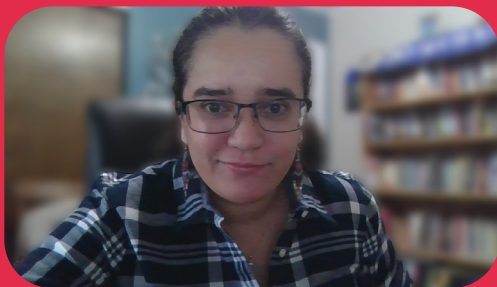




Stories of Hope

2023-2024

Pursuing Liberation



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Learn more!



Give today!

Dear friends,

The growing rise of fascism around the globe, continuing violence against communities historically marginalized, the increasing toll of the climate crisis, and record numbers of people forced to migrate all call us to greater solidarity and deeper relationship with those most impacted by these human rights violations.

UUSC's partnership model centers the solutions which address crisis and conflict that come from grassroots communities most impacted by injustice. Relationship — listening deeply to, following the lead of, collaborating with, and resourcing these grassroots organizations on the front lines of resisting oppression and advancing change — is at the heart of our work at UUSC. These relationships are made possible by the support of our congregations and by individuals of faith and conscience.

UUSC's Guest at Your Table program has been both a beloved multigenerational tradition and a timely call to action for nearly 50 years. This opportunity to learn deeply from a few of UUSC's grassroots partners invites you and members of all ages to expand the borders of our compassion and recognize the ways we are all connected by the desire for justice and liberation.

Thank you for sharing in this important tradition and spreading the word in your circles about UUSC's partners and our collaborative work for human rights.

In fellowship,

Rev. Mary Katherine Morn,
President and Lead Executive Officer

Dear fellow justice-seekers,

This year's Guest at Your Table program, centered on the theme *Pursuing Liberation*, presents stories from four leaders of UUSC's partner organizations. We are excited to introduce you!

You will hear from Ana Lorena Delgadillo, who works for Fundación Para la Justicia y El Estado Democrático de Derecho (FJEDD) supporting individuals and families impacted by human rights violations in Mexico and Central America.

You will meet Lidia Palma, national coordinator of the National TPS Alliance, who advocates for the dignity of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) beneficiaries and an equitable legislative path to permanent residency for TPS holders.

You will learn about Sepasitiano Patelisio, vice president of Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC), who promotes Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination and supports work in the Pacific to address climate-forced displacement; he inspires young people to join the work of mitigating the impacts of the climate crisis.

And you will be introduced to Dr. Margaret Amaka Ohia-Nowak from Alliance for Black Justice in Poland, who responds to the needs of a diverse mix of Black, African, and Afro-descendant people fleeing Ukraine and staying long-term in Poland, helping them navigate issues of assimilation, racism, and citizenship while building community and providing direct support.

Thank you for joining UUSC for Guest at Your Table to learn more about our global partners who are embodying hope and transforming lives. We invite you to help advance community-led change and support Ana Lorena, Lidia, Sepasitiano, and Margaret by making a gift at uuscs.org/guest. Together, we can find new points of connection and sources of inspiration as we all continue pursuing liberation for all.

In faith and solidarity,



Rev. Laura Randall,
Director of Congregation Relations



Story 1

FJEDD

Right now, people migrating from Central America, Mexico, and other parts of the world are in peril. Not only must they endure an arduous journey to their destinations, but they also have to deal with injustice and discrimination when they arrive.

Fundación Para la Justicia (Foundation for Justice) was established in 2011 to “uphold the rule of law in Mexico by ensuring access to justice and due process for particularly vulnerable people.” FJEDD has a successful track record of connecting and dispersing resources to those harmed by human rights violations. FJEDD provides critical

services to those needing to navigate difficult and oppressive systems.

The world over, there are regular threats to the human rights of people in migration, and sadly, Central America and Mexico are two regions that face these threats routinely. This year's theme for Guest at Your Table is "Pursuing Liberation," a value rooted in addressing oppression through trusting those most impacted by oppression. Ana Lorena Delgadillo, FJEDD's Executive Director, shared how the organization pursued liberation this year.

"The Foundation works with groups that have historically been discriminated against," she said. "The migrant populations are in a situation of inequality where they are trying to achieve justice."

