



January—March 2010

Inside...

Program Highlights:

- Immokalee TPS Meetings
- Fighting Abuses Around TPS Filings
- Donation Drive & Haiti Relief
- Haitian Community
- TPS Application Drive

Upcoming Events

Across the Region

Meet Our Staff & Interns

The Miami **AFSC - American Friends Immigrant Services (AFIS)** Program's primary focus is to strengthen understanding and respect among cultures, as well as increase awareness of migration and the rights of immigrants. Our programs aim to provide direct immigration representation and assistance for refugees and immigrants.

AFSC - American Friends Immigrant Services (AFIS) Miami, Florida

Temporary Protective Status Meetings

Even before the earthquake in Haiti, filing for TPS status for Haitians and other immigrant communities kept the staff in Miami very busy.



Attorney Ralph Francois speaking to the Haitian community.

Immokalee TPS Meetings

Acquiring Temporary Protective Status (TPS) has long been an obstacle for Haitians in the US due to unresolved political issues. AFSC has been working tirelessly to overcome this obstacle with the hope that Haitians will soon be able to enjoy the same rights and opportunities as other immigrants in this country. In Miami, our Haitian Community

Social Advocate, **Paul Andre Mondesir**, has recently seen some of the results of his hard work and dedication towards resolving this issue. He says that the best ways to teach the community is through radio



station programs, churches, and community meetings. Among the many projects and events he has been a part of throughout south Florida, Paul held a meeting in Immokalee on December 18th, 2009 to address human rights issues and push TPS for the Haitian community. Approximately 40 people from the community attended this event. It also included the TeteEnsemble radio station 1580 AM (www.radioteteensemble.net)

out of Ft. Myers which broadcasted the event to 50,000 people, providing them with useful information regarding TPS, alternatives for immigration, and how to prevent abuse from attorneys and TPS opportunists when dealing with these types of issues. This event was aided through a phone conference with Haitian attorney Ralph Francois, located in Broward County, who took questions from the audience. The meeting caught the attention of several people looking for assistance; shortly thereafter the radio station began receiving a very high volume of callers requesting information.

Since the radio station did not have the capacity to help all these people, they contacted Paul and suggested having another meeting so that the community could get the answers they were looking for.

Fighting Abuses Around TPS Filings

On January 11th, Paul attended a meeting in Chicago regarding TPS to discuss possible options for bringing this relief to the community faster. He returned home on January 12th, just to find out hours later about the devastating earthquake that occurred in Haiti that same day.

Although tragic news, it also became the catalyst to finally bringing TPS to Haitians. Paul held a much needed 2nd meet-

ing on the subject on January 29th, in the Lutheran Church in Immokalee.



Pictured: Paul Andre Mondesir (far right) with some of the community members who attended.

The meeting lasted approximately 2 hours, but this time attorney Ralph Francois accompanied Paul to speak in person to the Haitian community. Approximately 60-70 Haitians attended this event and TeteEnsemble radio station was there again, broadcasting to the cities of Naples, Ft. Myers, Lehigh, Port Charlotte, and even Sarasota.

(story continued on page 2)



Pictured: Migrant workers waiting to receive their weekly checks from their contractors on Jan. 29th



Pictured: Migrant workers waiting for the bus to pick them up for work in Immokalee.



Pictured: Marie Jean (far right) with Paul Mondesir. Also pictured: women from the community speaking to Paul and a person from Karen Dudden-Blake's group.

Donation Drive & Haiti Relief

In light of the recent tragedy that befell Haiti, AFIS has also been taking in donations to send as forms of relief. Leading the project is **Paul Andre Mondesir**. He has received several donations so far, the largest which came from Karen Dudden-Blake and her group of participants. Remaining donations have come from Jean Kapulski in Texas, an AFSC volunteer in Miami Jenna Kulbersh, and many others. So far, the donations received have included 370 bottles of water, 12 large boxes of clothes (and shoes), 8 large boxes of canned and nonperishable food, medi-

cal supplies, and a brand new generator.



Pictured: Supplies received the first day of donations; brought in by Karen Dudden-Blake and her group.

The donations are being sent to Haiti through three organizations. The water, food, clothing, and shoes are being sent to

Port-au-Prince, Haiti through the Hero organization located in Broward County. The generator and remaining clothes are being sent to Cap-Haitian through Pastor Andre Mezilus and his organization. Finally, the medical supplies are being sent through the Friends of Petit Goave organization with Mr. Emmanuel Hyppolite, who is the husband of our Outreach Paralegal Marie Jean, in Miami. The office is still receiving donations and the drive will remain open until further notice, sending all donations via the previously mentioned contacts.

