

Quaker Action

Where
do we
go from
here?



**American Friends
Service Committee**

afsc.org

“If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create the consciousness of others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world.”

—JAMES BALDWIN



James Baldwin. Photo: Allan Warren

Showing up for racial justice

Friends,

Mike Brown and Tamir Rice were shot and Eric Garner was killed with a chokehold, all by police officers “acting in the line of duty.” Day after day, young black and brown people are disproportionately profiled, arrested, incarcerated, and, yes, killed by our criminal justice system. Unfortunately, this is what racism looked like in 2014—pernicious systemic racism that is obvious to those being harassed and oppressed, but has been invisible to large segments of the white community. Shaken by the tragic events in Ferguson, Cleveland, and Staten Island, many people are stand-

ing up peacefully and saying, “Enough. This must stop.”

Disciplined peaceful protest is how the Montgomery Bus Boycott began and how social change is most often propelled forward. Enough people stand up, refuse the conditions of oppression, join hands, cry out, and don’t sit down until change comes.

Social change begins inside each of us, as we wake up to human consequences of unjust systems and policies. That’s how my commitment to racial justice began, with reflection on my own experiences and instructions from black and white friends

who helped me to see how deeply racism is ingrained in our minds and in the fabric of our country.

When I went to Yale in fall 1968, the public health school of this elite university was in the middle of a black ghetto. The Hill District was a neighborhood where landlords violated housing codes with impunity. Garbage collection was infrequent and badly done. Parents struggled to protect their children from rat infestations and peeling lead paint.

Several of us public health students began working in the Hill, wanting to make

a difference. Now I was the minority, one of a handful of white faces. As much as I wanted to distance myself from “those racist people from the South,” my upbringing left me with unfounded assumptions, biases, and insensitive ways of speaking and acting that had to be faced. My black friends had, of course, already seen all of these things in me. Yet they were willing to be my friends and teachers as I grappled with the unpleasant reality that I was—and am—a white woman with much to learn about race and privilege.

I knew from my experience as a woman at MIT that those in a minority are always—as a matter of survival—observant students of the dominant culture, while those from the dominant culture can live comfortably in the illusion that their way is the only way.

I decided that my children were not going to grow up in the same kind of white cocoon that had allowed me to be so blind for so long to the experiences, history, and culture of African-Americans. While my daughter attended daycare with the toddler daughter of Ericka Huggins, a Black Panther on trial for her life in the courts of New Haven, I joined the teach-ins and demonstrations for Ericka that, over two years, drew thousands of supporters to the New Haven Green.

About the time of Ericka’s release, one of the Black Panthers with whom I had been working took me aside. He said, “I know you mean well. But if you want to do something about the conditions you see in this community, you need to go work in your community. We can take care of ourselves—we black folks can take care of ourselves. The real problem is with the white folks, and I really wish you would go work there.”

That message helped me understand my responsibility to end racism, not by “helping” disadvantaged African-Americans, but by working with those with privilege and power. I realized that white people need to talk about race first—as uncomfortable as that is—so that we can begin as a whole society to actually achieve racial justice.

The deaths of these three young black men have opened up new and much needed conversations about race in the government, in white suburbs, and in communities of color still grappling with anger and grief. A growing movement is calling for an end to the systems that fuel brutal and discriminatory police practices. In these times of struggle, I especially appreciate your commitment to ending racism as a central part of peacebuilding here in the U.S.

All across the world, AFSC’s work recognizes that ending discrimination and racism is a central part of building peace. We create safe spaces for dialogue, healing, and transformation, bringing together people from diverse perspectives and life experiences. We pave the way for ordinary people to take courageous actions that replace conflict and fear with Beloved Community. This issue of Quaker Action features stories about how we engage in that work, reaching out to those most impacted by, and those who most benefit from, the systems that stand in the way of just peace. Thank you for your partnership in this important work.



In peace,

Shan Cretin
General Secretary



New look: Simple but substantial

The new cover design is one of several small changes we’ve made to improve Quaker Action over the past few issues. Learn more at afsc.org/quaker-action-design.

Quaker Action

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WHO WE ARE

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace with justice as a practical expression of faith in action. Drawing on continuing spiritual insights and working with people of many backgrounds, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.

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Conversation starters

Any kid growing up in Pittsburgh knows the name Jordan Miles. For five years, the story of the black teenager's beating by three white police officers has been retold in this Rust Belt city. In 2010, Jordan was walking the block from his mom's house to his grandmother's place. Three plainclothes police officers approached him, and three minutes later, he'd been beaten, handcuffed, and arrested. Charges of aggravated assault, prowling at night, and resisting arrest painted a very different picture than the photos of his unrecognizable swollen and bloody face.

Jordan's civil suit against the police resulted in a mixed verdict from an all-white jury in March 2014: He was awarded \$119,000 for false arrest, but the jury decided the police had not used excessive force. "They'd do it all over again," the officers' attorney told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "They did nothing wrong."

Perhaps because Jordan attended a diverse magnet school, what happened to him brought more public attention to issues of racial profiling and police brutality in Pittsburgh. "There's been more awareness outside black communities, which were already very aware," says Amanda

Gross, a Pittsburgh resident for the past six years, who now directs AFSC's Pennsylvania program.

Mayor Bill Peduto, who took office in January 2014, has promised to improve relations between the community and police. A new police chief came on board in September 2014. As they begin their work, they're being guided by teenagers who, like Jordan Miles, have learned a wealth of

