

# ROOTS OF RESISTANCE, WINGS FOR PEACE

## ROOTS OF RESISTANCE, WINGS FOR PEACE

*“This sky where we live is no place to lose your wings so love, love, love” –Hafez*

With several significant organizing victories, 2015 saw the incredible power of cross-community organizing to block the Keystone XL pipeline, the rise and persistence of Black Lives Matter, mass non-violent protest in Baltimore and Ferguson, the resurgence of protests in Iraq and Syria, and the resilience of resistance in the occupied territories of Palestine. The voices of peace that guide international social justice, antiwar, and anti-occupation efforts confront militarism everyday and define the movements we build.

The Stop Urban Shield Coalition continues to target the death-dealing Urban Shield exposition with its SWAT training and marketing of the kind of military-grade weaponry used in Ferguson. By collaborating with local activists of various race, faith, political, and social backgrounds, and unifying around the leadership of those most impacted by policing, militarization, and war, WRL works to build power with Black, Arab and Muslim, migrant, and poor communities across the nation.

WRL envisions change from the ground up. By distributing flyers in our local communities, visiting high schools to do counter-recruitment work, talking with neighbors about war tax resistance, and offering nonviolent action trainings, thousands of people are directly engaged with WRL’s campaign work through petitioning, direct action, and coalition building on the ground from California to Iraq.

Boldly envisioning the power and possibility of nonviolent revolutionary resistance, WRL’s commitment to a world without war has been unwavering for 92 years. Today WRL continues its work to build cross-movement struggles, share resources, and facilitate real change. Please join us as we root our struggle in resistance and soar on wings of peace in 2016!

## ANTI-MILITARIST ORGANIZING

*With speak outs, guerrilla theater in the streets, teach-ins on policing and the arms industry, and gigantic banners across the top of the Peace Pentagon, "We Want Peace, Not Police!" and "Hey Mayor, Dismantle Bratton's Army!" In 2015, WRL continues to campaign for an end to all forms of war and militarism in our communities.*

## DEMILITARIZE HEALTH & SECURITY (Oakland, CA)

This year, as the national anchor in the Stop Urban Shield coalition, WRL expanded its organizing to end the Urban Shield weapons expo & SWAT training in the Bay Area of California. The even-stronger 2015 Stop Urban Shield coalition called on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to stand with Bay Area communities and reject Urban Shield by holding direct actions and town halls from Oakland to Pleasanton. With the signatures of nearly 10,000 activists nation-wide to Stop Urban Shield, energy built in Oakland overflowed into Berkeley where residents nearly won a vote to reject Urban Areas Security Initiative funding. We are proud to cultivate this growth of resistance in coalition; in 2016, WRL will continue our campaign to stop the Department of Homeland Security's Urban Areas Security Initiative (#EndUASI)!

## DISMANTLE BRATTON'S ARMY (NYC)

WRL joined fellow activists in the Safety Beyond Policing Coalition to take action against NYPD militarization and build-up of counter-terrorism units. The coalition confronted the New York City Council, NYPD Commissioner Bratton, and Mayor DeBlasio head-on. In March we wrote letters of dissent to the Mayor, and in a day of action with the Dismantle Bratton's Army Coalition, flooded the Mayor's office with calls of disapproval. A letter authored jointly by 30 local community organizations garnered 3,200 signatures, while rallies and mic-checks disrupting City-Council meetings attracted national media coverage and instigated ongoing discussions on NYC police militarization and the expanding War on Terror.

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

*As activists and concerned US residents, it is our responsibility and it also works to our advantage to defy the sectarianism and nationalism reproduced in the logic and culture of militarism. Instead, we find strength in internationalism and solidarity.*

## WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL

In October 2015, WRL National Organizer Tara Tabassi participated in the War Resisters International (WRI) Seminar, Stopping the War Business, hosted by World Without War, a WRI affiliate in South Korea. Seventy international activists gathered to #StopWarBiz, swapping

campaign tactics, strategies, and planning ongoing resistance to the global arms trade. Tara presented in the opening plenary, What is War Profiteering? Building Resistance Against Police Militarization in the United States. The conference culminated in a direct action at the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Expedition (ADEX). Radio Malva, in Valencia, Spain, interviewed WRL, highlighting our national campaign to Demilitarize Health & Security (DHS), and its connections to international antimilitarism efforts.

