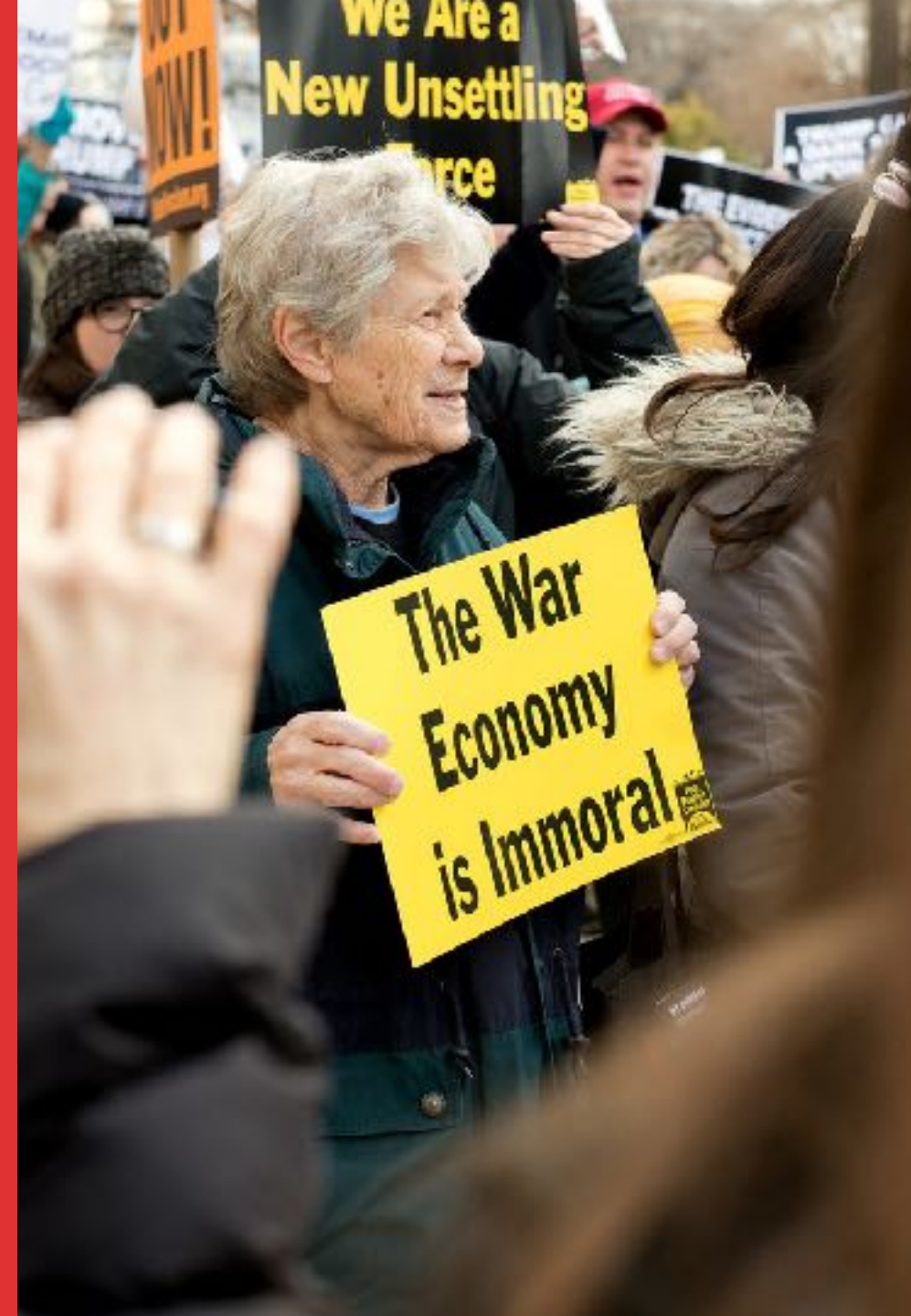


# Quick Introduction to AFSC for LEYM Friends

April 2022



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**



# Overview



## **Some History**

Some moving images to tell the story of AFSC's history



## **Org Structure**

AFSC is a complex organization. We'll check out the Org Chart



## **Projects in Our Region**

What's happening in AFSC's Midwest Region?