TPS Abuses (continued from pg. 1)

Once again, the broadcast included information on TPS, precautions to take with agencies, attorneys, and opportunists, as well as other helpful tips. The Haitians we informed of how much they should realistically pay for filing forms associated with TPS.

Some were paying anywhere between \$350.00-\$800.00 and others were told that it

would cost them \$1,800.00 to file! Additionally, the community was informed of how many days they have to file their TPS and that if they choose to seek help from an attorney, their attorney should give them that information as well.

However, the most important piece of information came from attorney Ralph Francois, which explained how important it was

for them to make sure they got copies of ALL their documents and to personally go to the post office to send their application out with the money order included, to ensure its delivery.

Pictured below: Paul Andre Mondesir with volunteer and activist, Ducarmel Bellevue, who provided an exceptional amount of help to the community.



getting their documents ready to send out through certified mail. Marie said this event was very well organized and helpful for the Haitian community.

TPS Application Drive

On Saturday January 30th, our Outreach Paralegal, **Marie Jean**, attended a free TPS application drive that was held from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm for qualifying Haitian nationals that live in North Miami. It was hosted by the mayor of North Miami, Mayor Andre Pierre, who is also Haitian, the North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), and the Haitian Lawyers Association. They were

accompanied by lawyers from the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Catholic Charities, an Immigration Official, and many others. This application drive served about 600 people looking for assistance by giving them crucial information and legal advice regarding the process of applying for TPS, helping them fill out their applications, providing them with envelopes, and even

AFSC Miami Office



Paul Andre Mondesir with the President of the Haitian-American Coalition, Robert LaFortune, and Director of Haitian Women of Miami, Marleine Bastien during a meeting on Jan. 14th right after the hurricane.

Haitian Community

There are nearly 17,000 Haitians in the Immokalee area. The majority work in agriculture. By bringing awareness to this community as soon as possible, Paul hopes to alleviate some of the fear and hesitation that many of the Haitians have concerning immigration.

MIAMI AREA OFFICE (AFIS)
111 N.E. 1st Street 3rd Floor
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Phone: 305.600.5441
Fax: 305.432.4476
www.afsc.org/miami/

- Lucio Perez-Reynoso, Miami Area Program Coordinator
Marie Jean, Outreach Paralegal
Herman Martinez, Community Social Advocate
Paul Andre Mondesir, Haitian Community Social Advocate

Helping Workers Collect Unpaid Wages

Herman Martinez, AFIS Community Social Advocate, set up a meeting between five workers and an employer who owed them wages. Each of the five workers was owed at least \$1,300.00. Herman and Lucio went to meet with the employer, his business is landscaping. They met for more than two hours putting the workers' hours together and mediating between the employer and workers. The employer stated that he did not owe them that many hours but that he was going to pay them anyway. The

workers wanted to be paid immediately, but the employer did not have the money, which totaled \$5,600. So the employer made a commitment before AFSC that he would pay them within one week. The workers found satisfaction because Herman was there. The day ended on a positive note for those workers and they went home happy. Without AFSC's presence, this type of situation may have never come to light. While Herman was meeting with

the original five workers on the street, another 20 workers came to talk to Herman about employer's abuses and non-payment. Herman told them to call him at the office so that he develops a complaint. As a result of all the complaints filed, Herman is working to have a local ordinance passed that would make it a criminal offense to steal wages from a worker. This local ordinance will make it much easier to protect the rights of venerable workers.

