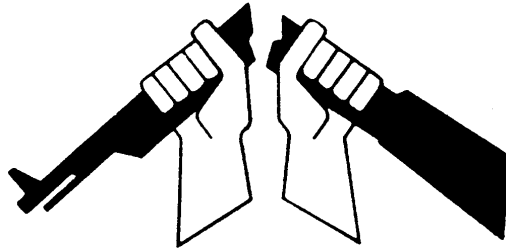


Organizing with the War Resisters League



“Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., April 4 1967

“The War Resisters League affirms that all war is a crime against humanity. We therefore are determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive nonviolently for the removal of the causes of war, including racism, sexism and all forms of human exploitation.”

-WRL Statement of Purpose

“The War Resisters League reaffirms its historic mission as an antiwar organization committed to nonviolence as the engine of social change and to removing the root causes of war. The League acknowledges that, in a society characterized by the systematic misallocation of power and privilege by race, white privilege acts to maintain itself in any predominantly white group regardless of whether individuals within that group are themselves bigots; and that if we wish to end war, we need to both be more diverse and work with more diverse communities...”

-WRL Statement on Nonviolence and Anti-Racism, 2003

The United States’ oldest secular pacifist organization, the War Resisters League, has been **resisting war at home and war abroad since 1923**. Our work for nonviolent revolution has spanned decades and been shaped by the new visions and strategies of each generation’s peacemakers—**now is your chance to make your mark**.

We know that change doesn’t happen overnight and we know that none of us can do it alone – locally based, home-grown community organizing is the key to our success. Knowing this, we’re glad to hear that you are interested in getting involved in the WRL and welcome your participation at whatever level makes the most sense for you and your community. This packet will outline the different ways that you can work with WRL and some of the benefits that come with that partnership.

Why the War Resisters League?

History tells us that the absence of war is not the presence of peace. We have seen time and time again that violence does not end when you put down the gun, that war is not over when you declare a ceasefire. We understand that there are interwoven systems of domination and exploitation at the roots of inequality and injustice and that to, as we say in our Statement of Purpose, “remove all causes of war” we must collaborate and stand in solidarity with oppressed people across the globe. We are committed to building a broad-based movement against war in all its forms. Our philosophy of revolutionary nonviolence demands change at the very roots of our society. We believe in the transformative power of nonviolent action in our communities, in our

world, and in ourselves. We invite you to walk this path with us, away from all forms of militarism and oppression and towards a world based on equality and justice.

This commitment to revolutionary nonviolence is what sets us apart from other organizations. We believe that war is a crime against humanity and we view war in a broad sense to include more than just armed combat between countries. We see war in its many iterations, from the dropping of bombs and the imposing of economic sanctions on foreign civilians as well as “enemy combatants” to what we know as “the war at home.” This includes the targeting of poor and working class people of color in U.S. military recruiting and the increased policing, incarceration, and deportation of immigrants and people of color within the United States. We have a long history of resisting violence in all its forms, bearing a distinct pacifist perspective and a tradition of effective nonviolent action.

A major part of all our programs is to help people organize in their own communities, where real change begins. Our staff and members offer nonviolence and direct action trainings that help groups develop strategic nonviolent campaigns and the skills they need to create change locally. We train people in civil disobedience, counter military recruitment, war tax resistance, and other ways of putting revolutionary nonviolence into action.

WRL provides its local organizers with programs and materials that are valuable tools for explaining, promoting, and organizing for nonviolent social change. You'll be part of a national network of other WRL organizers with whom you can share skills and information. In addition, you will be connected to War Resisters International, a global network with a commitment to nonviolence and antimilitarism with chapters in eighty countries around the world. See www.wri-irg.org for more information about the work of War Resisters International. Upon joining the Organizing Network, national organizing staff will provide you with updates on WRI and opportunities to collect with WRI through your work with WRL.

How can my group or community get involved with WRL?

There are many ways to get involved in the War Resisters League. We encourage you to first join as a Member or a Supporter. Our members and supporters are the backbone of our work and help us spread the word about our organizing and receive financial support during these tough economic times. To get more involved in our organizing work, you can start a WRL Local or have your organization become a WRL Affiliate. Individuals can apply to be a WRL Contact. WRL Locals, Affiliates, and Contacts and Task Force/Committee members are part of the **WRL Organizing Network**. See below for what each of these categories mean and for more information on the application process.

