



**American Friends
Service Committee**

**INSPIRING
PEACE & JUSTICE
in the Pacific Northwest
Fall/Winter 2010**

No Soy el Army!

Pablo Paredes grew up in the South Bronx, a neighborhood beset with the ills of urban decay, poverty and violence. Military recruiters were ever present in his high school yet Pablo pushed himself to go to college, with a scholarship, loans and income earned from three jobs to get by. After his first year the strain proved too difficult, and he enlisted in the Navy after his neighborhood friends recruited him as part of the military's Hometown Area

Recruitment Program. Pablo's story is a familiar one; Latino youth with limited options are especially vulnerable to military recruitment. What makes Pablo's story different is the journey he took while in the Navy - a journey of listening and learning about the horrors of war which led him to become the first public Naval war resister in the Iraq War. Pablo now works for AFSC in

the Bay Area, educating and organizing young people to embrace alternatives to militarism and war.

Through Pablo's AFSC involvement he joined other Latino

conscientious objectors to speak to Latino youth and their parents in rural Oregon as part of the No Soy el Army (I Am Not the Army) tour organized by AFSC Portland's Mireaya Medina in partnership with the Rural Organizing Project and PCUN (Oregon farm workers).

From August to October the tour traveled from Portland to Bend to Medford and many stops in between, reaching over 600 youth, parents and activists. Two stories illustrate the importance of creating opportunities for youth to hear different perspectives about military service:

In Medford, a young man came to the event wearing an Air Force T-shirt, having made up his mind to enlist. While respectful of his decision, speakers engaged him in dialogue and role plays designed to help him understand the realities of

military service and war. By the time the evening was over, the young man made a commitment to finish community college and weigh his options before considering enlistment.

In Forest Grove, youth involved with Adelante Chicas heard information about military recruitment strategies for the first time. Inspired, they asked AFSC to support them in educating others and creating campaigns to encourage students to "Opt Out" of the military database. These youth are joining many others reached by AFSC around the country to say "No Soy el Army!"

For more information about AFSC's youth and militarism work, contact Mireaya Medina at 503-230-9427 or mmedina@afsc.org.



PCUN staff and youth in Woodburn, OR. Pictured are speakers Pablo Paredes (top row, middle) and Sergio Espana (2nd from left, bottom row).

Expanding the Dream: AFSC Speaks about the DREAM Act

The proposed Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act offers undocumented youth in-state college tuition, a path to permanent residency and eventual citizenship—all benefits that AFSC supports. The problem is that as currently written, the DREAM Act limits these benefits to those who go to college or enlist in the military.

Excerpts from AFSC's statement on the DREAM

Act describe how it can be improved:

AFSC, like much of the nation, has been inspired by the willingness of undocumented students to ensure that the universal right to education is guaranteed, even when it threatens their ability to stay in the US. It is evident that the actions of these undocumented youth have helped to positively impact the national debate on immigration and education.

AFSC reiterates its grave

concern regarding the inclusion of a military service provision in the DREAM Act and the exclusion of community service and vocational paths as viable alternatives for youth to consider. AFSC will continue to advocate for legislation that includes:

- Provisions that provide robust civilian community service and vocational paths to legalization;
- Access for undocumented students to federal loans and

grants for college;

- Provisions that assure the protection of legal status for youth who, for reasons of conscience, object to war and are no longer able to serve in the armed forces.

For more information about how you can advocate for an improved DREAM Act, contact Pedro Sosa (psosa@afsc.org) or Mireaya Medina (mmedina@afsc.org) at 503-230-9427.

Speaking Truth to Power

Susan Segall

When homes and offices of anti-war and solidarity activists were raided by the FBI in Chicago, Minneapolis and elsewhere recently, a blow to the heart of our liberty and democracy was struck. Such activities by law enforcement agencies have always plagued movements for peace and justice; each time they occur we are reminded of the need to be ever vigilant in protecting our right to dissent as a fundamental civic duty.

In 1953, AFSC's Board of Directors issued a statement on civil liberties which included this passage that still rings true

in this age of an endless "War on Terror":

"Fear is too often our response to uncertainty. Loyalty oaths, legislative abuses of investigatory power, assumption of guilt until innocence is proved, implications of guilt through association, and denials of the free platform are some of the products of this fear. The alternatives to fear are faith and courage: Faith that in the free marketplace of ideas, truth will prevail; Courage to put the ideals of freedom into action."