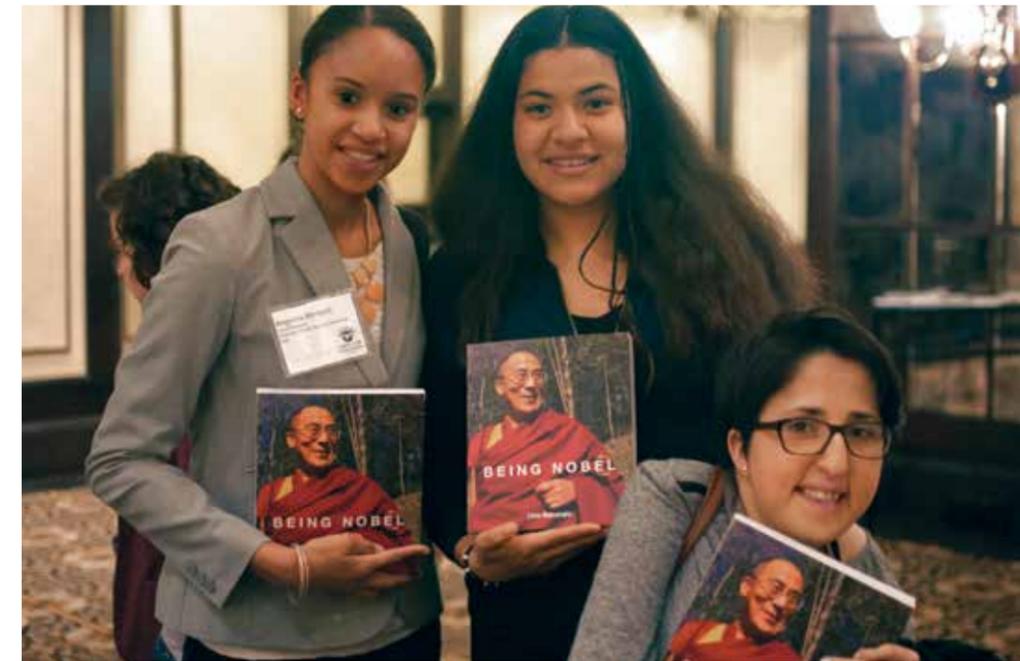
lessons about safety, appearance, and racial disparity from their own experiences.

Among the teenagers advocating for reform are past and current participants of AFSC's Racial Justice through Human Rights youth group. For four years now, they've been leading the way, showing peers, neighbors, and city officials how to examine the relationships between racial injustice and education and policing practices.



Scilla Wahrhaftig (right) speaks with a participant at AFSC's national youth film festival. Photo: AFSC/Bryan Vana

Through the lens of human rights, group members look at racism, privilege, economic disparities, violence, and gender inequities.



Angelina Winbush (left) with other youth delegates at the International Summit of Nobel Laureates in South Africa. Photo: AFSC/Bryan Vana

AFSC drew on the legacy of an interracial 1960s youth group when, in 2010, the Service Committee reintroduced a program in Pittsburgh. "Adult sponsors of the [60s] group felt it was about racial disparity, but the youth never saw it that way," says Scilla Wahrhaftig, retired director of AFSC's Pennsylvania program, who is friends with many members of the original group. "They saw it as youth coming together to understand the environment they were living in and to make changes." Scilla recruited 13 high school students from different corners of Pittsburgh to launch the Racial Justice through Human Rights program. "We pulled together as diverse a group as possible," she says, "economically, religiously, and racially—which was extremely important in Pittsburgh, because we're so divided."

Through the lens of human rights, the group looks at racism, privilege, economic disparities, violence, and gender inequities. Over the course of the year, they shift to understanding how to create positive change by building community and leading nonviolent social action. Their Sunday afternoon gatherings at the Friends meeting house start with time to talk about

what's happening in their lives. Then their focus shifts to the project at hand, which might be learning about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, producing a video for AFSC's If I Had a Trillion Dollars national film festival, or writing letters to city representatives.

"One of the issues that connected a lot of us was education," says Angelina Winbush, a homeschool student who was in the founding group. "We talked about what it means to have a good education and access to the resources you need."

Because the group was so diverse, their discussions provided direct evidence of how young people experience the world differently based on where they live, what

schools they attend, and how they look.

"We had youth in private schools, charter schools, suburban schools where you had two sets of books; and in city schools where there weren't enough books to go around," remembers Scilla. "They could see each other's experiences and were shocked by it."

They decided to hold their community to account for providing equitable education—a human right—to all young people in Pittsburgh. After another AFSC group successfully advocated for Washington, D.C., to declare itself a Human Rights City, they decided to follow suit. And their appeal worked—the city council declared Pittsburgh a Human Rights City on April 19,

POPULAR EDUCATION

The curriculum developed and used by Racial Justice through Human Rights is available online at afsc.org/justus. By using its popular education techniques to examine issues such as racism, privilege, economic disparities, violence, and gender inequities, youth groups can learn how to create positive change through community-building and nonviolent social action.

Popular education is in harmony with the Quaker idea that there is the light of God in everyone, Scilla says. "Everybody has value, everybody's thinking is incredibly important. Nobody gets ridiculed, however they express things or say things. We really listen to each other."

Group members have become adept at listening and at leading conversations about racial equity and school budgets.



Wesley Peterson. Photo: AFSC/Bryan Vana

2011. Now that the framework is on people's minds in Pittsburgh, the group uses human rights to talk about police brutality, too.

Through the advocacy process, Racial Justice through Human Rights group members have become adept at listening and at leading conversations about racial equity, school budgets, and more. They have produced videos about education justice in Pennsylvania. Each year, they've taken part in AFSC's If I Had a Trillion Dollars national film festival, traveling to Washington, D.C., for a weekend of media training, social change strategy, and lobbying visits in Congress.

Some of the original members have graduated—Angelina is now a sophomore at Allegheny College, where she's bringing students interested in international policy into conversations on community justice. Some of the core group are taking on leadership roles, and new members join every year.

Though the youth group works on a very small scale, its members have discussed racial justice on Capitol Hill in Washington and at the International Summit of Nobel Laureates.

And its impact is already being felt in the Pittsburgh mayor's office. The group is represented by members Joan Mukogosi and Wesley Peterson on the new Pittsburgh Student Activist Coalition, which meets with the mayor to talk about education, policing, and other issues young people feel are important.

Joan says the coalition wants policymakers to start seeing issues through young people's eyes. "Because of what's been happening in the news lately, we felt it was important to talk about how police brutality and police relations affect us, and how we could make police relations with teens a lot better," she says. "Personally I don't feel always safe around police, definitely in light of the Ferguson case. There's this apprehension that sometimes you think, 'Are all police officers there to help you?' In a perfect world, the answer is yes. I'm sure Pittsburgh cops are here to help. It's just we need reassurance and understanding."

Their first meeting with the mayor was in November. "We talked about school budget cuts, and about different policies that the mayor has relating to youth, and how we could change them to make them more accessible to youth."

One suggestion: instead of police scheduling "Coffee with Cops" to connect with youth at local schools, let students extend the invitation. And create an environment where students feel comfortable and heard—perhaps with pizza instead of coffee. Joan explains: "It would be a lot cooler if schools could invite the cops, and say, 'Hey, we want to talk to you and have the conversation on our terms.'" ■

—NEAH MONTEIRO



Peace torch ceremony in Indonesia. Photo: Sigit D. Pratama/AJAR

Pacing the way

In Indonesia, AFSC slowed its work to build a diverse and inclusive society after seeing how the usual way of doing things excluded many marginalized groups from participating.

