

AFSC Midwest Digest – April 2022

Highlights of work from around the region



Chicagoans call for an end to the blockade of Gaza.

National study shows many Americans oppose Gaza blockade

Last November, AFSC conducted a poll of 1,000 U.S. adults. We wanted to know what people thought about the Gaza blockade, and whether having more information would influence their thinking. Jennifer Bing and Beth Hollowell of AFSC [write](#) that about half of U.S. adults oppose the Gaza blockade. Jennifer also took part in a recent [webinar on Land Day and the Gaza Great March of Return](#). Join her and others for the next No Way to Treat a Child [webinar on the Israeli military detention system](#) set for Tuesday, April 12, 11 am CT.



Youth in St. Louis build toward healing, liberation

In the latest [newsletter](#) from AFSC in St. Louis, Jonathan Pulphus writes that Youth Advocating for Healing and Liberation (YAHL) are working on their 1) Advocacy Project: Researching of Social Justice; 2) Campaign Basics 101: The Desegregation of Busing; and 3) their Relationship Building Activity Calendar for 2022. Stay tuned!



From left: Natalie Holbrook, Annie Somerville, and Lawanda Hollister speak during a panel discussion on the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility. Photo by Anna Gustafson

Building power with incarcerated women in Michigan

Natalie Holbrook recently moderated a [panel discussion](#) on the deteriorating and hostile conditions at Women's Huron Valley prison in Michigan. There, 194 women are serving life sentences and another 600 have very long sentences. "There's less education inside," Natalie says. "The food is as processed as it's ever been. They're feeding people on \$2 a day.... We know it's awful, we know it's deplorable, and together, we can do this differently than we've been doing it."



Gun violence and community safety

Many communities across the country have experienced an increase in gun violence over the last two years. At the same time, we are having a robust debate around the role of policing in our society. How has or should the movement to divest from policing and invest in community be responding? [Join us](#) on Thursday, April 21 at 7 pm CT as part of our webinar series "Community Safety Beyond Policing." Keep up with Chicago Peacebuilding work on [Instagram](#).



Youth Board cohort announced in the Twin Cities

From [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#): AFSC Twin Cities is pleased to introduce our amazing Youth Board Cohort of 2022-23! We had many worthy applicants and were faced with a hard decision of choosing 12 amazing future leaders to help us impact change in community. Check us out on social media to learn more about some of our YB members and what they are looking forward to in this new year.



At the statehouse in Des Moines, African refugees rally for the people of Ukraine.

AFSC Iowa alums celebrate and organize

Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice recently [celebrated its first birthday](#) as an independent organization.... Alum Kathleen McQuillen organized two peace vigils for Ukraine on [March 6](#) and [March 31](#).... Other rallies for Ukraine included this [candlelight vigil](#) and this [spirited call](#) for support from African refugees.

Short takes

[Events](#) connected with AFSC's Corporation meeting run through April 9...Check out our [North Star](#), AFSC's Healing Justice vision statement...Applications for AFSC's [Economic Activism Investigative Research Intern](#) are due May 1...Learn how to [demilitarize the US budget](#) on May 3...RIP [Bill Barrett](#), [Neil Mesner](#), and [John Griffith](#).

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