In addition to working with people in migration, FJEDD also advocates for gender justice issues.

"The greatest need that women and migrants have is the need for recognition and respect, that their rights are recognized and respected. That they are not criminalized, they are put on equal footing with everyone else."

FJEDD's advocacy work deals with regional agreements that impact migrating people's rights.

"We want to combat regional agreements that violate the right of people to migrate, that violate the right of people to request asylum, that violate the right of migrants to live without violence, that violate the rights of migrants to achieve justice and reparations."

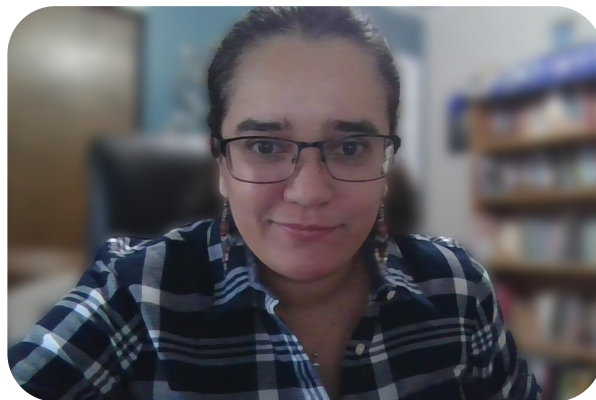
To that end, FJEDD labors extensively to search for disappeared migrants, which includes defending cases and following up on human rights violations.

Ana states that UUSC has "felt like

a family." "We feel less alone and we also feel strengthened," she said.

Go deeper and take action:

- Learn more and watch a video about FJEDD at [***uusc.org/guest***](https://uusc.org/guest).
- Make a donation to UUSC today at [***uusc.org/givetoguest***](https://uusc.org/givetoguest).
- Engage in needed human rights advocacy at [***uusc.org/action-center***](https://uusc.org/action-center).



Story 2

National TPS Alliance

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a legal designation that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can assign to nationals of a particular country if/when the circumstances in those countries are dangerous enough to warrant temporary leave in the United States. Currently, there are more than a dozen nations on this list whose citizens are granted TPS protections including countries like Burma (Myanmar), Nicaragua, Honduras, and Haiti.

The National TPS Alliance (NTPSA) was formed in 2017 when TPS recipients from Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Nepal, and El Salvador gathered in Washington, D.C. to

form a national association of TPS holders working towards concrete solutions to the issues facing those with—or seeking—the designation.

National Coordinator for the NTPSA Lidia Palma—herself an immigrant—has lived through the challenges and fears that come from being an immigrant to this country.

“Upon arriving in this country, I was always motivated to get involved in actions that seek justice, dignity, and equality for people.”

NTPSA employs a two-level strategy: protecting TPS in the short term while advocating for legislation in the long term. With this approach, NTPSA hopes to, “preserve fairness, dignity, and respect for TPS holders.”

This organization’s work is needed at this time as people’s rights are still being ignored. There is no accountability for institutions

infringing on the rights of people exercising their human right to migrate, save for the advocacy organizations and groups that make it a priority.

Keeping with this year’s theme of “Pursuing Liberation,” Lidia highlights NTPSA’s strategic work. “We work to build collective power among the TPS holders to fight harder to achieve social justice for immigrant populations.” Key to their strategic success is top-notch organizing.

“This has allowed us to develop lobbying actions in Washington, D.C., and promote laws that favor TPS holders.”

Lidia is fond of the relationship between UUSC and NTPSA. “Our connection with UUSC goes back several years and has been a very special and important collaboration for the development of strategic activities for the National TPS Alliance. We have had financial and technical support in different work areas of the TPS Alliance.”

Lidia had these final words of gratitude. "As the National TPS Alliance, we are honored by and grateful for the support of UUSC during these years, they have been accompanying us in our fight for justice for our migrant populations. We hope for your continuing support throughout this year and the coming year as well."

Go deeper and take action:

- Learn more and watch a video about the National TPS Alliance at [***uusc.org/guest***](https://uusc.org/guest).
- Make a donation to UUSC today at [***uusc.org/givetoguest***](https://uusc.org/givetoguest).
- Engage in needed human rights advocacy at [***uusc.org/action-center***](https://uusc.org/action-center).



