

2019 MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE | PROGRAM BOOK

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH

Registration Opens

7:30am | The Commons Theatre Concession (1st Floor)

Social Networking & Coffee/Pastries

7:30am – 8:30am | Outside of Richmond Salons (2nd Floor)

Action Alley & Art Space

8am – 5pm | James River Terrace

Action Alley is a forum to learn about and take action on human rights issues and current AIUSA priorities, and a space for groups to creatively display their ideas and accomplishments.

The Art Space is a place to come and put your creative juices to work! We will have canvases and brushes for you to design a banner for the national banner drop action on November 20th, Universal Children's Day, calling on US government agencies and corporations to stop locking up migrant children. Information on this action and materials will be provided. Feel free to drop in throughout the conference to work on your banner to drop in your community. "Artivism" is an effective way to draw attention to human rights concerns.

Welcome: Be Bold, Act Now: Organize for Human Rights

8:30am – 9am | The Commons Theatre

Power Sessions I

9am – 9:30am | Various Locations

Back to the Basics: A model for student organizing! | Richmond Salon I

A workshop for developing organization skills for starting a new student group. In this workshop we will go over how to recruit new members, run successful events, and have concise and interesting meetings.

Building a Strategy to Win: Using the Midwest Academy Strategy Chart | Virginia Room D

The Midwest Academy Strategy Chart is considered a gold standard in the field for strategic campaign planning. Whether you're a new organizer or looking to brush up and expand your skills, this power session will give you a solid foundation on analyzing power and organizing effectively.

Everyone Can Lobby & How to Do It Well | Richmond Salon II

"Often times, the most righteous thing you can do is shake the table." – Representative Ocasio-Cortez

Learn how to effectively propel your voice into a change-making tool. From the first impression to the follow-up, make your voice part of the fight for human rights with AIUSA.

How to Join Write for Rights to Change Lives | Richmond Salon III

Write for Rights is our annual letter writing campaign on ten important human rights cases. This year's cases are all youth activists facing abuses. Find out how you can take part and organize fun letter writing events that will help the cases, grow your network and make new friends.

Welcome to Amnesty! | Virginia Room C

Amnesty International is a global human rights movement, but what does this really mean? What does this movement look like? And where is this movement going? In this workshop participants will learn the fundamental framework that shapes the strategy and policies that guide Amnesty International. This workshop is for everyone! It has been designed to provide a little bit of history, a little bit of opportunity, and a lot of room for getting involved in working for human rights!

Power Sessions II

9:45am – 10:15am | Various Locations

Election 2020: Walking the line of nonpartisanship | Richmond Salon I

The 2020 election year will present many challenges and opportunities for Amnesty activists. This session will provide tools for staying informed and nonpartisan because human rights shouldn't be politicized.

Getting involved in conflict resolution | Richmond Salon II

We constantly face difficult conflicts. It is important to know how to approach a conflict when we see one, how to analyze them, and what roles to take in what situation. This seminar aims at looking at different conflict scenarios and suggesting actions we can all take to solve conflicts around us.

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Running Successful Digital Fundraisers | Virginia Room C

This interactive session will concretely identify best practices for raising money online using popular crowdsourcing websites like GoFundMe and Facebook.

Tactics and Escalation | Virginia Room D

Learn how to execute diverse, creative, and strong tactics to build power, build leaders, and apply escalating pressure as part of broader strategies to make lasting change.

Using Power Mapping for Your Organizing | Richmond Salon IV

To create the change we seek, we need to understand the power structures at play. A power map is a strategic tool that, properly done, can reveal power dynamics and leverage relationships and networks.

Breakout Sessions I

10:20am – 11:20am | Various Locations

Art and Poetry Competition Against Enforced Disappearances | Richmond Salon III

Victims of enforced disappearance are people who have literally been disappeared; from their loved ones and their community. Victims are often never released and their fate remains unknown. Join our art competition to spread awareness of enforced disappearances around the globe with an emphasis on Sri Lanka.

Bringing Your Humanity to the Human Rights Workforce | Virginia Room A

In this riveting panel discussion, AIUSA staff who identify as women of color will offer life experience and career advice to attendees who are considering a career in human rights and are seeking best practices into making inroads at organizations committed to fighting for justice and social change. This panel will offer time for questions.

