

AFSC Midwest Digest

Some Highlights of Work from Around the Region — December 7, 2017

Historic bill supports Palestinian children

US tax dollars would no longer support the Israeli military's detention of Palestinian children under a bill introduced last month in Congress. [Rep. Betty McCollum](#) of Minnesota and nine others authored H.R. 4391, "The Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act," and we need you to [contact](#) your members of Congress to push for it.

Jennifer Bing of AFSC's Chicago office has worked tirelessly on the [No Way to Treat a Child](#) campaign. Read her piece in [Truthout](#) and this coverage in [Al Jazeera](#) and [Electronic Intifada](#). This [infographic](#) is helpful, too.

Chicagoans and Iowans mark AFSC's centennial

The Midwest continued to celebrate AFSC's first 100 years with a very successful fundraising dinner in Chicago and workshops and plenary in Des Moines. Joyce Ajlouny, AFSC General Secretary, spoke at both events. In [Des Moines](#), Denver Sanctuary leader Jeanette [Vizguerra](#) gave the keynote address.

Other media include an [op-ed](#) by Erica Johnson and this [interview](#) with Jeanette and Gabriela Flora (starting at the 35:45 mark). AFSC was pleased to [honor](#) community leaders Isabel Conn and Fabiola Schirmeister. Photographers [Jon Krieg](#) and [Jeff Kisling](#) were on hand, and AFSC intern Evan Sundermeyer created this history [slideshow](#).

Cary Fellow to work with African immigrants in Dayton

Sarah Michieka is a recent graduate of Harvard with a Bachelors in African Studies and Economics. While an undergrad, she was involved in a variety of social engagement initiatives with African diaspora communities in the Boston area and researched Kenyan diaspora issues as a Research Fellow of the [Weatherhead Center for International Affairs](#).

Sarah was born in Nairobi, Kenya but was raised in the US. As a Kenyan in the diaspora, she is passionate about improving the immigrant experience and building strong support for diaspora communities. Sarah is excited to support AFSC's Ohio Immigrant Voice Program as it works to empower African immigrant students in leadership and action within their communities, especially through the launch of the "We Dream a World" project to promote a welcoming global village in Ohio.

Migwe Kimemia adds, "AFSC is inspired by Sarah's background and passion for empowering African students to have a voice and become creative changemakers in Ohio."



Israeli forces detain a Palestinian boy in East Jerusalem. (Photo credit: [Activestills.org](#))



AFSC General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny, left, visits with Denver Sanctuary leader Jeanette Vizguerra at the AFSC Centennial Celebration in Des Moines. More photos [here](#).



Sarah Michieka is the new Cary Fellow with AFSC in Dayton.

Daryl's story of redemption

The AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program is pleased to release a new [video](#) as part of the "Changing the Narrative" Campaign. We appreciate Daryl Alexander sharing his story of personal redemption and the power to overcome obstacles. AFSC aims to highlight stories of people who were incarcerated for far too long and made it to freedom through parole, commutation, or re-sentencing.

Michigan staff graciously hosted the rest of the [Midwest staff](#) for a retreat in November. Korbin Felder [writes](#) about the staff's visit with [James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership](#) in Detroit.

"What does love have to do with protest?"

Joshua Saleem, who directs AFSC's work in St. Louis, asks that question in this [blog](#) about police killing of people of color. Joshua writes: "We protest because we love ourselves, our neighbors, our community enough to not allow injustice to thrive among us. Why? Because injustice harms everyone. It has literally been killing people of color for centuries, and it kills the humanity of people in power and those who have come to be known as white, as well."

Joshua was one of three male staff quoted in this [reflection](#) about the [#metoo](#) movement. He also authored this [letter](#) about the work of prioritizing social justice in school.

Changemaker addresses Islamophobia in Indy

At AFSC, Umaymah Mohammed works to address cultural stereotypes by leading Communities Against Islamophobia workshops in Indianapolis. During these workshops, she helps participants acknowledge that racism and Islamophobia are real—and aren't just present in the crude rhetoric of white nationalists.

