Twin Cities hosts “amazing” summer intensive for Black youth

AFSC recently hosted “Money, Power & Respect,” a week-long intensive learning experience for 20 Twin Cities Black youth ages 14-24. This was an in-depth exploration unpacking the layers, causes and effects of gun violence. This multifaceted challenge demands a holistic set of solutions to stop the cycles in impacted communities of color. We know that concentrated gun homicide is tied closely to urban poverty, inequality, segregation, and divestment from Black communities. The gathering uplifted the work of local organizers and community members who are developing community-based solutions that successfully reduce gun violence. Stay in touch on Facebook and Instagram.
Youth rally against plans in Illinois to build a sixth youth prison

On Instagram, watch as Chicago Peacebuilding youth and partners rally in front of the Thompson Center to insist that Gov. Pritzker meet the demands of the Final 5 Campaign. Youth are calling for the closure of all youth prisons, an end to the construction of the Lincoln youth prison, and the need to uplift the voices of incarcerated youth. Read more.

I want a chance to go after my dreams and
share laughter
happily ever after with those I love
Hug my nephews who I've yet to meet
Set my feet on terra firma
I've learned the very real ideals behind the minds that designed
these concrete caskets, for bastards unlearned

Website shares stories of people inside

The AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program continues to highlight stories of people serving life and long sentences on its Let Me Tell You site. The lines above are by Paul Carter from his poem “Thoughts from a Man Sentenced as a Boy to Die in Prison 26 Years Later.” Catch excerpts of more people’s stories on Instagram.
Youth in St. Louis build their team, discuss racism, tackle allyship

In the latest newsletter from St. Louis, staffer Jonathan Pulphus gives an update on a recent meeting of Youth Advocates for Healing and Liberation (YAHL). “The youth divided into two groups and shared their opinions based on their lived experiences and best judgments. The purpose of the activities was to help the youth gain tools to navigate their Advocacy Projects. Throughout our time together, we enjoyed team building exercises – and pizza.”

New anthology centers the voices of Palestinians in the struggle

Edited by AFSC staff Jehad Abusalim, Jennifer Bing and Mike Merryman-Lotze, Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire is now available for pre-order! This is a seminal, moving and wide-ranging anthology of Palestinian writers and artists that constitutes a collective effort to organize and center Palestinian voices. Light in Gaza is an urgent and powerful intervention into an important political moment. Stay tuned for an upcoming blog post, book launch and speaking tour!
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