Building a Better Resolution Process | Richmond Salon II

The National Resolutions Committee (NRC) will host breakout sessions to engage members in a robust, interactive discussion of our Membership Resolutions Process, and the role it plays (or should play) in making AIUSA a truly democratic organization based on shared leadership.

Stand Up, Fight Back! Stop the US Government and Corporations from Locking Up Children | Virginia Room C

The detention of migrant children is a stark reminder of our nation's hypocrisy in what it strives to stand for – a pillar of welcome and freedom – and what's actually happening – the cruel persecution of kids simply for seeking safety here. Join us for an interactive discussion and action fighting back against the Administration's hateful attacks and rhetoric; and getting corporations out of the business of detaining kids for profit.

Stop State Sanctioned Killings in the US! | Virginia Room D

No state in the US meets international standards for police use of force but based on recent legislation passed out West more states are getting closer. Join a session with your state team to strategize how you can advance a bill to restrict when police can use deadly force.

Lunch

11:30am – 12pm | The Commons, Main Level

Poster Presentations I (in presentation order)

12pm – 1pm | The Commons Theatre

Inclusive Organizing to increase impact

The focus is on applying Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) in our organizing and activism. As a diverse movement that fights for the human rights of everyone, we have to make sure we walk the talk in the work we do and the way we work together to accomplish our goal.

Your Actions Change Lives: Write for Rights Victories You Helped Make Possible

Celebrate the people you have helped by writing letters during Write for Rights, our largest annual global campaign - people like Phyo Phyo Aung, a youth activist and prisoner of conscience who was freed from prison in Myanmar.

Looking for a Resource and an Inspiration? Meet Grassroots Leaders who are Making an Impact for Human Rights

This presentation will highlight the many ways in which our member leaders are making an impact for human rights. Questions that will be answered: Who are the member leaders within the Member Leadership & Training (MLT) unit? How can I connect with member leaders as resources? What are some success stories?

Send them back, into deadly chaos?

Democratic Republic of Congo has 3.9 million Forcibly Displaced Persons (refugees plus internally displaced persons, IDPs). The example of Kasai region shows that this is not accidental but the result of government actions. See Amnesty International, *The Stolen Childhoods of Kasai, DRC*, 2017.

Foundation Building at Amnesty International USA

Overview, Purpose and Highlights of the Door-to-Door Fundraising Program

Celebrating Urgent Action Network and Case Commitment Victories

Come see how you and our global movement has contributed to case successes throughout the years, including the release of prisoners of conscience and better conditions for human rights defenders. Participants will learn how they can engage with cases and lend their voices to future successes.

Human Rights Discussion Groups

1pm – 1:45pm | Various Locations

Detention and Trauma: Children Caught Up in the Politics of US and Israel | Richmond Salon III

The session will examine parallels between violations by the US government against asylum-seeker, refugee and migrant children at the US border with Mexico, and the Israeli government's violations as an occupying power against Palestinian children.

Ending the Death Penalty: We can DO this! | Richmond Salon II

We've won abolition in many states and others are in play. But now there's a new danger. In December, for the first time in 20 years, the federal government has scheduled several executions. We must bring passion, skills, and creativity to fight the death penalty from wherever we live.

Outsourcing Responsibility: Holding the Defense Sector responsible for Human Rights Violations | Virginia Room C

We will give an overview of Military, Security and Policing and Business and Human Rights campaigns (from Hong Kong to extractive industries) and focus in on "Outsourcing Responsibility" campaign targeting governments and weapons producers involved in the sale of weapons to human rights abusers and how you can take action.

The Climate Crisis & Human Survival: What Can We Do? | Virginia Room D

In this session, we will discuss the scope of the climate crisis (how bad it is now, how bad it could get and how it impacts human rights); what Amnesty's solutions are; and your creative ideas for how we can best campaign to protect our planet.

The Human Rights Crisis in Venezuela: What is Happening and What We Can Do to Help | Virginia Room B

The Venezuelan refugee crisis is second in size only to Syria. It is the largest ever forced displacement on our doorstep in the Americas. In this session, we'll talk about how the human rights crisis has led to record levels of displacement and what Amnesty members can do to help.

Women human rights defenders under attack in Saudi Arabia: How you can help! | Virginia Room A

Can you imagine being arrested solely for working on behalf of women's rights? Having false charges brought up against you to silence your voice? Being imprisoned, held incommunicado, tortured, sexually abused, and not being charged for a crime for almost one year? Learn what you can do to help!

