

# **AFSC Midwest Digest**

## **Some Highlights of Work from Around the Region — February 22, 2018**

### **"You don't sound like an American."**

So [said](#) a WGN-TV anchor to Hoda Katebi, a co-trainer with AFSC's [Communities Against Islamophobia](#) program in Chicago. Hoda and co-trainer Sofia Sami are starting to do Muslim-only workshops within Muslim student organizations around the city at various colleges. Along with a six-week course offered to Chicago Public School teachers, AFSC is building a base of people willing to speak out and help organize campaigns against Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and other surveillance programs, including those in the schools.

Also in Chicago, Debbie Southorn has been providing significant leadership to a youth-led [campaign](#) against a proposed police academy for Chicago. Organizers are canvassing in the neighborhood of the proposed site for the academy, doing the hard work of door knocking and visiting alderpeople, trying to gain support both within the neighborhood and in various wards. Over the last month, AFSC was an organizational supporter of an amazing art exhibit called [Do Not Resist—100 Years of Police Violence in Chicago](#).

### **School-to-Prison Pipeline documentary to premier March 7**

"In my school, only black people get out-of-school suspensions." So says high school senior Menkahre Rawlings in a new 30-minute AFSC documentary entitled *Pipe Dreams: Implicit Bias in Education*. Joshua Saleem, who directs AFSC's work in St. Louis, adds, "In addition to the screening, we'll have Youth Undoing Institutional Racism ([YUIR](#)) awards to highlight the good work young people are already doing on racial justice in St. Louis, leading up to our next AFSC Freedom School later in April."

### **Youth facilitate AFSC Freedom School, guide direction**

Dominique Diaddigo-Cash said AFSC in the Twin Cities had six youth facilitators at the AFSC Freedom School in December. "For the first time, six youth had the opportunity to facilitate courses in the curriculum, and now we're deciding what we want our organizing to be around," Dominique said.

"We recently attended a rally to protect TPS (Temporary Protected Status) and DACA," he added. "After the rally, young people got together for a meeting to talk about how we want to guide some of our organizing." Connect here on [Twitter](#).



Hoda Katebi, right, stands up against the Islamophobic questions of TV anchors in Chicago.



Menkahre Rawlings talks about teachers bias against black students in a new AFSC St. Louis documentary.



Young people involved with AFSC's Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) work in the Twin Cities.

## **AFSC in Indiana: “We all belong here”**

AFSC’s recent We All Belong Here press conference was a huge [success!](#) Joining us to take a stand against the Muslim ban was Indiana Undocumented Youth Alliance, ACLU Indiana, Jewish Voice for Peace-Indiana, Muslim Alliance of Indiana, Don’t Sleep, Indy 10 Black Lives Matter, Exodus Refugee Immigration and the Muslim Youth Collective.

AFSC held a multi-weekly, Muslim-Only Communities Against Islamophobia training as a more focused way of centralizing what can be done within the Muslim community to combat Islamophobia. AFSC also hosted a roundtable discussion on anti-Semitism and is organizing another Alternative Spring Break for Earlham College students March 11-16 in Chicago, focusing on Palestine issues. Mark your calendars for an April 21 “[Hearing in the Heartland](#),” lifting up [Gaza Unlocked](#) concerns at the Central Library in Indy.

## **Improving food, commuting sentences in Michigan**

How would you like to be fed on two dollars a day by a for-profit company? That’s the current reality for prisoners in Michigan, but AFSC is working with others to ensure healthy, local food for those incarcerated. Natalie Holbrook, who directs AFSC’s Criminal Justice Program, is writing a report based on her research of the history of food procurement practices in Michigan and horticultural practices and farms inside of prisons.

AFSC staff are helping people in prison craft their commutation requests to the governor, who is nearing the end of his term. Staff are working on a new booklet to accompany AFSC’s [Changing the Narrative](#) video released last year.

## **Connecting with students on conflict minerals and pushing for gender equity in Dayton**

Sarah Michieka, a Cary Intern with AFSC’s office in Dayton, has been meeting with African student leaders in advance of the launch of AFSC’s “We Dream a World Project.” Read about her recent [visit](#) to Earlham College.

Migwe Kimemia reports on the good news of the recent appointment of a woman to lead the New African Immigrants Commission in Ohio. AFSC staff will be attending the next meeting of the commission.