WRL MEMBERSHIP

Become a WRL Member

All it takes to join is agreement with our Statement of Purpose:

"The War Resisters League affirms that all war is a crime against humanity. We therefore are determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive nonviolently for the removal of the causes of war, including racism, sexism and all forms of human exploitation."

If you agree with our Statement of Purpose, we encourage you to sign on to it and become a WRL Member. If you support our work, but are not yet ready to sign the statement, we invite you to become a WRL Supporter.

What we ask of our Members:

- Signing on to the Statement of Purpose
- Financial support if possible. \$26 per year (or more) will allow us to maintain our totally independent funding structure. The majority of our annual budget comes from member and supporter donations like this, not grants or large donations.

What we offer our Members:

- A one-year subscription to WIN magazine
- Regular updates on our program and organizing work
- An invitation to join the WRL Organizing Network (comprised of Locals, Affiliates, Contacts, and Task Force/Committee members)
- Eligibility to serve on our highest decision-making body, the National Committee (NC) and the ability to vote for at-large NC members

Become a WRL Supporter

If for any reason you are not ready to sign our Statement of Purpose, we encourage you to become a WRL Supporter.

What we ask of our Supporters:

- Financial support if possible. \$26 per year (or more) will allow us to maintain our totally independent and autonomous funding structure.

What we offer our Supporters:

- A one-year subscription to WIN magazine
- Regular updates on our program and organizing work
- An invitation to join the WRL Organizing Network (comprised of Locals, Affiliates, Contacts, and Task Force/Committee members)

A Membership form is included in this packet.

WRL ORGANIZING

Become a WRL Organizer

If you want to get connected with our organizing and be a part of the WRL Organizing Network (ON), your group or community can form a WRL Local or become a WRL Affiliate. Individuals can also sign up as WRL Contacts or join issue-specific Task Forces or Committees.

Benefits of joining the Organizing Network

Established for the purpose of empowering and strengthening grassroots activism, the WRL Organizing Network is made up of WRL Locals, Affiliates, Contacts, and Task Force/Committee members. The Organizing Network will meet regularly in person, over conference calls, and through email and internet networking sites to build connections, share ideas and skills, create strategies, and help develop WRL programs and campaigns. Members of the Organizing Network can help our national organization create its overall strategy, bringing local concerns and conditions to bear in developing a national program. The Organizing Network chooses 6 representatives to our National Committee— 5 from Locals groups and 1 from an Affiliate group. All members of the National Committee are required to sign the WRL Statement of Purpose.

Start a WRL Local

A WRL Local is a locally-based chapter of our national organization. Locals may be small discussion groups or large community organizations; what brings the members together is their interest in WRL's philosophy and program of nonviolent resistance to war and injustice. What is required is an interest in doing local organizing that is in communication and often collaboration with the national office. If you live in an area where there is no peace and justice group or where you see the real need and potential for a WRL-identified group, we encourage you to start organizing under the WRL banner!

If you would like to form a WRL Local and expand the group of people who are part of it, you can send a letter and information about WRL to people in your area inviting them to come to a meeting or to contact you if they are interested in being part of the group. WRL organizing staff can assist you in the process of connecting with WRL members in your area.

Once a group is formed and wants to be recognized as a WRL Local, at least five registered WRL Members (people who agree with the WRL Statement of Purpose and have signed up as a Member) can submit an application to the WRL national office addressed to Kimber Heinz, National Organizing Coordinator. If it is emailed, it should have "New Local Application" in the subject line. Emails should be sent to kimber@warresisters.org. We will respond to each inquiry within a month.

Through its organizing staff, the national office will maintain regular contact with members of the WRL Local. WRL Locals may belong to more than one national organization.

A printed Local application is included in this packet.

Benefits of Starting a Local

WRL Locals can use WRL in their name (e.g. Portland WRL, Houston Nonviolent Action/WRL) and can publicly identify themselves as part of the War Resisters League in local and regional work.

