

# AFSC Midwest Digest – April 26, 2019

*Highlights of work from around the region*



*St. Louis Freedom School*

## A dream comes true in St. Louis

“The last week of March was a ‘dream come true,’ according to Joshua Saleem of AFSC St. Louis. A humble and mighty group of youth participated in the Freedom School Alternative Spring Break with AFSC St. Louis and Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR). Dancing, networking, singing, and analysis development—these are a few words that describe the program. It was a week filled with enrichment, love, and community.” Read more of Jonathan Pulphus’ [account](#), his [op-ed](#) on responding to racism, and Joshua’s [report](#) on Youth Advocacy Day at the Missouri Capitol.



*Twin Cities Freedom School (Photo: Shanene Herbert)*

## Twin Cities Freedom School breathes new life into anti-racism work

“It’s been nearly three weeks since the end of Freedom School Spring 2K19: Reclaiming Radical,” [writes](#) Shanene Herbert, who directs AFSC’s Healing Justice Program in the Twin Cities, “and we are still coming down from the adrenaline rush of the packed three-and-a-half days together. When people ask the question, ‘Well...how was it?’, I liken it to delivering a

baby. It's that moment when you finally see your baby after your delivery and it has all of its fingers and toes and is in good health, inquisitive, bright eyed and ready to take over the world. And you, you are filled with joy, but complete exhaustion." Shanene is set to present to Twin Cities Friends about AFSC's restorative justice work this coming Sunday, April 28.

Sharon Goens-Bradley, Associated Regional Director based in St. Paul, shares this [review](#) of *American Prison*. To support AFSC's work, click [here](#).



*AFSC General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny (fourth from left) visits with Bloomington, IN Friends. (Photo: Tom Roberts)*

## Hoosier happenings

Joyce Ajlouny was the keynote speaker for a recent Women's History Month Luncheon in Bloomington, Indiana. Among the hundreds of attendees were several Bloomington Friends.

In the aftermath of the Christchurch massacre, the AFSC [Muslim Youth Collective](#) Fellows conducted a workshop with several mosques about working to develop safety protocols that do not rely upon law enforcement, given the history of FBI and police surveillance and entrapment of Muslim communities. AFSC in Indy has been a key organizer resisting the Muslim Ban and is hosting a [Passover for All](#) tonight. Erin Polley of AFSC also shares this powerful [video](#) and [article](#) featuring intern Tatjana Rebelle.



*Former AFSC Iowa intern Cecelia Martinez speaks at the Iowa Capitol in support of humane immigration reform.*

## Iowans push for “Dream and Promise Act”

Iowans [gathered](#) at the Statehouse recently to promote a first-in-the-nation state resolution in support of HR 6, the [Dream and Promise Act](#), currently before Congress. See [photos](#), a [video](#), and a related [news article](#). Earlier, America Duran and Erica Johnson [shared](#) about an advocacy trip to Washington, DC and how people are working for immigrant rights in Iowa.

Here's a [list](#) of questions related to immigration policy for Iowans to be raising with presidential candidates as they come through our state. Feel free to share, and let [Erica](#) know if you're attending an event (or interested in hosting a forum) in your area. AFSC will be partnering with ACLU Iowa on May 14 for a [bird-dog training](#).

**THE CRIMINAL DEFENSE ASSOCIATION AND SBA HOST:  
A TOWN HALL WITH DEMETRIUS TITUS**

"It's a good reminder  
that the person on the  
inside is a person with a  
life story and not just a  
number."  
-Jennifer Young, Co-Mentor

GOOD

NEIGHBOR



PROJECT



COME LEARN ABOUT THE LIFE-CHANGING PROGRAM THAT  
IS ATTEMPTING TO SHIFT PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON  
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN MICHIGAN.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 18TH 12:30-1:30PM**

## Michigan State law students learn about AFSC’s work

The Criminal Defense Association and Student Bar Association at Michigan State recently hosted a town hall featuring Demetrius Titus, who directs the [Good Neighbor Project](#) connecting co-mentors inside and outside of prison. Demetrius has served since 2016 with the AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program.



*Anti-war training camp in Chicago*

## Anti-war training, anti-surveillance work in Chicago

Here's a tweet from @WinWithoutWar: "How do struggles against huge police budgets in Chicago and against US support for Saudi-led war in Yemen in Congress connect?! This crew knows! Shout out to @resistwar & @afsc\_org for organizing a brilliant antiwar training camp this week in Chicago! #NoCopAcademy #ResistWar."

Debbie Southorn of AFSC [talks](#) on WGN Radio about the many problems with Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), and she's quoted [here](#) about work with #NoCopAcademy. Mary Zerkel of AFSC recommends former intern Hoda Katebi's [article](#) about allyship.



*Chicagoans view "Imprisoning a Generation"*

## Chicago marks Palestinian Prisoners Day

In remembrance of Palestinian prisoners day, AFSC Chicago showed the film "[Imprisoning a Generation](#)" by [Anemoia](#) projects which highlights the experiences of Palestinian children held in Israeli detention. Look for more resources on this topic at [nowaytotreatachild.org](#).

Here's an impressive [compilation](#) of media from Ahmed Abu Artema's recent AFSC-sponsored tour of the US in support of the [Great March of Return](#). BDS leader Omar Barghouti was [denied](#)

entry to the US but joined a powerful Chicago [event](#) via Skype. AFSC also called for [solidarity](#) with Omar Shakir, a Human Rights Watch staffer.



## Celebrating Jennifer Bing

Jennifer Bing has a long history with AFSC. "My first visit to AFSC was with my Quaker youth group from Richmond, IN in the 1970s when we visited Friends Center and met staff who were working on peace and justice issues. I later had an internship with AFSC and Joseph Gerson (1981) in Cambridge when he was doing work around the 'Deadly Connection' of US arm sales in the Middle East. After college I volunteered with the AFSC Cambridge office, serving as the clerk of their Middle East committee. After teaching three years at the Ramallah Friends School, I came to Chicago in 1989 where I started my long tenure as a staff member working on peace and justice issues in the Middle East."

## Bits and Peaces

AFSC staff are offering three workshops at the upcoming FGC Gathering in Iowa, so [register](#) today!...Midwest Regional Director Brant Rosen recently [spoke](#) in Peoria and writes about the [root causes](#) of forced migration from Honduras and [Radio Progreso](#)....AFSC [divests](#) from the fossil fuel industry....Former Midwest Regional Director Michael McConnell is among those profiled [here](#)....Please sign and share this [petition](#) to close the Homestead Child Detention Center; learn more at AFSC's new [Defund Hate](#) website....AFSC's [Annual Report](#) for 2018 includes lots of Midwest work, and here are [talks](#) from the recent Corporation meeting....Check out photos from a Palm Sunday [Procession](#) for Peace and a Tax Day [Forum](#) in Des Moines.

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