Miami Staff, Volunteers & Interns

- Lucio Perez-Reynoso is the Miami Area Program Coordinator. Lucio deals with the bulk of court hearings and trials; attends various immigration programs and trainings in the community and travels with Herman occasionally to deal with issues regarding the migrant workers; works very closely with Marie, Paul, and Herman to provide the best services possible to the immigrants in our area and has even gone out of his way to provide transportation to our office for those who live further away.
Marie Jean is the Outreach Paralegal. She works closely with Lucio in dealing with legal issues regarding the immigration status of our clients; Participates in community events that benefit the immigrant population. Recently, she was part of a large TPS event in South Florida with several lawyers as well as the Mayor, providing legal advice and assistance with TPS applications to the Haitian community after the crisis that took place.
Paul Andre Mondesir is the Haitian Community Social Advocate. He focuses on relations with the Haitian Community; There is a large Haitian community in Immokalee, Florida where Paul attends various events and holds informative meetings for the public. He is also part of a Radio station that broadcasts important information for Haitian immigrants. Recently, Due to the current crisis in Haiti, he has been working more to educate and protect the Haitian people about TPS and to be weary of those who may take advantage of them.
Herman Martinez is the Community Social Advocate. He Works mainly in the field; traveling to parts of South Florida addressing issues of non-payment and/or abuse of migrant workers; Speaks directly to the immigrants' employers and negotiates with them to have adequate payment given to the workers.
Ana Halper is an undergraduate at Florida Atlantic University. She helps part time and has given presentations on immigrant rights. She has also worked on wage theft mediations. She hopes to become a community activist after graduation.
Jenna Kulbersh is an undergraduate at Florida International University. She volunteers part time in our office and is very interested in immigration law and human rights. She plans to attend law school after graduation next year.
Liviu Lungu, Esq. graduated from Nova Law School and has been admitted to the Florida Bar recently. He is volunteering in our office during his search for a job, which he hopes will include the practice of immigration law.
Sivan Fraser is an undergraduate at FAU. She is studying to take the LSAT, in preparation for entering law school.



Atlanta, Georgia Regional Office
189A Sams Street, Decatur, GA
30030
404-373-7410

April 12-16th—Martin Luther King Justice Tour—will make stops in Dalton, Milledgeville, Statesboro, Athens, and Atlanta to bring provocative mixed media art and spoken word pieces inspired by Dr. King's April 4th 1967 "Beyond Vietnam" speech in which Dr. King prophetically drew connections between militarism, poverty, and racism.

May 21,22,23—Second Annual, " Be the Change" Youth Convergence organized by AFSC and the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition. Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech serves as the "grounding text" for the weekend. Experienced organizers and activists offer workshops on carrying out effective nonviolent direct action, closing the school to prison pipeline, countering military recruitment, and community organizing.

Miami, Florida Office
111 N.E. 1st Street 3rd Floor
Miami, Florida 33132
305.600.5441

March 2, 9, 23 & 30—Creole radio program: motive Haitians to apply for TPS, ft. Myers, FL

March 6—City of Miami garden and the Haitian lawyers association TPS application drive (Marie will be assisting TPS applicants) city of Miami Gardens, City Hall

March 7—representation of AFSC and AFIS work; Key West Friends Meeting house; Key West

March 11—immigration subcommittee meeting, USCIS; Miami **ALSO** media spokesperson training

March 13— community meeting, St. Mary's Catholic Church; Pahokee

March 24—quarterly CBO meeting, USCIS Oakland Park Field office; Oakland Park

March 25—radio interview: TPS drive, Port Charlotte

March 27—community meeting with Amigos Center; Immokalee

March 27—information session on TPS for Haitians, USCIS and Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss; Homestead

Greensboro, North Carolina Office
6306 W. Market St.
Greensboro, NC. 27409
Phone: 336-854-0633

Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace: annual march through cities in North Carolina during Holy Week to focus on different issues of peace and justice in local communities.

—Charlotte on 3-28, Hickory on 3-29, Greensboro on 3-30, Winston-Salem on 3-31, and Raleigh on 4-2

Immigrant Solidarity Committee—Charlotte-3rd Thursday of every month & Durham-4th Monday of every month

April 9th 3pm-6pm—Alternatives Fair: Take Charge of Your Future- Greensboro Public Library

New Orleans Project Area Office
1137 Baronne Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.565.3596

March 27 9am—7pm & March 28 1pm—3pm
 The Overcomers & AFSC Co-sponsor **Pick up Your Peace Youth Summit & Social Forum**—at the Science and Math High School, youth led workshops and people's movement assemblies.

April 3 9am—3pm—Circle Food Store Farmers' Market in the 7th Ward in partnership with the Renaissance Project. This is the first of a monthly event.

April 6 4:30pm—6pm—Peace Program with the New Orleans Peace Alliance—Tues. and Thurs. at the Apex Learning Center in mid-city from 4:30-6pm for students 13-17—community mobilization, power of non violence, criminal justice and the role of the police, and peace art.