WRL continues to broaden relationships developed at WRI's Small Actions – Big Movements: The Continuum of Nonviolence conference in South Africa last year, with Climate Satyagraha profiled in the last issue of WIN; collaboration with Egyptian Conscientious Objector Maikel Nabil for International C.O. Day; and work with the Pan African Network for Nonviolence and Peace-Building to bring together nonviolent activists from the Eritrean diaspora.

## IRAQ SOLIDARITY

In November, National Organizer Ali Issa, as author of *Against All Odds*, visited Lebanon, Jordan, and the UK, connecting activists around the world to Iraqi organizing efforts. Today, as the power of this solidarity network grows, Iraqi-led organizing inspires WRL's international work as we connect people resisting regimes of militarized police to those resisting conditions of imperialism and occupation. While we share the bitter fruits of racism, sexism, and exploitation, we continue to build power across impacted communities to confront militarism at its roots.

## EDUCATION

*Education remains vital for sharing the histories, vision, and strategies of revolutionary nonviolence. WRL produces workshops and publishes literature to support activists and educators in their local and international organizing.*

## LITERATURE

WRL celebrated the publication of our new book, *Against All Odds: Voices of Popular Struggle in Iraq*, written by WRL Field Organizer Ali Issa, with a foreword by Vijay Prashad. Keep an eye out early in 2016 for an *Against All Odds* tour event near you! This year we filled over 400 orders for books, brochures, fact sheets and workshop curricula, as well as calendars and wearable resistance such as t-shirts, hats, and buttons. Our perpetual calendar, *90 Years of Revolutionary Nonviolence*, continues to be a useful historical resource for hundreds of activists across the country. We produced new editions of two of our counter-recruitment resources - *Know Before You Go* and a new Spanish translation of the recently updated *What Every Girl Should Know About the US Military*. Thousands of copies of both have been ordered and distributed to young people and their families across the country, providing much needed information to those working to end the militarization of our youth.

## WORKSHOPS

To help communities put to use lessons found in *Against All Odds*, WRL also released *Against All Odds: Organizing and Study Guide*, a popular education resource to build solidarity with Iraqi activists organizing across borders as we organize for peace and liberation. We continued our work connecting organizations led by youth of color to our campaign against UASI with our “Buy 10 Guns, Get 2 Tanks Free” anti-militarism workshop, developed in 2014 with YA-YA Network and facilitated at the INCITE: Colors of Violence Conference with over 50 participants in attendance.

## WEBSITE

After months of work, we rolled out a new website and online store, simplifying the design and adding a number of new features. The site now includes an archive of WIN magazine, which ceased publication this year. An archive of WIN’s predecessor, Nonviolent Activist, should also be available online in the coming year.

## NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE

*By training people in the history, principles, tactics and strategies of revolutionary nonviolence, we build the capacity of activists and grassroots organizations to take powerful action for transformative change.*

## PROMOTING NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

This year WRL continued its crucial nonviolence trainings with activists across the country, facilitated counter-recruitment in high schools, universities, and activist training camps, and co-organized the Colors of Healing bazaar to send queer activists of color to the INCITE: Colors of Violence conference. We marched in solidarity with activists from DRUM, Ugnayan, RAISE-NYC, AF3IRM, Audrey Lorde Project’s Trans Justice, and LGBTQ organizations to support workers’ rights on May Day. We also participated in the Oscar Rivera Lopez March, Trans Day of Action, and Black Lives Matter protests as we continue to build our movement against militarism and war in all forms.

## WAR TAX RESISTANCE

War Resisters League has rejected IRS levies on its tax refusing employees for 60 years and, since the Vietnam War, has been actively promoting the nonpayment of taxes as a method to directly resist war. In addition to publishing the only WTR manual – “War Tax Resistance” for over 30 years, WRL produces the annual English and Spanish versions of “Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes,” a pie chart analysis of U.S. military spending. As a founding affiliate of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, the clearinghouse for all things WTR, WRL continues to actively support WTR today. Ruth Benn and other WRL members give newspaper, radio, and TV interviews every tax season.

