GPD). 75% of department employees identify as white, yet only 48% of Greensboro residents are white. View additional statistics here <http://tinyurl.com/ntlzk2o>.

Speakers at the meeting reasoned that GPD's recruitment efforts toward minorities are inadequate, and in need of direction. One resident noted that "there are a good amount of blacks out there who want to be police officers; GPD just isn't looking in the right places to recruit them."

-Kahlil Perine, AFSC Intern

AFSC YOUTH SPEAK OUT FOR POLICE BODY CAMS

AFSC staff member Toni Etheridge and interns Naomi Madaras and Kahlil Perine attended the Greensboro City Council meeting on April 5th to give statements on the proposed release of police body cam footage to the public. Staff and interns met with retired Civil Rights Attorney Lewis Pitts prior to the meeting, where they learned more about Pitts' proposed ordinance for public access and the current legal limitations on releasing such footage.

Currently there exist some obscurity and controversy surrounding the release of police body cam footage in Greensboro, as there is no law that defines whether body cam footage should be considered a public record. In past incidences, the police force has denied public access to such footage, stating that the footage belongs to an officer's private personnel file. However, there are certain state regulations that can be applied to the proposed release of such footage to the public. For instance, the "Public Records Act" states: "Public record of public records shall mean all documents, papers, letters [...] photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes [...] made or received pursuant to law or ordinance in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of NC government or its subdivision."

AFSC staff and interns, along with Lewis Pitts, each made statements at the meeting on April 5th to outline the benefits of releasing police body cam footage to the public, including higher levels of trust between police and citizens and improved transparency in the judicial process.

-Naomi Madaras, AFSC Intern



"NO WAY TO TREAT A CHILD" SCREENING COMES TO GUILFORD

On April 4th, longtime activist Jennifer Bing visited Greensboro to deliver a presentation on the issue of the Israeli military detention system's treatment of Palestinian children. Jennifer Bing directs the Palestine/Israel program of AFSC from the Chicago office, and has spent several years working in Palestine/Israel, as well as doing grassroots organizing and community education surrounding the treatment of Palestinian youth.

Several Guilford students, alumni, AFSC staff members, and community members attended Jennifer Bing's presentations, asking questions and hearing personal reflections on the issue. At one point, Jennifer recalled one particularly unnerving experience in Palestine during a violent police raid, when she looked out the window and noticed a "US Military" emblem on Israeli vehicles. As citizens of a nation that funds Israeli arms, the issue of detaining children is far from isolated. Americans fund this operation through our tax dollars, and it is estimated that the US provides \$10.2 million to Israel, daily.

Jennifer Bing, along with others, have created the No Way to Treat a Child campaign, which seeks to challenge Israel's prolonged military occupation of Palestinians by exposing the ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system. As reported, "Israel has the dubious distinction of being the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes children in military courts each year. Since 2011, Israel has held an average of 201 Palestinian children in custody each month." The documentary screening presents a clear responsibility to ask who is impacted by our support and the role we play in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. For more information, visit the website of No Way to Treat a Child: <http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/>.

-Naomi Madaras, AFSC Intern



AFSC TRAINS YOUTH ON MEDIA

AFSC Intern Allison Stalberg has been presenting workshops for youth on how to lift up their voices and their issues in the media. She has trained youth at Page High School and the Hayes-Taylor YMCA Achievers group on how to write letters to the editor. She had the pleasure to work privately with youth to get 200 words down for their first drafts. All were passionate: one wrote about an issue of violence in her school, another wrote about global warming, while another wrote about her idea of enhancing school lunches by using an old greenhouse at the school. Two letters to the editor were published from our AFSC workshops in the Greensboro News & Record! You can view the letters here: tinyurl.com/jsq3eob and tinyurl.com/ztwzvhc.

Other YMCA youth worked alongside AFSC Fellow Leticia Benitez writing personal statements based on their values. Leticia helped them articulate their values in writing, with the goal of inspiring future activism-through-writing among the group. Two Achievers' personal statements revolved around the importance of being true to self. Both Achievers highlighted that "in order to be true to yourself, you must do what makes you happy."

-Allison Stalberg, AFSC Intern and Leticia Benitez, AFSC Fellow

AFSC WECOMES NEW INTERN!

Fernando Jimenez is from High Point, North Carolina and originally from Guanajuato, Mexico. He is a First Year Bonner Scholar at Guilford College and has a passion for human rights and immigration issues. He is currently the coordinator for the Soy un Lider conference and works as a photographer for the school's newspaper.



Fernando hopes to develop his leadership and photography skills by serving as an intern in AFSC and being involved directly with the community in Greensboro.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Greensboro Participatory Budgeting

VOTE

You Decide How To Improve the community!
Vote on how to spend \$100,000 in your district!

www.greensboro-nc.gov/pb

District 1: April 15, 4-8 pm Hayes-Taylor YMCA; April 21, 12-4 pm Glenwood Library

District 2: April 14, 4-8 pm Mc Girt-Horton Library 2501; April 18, 12-4 pm Windsor Recreation Center

District 3: April 13, 4-8 pm and April 19, 12-4pm Central Library

District 4: April 11, 12-4 pm Kathleen Clay Edwards Library; April 20, 4-8 pm Lindley Recreation Center

District 5: April 12, 4-8 pm Hemphill Library; April 22, 12-4 pm Griffin Recreation Center

O: 336-373-7750 OR TEXT "VOTE" TO 855-910-7110

UNITE! ORGANIZE! CELEBRATE! CREATE!

WORKER JUSTICE ASSEMBLY

Join the movement for worker power in North Carolina!

Calling all workers to assemble: black, latinx, white, queer, immigrant, young, students! If you are looking for work, are having trouble at work or want to know more about your rights, come! To celebrate International Workers Day (May 1), come! To connect with other workers, develop leadership and build power for the struggle to win \$15, better working conditions, respect and a voice in workplaces in Greensboro and beyond, come!

For more information: centralcarolinaworkers@gmail.com 336-543-0545
[facebook.com/carolinaworkers](https://www.facebook.com/carolinaworkers) - twitter.com/carolinaworkers - carolinaworkers.org

SATURDAY APRIL 30 2016
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Central Carolina Worker Justice Center
407 E. Washington St., Greensboro, NC

Child care, lunch and snacks provided

WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN \$15 & A UNION

Central Carolina Worker Justice Assembly
Saturday, April 30, 2016, 10am-4pm
407 E. Washington St. Greensboro, NC 27401
Childcare, lunch and snacks provided
For more info: 336-543-0565

Do you have DACA? undocumented? Ally? Facing higher education obstacles?

Then Come join us for **Encuentro** Free Event

May 7th, 2016
10am - 4pm

*Lunch will be provided

Guilford College, 5800 W Friendly Ave, Greensboro, NC 27410

If you don't know how to speak to representatives, it's okay! We'll be having a Lobby Training, College Access workshop, and a Building Allies discussion! You can't miss it! Remember UNDOCUMENTED GRADUATION is right around the corner!

For more info contact Jose & Yubi Sandoval lltuition.equitync@gmail.com
www.learntriad.org/encuentro

American Friends Service Committee, Guilford College, LEARN TRIAD

Let's Learn Triad- Encuentro for tuition equality and info about college for undocumented students
Saturday, May 7, 2016 at Guilford College in Greensboro
Lunch provided
For more info: LLTtuition.equitync@gmail.com
Tinyurl.com/TriadEncuentro