



American Friends Service Committee

San Francisco Bay Area 2016 in Review

As we round out the second month of 2017, we are looking ahead to some new and increased challenges for our country overall, especially for the communities with whom we work. In addition, it's an important time to look back at our work in 2016. Reviewing where we've been, examining what's been particularly challenging, and celebrating where we have had great success helps us to look forward and plan effective social justice work at a time when our communities need AFSC support and partnership more than ever.

In the pages ahead you'll read about some of the inspiring work AFSC programs and projects undertook in 2016. This work would not have been possible without the generous gifts and efforts of our supporters and volunteers, and we're grateful for all the ways you've championed AFSC programs. Thank you so much for your dedication to the Bay Area and to the American Friends Service Committee!

We hope you'll continue to be part of our work as we face new challenges in 2017 and beyond. In the following pages, you will find a brief description of each of our programs and an update on the important accomplishments your contributions have enabled.

With gratitude,
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67 SUEÑOS

67Sueños is a youth leadership development program working with high school students in the San Francisco and Oakland Bay Area. Our youth are undocumented or come from mixed status families that know all too well the fear and anxiety that family separation provokes. We focus on holistic trauma healing through reconnecting youth to ancestral knowledge, practices, and healing circles to facilitate leadership development with community organizing, political activism, and art(ivism) challenging exclusionary, racist narratives. Youth undergo a year-long leadership training course designed to fit their experience and ensure graduates leave our program transformed and ready to be change agents in their communities. This involves education, action, and art projects like our large scale murals which can be found throughout Oakland and San Francisco.

In 2016, we had a 100% retention rate with 15 participants who received over 180 hours of programming! After going through the program and learning about social activism in their communities, the youth identified a variety of issues they felt passionate about. Participants attended city council meetings and sat down with individual council members to influence their votes for affordable housing; they met with congressional aides in Washington DC to discuss Temporary Protective Status for recent arrivals and an end to US funding of Plan Frontera Sur and Plan Merida; worked with Stop Urban Shield to end police militarization; and joined post-election walk-outs throughout the Bay Area. These experiences showed participants a variety of ways to engage their political representatives and take part in the democratic process. It also cultivated their critical thinking and gave them stronger tools for resistance in a social climate of bigotry and disregard. Our high school graduates went on to enrolled in San Francisco State, UC Davis, UC San Cruz, UC Merced, and various bay area community colleges.

By centralizing the experiences of our youth and fostering their leadership potential, we are taking part in building healthier, more just communities. This work is ongoing and we need your help as a sustaining supporter to ensure that our youth are prepared to take up the fight for justice!



HEALING JUSTICE

All across the country, AFSC has taken a strong stance of dedicating its efforts to defend the rights of people who come in contact with the criminal justice system. We are tackling mass incarceration head on by advocating changes in law to reduce the length of sentences, and opening up more opportunities for transitioning to the outside. We are working alongside prisoners who have been held in solitary confinement for decades and their families, to change the policies that have allowed these practices. Such isolation has been incredibly detrimental to our communities as it breaks apart families and offers little opportunity for healing. We strive to guide our justice system to adopt restorative practices that help mend the bonds of society by recognizing the rights and dignity of survivors as well as people who have been convicted and their communities.

2016 marked both exciting progress and some disappointing setbacks. Working with legislators and activists in Sacramento, we saw the passage of bills to give prisoners in any form of isolation the right to earn credits to reduce their sentences, limit the use of solitary confinement to four hours for youth, and change the

purpose of sentencing to include rehabilitation and restorative justice. We also supported CA Proposition 57 and celebrated its passage which will help reduce the prison population by opening up new parole possibilities and improving the processes for deciding when young people can be tried as juveniles.

At the same time, the loss of proposition 62 which would have ended the death penalty in California and the passage of proposition 66 which speeds up the appeal process have created new hurdles for those who believe there is no place for death, or life without the possibility of parole in a “justice” system

We have helped build coalitions like Californians United for a Responsible Budget, the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition, and the Quaker Network to End Mass Incarceration. Through these groups we have created strong networks that link together policy makers, lawyers, organizers, community members, people who have been incarcerated, and their families. Together, we have the right people and the right resources to address the hard work ahead.

Working with our partners, we continue to speak across the state at legislative hearings, community meetings, and in faith settings to educate people about the realities of the prison system and centralize the stories of those impacted by it. This work has been made possible by your generous donations. Together, with your continued support, we can work for true justice and help heal our communities.