## **Strategic Plan**

AFSC has worked hard on a 10-year Strategic Plan. What's in it?



# American Friends Service Committee

## About AFSC

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) promotes a world free of violence, inequality, and oppression.

Guided by the Quaker belief in the divine light within each person, we nurture the seeds of change and the respect for human life to fundamentally transform our societies and institutions. We work with people and partners worldwide, of all faiths and backgrounds, to meet urgent community needs, challenge injustice, and build peace.

# Values Statement

- We respect the equality, worth, and dignity of all people and regard no one as our enemy.
- We seek right relationship with all life on a sustainable Earth.
- We accept that our understanding of truth is incomplete and seek ever deeper insights from lived experience.
- We trust the Spirit to guide discernment of our collective actions.
- We assert the transforming power of love and active nonviolence as a force for justice and reconciliation.

*Approved by the Board on June 20, 2020*



# Quick History in Pictures

Our legacy since 1917

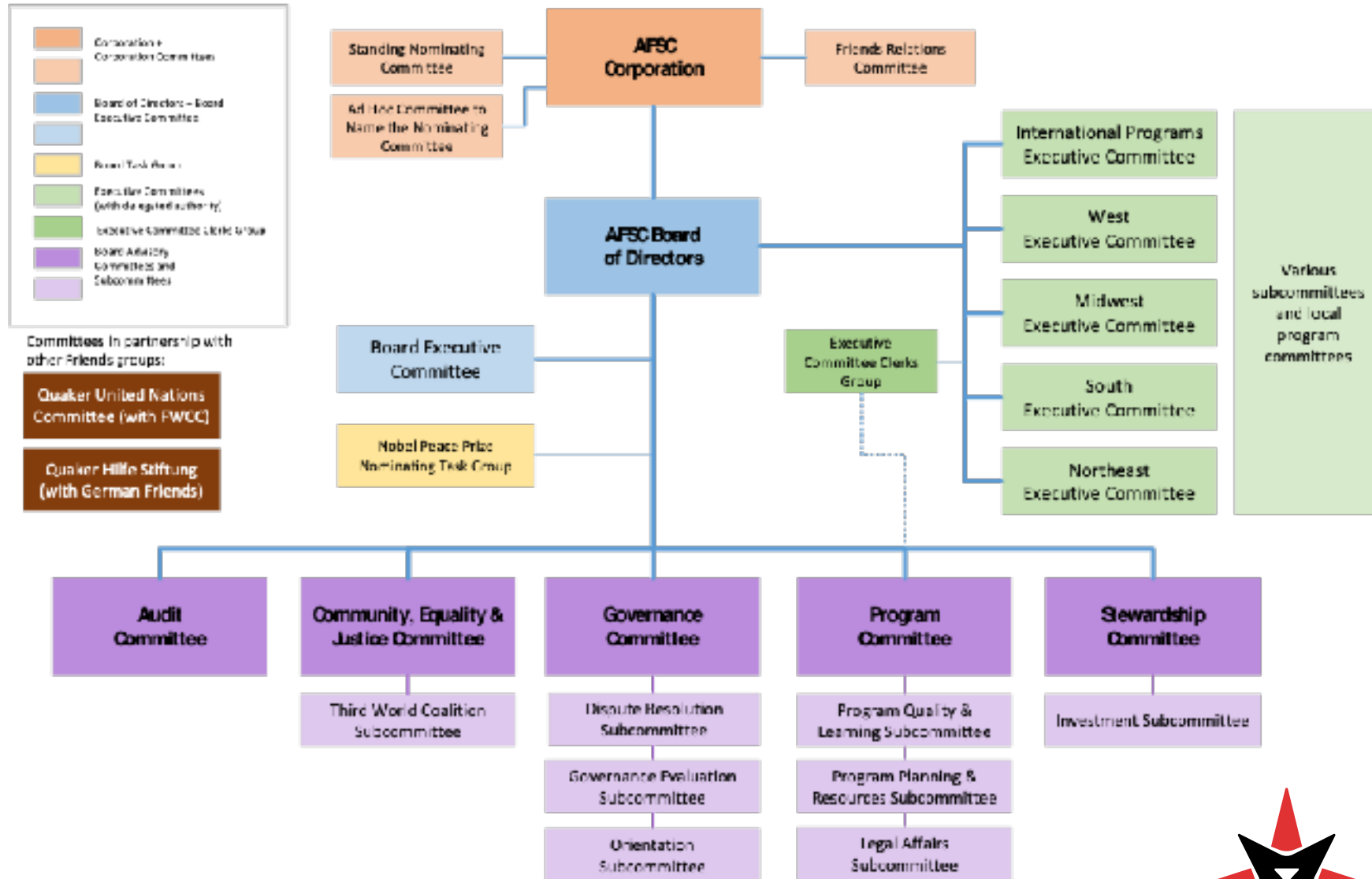
AFSC's founding during WWI gives conscientious objectors at Haverford College a way to be of non-military service.