Four years ago, at a meeting with AFSC's peace-building partners in Aceh, Indonesia, I scanned the room and noticed it was filled only with men.

I approached the partners delicately: "Where are the women? What about working on creating gender equality? This is a diversity and inclusion movement we're building, right?"

The men replied: "We've already dealt with gender. We're done with that."

The exchange was a moment of reckoning.

From the Aceh experience and other complicated—and at times, tense—exchanges, my AFSC colleagues and I recognized the need for a more sophisticated analysis of how organizations can work to be more inclusive. We asked questions like, "What does it mean to be inclusive? What levels of participation need to happen for underrepresented and marginalized groups to feel empowered?"

Guided by these queries, AFSC's Indonesia program became more intentional in our approach to diversity and inclusion.

We met separately with women activists, uncovering how gender biases created obstacles for them to fully participate in diversity and inclusion movement organizing. Male organizers often scheduled gatherings late at night in locations far from town; they

didn't realize how this was excluding women, who had children to care for, safety concerns, and other social limitations to consider.

We helped create more space for women's organizations to take the lead in partnership network activities and we analyzed the gender balance of partners and decision-makers. We also took a hard look at our internal organizational dynamics. For three years, we focused on intense discussion, introspection, and learning around how to actualize AFSC's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Another big gap existed around sexual orientation and gender identity. AFSC hired committed activist staff, more women, and new staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT). Showing a concrete commitment in the struggle for diversity and inclusion meant AFSC would not be spectators, but speak from direct experience. Through our LGBT staff, AFSC gained access to networks and discussions of local LGBT issues—and an insider perspective into the dynamics of marginalization. In Yogyakarta, Kupang, and Banda Aceh, we reached out to LGBT activists and organizations. New members joined us and collaborated with our partners to plan activities.

In Yogyakarta, AFSC brought LGBT and women's groups together with local artists and the street community to collabo-



AFSC's Kerri Kennedy (left) talks with Yolanda (center) of Asia Justice and Rights and Akhol Firdaus during a meeting of Solidarity Victims of Religious Faith Freedom. Photo: Sigit D. Pratama

rate on a large annual street festival. We are working to develop a robust response to discriminatory threats and assaults, including attacks from fundamentalists on the LGBT community.

In Aceh, partners argued that including LGBT activists in public advocacy made them vulnerable to counterattack and smear campaigns. In a region where Shariah law dominates, and religious intolerance and the risk of stigmatization is high, publicly including LGBT activists in the mix seemed risky. Together, AFSC, partners, and LGBT activists decided that we would include LGBT perspectives in internal meetings and activities, but avoid putting people at risk in a public campaign. We continue to provide ongoing education and consciousness-raising around sexual orientation and gender identity among partners in Aceh. However, fundamentalist leaders sanction increasingly intolerant laws and decrees.

In Kupang, AFSC brought together partners working on HIV/AIDS and interfaith issues to include LGBT youth in community dialogues. The discussions have been semi-public and involved hundreds of people, significantly changing participants' perception and acceptance of LGBT youth. Partners collaborated on a transgender beauty contest with hundreds of spectators in attendance.

LGBT youth still question whether their inclusion as participants in many public forums has had real impact. They want to plan, monitor, and evaluate public programs—not just take part.

Social, political factors can still divide LGBT community

In Indonesia, LGBT community members face significant stigma and repression, with discriminatory policy and legislation at national and local levels. Such laws have been used to censure and cancel LGBT-organized activities. Threats of violence by fundamentalists give local authorities an excuse to stop LGBT events.

Portions of the LGBT community come from the middle class and are immersed in Western concepts of sexual orientation and identity, while working-class LGBT members feel being “out” in their communities is not an option. A deeper look at issues with lenses of class and sexual orientation is necessary. Resources for LGBT issues have been most successfully garnered by middle-class LGBT members, while those most vulnerable in more conservative communities have limited resources and skills to organize.

The LGBT community, with all its diversity internally, still needs more time to work together to set their own agenda and come to their own agreements, before contributing to broader movements.

Where do we go from here?

Our initial focus has been community-level change. Working with activists, faith-based groups, community and cultural organizations, and civil society leaders, AFSC and partners have been trying to build tolerance and a deeper understanding of diversity and inclusion.

AFSC and partners have also worked to

pressure local and national governments and leaders to make structural changes.

In addition to the Peace Torch parades—involving tens of thousands of people in different cities publicly celebrating and supporting diversity—AFSC partners initiated a national report on intolerance, examining case studies of violence based on ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual identity. Our partners are also collaborating closely with a national organization of survivors of religious intolerance. Together, they have been speaking out publicly for survivors of violence—and those in danger of being attacked.

Some partners recently met with ministers in the newly elected government to push for specific regulatory and legal reform. We have made progress in promoting the civic participation of women and ethnic minorities and in addressing issues of gender identity and sexual orientation. Yet, the agendas of the LGBT communities remain underrepresented in these efforts.

AFSC and the diversity movement in Indonesia face the danger of replicating the same exclusive dynamics and habits that other institutions exercise against marginalized and under-represented groups. We must be even more intentional about including marginalized groups in decision-making at all levels. Despite our good intentions, if roles and the spaces we create remain dominated by mainstream constituents, we risk reproducing patterns of exclusion and ultimately oppression.

In the words of Maya Angelou: “We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.”

Closely examining communities through the multiple lenses of race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual identity allows us to fully understand the complexity and beauty of this tapestry. We must also be willing to speak discomfiting truths and take the actions needed to make things right. ■

—JIWAY TUNG

AFSC staff members Ajeng Herliyanti, Elizabeth Chey, Matius Indarto, and Ninik Suryandari contributed to this article.

Staying together to end racial profiling

A cop sees a kid walking down the street with his cousin, a gang member. The cop takes a picture, and adds the kid to the city's gang database. There's no transparency about the database—it's unclear how the information is supposed to be used or who can access it. But when the kid applies for a job, he's turned down because he's in the database. He doesn't know why his application was rejected. And he's not in a gang. But because the database isn't public, he can't appeal it, or even find out if he's in it.

