



May 19, 2017

Dear Friend,

This past May Day was like no other in my recent memory.

**Muste's collective imperative, to support groups reclaiming their power and addressing social inequities – everything May Day represents – could not be abstract this year. It felt deeply personal.**

When I see ill-conceived attacks on immigrants, the rollback of LGBTQ rights, cuts to women's health programs and environmental protections, unconscionable abuses of power in every realm, I am filled with outrage.

My outrage turns to pride when I see the Muste Institute step up its support of the very persons and struggles the new administration is leaving in the gutter. I am humbled to be part of an organization supporting creative grassroots community-based initiatives.

**These projects promise to put power back into the hands of people most impacted by a greedy and more militant corporate-government enterprise.**

Who hears Tamir Rice's brother, Sandra Bland's sister, Michael Brown's father, the countless voices of families and communities directly impacted by police violence?

Between 2014 and 2016, Ferguson, Missouri's **Truth Telling Project** collected audio and video testimony from those in marginalized, often silenced, communities around the country, who live under the constant threat of militarized police violence. A Muste grant is helping the Project launch "It's Time to Listen," a web-based curriculum that will be used in schools and youth programs to teach about racial justice and structural oppression.

As if the uphill battle of searching for disappeared relatives in Mexico is not a steep enough climb for heartbroken families.

These family members are in constant danger of fallout from challenging the state's involvement with organized crime and multinational corporations. The personal toll is extraordinary. **Técnicas Rudas** is strengthening security conditions—focusing on digital security—for grassroots mobilizations searching for disappeared persons in highly-surveilled states. Tens of thousands, including migrants from Central America, are kidnapped into trafficking networks. The Muste Institute supports Técnicas Rudas' efforts to allow organizers to continue their work without relentless fear of retaliation.

A.J. Muste Memorial Institute

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Imagine relying on a bottle of soda and a bag of potato chips for lunch.

Many families in cities across the nation lack access to healthy, fresh, nutritional food. The **Black Yield Institute** in Baltimore is building a coalition of community members to address “food deserts” – locations with little access to grocery stores, where many food options are high in fat and sugar – disproportionately impacting African Americans. With a Social Justice Fund grant organizers will pull together farmers, educators, politicians, restaurateurs and others in a strategy to bring “black food sovereignty” to life.

In our most recent round of grants, we also provided funds for undocumented and unafraid youth organizing in New York, creative worker justice mobilization in Alabama, and a public campaign by Palestinian women against illegal settlements around Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

**Our momentum is strong, and we invite you to join us in supporting positive social change that comes from the people.**

This moment in our history is critical. We are forced to challenge cuts and threats to basic human sustenance. If not for the energy of those who stand beside us, we might be overwhelmed by the escalation of crisis that demand immediate response. From our collaborative office and meeting space to the distant reach of our grantmaking programs, the Institute supports innovative organizing by those directly impacted by injustice where they live and work. Their ideas are creative and inspiring and their courage leads us forward.

Your financial support is a meaningful investment in the lives and accomplishments of our grantees and in the very future of social change on the grassroots level.

Thank you for your support in the past, and thank you in advance for giving generously once again. **Please know how deeply gratifying it is for me, today, to be part of this unflinching and undaunted community of activists.**

Onward!



Heidi Boghosian  
Executive Director

P.S. Your gift to the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donate Online via [npo.justgive.org/ajmuste](http://npo.justgive.org/ajmuste)