



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**

## **AFSC Midwest Digest – March 2026**

*Stories of work from around the region*



LaWanda Hollister on [WWMT News](#)

### **Women in Michigan prison push state leaders for change**

On the heels of a February meeting at the State Capitol, people at Women’s Huron Valley Correctional Facility in Michigan are urging state leaders to take action on the problems they’ve identified in the prison and move forward with resentencing, clemency and reentry support.

LaWanda Hollister of the AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program spoke at the legislative hearing and with [WWMT News](#) about the effort. LaWanda served more than three decades inside the prison and says it’s past time for real solutions. “I hope that people actually start doing something,” she says. “I hope that the governor who has the power to create clemency actually does it.”

LaWanda was one of several Midwest people featured in February on AFSC’s Third Tuesday webinar. Read her thoughts on “love and liberation” [here](#). LaWanda’s colleague, Natalie Holbrook-Combs, is quoted [here](#) about the need for a Survivor’s Justice Act in Michigan.

# Peaceful Careers YOUTH JOB FAIR

Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2026 | 12-3pm

CHICAGO FREEDOM SCHOOL 1727 S INDIANA AVE SUITE G02A

DO YOU WANT TO TABLE AT OUR FAIR? FILL OUT THIS INTEREST FORM →



Connect driven, curious, passionate young people with your work!

We're looking for orgs with work, learning, training, career exploring opportunities that build community.



Featuring: FREE LIVE LUNCH & DJ LEARNING

THE BLACK ALLIANCE FOR PEACE CHICAGO



## Peaceful Careers Fair, youth organizing intensive set for April in Chicago

Does your organization have internships, apprenticeships, fellowships, volunteer opportunities, seasonal, part- or full-time positions available for young people? Are you an organization that has a commitment to building a better world and are looking to connect with and/or hire youth? If so, please join AFSC Chi Peace and the Black Alliance for Peace for a [Peaceful Careers Fair](#) on Saturday, April 18 at noon CT.

Are you a high school student who is interested in making a difference in Chicago? Do you want to get paid to work with other teens supporting a local campaign fighting disinvestment? [Apply by March 14](#) to join our 5-week paid youth organizing intensive April 1-May 2. We'll spend these five weeks learning about a local campaign against divestment and environmental injustice on the Southeast side, attending workshops, doing field trips, and preparing for our Week 5 project.

And [here](#) are asia's Third Tuesday comments on centering youth in the work for love and liberation.



Barbara Gunn Lartey emcees AFSC's Third Tuesday webinars

## St. Louis celebrates Black History month

On [Instagram](#), AFSC St. Louis shared a series of posts lifting up “the legacy and continuation of Black history through an intergenerational lens. Movements don’t happen alone. They happen through collective action and solidarity, and that is the legacy of Black activism.” Learn [more](#) about the Congress of Racial Equality, the Ferguson Uprising, and Black and Palestinian solidarity.

Barbara Gunn Lartey, Peacebuilding Program Director, was a recent special guest on [AFSC's Action Hour for Palestine](#). Barbara visited Palestine in the late 90s, while she was studying in South Africa. In speaking about her trip, she reminded us that colonialism has legs and doesn't need a passport to travel. Colonialism has destroyed the peace, sanctity, and sovereignty of people all over the world.

She shared about the severe tornado that struck St. Louis in May 2025, prompting a community reckoning and exposing layers of state-sanctioned harm. In helping her community recover and thrive, Barbara has drawn from the power of diasporic and intergenerational spaces. She says that truth and wisdom know no bounds and that it is impossible to do powerful organizing work without intergenerational organizing.

Click [here](#) to watch the full Third Tuesday Love and Liberation webinar from February. Following Barbara's insightful interviews with asia and LaWanda, she closed the evening with Rebeccah Bennett of St. Louis, Founder of [Emerging Wisdom LLC](#) and [InPower Institute](#).



Friends and allies from across central Iowa join a Love as Action event in Des Moines.

## Love as Action events set for throughout the Midwest for March

In the face of rising authoritarianism, Friends and people of conscience are gathering in silent public witness. Since December, more than 20 communities across the country have taken part in AFSC's [Love as Action](#) vigils. Together, we gather in public worship to affirm justice and dignity for all.

Click to learn more and register for Love as Action events in [Chicago](#), [Champaign-Urbana](#), [St. Louis](#), [St. Paul](#), [Kansas City](#), [Des Moines](#), [Madison](#) and [Royal Oak, MI](#).



## Short takes

Here's an AFSC [explainer](#) on what you need to know about the US war in Iran – and here's our related [action alert](#).... Join AFSC's Third Tuesday [webinar series](#) – Protect, Resist and Build – at 7 pm CT. The topic for March is opposing the war in Iran.... AFSC and Quaker Peace and Social Witness have [nominated](#) Concordis International for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize.... Join AFSC each Friday for our [Action Hour for Palestine](#). On March 13, the Action Hour featured Natalie Holbrook-Combs of AFSC Michigan. Natalie spoke about the connections between political prisoners, prison systems, and policing of bodies between her work and Palestine.

## **Get social**

Check out AFSC Midwest on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Blue Sky](#).

## **DONATE TO AFSC MIDWEST PROGRAMS**

AFSC Mission Statement: *Guided by the Quaker belief in the divine light of each person, AFSC works with people of all faiths and backgrounds to challenge unjust systems and promote lasting peace.*