*A diverse coalition of people in Indiana rally to mark the one-year anniversary of the first Muslim Ban.*



*A screenshot from the AFSC video [Changing the Narrative: The Case for Commutations in Michigan](#).*



*Earlham College students engage with AFSC staff about conflict minerals and how to build a conflict-free campus.*

## **Having a heart for immigrants in Iowa**

AFSC in Iowa is fighting hard (see [photos](#) and a [video](#)) to stop anti-sanctuary city [legislation](#) while also pushing resolutions in support of people with [DACA](#) and [TPS](#). Intern Ricky Corona recently [compiled](#) a year-end report on ICE activity in Iowa and led an effort to make [valentines](#) for the Iowa House Public Safety Committee, with whom staff and volunteers had good conversations.

AFSC led a [training](#) for immigrants on advocacy and helped stop a bad [bill](#) on immigrant identification. Program Director Erica Johnson contributed to this Sanctuary Everywhere [webinar](#) and will be [honored](#) next month for her work. Berenice Nava met recently with U.S. Senator Joni Ernst about federal legislation, and Sandra Sanchez met with ELL school liaisons to update them about DACA and [TPS](#).

AFSC's Legal Services Program, directed by Jody Mashek, has been hosting popular clinics for people to renew their [DACA](#) status and for Salvadorans with TPS; the next TPS clinic is set for March 3.

## **AFSC and F/friends send Valentines to Gaza**

AFSC led a successful [drive](#) to send Valentines to Gaza to make sure that people in Gaza know that they are not forgotten, that we see their reality and that we are committed to bringing change. Photos [here](#). Learn more and take action at AFSC's [Gaza Unlocked website](#).

Join Jennifer Bing on a February 27 [webinar](#) to learn more about legislative efforts to end Israeli military detention of Palestinian children. Here's a new [video](#) from our partner organization, DCIP, on the arrest and transfer of Palestinian children. On Saturday, March 10, AFSC research fellow Hanna AlShaikh is organizing an event in celebration of Palestinian women on International Women's Day.

## **Short takes**

AFSC Midwest Executive Committee member Paul Ricketts has written a second [article](#) on his recent trip to Ghana ....Check out this blog [post](#) on Trump's plan to surveil Muslims, and save the date for a March 15 [Sanctuary Everywhere](#) webinar....Curious about who serves on AFSC's Board of Directors? [Wonder](#) no more....Learn [here](#) about the Diversity Visa lottery now under attack....And Iowans [stopped](#) a bid to reinstate the death penalty this year!

## **Thanks as always for your support**

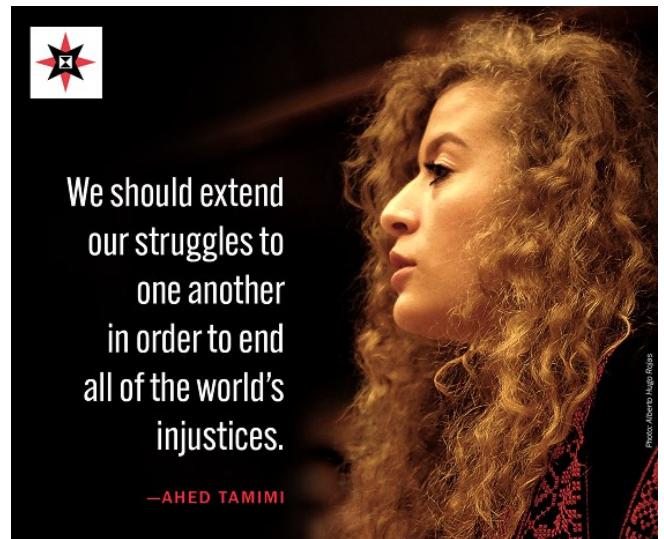
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Thanks!



Iowans gather at the Statehouse for a first annual Immigrant Advocacy Day and Latino Day on the Hill. A major focus is stopping an anti-sanctuary city bill. (See more [photos](#) and a [video](#).)



People in Indianapolis send Valentines to Gaza. See more photos [here](#).



Learn more on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) about Ahed Tamimi. Take [action](#) to end Israeli military detention of Palestinian children.