Kimberly Miller



# AFSC Governance Structures

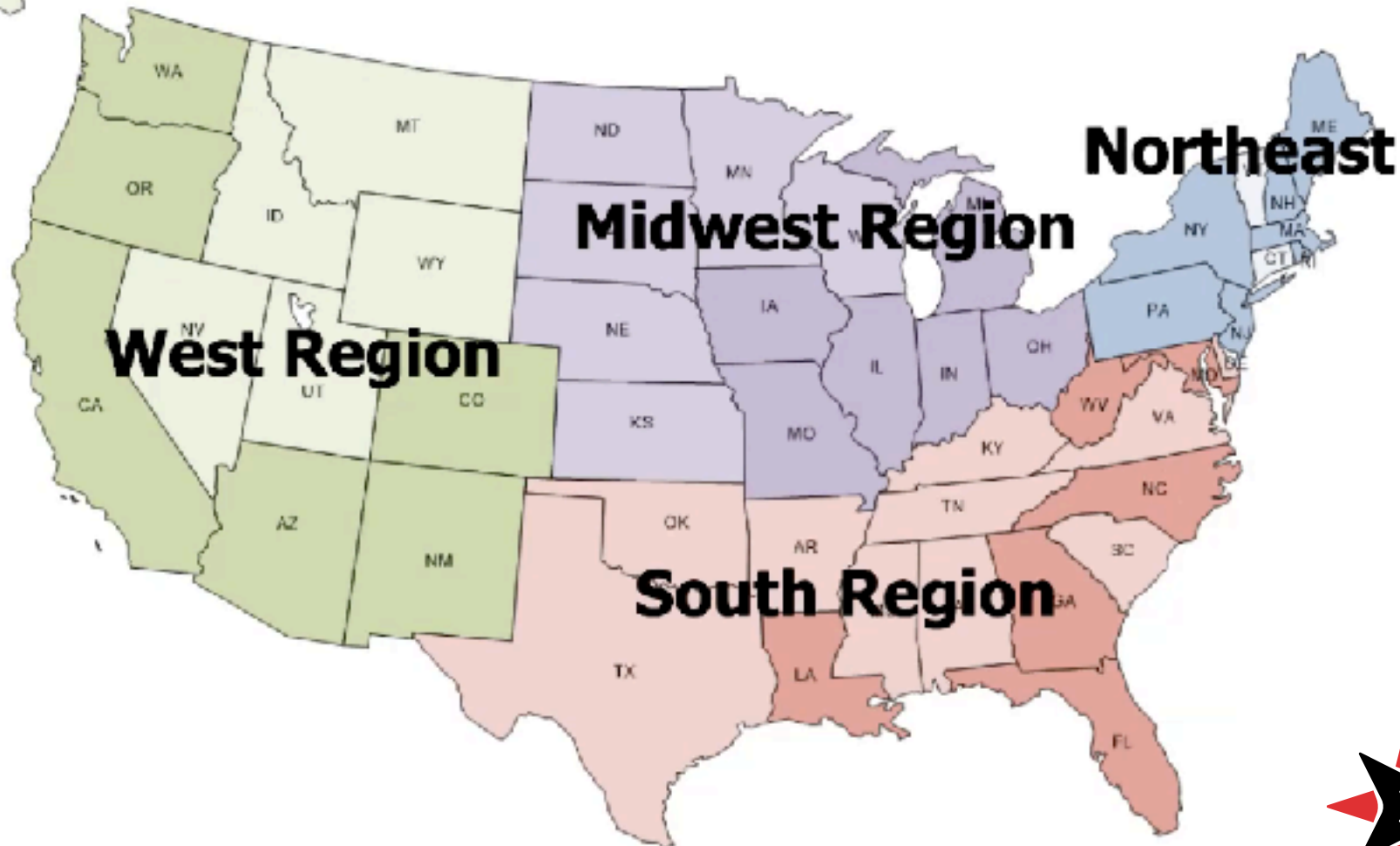


Organizational Chart



# AFSC Regions

## The Current Region Structure



# Chicago Peacebuilding

## Chicago, IL

Chicago Peacebuilding works to dismantle militarist state practices that target communities of color and the Muslim community. It resists surveillance programs like CVE and racist policing practices. It supports those directly affected, amplifying their voices and building coalitions to end surveillance, cut police spending, and make explicit the connections between militarism at home and abroad. It conducts trainings and public education, leads direct action, and builds grassroots power through leadership development and community building.



**Mary Zerkel**

Mary Zerkel is coordinator of AFSC's **Communities Against Islamophobia** initiative, director of Chicago Peacebuilding, and has worked at AFSC for over 20 years.





# Michigan Criminal Justice Program

## Ypsilanti, MI

The Michigan Criminal Justice Program works with prisoners, families, and institutions to achieve humane reforms and prison depopulation. It provides resources, case management, advocacy, community organizing support, and education. It tracks data on abuses and violations, and it advocates for a reform agenda. It works in coalition to build relationships with key decisionmakers and to activate the population at large. It strives to achieve systemic reforms within the criminal justice system, to improve the conditions of individuals experiencing confinement, and to gradually depopulate prisons.



**Natalie Holbrook**

Natalie Holbrook, Program Director, is an advocate and activist working to disrupt the paradigm of punishment in MI.



At a **Free Them All** action in Michigan in 2021, community members and groups called for release of people in prisons, jails, and detention centers. *Photo: Mary Buchanan*

# Palestinian Activism Program

Chicago, IL

The Palestine Activism Program provides resources, mentorship and training for youth and faith-based/community activists. It supports building successful educational and advocacy campaigns including, “Gaza Unlocked” and “No Way to Treat a Child,” with the goals of securing human rights for Palestinians, ending military occupation, and equality for Palestinians and Israelis. It strives to hold Israel accountable to international law, support an end to military occupation and the blockade in Gaza, and protect the rights of Palestinian children.



**Jennifer Bing**

Jennifer Bing has worked at AFSC since 1989, serving in various capacities in its Israel-Palestine programs. She directs the AFSC **Palestine Activism Program** in Chicago and works with her colleagues Palestine and Israel.



