

# AFSC Midwest Digest – March 2023

Stories of work from around the region



Twin Cities staff (from left): Brynne Crockett, Prescott Jones and Maddy Foss

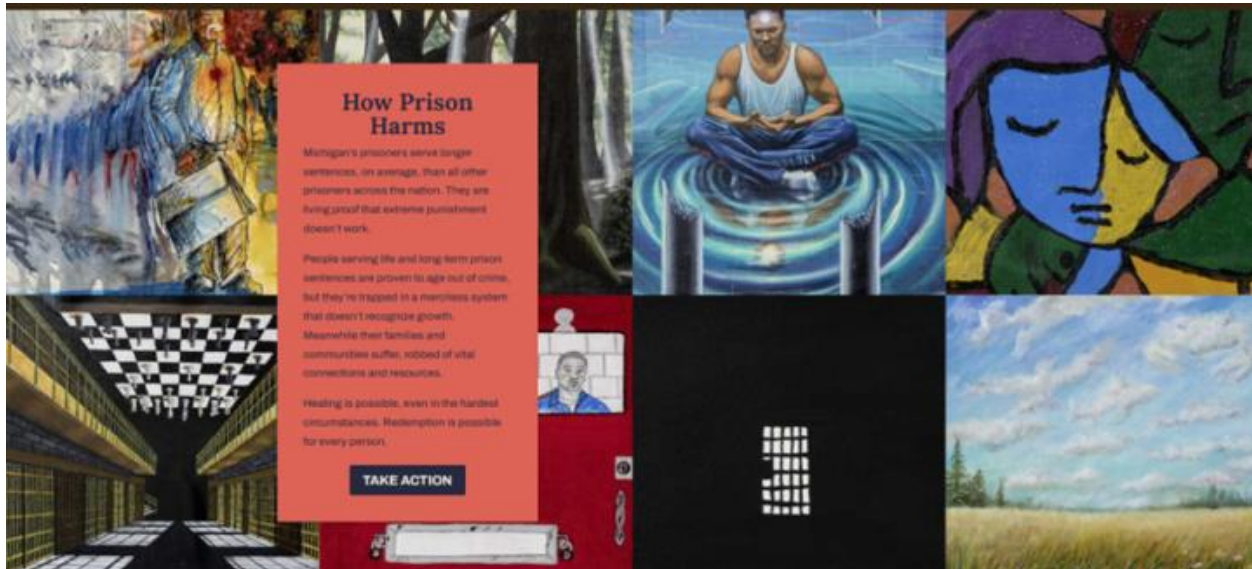
## Using restorative practices to create safe spaces for youth

Brynne Crockett reports that AFSC staff have been engaging with staff and recruiting youth at North Community High School in Minneapolis. AFSC will be providing restorative practices in the schools as alternatives to in-school suspensions. By using mediation with students and administrators, we all can create a safe space for young people. Brynne adds that excitement is building for more youth programming, including potential podcasts and visuals. Stay in touch on [Instagram](#).



## Light in Gaza author discusses agriculture, the media, women's organizing

Recently, Shireen Akram-Boshar of AFSC interviewed Asmaa Abu Mezied (above), a contributor to our anthology *Light in Gaza*. Asmaa is an economic development and social inclusion specialist working to address issues of gender, development, and climate change in the agriculture sector of Gaza. [Read the full interview](#). Also, we thank Jihad Abusalim for his service; he recently left AFSC to become executive director of the [Jerusalem Fund and Palestine Center](#) in Washington, DC.



## Advocating for “Second Look” legislation in Michigan

Natalie Holbrook, director of the Michigan Criminal Justice Program, discusses AFSC’s ongoing work to [end life and long sentences](#). This is a basis for moving away from retribution, isolation, and punishment toward life-giving models rooted in healing, community, accountability, and transformation. “Second Look” legislation, expected to be introduced in the Michigan legislature in April, would make everyone who has served 10 years or more eligible to apply for resentencing by their sentencing judge or successor.

**Coalition of Nearly 50 St. Louis Organizations  
Renew Call for Re-envisioning Public Safety**

**The People’s Plan  
St. Louis**

We write this statement as a coalition that is deeply invested in the transformation of St. Louis into a city that is safe, equitable, sustainable, and inclusive in every respect. We love this city and believe that it has so much to offer the world. It breaks our hearts that the life of Janae Edmondson, a visitor to St. Louis, will forever be altered by the horrific and avoidable crash that took place on our streets this past weekend. It is difficult to make sense of such a sudden tragedy, and even more so when it involves someone so young and promising. Janae and her family will need abundant love and support in the months and years to come, and we are hopeful that she will find that in the community that surrounds her.

## Expanding the base for justice work in St. Louis

Devonn Thomas reports that the St. Louis Program continues to expand its base and is beginning to add work with youth ages 18-25. Staff will be sharing “Abolition 101” presentations on college campuses. AFSC has joined with other groups in opposing the Missouri legislature’s likely action to return control of the St. Louis Police Department to the governor (a racist relic of the Civil War era that lasted through 2013). Follow on [Facebook](#) for updates and share this [Organizing Fellow](#) opening.





## Sign AFSC's "Think Twice" pledge

In 2020, people across the U.S. deepened their commitment to racial justice after the police killing of George Floyd. But today, we're seeing a backward slide toward law-and-order policies and rhetoric. It's time to reaffirm our commitment to build community safety beyond policing. One way we can do that is to [think twice](#) before calling the police. Mary Zerkel of AFSC Chicago has been instrumental in local and national work to build community alternatives to police response.

<p style="text-align: center;">2023 <b>IMMIGRANT &amp; REFUGEE ADVOCACY DAY</b> <b>TUESDAY</b> MARCH 14, 2023 IOWA STATE CAPITOL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8:30 AM - REGISTRATION</li> <li>• 9AM-10AM - CIVICS TRAINING</li> <li>• 10AM-12PM - MEET WITH LEGISLATORS</li> <li>• 12PM: LUNCH</li> <li>• AFTERNOON: SPECIAL MEETINGS</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;">&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt; HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt; HOW TO ADVOCATE &amp; TELL YOUR STORY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt; STATE LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">MORE INFO HERE: INFO@IOWAMMJ.ORG</p>	 

## Short takes

Check out the latest [news](#) from AFSC alums with Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice....Read AFSC's [2023 Yearly Meeting Epistle](#) and check out our [2023 Corporation Program](#).... Join us at Pendle Hill April 28-May 1 for a [weekend](#) of experiential workshops on creating beloved community....Learn about our [2023 Nobel Peace Prize nominees](#) and see this update on our [earthquake relief work in Turkey and Syria](#).

## **Grateful for your support**

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## **DONATE TO AFSC MIDWEST PROGRAMS**