Gang databases. Traffic stops. Frisking because of clothing colors or tattoos. The effects of aggressive police practices on young Southeast Asian, Latino, and black residents are invisible to many Rhode Islanders of other ages and colors, for the simple reason that they are not the ones being targeted. But as Martha Yager knows from her community justice work, the participation of allies in multiracial coalitions is crucial to getting fair policies and practices for everyone.

“I take direction from the people who are most impacted, particularly the youth,” Martha says. “It's really important to have folks from AFSC's world, who have access to privilege and policymakers, stand with them.”

Report after report has shown racial profiling to be common practice in Rhode Island—but a coalition of community groups, including AFSC's South East New England Program, has been working to end that. For eight years, the coalition has been pushing for the passage of the Comprehensive Racial Profiling Act, a state bill that would standardize police practices in traffic stops and interactions with young pedestrians.

But the slow pace of progress is wearing on the coalition. Some people want to work things out with police, while others are unwilling to compromise on their demand for equitable treatment. Some coalition members have shifted focus to passing a comprehensive city ordinance in Providence to address these issues at the city level. “No one should get thrown under the bus just to get a win,” says Martha. “Sometimes AFSC's role is just to help keep people at the table.” The group hopes that with national focus on police practices, they will be able to at least get a policy passed in Providence this year. ■

—NEAH MONTEIRO

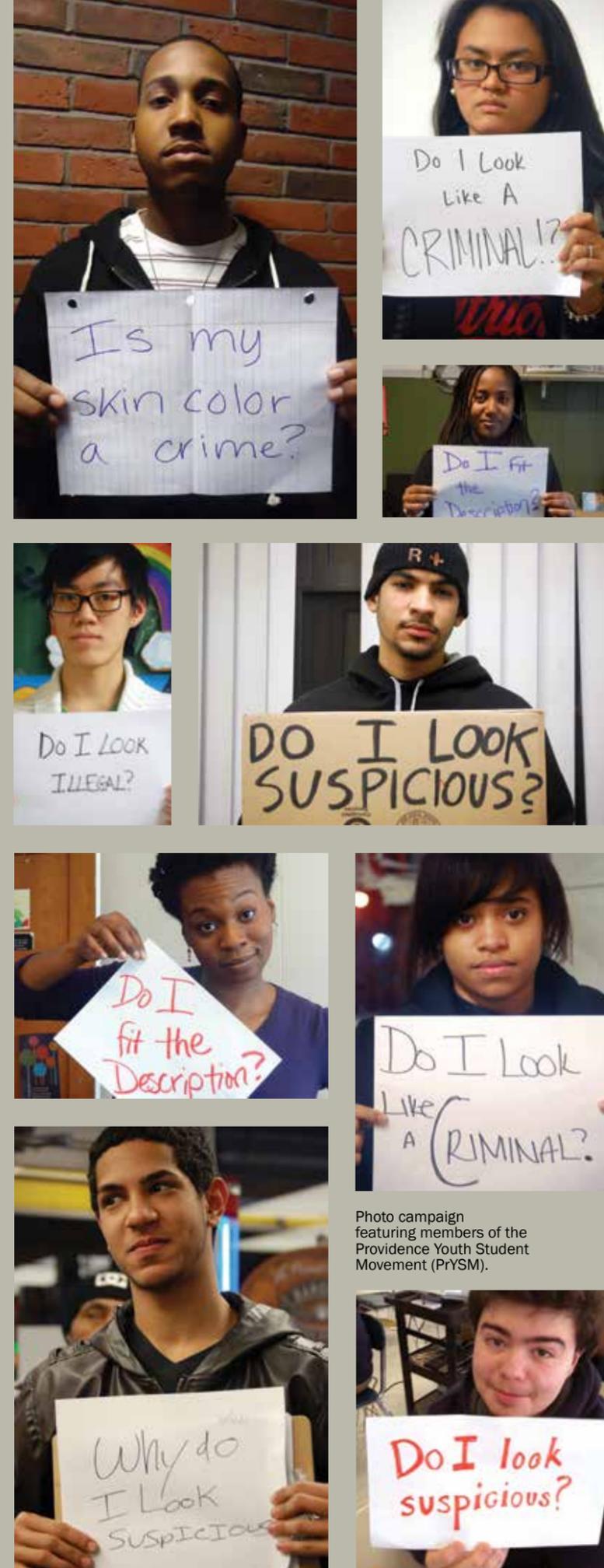


Photo campaign featuring members of the Providence Youth Student Movement (PrYSM).

Are we working to fix broken individuals or to address systemic issues?



FREEDOM SCHOOL 101

Freedom schools teach the history of race, racism, and local racial justice organizing.

CIVIL RIGHTS LEGACY

During the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964, young activists set up alternative schools to organize local communities, provide leadership training, and conduct classes in subjects relevant to students' lives that had been suppressed by mainstream public school education.

TYREE SCOTT FREEDOM SCHOOL

Partnering with The People's Institute of Survival and Beyond, AFSC's Seattle staff revived freedom school in 2001. It was named to honor Tyree Scott, a Seattle labor leader who organized workers against racial discrimination in the construction industry.

SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS

The Tyree Scott Freedom School curriculum provides community-based leadership training and anti-racist organizing skills to address issues relevant to the everyday lives of its students, including youth poverty, institutional racism, and "Eurocentric" schooling. More than 1,200 young people have attended.

SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Elected officials hear from Freedom School participants about their vision for justice in Seattle, then engage in a dialogue about issues affecting youth and avenues for change.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING GATEWAY

After Freedom School, students are encouraged to join Youth Undoing Institutional Racism, a multiracial group of young organizers that meets weekly to work against institutional racism.

END THE PRISON-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Racially disparate youth incarceration rates in Seattle have systemic roots. The activists of Youth Undoing Institutional Racism are mobilizing against a new, \$210 million youth detention center the county is trying to build.



WE ARE POWERFUL, DESPITE WHAT THE SYSTEM SAYS

Systemic analysis helps young people see their place in society, leading them to build the skills, knowledge, and will to transform social injustice that affects their communities.



HISTORICAL CONSTRUCT OF RACISM

Understanding the historical construction of race and racism in the U.S. helps people understand how bias for whites is embedded in social institutions like education, criminal justice, healthcare, and housing systems. Anti-racist community organizing begins to address the negative impact of U.S. institutions on communities.

INTERRELATION OF RACISM AND POVERTY

You cannot understand poverty in the U.S. without understanding the history of racism in this country. Since Reconstruction, laws and social trends have been instituted to use racism to keep poor people from coming together across racial lines. Watch the video at afsc.org/seattle-race-keynote to learn more from YUIR's members.

