Iowans talk about DACA and TPS
The AFSC Iowa Immigrant Rights Program recently organized an assembly for 30 DACA and TPS beneficiaries and their families. Jody Mashek, who directs the Legal Services Program, joined with former staff Kenia Calderon (above) and Ceci Martinez in sharing information about the status of the two programs and how we can fight for them in Iowa. Berenice Nava, AFSC Administrative Associate, said the TPS holders especially appreciated meeting in tandem with DACA recipients. “People were able to see how alike we are,” Berenice said, “and that we have the same fears around what’s happening and similar hopes for what we can create together.” To view more photos of the event, please visit [AFSC Iowa](#) on Facebook.

Chicgoans celebrate solidarity and resistance
Last Sunday, AFSC Chicago volunteers, donors and staff gathered at Alhambra Palace Restaurant for AFSC’s annual fundraising event. The festivities included a silent auction, AFSC bingo game, and reviews of AFSC’s Palestine-Israel and Peacebuilding programs. AFSC presented its 2019 Inspiration for Hope Awards to the Arab American Action Network (AAAN) and [Worldview](#). Brant Rosen, who will soon conclude five years of service as Regional Director of the Midwest Region, shared these closing remarks and encouraged people to support AFSC’s dynamic work in Chicago.
Students in Ohio embrace digital storytelling
Migwe Kimemia, AFSC Ohio Program Director, recently facilitated an interactive Digital Storytelling Challenge for African student organizers from the University of Dayton and Wright State University. During the interactive challenge, the students explored some ideas of combining the art of telling stories through a variety of multimedia outlets, including graphics, audio, video, and film.

“Teamwork makes the dream work,” said one student. “I learned that everyone has great ideas, but when we come together, we can be better.” Read more.

Michiganders rally to end life without parole
The National Lifers of America from Cotton prison hosted a large rally recently on the steps of the Michigan Capitol to provide visibility to people serving life without parole and their loved ones. Please see Safe and Just Michigan’s Annie Mahar’s post about the event.

Catch more updates on an Ending Perpetual Punishment convening, legislative work in support of pregnant women in prison, and challenging the mandatory nature of the felony firearm sentence in this update from the AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program. See also Natalie Holbrook’s blog on why those who oppose capital punishment should also oppose death by incarceration.
Students speak truth to power in St. Louis
Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) interns spoke their truths at September’s St. Louis Public School Board Meeting, writes Jonathan Pulphus of AFSC. The young people presented their views on policy before the school board officials, calling for improvements around teaching, testing, and safety officers. Follow-up from the session led to an awareness that there must be better processes for addressing student concerns.

“Every public or private meeting should be about the business of ensuring that scholars and their voices matter,” concludes Jonathan. “They face many obstacles in their journey to become alumni, yet having a seat at their own table shouldn’t be one of them.”

Chicago art exhibit promotes resistance and community
A current art exhibit called “FOUND: Love Letters of Muslim Resistance and Community” was curated and organized by AFSC-Chicago, StopCVE Chicago, and PO Box Collective in partnership with Arab American Action Network, CAIR - Chicago, and the Arab Jewish Partnership for Peace and Justice in the Middle East. Here’s the recording of a webinar led by Mary Zerkel on Countering Islamophobia in classrooms and schools, and here’s Zareen Kamal’s blog on Three Ways We Can Support Muslim Students.
Bits and Peaces
AFSC’s partners in Indianapolis will play active roles in the 24th annual Spirit & Place Festival, which will include AFSC’s Boycott Exhibit on November 7…Stay tuned for updates on this week’s AFSC Freedom School in the Twin Cities…Read these recent AFSC blogs on the No Way to Treat a Child campaign and AFSC material aid to elders in Gaza….The trial will begin soon for faith leaders and veterans arrested at the AFSC-led Love Knows No Borders action from December 2018….AFSC’s Colorado office recently released this resource for people facing deportation to Mexico and Central America….And take action to formally end the Korean War, protect asylum seekers, and cancel Somali debt.

Your support matters
Your gifts of time and money make a real difference. Please support AFSC by donating now and sharing this subscription link for the Midwest Digest. Please like AFSC Midwest on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. Thanks!