When it comes to standing against Islamophobia, her number one tip is to listen to affected communities. "There will naturally be some points of contention," she says. But "when someone from the affected community speaks, listen to it, whether you believe it or not," because listening can help you understand why a person feels the way they do.

Also in Indy, check out AFSC Indiana's [statement](#) in support of the free speech rights of Palestinian American students. Here's a [recap](#) of AFSC's farmers' markets work on Gaza (see staffer Malkah Bird in photo at right) and an invitation to a ["Gaza: Lunch and Learn"](#) on December 18.



AFSC Midwest staff visit the Boggs Center in Detroit.



A protest against police brutality in St. Louis. (Photo by Joshua Saleem)



Umaymah Mohammed works with AFSC in Indiana to counter Islamophobia.



Look sharp while supporting good work!

Support AFSC Chicago's [work](#) to end police violence and surveillance. And gift yourself or a friend a new t-shirt! Here's how:

1. Donate \$20 (per shirt you'd like) to AFSC Chicago Peacebuilding at this link: <http://bit.do/AFSCshirt>
2. Email dsouthorn@afsc.org with your shirt size(s) and design preference(s).

**If you choose to become a monthly contributor at \$10.00 or more, you get all three shirts!

ALL ORDERS PLACED BEFORE DEC. 15th WILL ARRIVE BEFORE DEC. 25th! Shout-out to [Puente Ink](#) in Arizona for their fantastic screen-printing skills and [For the People Artists Collective's Monica Trinidad](#) for the designs!

Chicago's Peacebuilding Program also works on countering Islamophobia. Here are some [tips](#) in time for the holidays from Mary Zerkel and [ideas](#) for how to engage rather than enrage on the topic.

Short takes, part 1

The next AFSC Freedom School in the Twin Cities is set for December 27-29; contact [Sharon Goens-Bradley](#) for more information....Iowans recently [rallied](#) in support of DACA and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders....Did Joyce Ajlouny really blow out [candles](#) on an AFSC Centennial birthday cake?....Check out AFSC's recent posts on [TPS](#), Trump's [hate tweets](#), and whites working for [racial justice](#).

Short takes, part 2

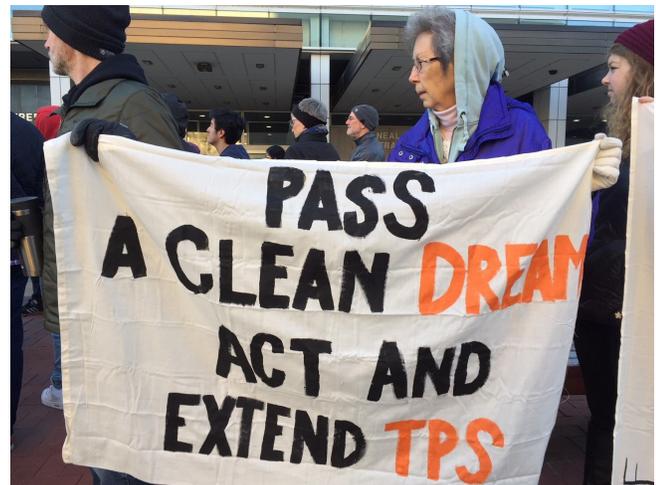
Brant Rosen shares these blog posts on a theology of [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions \(BDS\)](#) and [Gaza](#).... AFSC has created this [video](#) calling for a Clean Dream Act....Need some AFSC swag? Check out our new [online store](#)!....What act of resistance inspired you the most during the past year? Share your stories [here](#).

Thanks as always for your support

Your gifts of time and money help AFSC shine a bright light. Go [here](#) to give. And please share this [subscription link](#) for the Midwest Digest with anyone you think might like to connect with AFSC's creative work in the Midwest. *Thanks!*



T-shirts in support of AFSC's Chicago work



Iowans rally for a Clean Dream Act and in support of TPS holders. More photos [here](#).



One more group shot of AFSC's amazing Midwest staff.