VEHICLES TO LEADERSHIP

When talking about organizing with younger people, nurture and support their inherent brilliance instead of speaking for them. By helping them contextualize their lives in a society founded on racism and systemic poverty, young people should have room to develop their own path to social change.

“Race and racism in the U.S. is not just about personal feelings, personal dislikes, hatred, or saying bad words. Racial prejudice is embedded in our institutions and systems.”

—DUSTIN WASHINGTON, AFSC'S COMMUNITY JUSTICE DIRECTOR IN SEATTLE

Photos: Caylee Dodson

Lessons on anti-racist organizing

Resources you'll find at afsc.org/freedom-school-101

Video

St. Louis Freedom School participants reflect on how they can challenge racism nonviolently.

Podcast

Dustin Washington, community justice director in Seattle, talks about unpacking structures of racism and oppression.

Stories

Seattle youth lead protests against new detention center.

AWAKENING ST. LOUIS TO HISTORY OF RACISM

AFSC held its first St. Louis Freedom School in the weeks after Mike Brown was killed. Joshua Saleem, program director, explains how a structural analysis of racism can help the community heal:

In 1847, the state of Missouri made it illegal for African-Americans, enslaved or free, to learn how to read. "No person shall keep or teach any school for the instruction of negroes or mulattoes, in reading or writing, in this State," the Missouri Legislature declared. In response, former slave John Merry Beacham established a "School for Freedom" in the middle of the Mississippi River. The river, technically federal property, allowed students to learn despite Missouri's racist law. To reach this freedom school, they had to travel by row boat from St. Louis.

One hundred and seventy years later, St. Louis is again in need of a freedom school.

In the wake of Mike Brown's shooting and subsequent protests, many across the country are interested in helping the local Ferguson community heal. Some have offered afterschool programs, employment opportunities, and food drives for residents. These

efforts are noble, but the community also needs real healing and lasting peace.

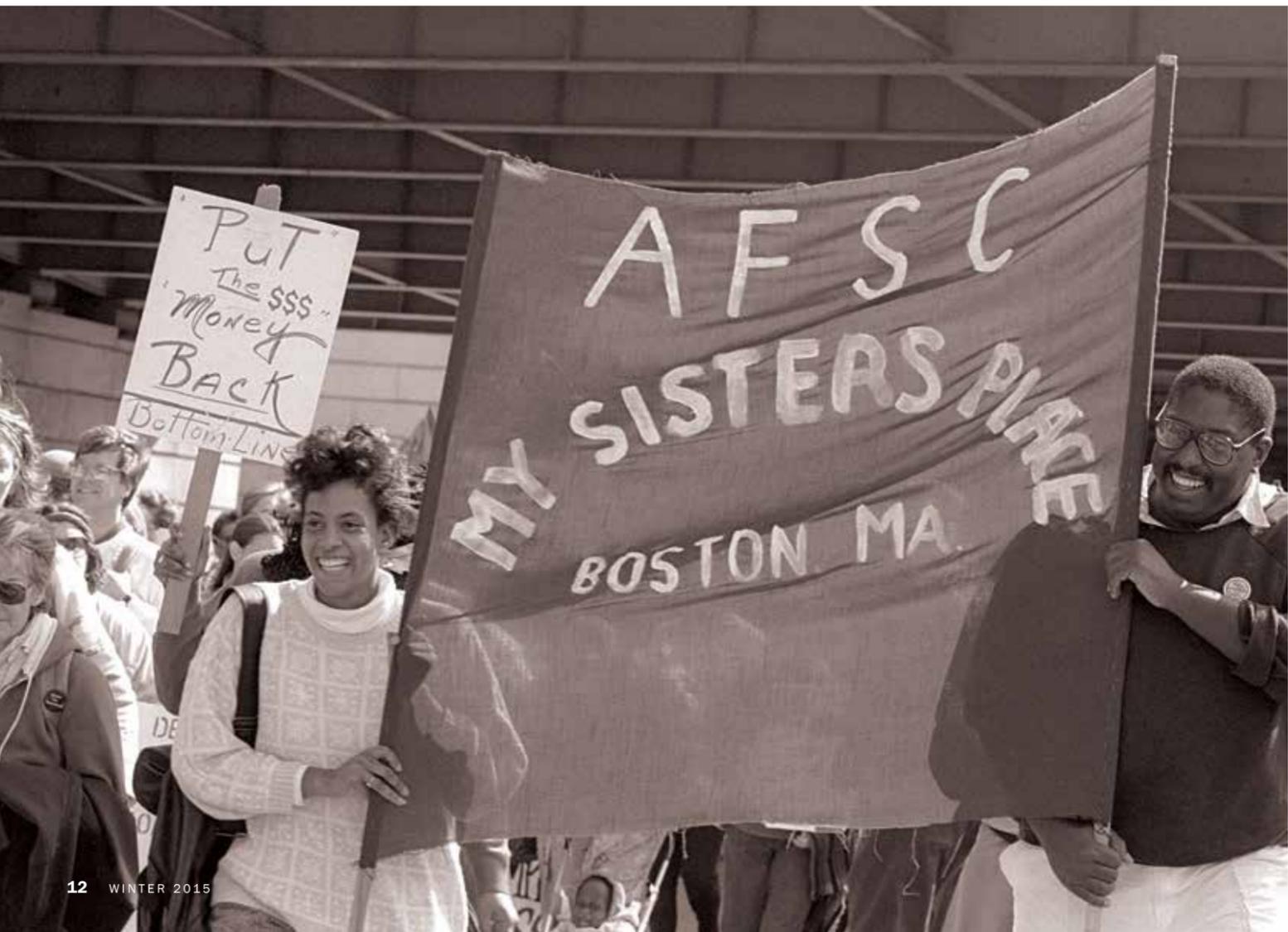
Also in the wake of the Mike Brown shooting and subsequent protests, the history of institutional racism in Ferguson and the St. Louis area has been exposed. These systems and structures are at the root of inequality and injustice in the St. Louis community. A recent report by the Economic Policy Institute put it this way:

This story of racial isolation and disadvantage, enforced by federal, state, and local policies, many of which are no longer practiced, is central to an appreciation of what occurred in Ferguson in August 2014 when African-American protests turned violent after police shot and killed an unarmed black 18-year-old. Policies that are no longer in effect and seemingly have been reformed still cast a long shadow.

