

Friends Peace Teams Report for SAYMA 2017

First, Friends Peace Teams would like to thank you for your support, both spiritually and financially. During this past year, our peace work has intensified, and we have new leadership for two of our initiatives. For AGLI (the African Great Lakes Initiative), David Bucura, a long-time coordinator with a local partner organization, stepped in for David Zarembka as our new coordinator. Monica Maher is our new coordinator for PLA (Peacebuilding in Las Americas), taking over the leadership responsibilities from Val Liveoak who is one of the founders of FPT.

The FPT Council (our governing body) has begun an examination our infrastructure, specifically the financial authority and responsibilities, with the goal of more transparency and accountability. Examples of what we are looking at are: What is the Council's role for oversight? What is the role of the working groups for each of the initiatives? And what is its relationships with partner organizations?

Our decentralized structure calls for the three initiatives (AGLI, PLA, and AWP—Asia West Pacific) serves us well. Abiding by and honoring our commitments to Friends process and practice as we solve conflicts and work through opportunities. Just recently, we established a Governance Committee, to be sure our practices continue to empower us all in the manner of Friends.

To help celebrate our twenty-second year, Friends Peace Teams held our annual meeting at Wellesley Monthly Meeting (Massachusetts) on May 18 & 19, followed by our third annual PeaceQuest, where we celebrated FPT's and Friends' work with peace around the world, on Saturday, May 20. PeaceQuest was also held at Wellesley.

The Initiatives This Year:

Friends Peace Teams Asia West Pacific Initiative engages with peace workers in Central Java, North Sumatra, Aceh in Indonesia; Manila, Tagbilaran City, and Davao City in the Philippines; Seoul in Korea; Kathmandu, Pokara and Bhutanese camps in Nepal; and we maintain a concern for peace workers in Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Ukraine, New Zealand and Australia. As our peace-work follows the calling of our volunteers, in 2016 we actively worked in Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and Korea supporting nonviolence, peace, trauma healing, conflict transformation, and social justice advocacy for communities recovering from war or religious violence.

We completed earthquake relief activities in Nepal. We also provided a grant to Peace Place in Central Java to expand their training center and school. We continue to develop and support pre-schools, after-school programs, and parent, family and teacher training based on peace and nonviolence. The book, *The Power of Goodness: Art and Stories for a Culture of Peace* was published and is now available. It is a collection of short stories from the lives of real people who chose nonviolence and reconciliation and is accompanied by illustrations by young artists.

Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) has over ten active peacebuilding and trauma healing programs in Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, Peacebuilding en Las Americas (PLA) provides grassroots solidarity, tools and hope to those most discriminated against and marginalized. 2016 marked an important year for the continued sustainability of PLA's programs. After 13 years of volunteer service, Founding Coordinator, Val Liveoak, retired, continuing as advisor to the new team: Monica Maher, Initiative Coordinator; Allie Prescott, Communications Specialist and Andy Cross, Financial Specialist. During this transition, the

new team focused on growing and solidifying relationships with in-field Facilitators, Coordinators, and Volunteers who have passionately supported and facilitated workshops. In 2016, each of PLA's programs focused work with at-risk youth, teachers, war survivors, former and active gang members, prison personnel, indigenous communities and grassroots leaders. Some program highlights include: the first ever workshop in a Mayan Language in Guatemala; trauma healing workshops in El Salvador with female war survivors who have disappeared relatives; workshops that empowered women in Afro-Indigenous and Indigenous communities defending their land rights against illegal development in Honduras; workshops that provide rehabilitation for former gang members and prisoners in a Honduran Prison; and workshops with victims of violence as well as demobilized guerrilla and paramilitary fighters in Colombia during the historic signing of the Peace Accords. For more information on our work, please visit: <http://pla.friendspeaceteams.org/>.

The African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams (AGLI) has continued its work in Central East Africa: Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo. This includes Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC), Friends Womens Association's, clinic in Bujumbura, Burundi, the Alternatives to Violence Project AVP, and other work. David Zarembka, the founder of AGLI resigned in August, and was partially replaced by David Bucura, a Rwandan. AGLI will be seeking a US-based person for outreach.

FPT's office in St. Louis continues to be run efficiently and frugally by our Administrative Specialist, John Kintree. A new Communications Specialist, Hayley Hathaway, has been doing a great job updating our website and producing the beautiful new brochure available on our table. Tom Martin and Nancy Shippen continue as co-Clerks. We are grateful to the many volunteers who help us and our partners abroad continue to do this work.

Please visit our table in the display area for newsletters and more to take back to your monthly meetings, and also our website at: www.FriendsPeaceTeams.org.

Your representatives:
Sallie Prugh, Columbia Friends Meeting
Jack Willis, Nashville Friends Meeting