



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC Midwest Digest – August 2023

Stories of work from around the region



Youth and staff in the Twin Cities

Summer Intensive in the Twin Cities asserts: I Deserve a Shot!

“I Deserve a Shot” was a five-day intensive in which Black youth in the Twin Cities metro sought to unpack, understand, and learn about dismantling oppressive systems. With the help of AFSC staff Brynne Crockett, Prescott Jones and Maddie Foss, youth built a race analysis and learned about how systematic racism in poor communities is perpetuated and sustained through power. The initiative intentionally sought to celebrate, inform, and uplift the Black and brown youth of Minneapolis in reclaiming the safety of their community.

Stay tuned for more photos and reflections from Brynne, and follow the latest news on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).



Adalia Kirby, left, and Claudia McLean

Staff additions propel Michigan work for Second Chance legislation

The Michigan Criminal Justice Program is delighted to welcome two new staff. Adalia Kirby is Program Coordinator, Ending Life and Long Sentences, and Claudia McLean is Second Look Rollout Coordinator. AFSC has been hosting a series of community meetings this summer to grow power toward liberation. A mixer on August 5 gave community members the chance to share their stories of coming home after a long time in prison and grow their relationships.

[Free Your Mind](#), an art exhibit including Michigan staff Pete Martel, the late Danny Jones, and Natalie Holbrook-Combs, is at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit through September 10. [Stay in touch on X](#) (formerly Twitter).



Intercollegiate action network to address militarized forces in St. Louis

Alex Jones, Organizing Fellow for the St. Louis Healing Justice Program, writes: “Currently, my focus is on the establishment of an intercollegiate Action Network in Saint Louis. The universities in the area, especially the private ones, have a direct link to Saint Louis policing. The goal of the network is to coordinate direct actions across the city to demand that all universities defund, refuse gifts, and completely eliminate their relationships with militarized forces in Saint Louis. That includes Boeing, one of the largest employers in Saint Louis.” Follow on [Facebook](#).



Activists in Chicago

Restorative Justice co-learning cohort to launch this fall

This co-learning cohort builds on AFSC's September 2022 webinar series which covered the principles of Restorative Justice (including a deeper dive into accountability). Participants will get hands-on practice and interactive instruction in the skills needed for Circle keeping. Although registration is now closed, [applications](#) may be submitted to be added to the waitlist and receive notifications of future trainings or co-learning cohorts.



Peter Clay, left, and Billie Wade

Iowa news

Peter Clay and Billie Wade, Friends from Des Moines, were among several Midwest Corporation and EC members at [Iowa Yearly Meeting-Conservative](#) in late July. Billie gave a powerful presentation entitled *Unrelenting: The Trauma of Racism on Black People in America...*. Here's the [latest news](#) from AFSC alums with Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice...Iowans [rallied](#) at the State Capitol for reproductive rights in July.

Short takes

Thanks to everyone who gave in support of Midwest Programs during our recent fundraising campaign. We greatly appreciate you! And it's not too late to [give!](#)... Earlier this summer, Mary Zerkel began as the Associate Regional Director of the Midwest Region. Mary directed AFSC's peacebuilding work in Chicago for many years. Meet all our staff on our [regional homepage](#).... Here are [five tips to advocate for a Farm Bill for all](#)....Here's the latest [AFSC alumni newsletter](#)....Please consider [nominating](#) yourself or someone else for service on an AFSC governance body.

Get social

Check out AFSC Midwest on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [X](#), formerly known as Twitter. *Thank you!*

[DONATE TO AFSC MIDWEST PROGRAMS](#)