

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Friends Place on Capitol Hill is a welcoming space that offers hospitality centered in peace, civic education, and justice-based advocacy for learners and leaders of all ages.

Quarterly Metrics

Friends Place engaged **23 Groups** and **410 Guests** for lodging and programming and hosted **6 Events** totaling **190 Attendees** (98 in-person and 92 online).

Four groups engaged **11 workshops**, including **2 lobby trainings**, and composted **1,000+ pounds** of organic materials.

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Violence Interrupter Symposium

In July, the FCNL Justice Reform team including Program Assistant Bri Tollie organized a symposium of community violence interrupter professionals from around the country to come to DC to connect and build collective power by lobbying for funding for community violence interrupters. The group gathered at Friends Place for two days and trained to lobby their congress members for this vital funding. See Bri's recap of the symposium at fcnl.org/updates.



Diaspora Organizer Gathering

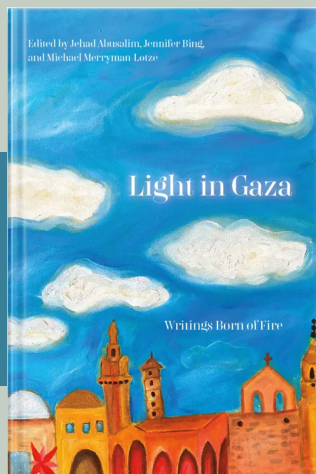
September brought the second annual Diaspora Organizer Gathering of community leaders, advocates, and movement-builders. Organizers representing a diverse range of diaspora communities focused on sharing their perspectives on U.S. foreign policy in relation to their home countries and building solidarity by advocating for policy change in the United States. Several organizers shared that they felt empowered by the experience of developing their storytelling skills and speaking to their representatives. Some also said that the gathering helped them gain a deeper awareness of the issues that the other cohort members were working on and the threads that tie them all together in their pursuit of a better world. We know this cohort of organizers will continue to do incredible work for their communities!



Photos by Tirrea Billings/FCNL

Community Engagement Series

The Friends Place team collaborated with the Quaker Engagement and Young Adult Program teams to host the July Quaker Changemaker event as a hybrid panel event during FCNL's Washington Summer Intensive. We were fortunate to be joined by four panelists (Lukas Solomon, Avela Chiya, Jim Cason, and Younos Mokhtarzada) who spoke of their relationships to campus organizing, what they learned, and how they grew from their organizing work. All organizers reflected on "movements for liberation being very materially connected" and how "fighting for one is itself fighting for the other at the same time." In August, the Friends Place team collaborated with Lauren Brownlee to host an FCNL network-wide book club on AFSC's anthology, *Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire*. The anthology imagines what the future of Gaza could be, while reaffirming the critical role of Gaza in Palestinian identity, history, and struggle for liberation. More than 60 people joined for the discussion. In late September, Friends Place opened its doors to community members for a "Welcome Back Brunch" which sought to bring folks to the house who hadn't seen its transformation in recent years. It was a lively gathering with lots of conversation, laughter, reminiscing, and pancakes.



Programming

One of the fall '23 Fly-In participants and a Spring Lobby Weekend alum, Sandra Avalos, brought a group of high school student leaders from LULAC National Educational Service Centers (LNESEC) in Dallas to DC. The day that their lobby visits were originally planned ended up being the day of Benjamin Netanyahu's address to Congress, leading to the offices closing and rescheduling their visits. The staff team decided to make the most of their unexpected free time and brought the students out to the big pro-Palestine protest that day instead. Sandra said that it was most of the students' first-ever protest and that they learned so much about all of the different forms of advocacy that are possible, both inside and outside of the halls of power. The students also got to visit several colleges in the area and explore different career opportunities in public service.



A group of high school students from a bi-national community in Cyprus (Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots) joined us at Friends Place as part of the State Department's On-Demand Youth Leadership Program facilitated by Legacy International with a focus on digital literacy. The group traveled to the U.S. for three weeks of immersion, first living with host families in Cincinnati, OH, before traveling to DC. They met with State Department Officials, visited various museums and government agencies, and also engaged daily seminars on peacebuilding, nonviolent communication, and leadership. The Friends Place team facilitated three workshops with them: digital storytelling, advocacy and the arts, and careers in peace and public service.

Upcoming Events

- Oct. 16th:** Voices from the Westbank: Stories of Resistance and Protection (online)
- Oct. 21st:** "Salt of the Earth" Dialogue with Peace Activists (hybrid)
- Oct. 31st:** Trick-or-Treat on East Capitol Street (in-person)
- Nov. 13-17:** FCNL's Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute (hybrid)

For more information and event registration, please visit friendsplacedc.org/events.
For programming and lodging requests, please visit the Friends Place website.
For other inquiries, please contact the Friends Place team via info@friendsplacedc.org.