# St. Louis Peacebuilding

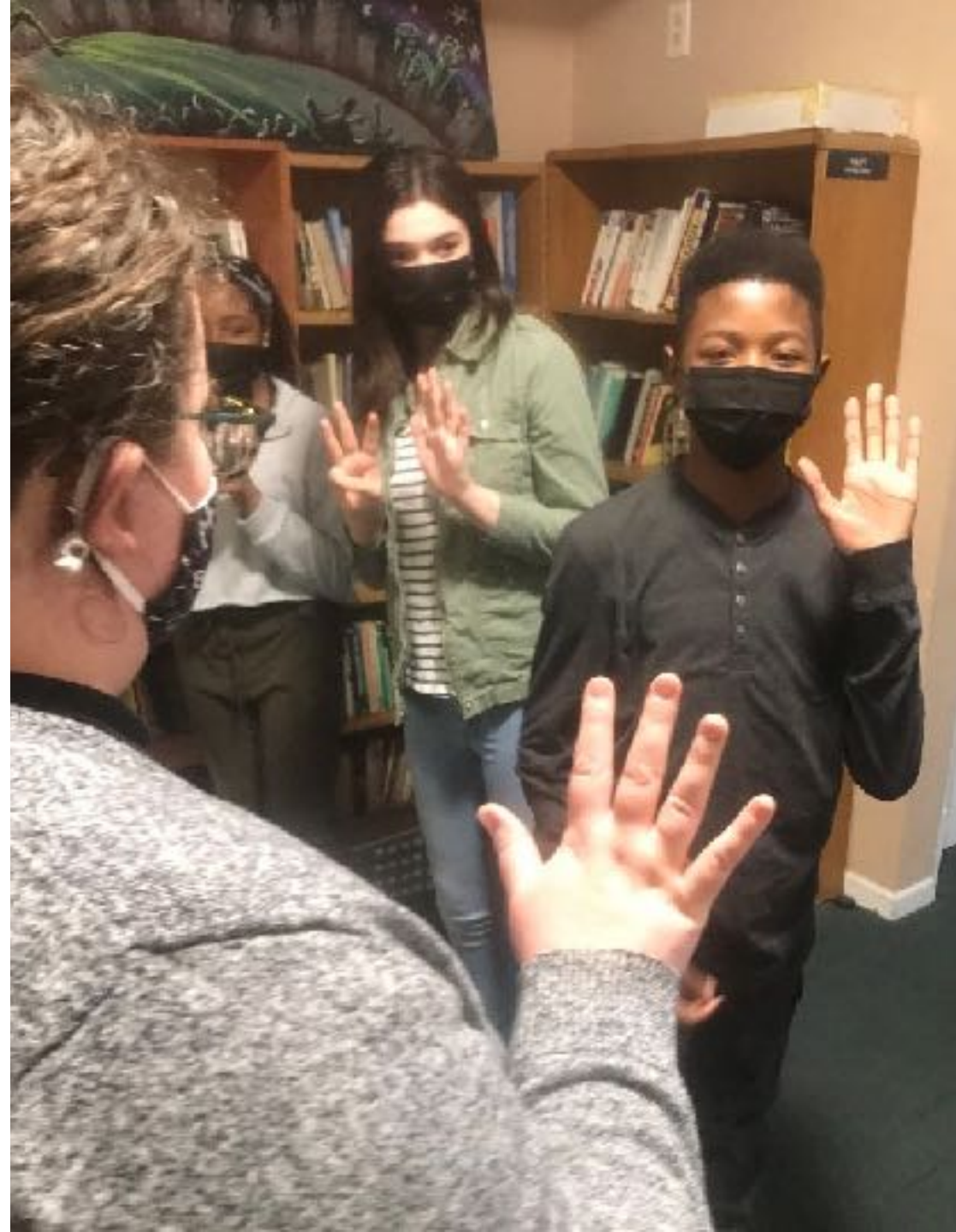
St. Louis, MO

The St. Louis Peacebuilding Program works with youth to heal institutional racism and to dismantle the school to prison pipeline. It works within the system to build school partnerships that seek to transform schools into spaces that heal and support all students. It also works from outside the system through its program to give youth skills to organize for systemic change. It seeks to support youth and their allies to become change agents, transforming racist structures, and interrupting the school to prison pipeline.



Joshua Saleem

St. Louis Program Director



# Twin Cities Healing Justice Program

St. Paul, MN

Chicago Peacebuilding works to dismantle militarist state practices that target communities of color and the Muslim community. It resists surveillance programs like CVE and racist policing practices. It supports those directly affected, amplifying their voices and building coalitions to end surveillance, cut police spending, and make explicit the connections between militarism at home and abroad. It conducts trainings and public education, leads direct action, and builds grassroots power through leadership development and community building.



Sharon Goens-Bradley is the **Healing Justice Program Director for the Twin Cities, Minnesota office**. Prior to this position, Ms. Goens-Bradley worked for a community foundation doing anti-racism work. Sharon holds a master's degree in counselling psychology and a bachelor's degree in Russian language. She has travelled extensively and has volunteered as a mediator, circle keeper and restorative justice practitioner.