Bearing these timeless words in mind, AFSC urged Attorney General Eric Holder to restore the rightful conduct of agencies under his control.

We reminded him that "As in previous periods in our history, arguments on the need for "national security" against threats from a possible "enemy within" can give political cover to the most egregious violations of human and civil rights. We need to learn from our past mistakes."

We encourage you to join us in contacting Attorney General Holder. By doing so, YOU will join the many courageous people throughout the ages who have created a better world by speaking truth to power!

To call the Attorney General's Public Comment Line, phone 202-353-1555.

Building Bridges Between Communities

Sheri Day

"What is AFSC's unique contribution?"

This is a question heard at the AFSC often when staff are asked to contemplate how and why we are involved in a project, specific area of work or in partnership with other groups and organizations.

Based on the belief that there is "that of God in everyone" and the peace testimony of the Religious Society of Friends, AFSC was founded as a service opportunity for conscientious objectors during

WWI. At nearly 100 hundred years old, AFSC has faced much change, particularly in the past year.

What remains true is the organization's presence as one that has the capacity to build bridges between communities in a very special way. Whether this is due to philosophy and style of work, or simply longevity, AFSC staff are poised to assist in ways that are rare in other organizations.

Recently, a police shooting rocked Seattle's Native American community along with those who have worked for police accountability in other communities of color. John T. Williams, a Canadian First Nation carver, was shot by a young officer. It was the long time relationships built between AFSC and members of the native community, diverse



Photo by Sheri Day
Cecile Hansen, Chairwoman of the Duwamish Tribe listens to roll call of those lost to gun violence at a rally honoring John T. Williams at Seattle City Hall.

groups of activists working on police accountability, and communities of color that brought partners together to call for changes in Seattle Police Department training and policies.

AFSC's unique contribution is trusted relationships and the quiet presence to connect people. This is indeed "What Love Can Do."



Youth Speaks!

Jenelle Forde

Since participating in the Tyree Scott Freedom School, I have served as a mentor for AFSC's Youth Undoing Institutional Racism in Seattle. What led me to YUIR was a yearning for community, guidance, and action! During Freedom School, I found inside myself unprecedented hopefulness. As a person of color, my strength and grace have always been challenged by the potency of racism. During Freedom School my spirit was renewed.

As a mentor for YUIR, I am taught and inspired by the youth of Seattle. To the youth, I humbly offer my insights on building a healthy community, developing critical consciousness, and turning education into action! I am honored to be in company with passionate youth.

Anchored in my heart and the hearts of other young people is the spirit and lessons of elders. Recently, I attended a memorial for Roberto Maestas (long time community activist and founder of El Centro de la Raza). Hundreds of people were there, each serving as a puzzle piece to my incomplete image of the man. I wanted to hear all the stories; I wanted to know the whole man. Instead, my insatiability yielded to the dozen or so accounts of Roberto. Each account revealed the nature of his character, commitment, and vision. A last account offered by his partner, Estella Ortega, gifted everyone with responsibility of preserving the beloved community.

Taking a Stand for Rights

Crystal Ybarra

Over the summer, a group of dedicated and extraordinary budding youth organizers from AFSC's Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) held a forum open to the public to introduce themselves to the larger community. Deputy Chief of Police Nick Metz of the Seattle Police Department was among those present. The work of the youth impacted Deputy Chief Metz so greatly, that he contacted Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn and told him he had to meet this group. That's exactly what happened in late August, kicking off the 2010 YUIR cycle in which the decided focus is on organizing around the juvenile criminal justice system.

Mayor McGinn, Deputy Chief Metz, and other public

officials sat down with YUIR youth and mentors in a large circle and began an intense candid discussion focused on improving relations between youth and Seattle City officials. The youth kicked off the dialogue by reading short compositions to introduce guests to the things that make YUIR important to them. In one piece, a youth stated, "I went from C-R-I-P to Y-U-I-R; I took what they gave me, and raised up the bar!"

Using an exercise from the Undoing Institutional Racism training model to facilitate the discussion, the group focused on the question, "Why are poor youth and youth of color disproportionately incarcerated?" The conversation was uncensored and passionate as many youth detailed personal experiences with city officials that have left them feeling jaded.