Community Caucuses

2pm – 3pm | Various Locations

Local Group Caucus | Richmond Salon II

Local Groups have been at the heart of Amnesty activism since the movement was born. The commitment, dedication, and creativity of Local Group members meeting consistently every month has led to the release of thousands of prisoners of conscience, changes in law and policy, and transformative moments in peoples' lives. Join others whose commitment to human rights runs as deeply as yours.

Youth Caucus | Richmond Salon III

Young people have been at the heart of Amnesty activism since the movement was born nearly 60 years ago - and continue to be at the forefront of change! From high school halls to the halls of power, from dorm rooms to boardrooms, and from classrooms to community centers, youth leaders are lifting their voices to demand a world where everyone's human rights are respected. The Youth Caucus is the space for young people to come together to share challenges, brainstorm ideas for action, and learn more about Amnesty and running effective chapters. Come caucus with your peers, get one-on-one support for your group, and help shape the future of the organization. Note: We value and respect our faculty advisors, educators and other adults allies in their work with young people, but hope to have this space for youth and students to connect directly with one another.

Breakout Sessions II

3:10pm – 4:10pm | Various Locations

Gun Violence Framing the Narrative: Tips for AIUSA Members to Engage on Gun Violence Issues | Richmond Salon II

Moderated conversation and action planning with local gun violence prevention organizations and Amnesty members discussing how do we move the Gun Violence Prevention agenda in the region. The conversation will include communities of color, National GVP organizations engaged in Virginia.

Shared Leadership | Virginia Room D

Shared leadership is the method by which AIUSA Board, staff, and member leaders guide our work. There appears to be a consensus that we can do better, including show more respect and trust, be more inclusive, communicate more clearly, resolve conflicts compassionately, and have clearer guidelines about decision-making and accountability. We will discuss the current status of this initiative, including the interim Code of Conduct, and brainstorm ways to move it forward.

Sponsoring a Refugee Family: Speaking from Experience | Virginia Room C

Learn about refugee resettlement sponsorship within the Longer Table Initiative. Participants can ask questions and better understand what refugee resettlement sponsorship means and what it can look like in their area.

Taking Action against Police Violence NOW! | Virginia Room A

Did you know? Modern day policing in the Southern United States evolved out of the slave patrols that brutalized Black folks and maintained white supremacy, including here in Richmond. Join your peers + local organizers who have been working to end over-policing for an hour of foundation building.

What would Eleanor Roosevelt say? Are human rights still universal and indivisible? | Virginia Room B

In July, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced a new Commission on Unalienable Rights, which purports to distinguish between the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and what it describes as “ad hoc rights” articulated in subsequent years.

Youth Training: Know and Claim Your Sexual and Reproductive Rights | Richmond Salon I

When our rights are under attack, what do we do? Stand up- fight back! In this workshop, youth (14-24 yrs) will join together to learn from a peer trainer and each other about their sexual and reproductive rights and plan how they can defend against the increasing attacks against their rights.

Activists Recognition & Keynote

4:20pm – 4:50pm | The Commons Theatre

Keynote Speaker: Ronnate D. Asirwatham is Advocacy Director for Bridges Faith Initiative. Her work focused on U.S. foreign policy priorities and U.S. policy toward South Asia and the Asia Pacific. Her main specialty countries include Burma/Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India and China/Tibet and U.S. relations with each of them. She currently also focusses on immigration policy in the United States. She began her career as a journalist at Reuters and then moved into the policy world, living and working in Sri Lanka and South Sudan for Oxfam International, where she was responsible for research, programming and publications. In 2008, her husband, J.S. Tissainayagam who is a journalist was arrested and sentenced to a 20 year prison term by the Sri Lankan government for writing. Ronnate spearheaded a campaign for his release. Amnesty International named him a Prisoner of Conscience. After 2 years of imprisonment her husband was released but she continues to volunteer with Amnesty International and speak out for the rights of others. In 2009 Ronnate was awarded the Hellmann-Hammet award in recognition for her commitment to free expression internationally. Ronnate received her M.A in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and her Master of Laws (LLM) in International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex, UK.

Voting Plenary

5pm – 6:30pm | The Commons Theatre

Closing Action: Candle Light Vigil Reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

6:30pm | The Commons Theatre