It is only by addressing these deeper systemic issues that we will see lasting peace in Ferguson. That is why AFSC's St. Louis Freedom School is so important today.

Learning from experience

National March for Affordable Housing in Washington, D.C., 1989. Photo: AFSC Archives/Peggy Fogarty



In nearly a century of working for peace and social justice, the people of AFSC have continually sought ways to dismantle discrimination. Decades of struggles against racism, sexism, homophobia, and religious discrimination have revealed lessons that pass from one era to the next.

“We’re heading in the right direction by understanding that conditions necessary for peace are really about justice—and the conditions necessary for justice mean you can’t have anyone discriminated against, marginalized, or out of the structure of the community,” Sonia Tuma, regional director for AFSC’s West region, says about a major focus of the organization’s work. The work is important but challenging, she says, because “there’s a vested interest in structures that uphold discrimination.” Opening the way to diverse, inclusive, and equitable communities requires understanding how power works, not only in societies, but also within social change movements.

A legacy of countering exclusion

After post-World-War-I relief in Europe, AFSC was known for its work to bridge gaps of understanding between peoples—to connect with those who were ostracized or seen as suspicious. At the same time, U.S. Quakers’ interest in “home service”—in U.S. communities—was growing. AFSC turned attention to issues of racism within U.S. society.

First created in 1925, the Interracial Section sought to build better understanding among the races worldwide. Its immediate charge was to address discrimination against African-Americans and people of Japanese descent, both immigrants to the U.S. and residents of Japan. In several large cities, Friends arranged “get-acquainted” dinners for black and white leaders. AFSC published “Exclusion: Its Cause and Cure,” outlining the roots of racism and the reality of Japanese-Americans’ contributions to the U.S. economy—a counter argument to the U.S.’s Immigration Act of 1924. The law showed clear discrimination against Southern and Eastern Europeans by imposing limits on immigration from specific countries, but also targeted Asians outright, completely eliminating immigration from Japan. AFSC invited Japanese students to spend a year in the U.S. to build understanding between the people of the two countries.

These ways of countering exclusionist rhetoric and bridging

Countering exclusionist rhetoric and bridging gaps between divided groups remained part of AFSC’s approach for decades—during struggles for school desegregation, voting rights, fair housing, and more.



Nationwide Women’s Program, 1988. Photo: AFSC Archives/Saralee Hamilton

gaps between divided groups remained part of AFSC’s approach for decades—during struggles for school desegregation, voting rights, fair housing, and more. But people within the Service Committee also called for approaches that supported movements already existing or emerging in affected communities.

When the community sets the direction

Through the 1970s, it was AFSC work camps that helped hundreds of young people cross over social boundaries. “Young people quickly absorb the prejudices of their parents, but they lose them as quickly as they were formed with opportunities for fellowship,” Ralph Rose wrote about AFSC work camps in a 1954 pamphlet. Native American youth forged bonds with their white neighbors in Maine. Black children began to use a Washington, D.C., playground where previously only white children played. And white and black youth collaborated to show and change racial prejudice in hiring practices. Stories like these dot decades of AFSC memories. Work camps changed countless lives.

But the work camp model didn’t always serve the most marginalized people.

“Change happens at multiple levels,” Sonia says. “There have to be readiness and people to step into leadership positions.” To



From top left to bottom right (all from AFSC Archives): 1. AFSC created gay and lesbian programs in Seattle (pictured) and Portland in 1986 to better serve local community needs. Photo: Ann Stever. 2. Female coal miners were among groups supported by the National Women's Program, created in 1975. Photo: Warren Witte. 3. Staff and committee members of color formed the Third World Coalition in 1971 to guide AFSC's work from the perspective of people of color and their struggles in the U.S. Photographer unknown. 4. Affordable housing march in Philadelphia, 1989. Photo: Peggy Fogarty. 5. Syracuse, New York program, 1998. Photo: Hope Wallis. 6. Seattle Gay/Lesbian Project, 1987. Photo: Ann Stever. 7. Affordable housing march in Philadelphia, 1989. Photo: Ann Stever. 8. Work camp in California, 1977. 9. LGBT programs meeting in Hawaii, 1998. Photo: Robbins Hunter

change the social and institutional structures that perpetuate inequality, AFSC needed to put its resources into supporting the ideas and leadership of people whose daily lives were most clearly affected by discrimination.

"Communities were challenging how we were coming in," Keith Harvey, regional director for AFSC's Northeast region, says, explaining pushback against the idea that poor communities needed outsiders to fix things for them. "Communities were like: 'We could fix it, we don't have the resources to fix it.' AFSC learned to not just roll in and think we can solve problems. Instead, we ask: 'What is your all's need?'" In Maine, where AFSC has a 50-year histo-

ry working with a Native and non-Native program committee, the healing justice program took that approach.

An indigenous community of 700 people identified that something was wrong about the high rate of men going to prison—about 20 percent of their community. They asked for AFSC's help.

"That's when we were able to say, 'Let's do a research project together,'" Keith says. "We put some resources into it and had community folks be a part of the project." Taking statements from people in prison, the project found that drug use was part of the problem, but that law enforcement's treatment of Native youth was also working against them. "They formed commis-

sions on prisons, and brought criminal justice perspectives in," says Keith. "The community began to think about engaging with the Department of Corrections."

Shifting from working in communities to supporting communities' self-determined work has meant that the kind of expertise and support AFSC offers has changed, too.

"We end up working in communities where we have some piece of the expertise, but the community has a lot of it themselves," says Sonia Tuma. "A lot of popular education techniques get used, respecting the experience and authority of the local community." ■

"It is the why of all the whys ... you know, when you sit around, when you look around and you start asking why things are the way they are—the poverty, addiction, despair—the Doctrine of Discovery kicked all this in play..."

—JOE STANLEY (PASSAMAQUODDY) ON THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY

Beyond right relationships: A journey of healing

Indigenous people and Quakers in New England live with the legacy of centuries of war. Through examining both the persistence of 15th century frameworks of conquest and their shared, tragic history, they are confronting historic trauma and unresolved grief in order to begin a journey of healing together. Here, members of the group facilitating this journey explain the shared process of healing.

Wars were waged for over 300 years on the land where New England Friends live. It's where Natives resisted colonization and subjugation and defended their people, their land, and their culture. Thus we—the descendants—share a long and tragic history.

