

AFSC Midwest Digest – May 2023

Stories of work from around the region



Michiganders work for Second Look legislation to bring our people home

The AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program joined with partner organizations for a recent [rally and press conference](#) announcing the introduction of Second Look legislation. AFSC staffer Lawanda Hollister, a former juvenile lifer who served 35 years, shared how her second chance at life afforded opportunities to work for criminal justice reform and with returning citizens like herself as a mentor and facilitator.

AFSC Director Natalie Holbrook-Combs said, “I’m so glad to be a part of the work to end life and long sentences in Michigan. We know more extreme sentences have done nothing to keep our neighborhoods safer. Michigan has the most extreme sentences in the country, and still our people are killed and also snatched up into cages.”

Learn more about Second Look by checking out this [zine](#) created by Lawanda, Natalie and their colleagues Myron Wood and Pete Martel.

Twin Cities appreciates artists and participants in “Unapologetically YOU”

From [Instagram](#): We’ve been working on programming behind the scenes and missing you all. Exciting things are on the horizon this season including our Summer Intensive! Be on the lookout for more details in the coming weeks. We kicked off the New Year with the Unapologetically YOU event where we saw many of your lovely faces. Here is a [video](#) recapping some of the wonders the evening held for us all.

Becca Townley joins St. Louis staff as Potts Intern

Earlier this year, Becca Townley began her service as Potts Intern with AFSC in St. Louis. She’ll serve in that capacity prior to joining AFSC’s Community Safety Beyond Policing work. Becca is a 2022 Truman Scholar who brings considerable experience and expertise to this work. Read [more](#) about her passion for social justice and career aspirations.

REMINDER: Think Twice Before Calling the Police webinar series to start May 4

Many people recognize that police violence targets certain communities and want to avoid calling the police – but don’t know what to do in case of an emergency. Our [new webinar series](#) – set for Thursdays in May at 7 pm CT – can help you develop concrete skills to avoid calling law enforcement unless it’s absolutely necessary. We’ll also explore community-based alternatives to ensure safety for all of our neighbors.

Short takes

All our thanks and best wishes to Jennifer Bing and the [Palestine Activism Program](#) as they move from AFSC’s Midwest Region to AFSC’s US Programs...Read about AFSC’s work with Grinnell College during WWII in [support of Japanese-American students](#)....The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) is [celebrating](#) its 75th anniversary on June 9 in New York City....Learn about [four ways](#) the Farm Bill can protect our climate...[Speak out now](#) to expand free school meals to more children!....Check out [recordings](#) from AFSC’s recent Corporation meeting...Read about [AFSC’s work in support of Ukrainian refugees](#) in Europe.

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