

# AFSC Midwest Digest – September 25, 2019

*Highlights of work from around the region*

*Special note:* Join AFSC Chicago at our annual [benefit](#) celebrating solidarity and resistance in Chicago and abroad!

★ 2019 Inspiration for Hope Award Honorees★  
[Arab American Action Network](#) and [Worldview!](#)



## Countering anti-Muslim racism in schools and communities

Educator Hafsa Siddiqui, who collaborated with AFSC Chicago on a curriculum called [Creating Cultural Competencies](#), offers these [ways](#) for teachers and others to create spaces where all young people feel they belong. Hafsa encourages people to educate themselves and others while learning how to shift the narrative. Join AFSC and partners for an interactive [webinar](#) on this work Thursday, September 26 at 7 pm Central.



## Demanding an investment in communities to end gun violence

Kayden Johnson was 2, Kristina Curry was 16, Kennedy Powell was 3, Eddie Hall IV was 10, and Xavier Usanga was 7. These are just a five of the numerous young black people killed in St. Louis communities since January, [writes](#) Jonathan Pulphus of AFSC. He adds, “Years of lack of funding into social services while public safety (policing) budgets skyrocket deserves part of the blame.” Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) played key roles in a [rally](#) calling for solutions. Young people in Chicago recently made a similar [call](#).



## Michigander goes from volunteer to staff

“We have a tendency to judge people based on the worst thing they’ve ever done instead of working toward restoring people, addressing the harm that was done to the community, restoring victims and people who’ve been impacted by crime,” says new staffer Jacq Williams in [this interview](#). Jacq has been a volunteer with AFSC Michigan’s Criminal Justice Program for several years and has advocated for incarcerated women who are pregnant. Natalie Holbrook, who directs AFSC’s work in Michigan, authored a report that’s cited in [this story](#) about a new farmer’s market at the women’s prison.



## Student organizers learn about the power of digital storytelling

Migwe Kimemia [shares](#) about AFSC’s We Dream a World program in Ohio and African students’ reactions to a recent workshop on digital storytelling. “This workshop helps create a change in my life and community by helping me see that there are others around me who are walking on a similar path,” one person said. “The idea of ‘we’ is in every one of us and we have each other.”



*Jehad Abuslim of AFSC talks about Gaza. Photo: Matthew Paul D'Agostino*

## Advocates for Palestine gather in DC

AFSC's recent conference, *Preparing for 2020: Advocating for Rights, Justice, and Freedom*, "was an excellent antidote to the stormy and frightening times in which we live," [writes](#) Alice Rothchild. She adds, "The positive energy, humor, honesty, and commitment were infectious and uplifting."

On October 1 at 7 pm Central, join Jennifer Bing of AFSC and Brad Parker from DCI-P for a [webinar](#) on how you can use HR 2407, part of the No Way to Treat a Child campaign, to propel discussions on Palestinian human rights.



*Erica Johnson (far right) receives an honor on behalf of AFSC Iowa.*

## AFSC Iowa staff honored

Lutheran Services in Iowa recently recognized staff from [Iowa Justice For Our Neighbors](#) (JFON) and AFSC Iowa for their work on naturalizations with LSI participants. (Not pictured above are AFSC Legal Services Director Jody Mashek and Administrative Assistant Berenice Nava.)

Erica Johnson reports that the [Iowa Sanctuary Movement](#), coordinated by AFSC, is planning a film series on immigration. On November 2, [Carol and Bob Bartles](#) are hosting a fundraiser in Burlington, Iowa for AFSC Iowa and [Iowa WINS](#).



## Muslim Youth Collective in Indy seeks applicants

Muslim youth near the Indianapolis area who are committed to upholding and encouraging social justice values are encouraged to apply for a fellowship focused on organizing and leadership skills. Learn more by visiting [mycindy.org](http://mycindy.org). MYC is supported by AFSC's [Communities Against Islamophobia](#).

## Bits and Peaces

Brant Rosen has announced his resignation as Regional Director for AFSC's Midwest Region, effective November 29, 2019. Brant will become the full-time rabbi at [Tzedek Chicago](#). Sharon Goens-Bradley will serve as Interim RD....Learn more about [Iran](#), [decriminalizing Hamas](#), and how the Trump Administration is making it harder for [asylum seekers](#)....AFSC in Colorado has created this [resource](#) to support those facing deportation, and Kristin Kumpf of AFSC shares this good [news](#) about AFSC's work to shut down the nation's largest child detention center in Homestead.

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