

# AFSC Midwest Digest – July 2021

*Highlights of work from around the region*



*AFSC St. Louis staffer Jonathan Pulphus and Sarah Nash*

## Reflecting on the police murder of George Floyd

Jonathan Pulphus of AFSC joins other staff in [reflecting](#) on the trial of the police officer who murdered George Floyd. “This country’s playing with Black bodies has long held bloody and deadly outcomes with no consequence,” he writes. “The state-sanctioned murder of Black youth and families with impunity is not a game.” Colleague Sarah Nash reports that AFSC has held workshops for its new Youth Council and looks forward to more organizing around St. Louis Public Schools and their relationship with police. AFSC and partners succeeded in closing the Workhouse, a city jail; that campaign has transitioned into DRT: Defund, Re-envision, Transform.



*from [Voices of the Holy Land](#)*

## “Gaza Fights for Freedom” panel set for July 11

Join AFSC and Voices from the Holy Land’s on Sunday, July 11 at 2 pm CT for an online panel discussion of the new documentary “Gaza Fights for Freedom.” The film takes an in-depth look at the protest movement in Gaza, including the Great March of Return. Panelists include film director Abby Martin, Issam Adwan of We Are Not Numbers, and Jihad Abusalim of AFSC. [Register for the event](#), and you will receive a link to watch the film in advance. Jennifer Bing of AFSC invites you to the next No Way to Treat a Child [webinar](#) – focused on tips for August advocacy -- on July 13 at 7 pm CT.



India Porter shares her story [here](#).

### “Let Me Tell You My Story”

Demetrius Titus, staff with the Michigan Criminal Justice Program, reports that AFSC has started a new campaign called *Let Me Tell You My Story*. “We’re collecting stories of those currently incarcerated, and we will add those of loved ones,” Demetrius says. “We’re in the process of launching a website to drop in all the stories told in different fashions -- art, music, storytelling – to humanize folks. We began in June, and we’re already sifting through hundreds of letters.” Stay tuned!



Youth interns Avery Sims and Karla DeJesus

### AFSC Chicago invites you to “Meet our Interns!”

Debbie Southorn wrote this recent [newsletter](#) from the AFSC Chicago Peacebuilding Program featuring our #DefundPolice interns Karla DeJesus and Avery Sims, an opinion piece from our former intern and anti-militarist young Black organizer Destiny Harris, some tools and resources from the #NoCopAcademy campaign's recent toolkit launch, and Mary Zerkel’s take on mutual aid. Stay connected with AFSC’s Community Safety Beyond Policing monthly webinars; you can view past webinars and register for upcoming ones [here](#).



## Twin Cities youth to focus on healing in week-long intensive

Set for July 12-16, **It's The Healing For Me** will be an intensive experience for 20 Twin Cities Black youth ages 14-24. Through popular education exercises, we will learn the historical context of what has happened over the last year and develop our analysis of race, racism and systemic oppression. You have seen the organizers on the front lines organizing for change, but there is also a need for healers. This will also be an in-depth exploration of the non-traditional modalities of healing that has allowed our people to heal and thrive in the past. We will learn what local organizers, artists and healers are currently doing to heal and develop our own models of self-care.

## Short takes

Read the **latest** from Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice....**Tell Congress** to end Israel's forced displacement of Palestinians.... On **July 14**, learn about local campaigns to end immigrant detention and, on **July 20**, boost your understanding of how Congress funds ICE and CBP....AFSC recently joined 110 other organizations in calling for an **end to US lethal strikes abroad**....Check out AFSC's new **investment policy**.... AFSC's Under the Mask campaign shares this new study on **Civic Space and the Covid-19 Pandemic**.

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