WRL Locals can co-sponsor and endorse local events using the name of WRL.

Locals receive regular support from the national office for their work, including strategy-sharing with national staff and other Locals, organizing resources, and training opportunities.

All new Locals are entitled to \$100 worth of selected WRL publications and organizing materials. After your group is accepted as a WRL Local, you will be sent a welcome letter and the literature list from which to place your order. A sample list is included in this packet.

Locals are eligible to receive \$50 worth of selected WRL publications and materials per year to support their local organizing work. For additional orders, WRL Locals may purchase selected literature at a discounted rate (See sample literature list for descriptions of our available resources). All literature orders will go through the National Organizing Coordinator.

Locals can submit news items/updates/articles to WIN, our national magazine. WIN, the magazine of the War Resisters League, includes articles on issues and actions of interest to organizers. A regular section in WIN about WRL's work includes reports from WRL Locals, Affiliates, and Contacts and we greatly encourage submissions from local groups.

Local groups receive bulk quantities of WIN magazine at no charge to give out or sell at events or place in local community and activist spaces.

Grant possibilities—Although WRL Locals are autonomous and each group is responsible for its finances and fundraising for its own needs, there are sometimes available grants from the national office for local training programs or local capacity building and organizing efforts.

Locals may join the Locals listserv, an online networking space for local groups with a commitment to antimilitarism and nonviolence. The national organizing staff serves as a moderator for this list.

The national office is currently working on developing online networking opportunities for Locals and other members of the Organizing Network, such as a blog or wiki page, as well as a regular e-newsletter on national actions and WRL program updates, centering the work of local organizers.

Locals can post their upcoming meetings and events on the WRL national website.

Responsibilities of Becoming a Local

Locals represent the organization in local and regional work.

Locals represent WRL in accordance with the WRL Statement of Purpose, included at the beginning of this packet. WRL is a national organization that is committed to nonviolence and anti-racism and the actions and statements of your group must reflect this mission, as reflected in our Statement on Nonviolence and Racism also included at the beginning of this packet. For groups who are unable to sustain or uninterested in a long-term commitment to these statements and practices, WRL has a process for disaffiliation.

We encourage Locals to use the WRL name in their literature or, where appropriate, in the name of their group.

We encourage Locals' participation in national WRL programs and organizing.

Locals send regular organizing reports to the national office and WIN magazine.

Locals help distribute WRL information, such as WIN Magazine, within their networks.

Locals designate a contact person to communicate with the national office to provide information about local concerns and to give information about national and international program work back to their group.

Become a WRL Affiliate

An Affiliate group is a group who may or may not have Members of WRL but who work in coalition with WRL activities.

Affiliates have the following three characteristics:

- They are active in their communities.
- They are committed to using nonviolence as a tactic or a strategy, although individual groups may or may not agree with our philosophical stance on nonviolence.
- They are allies whose work is important to the larger nonviolence movement and who we would like to support through our networks.

Interested groups should submit a New Affiliate Application. The application should be sent to the WRL national office addressed to Kimber Heinz, National Organizing Coordinator. If they are emailed, they should have “New Affiliate Application” in the subject line. Emails should be sent to kimber@warresisters.org. We will respond to each inquiry within a month.

Through its organizing staff, the national office will maintain regular contact with members of the WRL Affiliate. WRL Affiliates may belong to more than one national organization.

A printed Affiliate application is included in this packet.

Benefits of Becoming an Affiliate

Affiliates can publically identify themselves as an affiliate of War Resisters League.

Through participation in the WRL Organizing Network, Affiliates receive regular support for their work, including strategy-sharing with national staff and other local groups across the United States, organizing resources, and training opportunities.

WRL Affiliates may purchase selected literature at a discounted rate (See sample literature list for descriptions of our available resources). All literature orders will go through the WRL National Organizing Coordinator.

Affiliates are eligible to apply each year for up to \$50 of free selected WRL merchandise, based on need.

Affiliates can submit news items/updates/articles to WIN, our national magazine. WIN, the magazine of the War Resisters League, includes articles on issues and actions of interest to organizers. A regular section about WRL's work includes reports from WRL Locals, Affiliates, and Contacts and we greatly encourage submissions from local groups.