Students in the Twin Cities protest the police murder of Amir Locke. *Photo: @eadyiam / AFSC*



# AFSC Strategic Plan – 2020-2030

<https://www.afsc.org/strategicplan>

## Program goals

- Build a pathway to transformative change
- Goal 1: Just and sustainable peace
- Goal 2: Just economies
- Goal 3: Just responses to forced displacement and migration

## Organizational development goals

- Goal 1: Promote financial sustainability
- Goal 2: Advance engagement with Quakers
- Goal 3: Amplify program impact and learning
- Goal 4: Strengthen relationships with communities and partners
- Goal 5: Build internal practices for inclusion, cohesion, accountability, and justice

# Key Issues



## Advancing peacebuilding

Peace and security can never be achieved through violence. AFSC works to build societies that divest from militarism, organized political violence and state violence – and invest in alternatives that enable sustainable peace, open civic space, and prioritize human dignity and rights.

[READ MORE →](#)



## Healing, not punitive, justice

To build a more just, peaceful society, we must promote healing—instead of punishment—in the U.S. criminal legal system. We advocate for human-centered alternatives to policing and incarceration, better reintegration after prison, an end to prison privatization, more humane conditions of confinement, and ultimately, the abolition of prisons, jails, and detention centers.

[READ MORE →](#)



## Humane migration responses

AFSC works for a world where migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people have the power to determine where they live and the opportunity to thrive in society. We work to address both the economic and political drivers of migration in multiple countries as well as to support migrants and refugees, whether they are in transit or settled in new communities.

[READ MORE →](#)



## Just economies

Economies should work for all people and our planet and promote thriving communities. AFSC works to support just economic priorities and policies, challenges growing inequality and the corporate abuse of human rights, and advocates for increased access to basic resources. We also provide tools to help people and institutions make socially responsible investments.

[READ MORE →](#)

# Our plan

Changing  
systems  
together

Communities  
and  
partners

AFSC

Networks  
and  
coalitions

Systems  
change

Utilizing  
four core  
methods

Advocacy

Bridging  
and  
convening

Research  
and  
analysis

Community organizing  
and civil society  
strengthening

Strengthening  
our commitments

Feminism and  
gender justice

Anti-racism /  
anti oppression

Youth work

Vision

A just, peaceful, and sustainable world free  
of violence, inequality, and oppression

## Overarching organizational goal

Working in dynamic relationships with communities and partners, AFSC seeks, secures, and sustains transformative shifts in systems of power to reduce all forms of violence and advance human dignity and equality.

## Program goals

Just and  
sustainable  
peace

Just responses to  
forced displacement  
and migration

Just  
economies

*Climate justice will inform efforts under each goal.*

## Organizational development goals

Promote financial sustainability

Advance engagement with Quakers

Amplify program impact and learning

Strengthen relationships with  
communities and partners

Build internal practices for inclusion,  
cohesion, accountability, and justice

# Annual Corporation Meeting April 3-7

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Lots of workshops open to the public

**Quaker Action for a Just World:  
2022 AFSC Corporation Program**

<https://www.afsc.org/corporation2022>

SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 7 P.M. ET

**Keynote Speaker: Winona LaDuke**

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 7 P.M. ET

**Guided by the light of our North Star, above and within**

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2 P.M. ET

**Palestine program highlights**

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 7 P.M. ET

**Extractives and forced displacement: A case study of Laguna Larga**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2 P.M. ET

**Restricted space in climate justice activism**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 7 P.M. ET

**Emerging Leaders for Liberation: Demo workshop including how to get involved**

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 7 P.M. ET

**Panel: Quaker climate activists - Intersections of climate justice and Quakerism**



## Some Current Issues of Controversy



- AFSC has been exploring a restructuring of their organization, moving away from the Regional System, to one more centered around key themes that cut across programs. The stated goal is to enable the organization to be more fully able to enact the strategic plan.
- A wide ranging series of internal consultations has not settled controversy over reorganization plans. In December 2021, critical public statements from staff and concerned Friends was published in the Western Friend online site in an article entitled “AFSC Is at a Perilous Crossroads.” AFSC leadership team responded with their own post.
- Lucy Duncan, one of the authors of the critical piece, was put on leave and then fired for not following internal communication policies. She is grieving the termination.
- The April Corporation Business Meeting will address some of the issues and hear from MM representatives.



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**Questions/  
Comments**