News from the AFSC Office of the Carolinas

With the hit of the devastating earthquake in Haiti, AFSC area office of the Carolinas has been hard at work aiding our fellow humans facing hardship abroad. On January 18th, AFSC's Greensboro office held a volunteer day to make disaster relief kits for Haiti. Thanks to the enormous turnout we had, it was a huge success! Community members of all ages, races and faiths, including Mayor Bill Knight, showed up to assist and support the effort. We made nearly twice as many kits as we expected for Haiti, and by the end of the day we counted about kits filled with items such as: towels, water purification tablets, candles, antibacterial ointment and other basic toiletries. We made 97 kits for Haiti and in addition, our dedicated team also produced over 76 kits for local use. The volunteer efforts that took place on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day were a great way to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King through collective community effort. Creating kits for both our local community and our international community is a great way to demonstrate the way that issues of poverty and economic justice cross borders.



From more information about what we are doing visit us on the web at: www.afsc.org/greensboro

To see news coverage of the event, please visit these links:

http://www.news-record.com/content/2010/01/18/article/a_day_of_service

http://www.digtriad.com/news/local_state/article.aspx?storyid=136006

<http://www.myfox8.com/news/wghp-greensboro-celebrates-mlk-100118,0,1036086.story>

New Orleans AFSC works to bring fresh food to Inner City Neighborhood

New Orleans AFSC is partnering with the Renaissance Project to bring a monthly farmers market to the parking lot of the now shuttered Circle Food Store. Circle food store has been serving the 7th ward and downtown community for over 100 years. It was the only Black owned full service grocery in New Orleans. The owner, Wayne Boudreaux, has not been able to muster the funds and political support to stage a post-Katrina comeback. The 7th ward and much of downtown New Orleans lacks a supermarket which means residents can only find groceries at high priced convenience stores or by traveling several miles by car. Often this leads to poor food choices which result in long term health problems.

We plan to work with the owner and other 7th ward residents to bring back Circle Food Store. The reopening of the store will bring back local jobs, fresh food for the local residents and support for a network of black farmers.

In the meanwhile, we plan to launch the farmers market on April 3, 2010 in the Circle parking lot. In addition to finding fresh vegetables and the treasured bell peppers and merlitos for the Easter dinner we will provide a means for local residents to sign on to help bring back Circle Food.



Current housing conditions in the Desire/Florida neighborhood located in the 9th Ward.

New Orleans Peace & Economic Justice Project

The New Orleans office is implementing a peace and economic justice project focused on the 7th ward and the Desire/Florida area of the 9th Ward. Malcolm is in charge of the economic justice work. He has been engaged with the New Orleans Jobs with Justice Coalition – a coalition of labor, community and faith-based organizations- which is attempting to pass a First Source Ordinance in New Orleans. The passage of First Source would require all general contractors who receive city funds to hire at least 50 % local workers for construction projects. This would greatly relieve the unemployment problem in the city.

Scenes from the First New Orleans Alternative Jobs and resources Fair, on historic Bayou Road, September 12, 2009



Introducing The New Orleans Project Staff

Malcolm Suber is the newly hired Project Director at our New Orleans office. Malcolm has lived in New Orleans for over 30 years and has over forty years organizing experience in all phases of the human rights/social justice movement. He says, "I'm glad to be on board with AFSC. Your presence here will help advance the social justice struggle in New Orleans".



Above: Youth register for the Jobs Fair

Below: Tulane Community Health Team



Ahmane' Glover is the Community Activist in the New Orleans office. She is from Savannah, GA and graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans with a B.A. in Communications and Spanish. Ahmane' has lived in New Orleans for a little over five years and has focused on community work throughout this time. She worked with a number of non-profits, most recently with Hands On New Orleans and their AmeriCorps program. The New Orleans AFSC office has revamped the program and is prepared to do exciting work with the 7th ward and the Desire/Florida community in the 9th ward.



Jan. 20 at the GA State Capitol supporters participate in a Press conference to promote resolution that AFSC & ACLU created to protect children from abusive recruitment tactics. Former military recruiters will participate.

Jan. 22 with GA Peace & Justice Coalition, AFSC marked 7 years of consecutive weekly demonstrations against war at the courthouse square in Marietta, GA. Afterward we will have lunch at a local restaurant and discussion with an update on the state of the anti-war movement in GA.

Jan. 25 at the Atlanta Friends Meeting AFSC and the GA Peace & Justice Coalition, Atlanta Chapter, hosted a potluck followed by a moderated discussion with an Afghanistan combat veteran and IAW member, Cindy Sheehan, a KSU sociology professor and an Afghan refugee.

February 11 a caravan carrying hundreds of enthusiastic Georgians from around the state began a Selma-like bus ride to the State Capitol where they were greeted with a larger banner that read, "Jobs, Income, Healthcare, not Warfare", which was painted by AFSC intern Haley Murphy.