When the New England Yearly Meeting Committee on Racial, Social and Economic Justice be-

gan examining the impact of the 15th century Catholic documents of conquest on contemporary oppression of Native people, there was pushback: "How was this relevant? Quakers are not Catholic!"

One Friend opened a family Bible. Next to the name of his ancestor are the words "Killed by Indians." He said that after taking part in a workshop run by the committee, "I wonder what my ancestors, Quakers, did to bring about this conflict and I want to be part of healing that."

The yearly meeting committee invited AFSC's Healing Justice Program to co-facilitate a discussion on the Catholic documents of conquest. Indigenous people from the Northeast and the meeting agreed (thanks to the guidance of Walter Echo Hawk) to guide the conversation based on the principles of healing, respect, and Indigenous self-determination.



Photo: Doug Kerr

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A MEETING MINUTE

A minute is the written record of a decision made within a gathered Quaker body. Minutes are not merely notes of a discussion, but the record of the collective spiritual will of the body, and they often require deliberation, especially on controversial matters. Minutes on social concerns can often be circulated among Quaker meetings and churches, to invite other bodies to consider the concern and come to clarity on the same issue. They can also be circulated as public statements from Quaker bodies. They tend to carry more weight than individual statements from Friends.



Seaweed (Amelia Bingham), Mashpee Wampanoag Turtle Clan Mother and Mother Bear, Mashpee Wampanoag Bear Clan Mother and Journey of Healing facilitator for New England Yearly Meeting. Photo: Peter Bingham Jr.

A framework for genocide, slavery, segregation, and ongoing rights violations
Three papal bulls make up the Doctrine of Discovery, which established the worldview that a certain group of people, Western Christendom, had moral sanction and the support of international law to invade and colonize the lands of non-Christian Peoples, to dominate them, take their possessions and resources, and enslave and kill them.

The doctrine blessed slave trade and genocide. It yielded a body of international law known as the Law of Nations. The U.S. embraced these doctrines, creating a constitutional framework for slavery and later segregation, and adapted the Law of Nations as Federal Indian Common Law.

Over the last 150 years, we have seen the repudiation of both slavery and segregation, and the U.S. Constitution has been amended. Yet Federal Indian Common Law, devoid of human rights principles, remains intact. It defines Indigenous people as a political entity, giving land titles to Congress and reducing Indigenous property rights to occupancy. Enforcing concepts of plenary power and unfettered guardianship, rejecting the relevance of “principles of abstract justice” or the “morality of the case,” it affords remedies to Indians as “a matter of grace, not because of legal liability,” as stated in the Marshall Trilogy, the foundation of federal Indian law. The Doctrine of Discovery

was most recently quoted in a 2005 U.S. Supreme Court Case, *City of Sherrill, New York v. Oneida Nation*:

Under the ‘doctrine of discovery...’ fee title [ownership] to the lands occupied by Indians when the colonists arrived became vested in the sovereign—first the discovering European nation and later the original states and the United States.

Today’s massive human rights violations against Indigenous people are the results of such applications of the Doctrine of Discovery. Life expectancy for Native people in the U.S. is 48 to 52 years. Unemployment rates in Indigenous communities run from 45 to 75 percent. And incarceration rates and suicide rates are higher than in any other racial or ethnic group—as are rates of violence against and murder of Native women and the likelihood of being shot by law enforcement. [Learn more at afsc.org/dod-legacy].

After examining this information, New England Yearly Meeting decided to embark on a multi-year journey of healing. Their Meeting Minute of the Doctrine of Discovery states:

We as New England Yearly Meeting repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. We are beginning a journey to consider the moral and spiritual implications of how we benefit from and have been harmed by the doctrine

as individuals and meetings ... We need to learn more, find ways to seek forgiveness, and to ask how the Spirit might lead us ... We encourage consultation with Indigenous Peoples to restore the health of ourselves and our planet. We recognize that this is our work to do. On this path, respectfully traveled in love, our goal is true healing ...

Righting wrongs

The journey of healing was designed and implemented by Indigenous trainers who travel with the yearly meeting’s Minute 53 Working Party to work with individual meetings. The steps in this journey demonstrate the transfer of power necessary to

right a wrong.

First we must acknowledge that a wrong has taken place and apologize for that wrong. Once the apology is offered, we must wait and see if it is accepted, if it is enough, or if there is more we must acknowledge. It is at this moment that we transfer power to those we have harmed. In this case, Indigenous people decide whether they will accept the apology.

Still, it is not enough to apologize. We must make amends. Guided by Indigenous people, some Friends meetings in New England are opening this conversation. Only once amends are made can we explore the possibility of relationship.

This journey, guided by Indigenous trainers and relying on our shared wisdom

about righting a wrong, is framed by the simple truth that we have all been harmed and that the longing for peace will be answered by the development of good, equitable, “right” relationships.

These relationships are not a goal—they are a resource. If we develop and care for these relationships with compassion and respect, we may actually build the world our children and grandchildren will be able to share equitably, in love and in peace. ■

—MOTHER BEAR (MASHPEE WAMPANOAG),
JAMIE BISSONETTE LEWEY (ABENAKI),
PLANSOWES DANA (PASSAMAQUODDY)
AND RACHEL CAREY-HARPER (BARNSTABLE
FRIENDS MEETING)

The authors form the Minute 53 Working Party.

It is not enough
to apologize.
We must make
amends.

DONOR PROFILE

Joyce Myers-Brown

“Just as war is not the answer, injustice won’t end as long as individuals are denied protection under the law,” says Joyce Myers-Brown, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ (UCC) and long-time supporter of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).

It’s a sentiment she’s acted on. As a teenager, Joyce traveled from her home in Philadelphia to a rally in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she heard Martin Luther King, Jr. speak about the need to create “the beloved community.” Inspired to become more deeply involved in the civil rights movement, she headed south to North Carolina for college. She then went to Connecticut for seminary, where she participated in demonstrations against discrimination. Later she would marry Edward Brown, himself an ordained minister and a devoted civil rights activist who worked with civil rights leaders and other white pastors for the integration of his denomination.

After attending seminary, Joyce’s min-

istry took her to Angola for 15 years. “I saw people getting carted off by the secret police and by the authorities,” she says. “It stayed with me.” When she returned to the U.S., she went on a yearlong speaking tour, raising awareness about the negative effects of colonialism in Angola, and speaking out against the brutality and suffering she had seen.

