

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Representative Report to Annual Session 2022 Pacific Yearly Meeting

I have divided my report into two parts: the Annual Corporation Meeting and an Update on the AFSC West Programs.

Brief summary of AFSC Annual Corporation Meeting

The annual corporation meeting took place via Zoom beginning April 3rd. The keynote speaker was Winona LaDuke. She is a Native American land rights activist, environmentalist, economist, politician, as well as an author. She gave an inspiring presentation from her Minnesota home land.

The Corporation meeting had many interesting workshop sessions explaining our programs around the world.

The business meeting was where problems began to occur. There have been changes recently to both staff and the AFSC board so several of the by-laws were not adhered to correctly. This presented a long discussion, and it was finally decided that the Standing Nominating Committee [SNC] report would have to be 'held over' until a date in May. The by-laws state that the SNC report must be sent to the corporation 30 days in advance; it was not. There were concerns brought forward that two of the board members were recommended for a third term, again the by-laws state members are to serve no more than two terms. This issue has still not been resolved.

AFSC approved a new Strategic Plan in 2020 [this was discussed in the PacYM 2020 report] and now the Board is working through a process to revise the governance structure of the organization. Again, many members of the board felt there had not been enough seasoning with the broader AFSC/Quaker community. This is a continuing issue.

Meanwhile the AFSC general secretary and her leadership team are working through a process to change the staff structure. It is complicated and no decisions have been made. The US staff has created a co-design process for the US structure but at the moment nothing has been agreed to.

These two issues are still in the seasoning stage, and we are not sure when decisions will be made. It is too bad that unity has not yet been achieved because both the governance and the staff reorganization leave everyone wondering what will happen next.

Update on the AFSC West Region's nine programs:

We have nine programs in the West Region under the leadership of Sonia Tuma. You have the opportunity to listen during the PacYM session to the San Diego Program Director Pedro Rios. I hope you will connect to his presentation. He is always very interesting and motivating. [FYI: Orange Grove Meeting has invited him to speak at a Sunday morning adult education session].

1. Albuquerque, NM – New Mexico People of the Land Program

The New Mexico People of the Land Program's overall mission is to revitalize small, sustainable farms throughout the state, thereby protecting culture, natural land, water resources, and jobs, while improving the health of New Mexico's children and their communities. We provided farmer to farmer training programs in Albuquerque, Espanola and Anthony, NM.

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2. Salem, OR – Project Voice

Project Voice conducts Know Your Rights training with immigrants in Oregon and Washington. Our dynamic popular education workshops incorporate up to the minute practical and legislative information.

3. Los Angeles, CA – Roots for Peace: Building Healthy Communities

AFSC's Roots for Peace program utilizes urban farming, leadership development, and community organizing to address health and economic inequities in Los Angeles. We support community members to organize towards a food system that improves access to healthy and cultural foods, rebuilds ancestral connection to the earth, and increases collective power and self-determination.

4. Oakland, CA – California Healing Justice Program

The California Healing Justice Program works to reduce reliance on incarceration and other punitive approaches and replace them with restorative/healing practices. Toward that end we concentrate on four areas: mass incarceration, long term isolation, militarized policing, and the promotion of healing alternatives.

5. Denver, CO – Colorado Immigrant Rights Program

AFSC Denver organizes allies, faith communities and immigrants along the Front Range to support immigrant justice. From resistance to deportation to fomenting positive narratives, we advocate for policy change.

6. Fresno, CA – Pan Valley Institute

The Pan Valley Institute (PVI) is a popular education center located in Fresno, the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley. The Valley is home to large immigrant and refugee populations that struggle with experiences of social isolation, economic inequality, marginalization and cultural discrimination. Our mission is to accompany and support them in their efforts to build a productive and enriching place for themselves in their new home.

7. San Diego, CA – U.S. Mexico Program

The U.S./Mexico Border Program advances human rights and self-determination of migrant communities through base-building, alliance-building, documentation, and policy-impact. We support local community-based organizing campaigns, train and accompany community-based leadership to educate, advocate, mobilize, and organize constituents to secure just and humane immigration policies.

8. Oakland, CA – 67 Sueños

67 Sueños was born out of the recognition that 67 percent of migrant youth would be excluded from the DREAM ACT, a federal bill aimed at providing young migrants who arrived to the U.S. at an early age a path to legalization. Our goal is to raise underprivileged migrant youth voices to expand the platform of legislative possibilities

9. Economic Activism

In order to challenge the economic systems that sustain and profit from occupation and violence in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, AFSC supports economic activism including the use of nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) tactics. Specifically, AFSC supports boycott and

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divestment campaigns targeting companies that support the occupation, settlements, militarism, or any other violations of international humanitarian or human rights law.

The AFSC Arizona program has become independent from the AFSC during this past year. The dedicated staff and volunteers requested the “devolvement” as they wanted to become more politically involved in the Arizona prison issues via the use of more direct legislative and lobbying tactics, things that were complicated to do under AFSC’s 501c3 status. This program has been part of the AFSC for many years, sad to see them go – but glad to see that they are moving forward as *Just Communities Arizona* with issues dear to Quakers.

In closing, please hold Stephen McNeil, his family and his large extended family/community in the Light, he will be missed. Thanks so much for the faithfulness of his good friends Roy Bateman and Dov Baum, who set up the Caring Bridge site so Roy could post on it regularly.

Jane Krause - AFSC Representative to the Corporation
Orange Grove Meeting, Pasadena, CA.

AFSC Representatives:

Stephen McNeil who passed away after an accident in early June
Ramona Hussey
Jane Krause