Affiliates receive bulk quantities of WIN magazine at no charge to give out or sell at events or place in local community and activist spaces.

The national organizing staff is currently working on developing online networking opportunities for Affiliates and other members of the Organizing Network, such as a blog or wiki page, as well as a regular e-newsletter on national actions and WRL program updates, centering the work of local organizers.

Responsibilities of Becoming an Affiliate

Although Affiliates are not required to commit to our Statement of Purpose, they are committed to using nonviolence as a tactic or a strategy.

We encourage Affiliates to state publically that they are affiliated with WRL.

Affiliates acknowledge that they are part of an organization that is committed to nonviolence and anti-racism and their statements and actions must reflect this mission. For groups who are unable to sustain or uninterested in a long-term commitment to these principles, WRL has a process for disaffiliation.

Affiliates designate a contact person to communicate with the national office.

Become a WRL Contact

A WRL Contact is a person who is an active WRL Member and is an organizer in their local community, distributes WRL materials to groups in their area such as WIN Magazine or the Tax Day Pie Chart, and/or offers services to their local community such as training or strategic planning. Contacts are listed in WRL publications and on our website and have opportunities to communicate and collaborate with other members of the WRL Organizing Network (ON) to build up local work against all forms of militarism.

Interested individuals should contact Kimber Heinz, National Organizing Coordinator, if they would like to apply to become a Contact. Contacts are approved on a case-by-case basis by the national organizing staff.

Benefits of Becoming a Contact

Contacts are a WRL presence in a community that doesn't have a Local or Affiliate chapter. They are a part of the ON and may participate in WRL organizer blogs, internet networks, conference calls, and gatherings. They are encouraged to send updates, report-backs, and contact information to be featured in WIN magazine.

Contacts receive free copies of WIN magazine for distribution to their networks.

Responsibilities of Becoming a Contact

Contacts are a WRL presence in their community and may be asked to represent WRL in certain local actions or conferences.

For information on becoming a Contact, write to Kimber Heinz, National Organizing Coordinator, at kimber@warresisters.org or War Resisters League c/o Kimber Heinz, 339 Lafayette St. New York, NY 10012

Join a WRL Task Force

We encourage you to get involved in one of our Task Forces or Committees. Joining a Task Force or organizing Committee is a great way for WRL Members to be active in organizing with WRL separate from or in addition to being part of a Local or Affiliate group or being a WRL Contact. It is a way that our members may bridge some of their local work and/or work with other organizations with that of WRL through a focus on a specific issue. Members of other organizations may represent their group within a WRL Task Force or Committee without their organization necessarily being signed on as a WRL Affiliate.

Task Forces

War Tax Resistance Task Force

The War Tax Resistance Task Force supports the War Resisters League's work with war tax resisters and serves as a liaison with NWTRCC, the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, and other war tax resistance groups. This Task Force produces WRL's federal budget pie chart and updates WRL's war tax resistance resources, including the war tax resistance webpage. Members of the War Resistance Task Force propose activities to integrate with other WRL programs and advise on policies for WRL national's response to government interventions through institutions such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Justice Department.

Anti-Racism Task Force

The Anti-Racism Task Force studies the relationships between racism and war, develops WRL responses to racism, including racism within the peace movement, and monitors WRL's implementation of its affirmative action policy.

Feminism & Nonviolence Task Force

The Feminism & Nonviolence Task Force examines the links between patriarchy and violence, as well as feminism and nonviolence, and seeks to strengthen feminist analysis and vision within WRL and the peace movement.

International Task Force

The International Task Force works in solidarity and collaboration with antimilitarist, pacifist, and antiwar organizations around the world, primarily through its relationship with War Resisters International (WRI). The International Task Force is WRL's link to the international peace movement and the official liaison to War Resisters International through a collectively chosen WRI representative.

Counter Military Recruitment

Members of the Counter-recruitment Task Force work in their local communities to organize with young people to keep military recruiters and JROTC programs out of schools, to keep student information out of the hands of recruiters and to educate young people and other community members about "military myths" and alternatives to joining the military from an antimilitarist perspective.