Later she went on a two-month study sabbatical to Central America and Mexico and joined a prayer delegation arranged by AFSC. “El Salvador was just overwhelming,” she wrote home. “All I could think of were the darkest days of fear and oppression and violence that I had known in Angola ... and the struggle for independence.” Again, she became an ally for change, serving as a liaison to the Council for Hispanic Ministries and joining a delegation to Nicaragua to help expose and protest U.S. involvement in funding the contras and to participate in vigils to stop attacks against the Nicaraguan people.

Now a great-grandmother and active



Joyce Myers Brown

mentor in the sanctuary and immigration rights movement, Joyce remains committed to seeking justice for all. Giving to AFSC is part of that commitment. In 2002, she and her late husband set up a charitable gift annuity, which gives her guaranteed annual payments for life while at the same time supporting AFSC’s work.

“We are not close to where we want to be in peace, justice, and uniting divided communities,” says Joyce. “That’s what AFSC works for, and that’s why I continue to support AFSC.” ■



News from around AFSC

Restoring hope in Baltimore

Eddie Conway is a former Black Panther political prisoner. During his 43 years in Maryland prisons, Eddie organized many campaigns and programs to assist the prison population, including AFSC's Friend of a Friend mentoring project. He also authored two books: "The Greatest Threat: COINTELPRO and The Black Panther Party" and "Marshall Law: The Life and Times of a Baltimore Black Panther," co-authored with AFSC's Dominique Stevenson. He was released in early 2014 after a court ruled that he and 200 others had been given unfair trials.

Upon his release, Eddie felt called to do something to improve life in Baltimore. "Riding through the city and seeing people in a stupor, or nodding in front of abandoned buildings, made me realize how much the city and the population had deteriorated since the '70s," he says. "This tugged at my consciousness because it seemed like there was a sense of hopelessness. I felt the need to do something about it. That is what we do in Friend of a Friend—restore hope."

Eddie now volunteers with AFSC's Baltimore program, continuing his work as an organizer. He has also spoken at local colleges and universities, appeared on Democracy Now, and started working as a producer with Real News Network in Baltimore.

"I have a tremendous faith that people of all backgrounds can come together and make changes in their community," Eddie says. "We are trying to build relationships by supporting the community—providing lunches and school supplies and working with residents around issues that affect them."

Human rights review includes torture survivors' testimonies

For decades, prisoners have described to AFSC the psychological torture, physical and sexual abuse, degrading housing conditions, poor food quality, and inadequate medical care they experience in U.S. prisons.

In November 2014, when the UN Committee against Torture reviewed U.S. compliance with the Convention against Torture, AFSC presented these testimonies in the form of a shadow report offering evidence that the U.S. has fallen short of its commitments under the Convention. Shadow reports allow organizations like AFSC to advocate for domestic policy changes by measuring do-

estic practices against international human rights obligations. Our findings were shared with the committee and United States government.

"As the only organization speaking from a faith perspective rooted in moral principles, AFSC's voice at the review in Geneva was essential," says Lia Lindsey, who represented AFSC. "We drew upon our decades-long anti-torture advocacy and brought testimonies from prisoner torture survivors who, due to their imprisonment, weren't able to speak directly to the committee."

AFSC's report, "Survivors Speak: Torture in U.S. prisons and jails," is a compilation of firsthand accounts of torture, including solitary confinement and sexual assault, experienced by individuals in prisons and jails throughout the country.

The committee's final observations recommended full implementation in all states of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, which was one action suggested by AFSC. The committee also expressed concern about extensive use of solitary confinement in the U.S., stating that "full isolation for 22-23 hours a day in super-maximum security prisons is unacceptable."

Access AFSC's report online at afsc.org/US-CAT-compliance.

Oakland mural celebrates black and brown unity

Youth participants in AFSC's 67 Sueños program joined with youth from Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, California, last summer to create a black/brown unity mural. Crowned with "Still We Rise," from a poem by Maya Angelou, the mural uses colorful images to detail painful events related to incarceration.

"Our youth had been involved in work to raise awareness around the murder of Anastasio Rojas at the hands of border agents. Rojas was killed the same year as Oscar Grant, shot by police at an Oakland train stop," says Pablo Paredes, the program director. "So our youth made connections between the two cases. They also heard legal scholar Michelle Alexander speak on her recent book "The New Jim Crow," and realized that black and brown people are being targeted and incarcerated as a matter of business."

The mural, named "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" for Angelou's memoir, is huge: one 90-by-25 foot wall as the main canvas and one 35-by-25 foot wall as a complementary piece.

The youth interviewed 10 men who had been incarcerated, five in immigrant detention centers, and organized brainstorming sessions with about 60 mostly young people. The results inspired lead artist Francisco Sanchez to sketch a design rich with themes, concepts, and details portraying the legacies of pride, resistance, and culture of black and brown communities.

The young painters celebrated the mural's completion on Aug. 10 with Aztec and Turf dancing, spoken word by popular local emcees, Gospel music, and performances by the Allen Temple Youth Ministry—crowned by the unveiling.

Litzy Castillo of 67 Sueños spoke for many when she said, "I really like that in a neighborhood where it's mostly black and raza families living, we will have this mural that shows how we are connected and always have been." ■

—DOMINIQUE STEVENSON, LIA LINDSEY, AND ALEXIS MOORE



Snapshot

A look at AFSC around the world

Pablo Ramirez, young leader from Guatemala, and Crystal Gonzalez, director of AFSC's Los Angeles program, on the bus to Robben Island during the global youth indaba in South Africa. Photo: AFSC/Bryan Vana



Left to right, top to bottom:

1. Peace day mural painting; El Salvador
2. Rights of the child demonstration; New York, New York
3. Rights of the child demonstration; New York, New York
4. Legal services clinic; Des Moines, Iowa
5. Freedom school; St. Louis, Missouri
6. Immigration and deportation hearing; Washington, D.C.
7. Village near monastic school; Myanmar
8. Rights of the child demonstration; New York, New York
9. Boycott poster exhibit; Chicago, Illinois
10. Community workspace opening; Zimbabwe
11. Global youth indaba; South Africa
12. Monastic school; Myanmar

Photos: AFSC/Urban Youth Participation, Ester Jove Soligue, Ester Jove Soligue, Jon Krieg, Caylee Dodson, Karen Elliott Greisdorf, Elizabeth Chey, Ester Jove Soligue, Jennifer Bing, Charles Chisango, Bryan Vana, Elizabeth Chey



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