The message was clear: poor youth and youth of color feel the very prominent impact that the inescapable foot of oppression has left on their lives.



Jenelle Forde, Jason Clarke, Rev. Carl Livingston and Brenda Mchgee listening to Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn discuss how to reduce disparities of youth of color in the juvenile justice system.

The meeting lasted over two hours and closed with a brainstorming session that allowed for youth and City officials to share ideas with each other that would lead to better relations between the two groups. In the end, the youth sent a clear message: they will not stand for their rights being disregarded; they have found a voice and that voice is YUIR.



Crystal Ybarra and Mayor Mike McGinn at YUIR open forum.

Launching Freedom School at King County's Youth Detention

Larry Evans,

Legislative Aide to King County Councilmember Larry Gossett

First initiated by Dustin Washington at AFSC, the Peoples Institute Northwest and leadership at the King County Youth Detention Center (YDC), we are excited to embark on a plan to hold the Tyree Scott Freedom School for youth detainees at the YDC. As many of you are aware, the Tyree Scott Freedom School focuses on the Power Analysis, institutional racism, and how it impacts the most disenfranchised, especially our detained youth, their families and communities. This exacerbates how many of us internalize the negative ramifications of race and class disparities in self destructive manners.

Under the bold leadership of Pam Jones and her assistant Lee Davis at YDC, Dustin Washington, John Page, Joseph

Seia, Jenelle Forde, Martin Friedman and others, we are undertaking a process to help our most disenfranchised youth understand how the constructs they are forced to survive under can be overcome, and how they can use their natural leadership skills to benefit their communities as opposed to damaging themselves and those around them.

It is the group's hope that under the leadership of King County Councilmember Larry Gossett, this will be but one additional step towards grassroots, holistic, community-based prevention, intervention, and transitional services.

"If not us, who? If not now, when?"

We now know our feelings all along were correct. We are justified in our actions and are re-energized to do the hard work of creating change in our community.

Jay "Westwind Wolf" Hollingsworth (member of the J. T. Williams Organizing Committee)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST STAFF

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Quaker values in action

American Friends
Service Committee



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Announcements

YUIR (Youth Undoing Institutional Racism)

Every Tuesday at Seattle Downtown YMCA. For more information contact Dustin Washington 206-632-0500 ext 14 or dWASHINGTON@afsc.org

Freedom School in Juvenile Detention

Questions? Call or email Dustin Washington at (206) 632-0500 x 14 or dWASHINGTON@afsc.org for more information.

Cost of War

Are you interested in volunteering for a Cost of War project in Seattle?
Call or email Susan Segall at (206) 632-0500 x 16 or ssegall@afsc.org.

Winter Freedom School

For youth ages 15 – 21
December 28-30th, 2010, 10am-4pm
Application Deadline: December 9th
Questions? Call or email Dustin Washington at (206) 632-0500 x 14 or dWASHINGTON@afsc.org

Makah & Friends Arts & Crafts Sale

December 5th,
1330 N 90th Street, Seattle, WA 98103
Questions? Call or email Gary Stevens at (206) 632-0500 x 17 or gstevens@afsc.org

Staying the Course with your Support!

Martin Luther King famously quoted abolitionist minister Theodore Parker when he said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” The American Friends Service Committee has stayed the course along that arc for 93 years, 68 of them in the Pacific Northwest. We have stayed the course to lift up a vision of peace through many wars. We have stayed the course as we witnessed with Japanese Americans during WWII, walked with brave civil rights activists, challenged people of faith to embrace lesbian, gay and transgender rights, and welcomed our undocumented neighbors.

Today our vital programs are dedicated to educating the public about the human cost of war, working for racial justice, encouraging young people to embrace alternatives to violence and militarism, supporting Native Americans in sustaining their rights and culture, and developing strong immigrant leaders.

Our work—and yours—will help ensure that the arc bends more quickly and more gracefully toward justice. Please give generously to keep our Pacific Northwest programs strong.

We are deeply grateful for your support.

Act now to help us conserve resources and deliver our news direct to you! E-mail us at PNWNNews@afsc.org to receive an E-version of the AFSC Inspiring Peace & Justice in the Pacific Northwest Newsletter.