## NATIONAL OFFICE

### TRANSITIONS

We said a sad, though fond, farewell to Bryan Welton, who moved on to study for a future in healthcare, and then happily welcomed our new Development and Membership Coordinator Emma Burke. Consultants, volunteers, and interns who have been vital in supporting WRL’s organizing and operations over the past year include: Barbara Webster, Seelai Karzai, Leani Auxilio, Nico Fonseca, Jah’dae Ross, Ana Conner, and Skanda Kadrigamar. Next spring, we will bid a wistful goodbye to 339 Lafayette Street, our home since 1969. Our commitment to nonviolent action against war and militarism will remain strong as we move to new quarters in the spring of 2016.

### HONORS AND AWARDS

WRL honors journalist and activist Mumia Abu Jamal with the 2015 Peace Award. An internationally celebrated Black writer and radio journalist, author of eight books and hundreds of columns and articles (some in WRL’s WIN Magazine), former member of the Black Panther Party, and supporter of Philadelphia’s radical MOVE organization, Mumia Abu Jamal has spent the last 30 years in prison, mostly on Pennsylvania’s Death Row, today serving out a life sentence. Known worldwide as a political prisoner, Mumia’s reporting on police brutality and racism exposes the brutal oppression of national and international revolutionary movements. His struggle for freedom not only signifies the loss we incur in the face of racist, corrupt, and abusive systems, but also reminds us of our collective power to hope, struggle, and envision a better world. This Peace Award is given at a crucial time, as we mobilize our members, partners and friends to continue the pressure to fight for Mumia’s immediate release, and most urgently to fight for medical treatment of his serious health concerns.

### FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

War Resisters League like many organizations, faces funding challenges. We believe firmly in our work to support international grassroots organizing committed to changing systems. To do that, we cultivate a fundraising framework that boldly and humbly says we are not constrained by scarcity even though our resources are limited. We get real hope from our most significant sources of income--individual gifts, monthly and quarterly sustainer gifts that indicate ongoing support, and legacy bequests that strengthen our financial base for the future. Many members include WRL in their estate planning and bequests are divided such that one half is placed into our endowment, which is invested into socially responsible funds. We are firmly committed to a fundraising model that prioritizes grassroots funds so we can uncompromisingly continue to work towards peace through justice.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

April 1, 2014-March 31, 2015

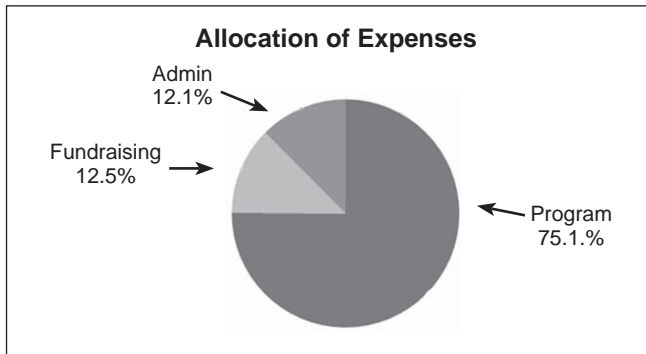
### INCOME

Contributions/Grants	256,937
Bequests/Endowment	130,365
Literature/Calendar Sales	11,535
Special Events	1,166
Magazine Subscriptions/Ads	586
Misc/Other	3,191
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>403,780</b>

### EXPENSES

Field Organizing / Movement Building	171,780
Promoting Nonviolent Social Change	57,043
Anti-Militarism/GI Resistance Support	66,824
WIN Magazine	64,063
Literature/Calendar	7,610
Other Program	11,664
Fundraising/Promotion	79,198
Administrative/Office	64,147
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>523,329</b>

Figures from the most recent fiscal year are not yet audited. You may obtain copies of prior year audited financial statements from the New York State Charities Bureau, 41 State Street, Albany, NY 12207.



## SUSTAIN RESISTANCE

For over 90 years, WRL has been able to do all this work and more with ongoing support from our members across the United States and beyond. To sustain and grow our education and organizing tomorrow and in the decades ahead, please give all that you can. We particularly invite you to join as a monthly or quarterly sustainer today: [warresisters.org/donate-wrl](http://warresisters.org/donate-wrl)

# GROW RESISTANCE!

**DONATE**

[warresisters.org/donate-wrl](http://warresisters.org/donate-wrl)

**VOLUNTEER**

[warresisters.org/get-involved](http://warresisters.org/get-involved)



WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE  
339 Lafayette Street  
New York, NY 10012  
(212) 228-0450  
[warresisters.org](http://warresisters.org)