A tribute to our friend Erin Polley upon completion of 15 years of service with the Chicago and Indiana programs of the American Friends Service Committee

Thank you, Erin!

December 2019
Indianapolis mom marks 10 years working for peace and justice

Mar 11, 2013

The day the U.S. invaded Iraq was the day the peace movement recruited Erin Polley.

In March 2003, Erin was working in Chicago's service industry, having moved from Indianapolis two years earlier in search of a sense of purpose.

"I had never been politicized before, but seeing all these stories coming out about the Bush administration wanting to start a war in Iraq, I felt like I had to do something," she says.

The day after the U.S.-led military campaign known as 'Operation Shock and Awe' attacked Iraq, 22-year-old Erin joined friends at a huge rally in Chicago, where alongside over 1,000 others, she was arrested and held in jail.

It was that day, inside a small jail cell, that she found "her people" in the form of a group of 30 women. They were nuns, young activists, and longtime protesters who remembered the wars in Vietnam and Central America.

Through the course of the 16 hours they were held together, she heard their stories and sang protest songs, and gradually realized she had found what she'd been looking for when she moved to Chicago. "I didn't know it until I was surrounded by them," she says.

After that experience, Erin got involved with the antiwar movement by raising awareness of the war in Chicago.
Thanks
to all of our IHTD DC
2014 Participants!
We thank you, Erin, for your dedicated service to AFSC and communities at home and around the world, and we wish you the very best!