Organizing Committees

War Profiteers

The War Profiteers Committee seeks to motivate and empower a broad-based movement to educate, agitate, and organize against the military industrial complex through creative, nonviolent, and democratic means.

GI Resistance Support

The GI Resistance Support Committee works in alliance with groups and organizations led by veterans and current servicemembers against ongoing U.S. wars and occupations, including Iraq Veterans Against the War, Courage to Resist, and Veterans for Peace, among others.



WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

Application to Start a New WRL Local

Date:

Contact Person:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Proposed name of new Local:

Local Contact Information (if different from contact person):

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Website:

What issues is your group interested in working on?

Letter of interest:

Please write and separately attach a brief statement outlining why you are interested in starting a new WRL Local and how your group plans to (or does currently) contribute to your local peace/antimilitarist movement.

Founding Members: Please include the contact information (name, address, email, and phone) for all founding members. Founders must be current Members of WRL.

1.

2.

3

4.

5.

Please return this application to:

New Local Application

War Resisters League

339 Lafayette St.

New York, NY 10012

Or email it to kimber@warresisters.org with “New Local Application” in the subject line



WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

Application to Become a WRL Affiliate

Date:

Contact Person:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Name of Affiliate Group or Organization:

Affiliate Contact Information (if different then contact person):

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Website:

What issues is your group working on?

Statement of interest:

Please include a brief statement outlining how you are interested in collaborating with the WRL and how you see your current work contributing to the peace/antimilitarist movement.

Please return this application to:

New Affiliate Application

War Resisters League

339 Lafayette St.

New York, NY 10012

Or email it to kimber@warresisters.org with “New Affiliate Application” in the subject line

WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

Literature for Local Organizers

Civilian Ally: A Guide to Organizing with Veterans and Servicemembers to Build a GI Resistance Movement (\$10) is a *NEW* manual for peace activists who are organizing alongside veterans, servicemembers and conscientious objectors to end war or organizers who want to build those working relationships. Written by veteran and civilian organizers, it offers an orientation to working with servicemembers and veterans within the context of the growing GI Resistance movement. *Discount is available.*

WRI Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns (\$10) provides resources to inspire and support your own work. Includes: section on developing strategic nonviolent actions (complete with checklist); exercises for working in nonviolence (including group dynamics and gender issues); stories and strategies showing the use of nonviolent organizing tools in specific settings and global campaigns. *Discount is available.*

DMZ: A Guide to Taking Your School Back from the Military (\$5) is a comprehensive counter-military recruitment organizing manual for youth activists and their allies. This 48 page magazine-style handbook includes everything you need to know about organizing to keep military recruiters out of your school, including detailed legal information, concrete campaign suggestions, and up-to-date statistics. *Discount is available.*

A Handbook for Nonviolent Action (\$3) is WRL's classic guide to nonviolent direct action. *Discount is available.*

War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military (\$15) is the most comprehensive book available on war tax resistance, covering everything from legal issues to the history of war tax resistance. *Discount is available.*

What Every Girl Should Know About the U.S. Military: Consider This—Before You Enlist (\$0.15 each) is a pamphlet co-published by the Women of Color Resource Center (www.coloredgirls.org) and the War Resisters League. Written for young women and featuring the voices of women veterans, this full color pamphlet is perfect for distributing at schools and community centers. *Discount is available.*

The Military is Not Just a Job, It's 8 Years of Your Life (\$0.15 each) is an essential counter-military recruitment flyer. Available in Spanish or English. *Discount is available.*

Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes (\$0.10 each) is WRL's famous "Pie Chart flyer," which analyzes Obama's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget (released Feb. 2010). *Discount is available.*

WRL Organizers' Manual (\$10) Written in 1986 but still a fountain of commonsense tips, theory, and practice for getting organized. Whether it's settling up a literature table, battling through the courts, contacting the media, or staging a sit-down protest, this is a great place to start.

FREE for WRL Organizers!

In It to WIN It: Get Involved in WRL is our outreach and membership brochure.

WRL "Patience to WIN" postcard is a glossy outreach postcard with basic information about WRL.