Tim Franzen, program director, Atlanta Peace building Program at the annual Poor People's Day event in Atlanta

During the spirited press conference on the steps of the capitol, AFSC/Atlanta was invited to address the crowd. We used our few minutes on the mic to highlight the connections between racism, poverty, and Militarism. It is our belief that every dollar spent on these wars is a robbery from our community. Each child recruited to fight these wars is a child we need here, in Georgia, to help fight poverty. Never has there been a moment in our lifetime that we needed our your people to serve their country by serving their broken communities...right here! We took a moment to let folks know that there was a resolution(on the floor of the Georgia House(HR1219) and Senate(SR955) that would provide safeguards against the recruitment of children under 17 years old. Folks in the crowd were asked to pick up their phones and call their representatives and encourage them to Support the resolutions.

To read a full copy of the resolution go to: http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2009_10/fulltext/hr1219.

To sign the online petition go to: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/GA-Says-No-To-Using-Schools-For-Military-Recruitment-of-Minors>

Feb. 10-11 was the 30th Poor People's Day at the Capital organized by Georgia Citizens Coalition on Hunger .

Student Writing Contest Winners!! The Peace Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ariana Jones is talented beyond her years. As a junior in high school who excels in academics and extracurricular activities, She spends her Saturdays with Bridging The Gap (performing arts team), perfecting her craft. Ariana started singing at the age of 2. Now at the age of 16, not only does she zealously grace the stage with her singing, acting, and dancing but she's also a passionate spoken word and script writer. Ariana has appeared in several plays across the Atlanta metro area and looks forward to a promising television and film career. Aside from her artistic endeavors, Ms. Jones plans to attend Spellman College and pursue a degree in law. BRIDGING THE GAP (BTG) is committed to Bridging the Gap from Here to Hollywood as we develop talent that can compete professionally but we also use theater, song, dance, and multimedia to bridge the gap between parents and children, males and females, race to race, students and teachers etc, through effective communication and solution oriented choices.

MLK, JR. PEACE PROGRAM SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Sponsor: American Friends Service Committee

Co-Sponsors: African American Human Rights Foundation, Atlanta Friends Meeting, Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition-Atlanta. Nuclear Watch South, Georgia WAND, Amnesty USA - Southern Region, Metropolitan Atlanta Chapter Democratic Socialists of America and the Atlanta Fighting Foreclosure Coalition

Partners: WRFG Radio, International Action Center, 50 Artists..., Women Watch Afrika, Human Rights Atlanta, Agnes Scott Living Wage Campaign, Amnesty International, Agnes Scott College Chapter, Coalition to Remember the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot and WonderRoot

The Substance Abuse Prevention Teen Theater (SAPT) is an 8 year old program for teens, ages 13 - 18, who reside in the McDaniel/Mechanicsville community. SAPT is a program of the Wholistic Stress Control Institute, Inc. (WSCSI), Teens are trained to write skits/plays and perform theatrical presentations on prevention topics for their peers. Charlotte Cain is the Artists in Residence for the program. If you would like to book SAPT for a performance you can call her directly at 770-322-7020 or call the main office at 404-755-0068.



The Peace Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE presents

The PEACE LEGACY of MLK

reception, speakers, performers, concert

1.14.2010

"OUR ONLY HOPE TODAY LIES IN OUR ABILITY TO RECAPTURE THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT..." -MLK

CONTACT: A.Lovelace@afsc.org 404.819.7363

On Friday, January 14, a broad partnership of organizations hosted the AFSC 3rd Annual King Peace Program. They gathered with 125 guests to lift up the message of peace in King's speech—**Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break Silence** delivered 4 April 1967, at a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned at Riverside Church in New York City. King spoke directly to "...[T]hose who ask the question, "Aren't you a civil rights leader?" and thereby mean to exclude me from the movement for peace.... Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to **poverty, racism, and militarism.**"

The event was held at **The Atlanta Friends Meeting meetinghouse and featured keynote speaker Constance Curry.** Curry served as an advisor on the executive committee of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and

from 1964 to 1975, worked as a field representative for the American Friends Service Committee on issues of voter registration, school desegregation, and economic development in the U.S. South. The audiences was entertained by performances from Stephen Wing, SAPT Teen Theater, Bridging the GAP, Soul Country, Chauncey Beaty, Ken J. Martin, Paula Larke, Miguel Paul & Itopia and Pacha Mamas.

The gathered audience generously donated \$300.22 to the AFSC Haiti Fund!



American Friends Service Committee

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Photo: Barry Puse