

# AFSC Midwest Digest – January 2021

*Highlights of work from around the region*

**COVID-19 Update**

Second Palestinian child detainee tested positive for COVID-19

- Detained September 15
- Spent two days in Israeli custody before he was tested
- Kept in a cell with other children before quarantined at the police station in Akka
- Sept. 24 sentenced to time served for a stone-throwing offense and ordered to pay a 2000 NIS (\$590 USD) bond

## Palestine Activism Program looks back at 2020, ahead to 2021

In this [slideshow](#), Chicago staffers Jennifer Bing and Jihad Abusalim review highlights of AFSC’s remarkable, largely online work in 2020 on behalf of people in Gaza and Palestinian children detained by the Israeli military. Plans for 2021 include work with Palestinian writers on a new anthology, *Gaza: Reimagining the Boundaries of Possibility*, and raising Palestinian rights via the No Way to Treat a Child campaign. Watch the most recent NWTC [webinar](#), mark your calendar for the next one on January 12, and [learn more](#) about how you can talk with your members of Congress.

**BBC**

**Voice of Chelsey Roundhouse**

in Huron Valley Correctional Facility.

## AFSC in Michigan calls for commutations

Courtesy of AFSC, the [BBC](#) recently featured the voices of three women in prison in Michigan, including Chelsea Roundhouse, who describes the death of her cellmate from COVID-19. As the state begins vaccinating health care staff in prisons and expands testing for incarcerated people, Natalie Holbrook of AFSC [says](#) the governor can do much more to stem the spread by ensuring more people are considered for release. Demetrius Titus talks about AFSC’s work to #FreeThemAll in this [Facebook Live](#).



### What to know as a new DACA applicant

Following a recent court victory, USCIS has posted that it will now be considering fi... See More



## Providing information for first-time DACA applicants

Following a recent court victory, US Citizenship and Immigration Services will now consider first-time DACA applications. In this [video](#), Jody Mashek, Legal Services Director for AFSC Iowa, explains what people should expect as a first-time DACA applicant and what they will need to complete the process. In other news, Alejandro Murguia-Ortiz, a community organizer with AFSC and Iowa JFON, [shares](#) his thoughts on the importance of meatpacking workers being able to stand up for their rights.



## When will the system “honor a Black person’s humanity?”

In this [article](#) about the recent Minneapolis Police killing of Dolal Idd, Shanene Herbert of AFSC says that mistrust in the community is only deepened after incidents in which police manage to take armed white suspects into custody without shooting them. When, she asked, will the system "honor a Black person's humanity?" In other news, applications are now closed for the Twin Cities YUIR Youth Board, a space for youth to organize around issues they care about. Learn more on [Facebook](#).



*Holiday card-making for justice-involved youth in St. Louis*

## Striving to create Real Student Safety in St. Louis

In their [December newsletter](#), AFSC staff in St. Louis – Joshua Saleem, Jonathan Pulphus and Sarah Nash – describe their work with young people and community partners to achieve #RealStudentSafety. They look at Community Safety Beyond Policing and #FreeThemAll holiday card making. Along with previewing what’s in store for 2021, staff share what drew them to this work, lessons learned from the past year, and their favorite dishes and albums.



[#FreeThemAll action at a youth detention center in Chicago.](#) Photo: Sarah-Ji/@loveandstrugglephotos

## Working to #FreeThemAll

Mary Zerkel of AFSC shares this recording of [Carving Out Rights from Inside the Prison Industrial Complex](#), a Chicago webinar that kicked off AFSC’s #FreeThemAll days of action in December. The event included very powerful performances by poets Tara Betts, Eric Blackmon, Tongo Eisen-Martin, Martín Espada, and musician Damon Locks. Debbie Southorn of AFSC co-hosted this [FB Live](#) on AFSC’s #FreeThemAll work.



*Ruth and Brant Rosen*

### **Short takes, part 1**

The Midwest Region holds former Regional Director Brant Rosen and family in the Light following the passing of his mother, Ruth. A virtual memorial service will be held Thursday, January 7....Friends throughout the Midwest are encouraged to sign up as [AFSC Meeting/Church liaisons](#)....Lucy Duncan of AFSC Friends Relations and Noah White will be leading a multi-part anti-racism retreat with the [Madison Monthly Meeting](#) in January and February.

### **Short takes, part 2**

AFSC joined 16 other faith organizations in signing on to this [letter](#) to the Biden-Harris transition team regarding working for human rights and equality in Palestine-Israel....Check out this [Love to Black Immigrants Teach-in & Letter Writing webinar](#) and this [video](#) about Temporary Protected Status (TPS)....Sign up now for [What to do instead of calling 911](#), an AFSC webinar set for Thursday, January 14 at 7 pm CT.

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