WAGE PEACE

San Francisco's Wage Peace program is concentrating efforts on two areas of militarism: police militarization (especially in the Bay Area), and the military transfers to Mexico that contribute to the drug war and human rights violations. These forms of militarism have led to increased violence in the United States and Mexico. To pursue these efforts, we have rebuilt Wage Peace from one back to two full-time staff. AFSC Wage Peace also continues to support the GI Rights Hotline, which supports military personnel facing abuses in the U.S. armed services.

We live in an empire that is permanently at war, internally and externally, where pervasive militarism is normalized. Activists and ordinary people are frequently overwhelmed with information about such militarism, yet relevant information that could support activists and communities to transform practices of militarism is often hidden, unavailable, or coded. This includes information about equipment, personnel, training, costs and funding flows, who is harmed and how, who makes decisions and who benefits from them, and timelines for and access to decisions.

AFSC provides research, analysis, and/or networking to the active movements that confront this militarism. Our proactive role permits us to prepare to respond to unforeseen opportunities and events with an overarching frame of analysis. We are well positioned to obtain relevant information,

analyze it, create user-friendly resources, and circulate them among activists, communities, journalists, and policy-makers. By closely engaging already-existing activism in two areas of militarism, we will have the relationships and communication to ensure our research and resources are those that movements see as useful. We publish these materials on our web site, in the bi-monthly Demilitarize! Newsletter, through coalitions partners, and in other publications.

For decades, when our staffing level was considerably higher, AFSC engaged in peace education across many areas. But the decision to respond to many local efforts was undertaken at the cost of going deeper in fewer areas. The Wage Peace program now works on fewer fronts so that we can engage more deeply on militarized policing in California, including the Urban Shield SWAT team competition, and weapons transfers to Mexico, which feeds the violence harming so many families.

Challenging militarism and the militarization of U.S. institutions has always been at the core of the work. We emphasize working with women and communities of color most adversely affected – from occupations and conflicts around the world to military base-building and the nuclear weapons industries. Providing opportunities to engage in waging peace remains a priority for AFSC. We look forward to working with all in confronting militarism in our society.



ECONOMIC ACTIVISM

Corporations have economic and political power that at times overwhelms us. Led by profit, they become some of the main drivers of exploitation, repression, violence and war around the world. Led by profit, they may also be very susceptible to public pressure. The Economic Activism program in AFSC's San Francisco office supports communities threatened by corporate greed, exposes corporate complicity in human rights violations, and provides training in economic activism strategies to organizers on various issues.

Through our investigate website (www.afsc.org/investigate), we publish independently researched information about corporate complicity in human rights violations. In 2016, we added a mapping of the U.S. wider incarceration industry, profiling service providers ranging from phone and commissary services to electronic monitoring and banking. We also completed our listing of companies complicit in the Israeli occupation. Our investment screening tool allows investors to see what they are invested in, learn more about what others have done, and choose a moral course of action.

We have supported the efforts of student groups, faith groups, funds, and city organizers to screen their investment for complicity in the Israeli occupation

and the prison industry, to engage with the companies, file shareholder resolutions, strategize, boycott and divest. We have celebrated decisions by five major denominations to divest from the Israeli occupation, and the growing consensus among ethical investors to exclude private prison companies. More importantly, we have celebrated removing five companies from our database this year alone, after the companies decided to step away from their harmful business.

We have organized against unjust laws that would limit our freedom of speech in advocating the use of nonviolent tools such as boycott and divestment against multinational corporations, and supported the courageous work of Students for Justice in Palestine chapters across the country, in the face of islamophobic slander, institutional intimidation and threats.

The power of the military industrial complex and the prison industrial complex seem stronger than ever, but we are learning how to influence corporate policies and create a new standard for corporate behavior using a much greater power, that of nonviolent peoples' action. More urgent than ever, we need your support to do this work. Your donation will help us promote this knowledge and create more organizing tools. Join us and invest in justice and peace!



Why not become a monthly giver?

All the programs you have read about are made possible by the generosity of people like yourself, dedicated to the work of justice and creating a peaceful, loving world. When you become a sustaining member of AFSC, over 80% of your donation goes directly to programs, meaning we put your contribution where it matters: into the communities and projects that make a real difference. The best way to help us continue this work is to become a giver we can rely on. By giving on a monthly basis, your donation provides a strong foundation for us to determine what programs we can

sustainably undertake.

When you donate to AFSC's work, your gifts help support San Francisco's 67 Sueños, Healing Justice, Wage Peace, and Economic Activism programs as well as many other incredible programs. Your support ensures that their work will continue to create strong changes in the Bay Area and beyond.

[Donate Here](#)

You can also donate by mail by sending your gifts to:
American Friends Service Committee, 65 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103
Make checks payable to AFSC