Story 3 **ABJP**

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has caused untold chaos and trauma for so many people. Thousands have fled to other countries for a chance to survive. Sadly, even the scourge of war does little to rectify society's other ills. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and a host of other issues challenge evacuees not only as they flee but also wait for them in their new locales.

Alliance for Black Justice in Poland (ABJP) formed in March 2022 to support Black people arriving in Poland for refuge. In keeping with this year's theme of "Pursuing Liberation," Dr. Margaret Amaka Ohia-Nowak shared how the organization is doing the same for people crossing into Poland. One of the co-founders of ABJP, Margaret

also is a linguistics professor and has spent her career combating anti-Blackness.

“We have continuously supported the African and Black communities in Poland in their structural struggles, including financial assistance, legal support, job-seeking guidance, and community engagement cultural programs,” she said.

Much of this support comes in the form of direct assistance. “This includes the provision of essential hygiene and sanitary items, food (through vouchers restricted to essential items), clothing, and public transport tickets.”

ABJP’s focus has expanded to include Black people who were already living in Poland prior to the invasion. “Since our initial focus on emergency response to Black and Brown individuals displaced by the Ukrainian conflict, our efforts have shifted towards communities of African descent who have lived in Poland prior to the war. These include fostering social inclusion,

advocating for the human rights of Black people in Poland and maintaining mutual relationships with the community we are supporting and working with.

“Existing systemic disparities targeted at Black people in Poland led us to do this work. When the war in Ukraine broke out, these disparities were even more visible. Black refugees from Ukraine were treated like second-class citizens and were denied most forms of emergency aid both by society and by the government. This drove us to unite and to establish the Alliance for Black Justice in Poland.”

The major issue ABJP is working to address now is the vulnerability of Black people who have decided to stay in Poland. “Many Black and Afro-descendant students and professionals still face issues like financial vulnerabilities, lack of resources to pay university fees, and being overwhelmed with debts. Employment is another huge challenge. We’ve seen that many of our beneficiaries, particularly students, are struggling to find jobs

due to discriminatory recruitment practices and unstable legal status which hinges on their ability to pay their school fees.”

Margaret had these final words to share: “We’d like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our partners, volunteers, and donors like UUSC. Their continuing support helps our belief that together, we can forge a better future for Black communities and racialized individuals who suffer simply because of who they are, what they look like and where they come from.”

Go deeper and take action:

- Learn more and watch a video about ABJP at ***uusc.org/guest***.
- Make a donation to UUSC today at ***uusc.org/givetoguest***.
- Engage in needed human rights advocacy at ***uusc.org/action-center***.



Story 4 PISFCC

The climate crisis will ultimately impact us all. From devastating floods and prolonged heat waves to historic storms, people all over the world are already feeling the consequences of this existential threat. With that said, there are places in the world that have been sounding the alarm for years. The people who live in places such as the Global South and the Pacific Islands contribute the least to this crisis. They have been living with the consequences of actions they did not take.

The prospect of bringing young minds into the struggle for climate solutions is what spurred Sepasitiano Patelisio to get involved with Pacific Islands

Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC). Originally from the Polynesian nation of Tonga, his goal as chair of the PISFCC awareness committee is to bring more youth innovation to the organization to generate creative solutions.

PISFCC has been at the forefront of the effort to bring more youth into the climate justice movement. Emphasizing youth involvement, they have a vision to, “live with dignity and without fear of climate change denying us and our children of that freedom.” Through hard work and dedication, the organization was instrumental in getting the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a resolution calling for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on climate change and human rights. This is a significant victory as an advisory opinion will set a global precedent for how larger, climate change-inducing nations should address the climate crisis in a way that is equitable.

After their victory earlier this year, PISFCC works closely with

Pacific Island governments in places such as Vanuatu, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands to build their organizing capacity. With increased capacity, they will build upon their groundbreaking work with the advisory committee and meet everyday community needs.

Sepasitiano elaborated on a few of these needs. “Communities need effective strategies to adapt to the changing climate,” he said, “including infrastructure improvements, disaster preparedness plans, and ecosystem restoration projects to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather events.”

Sepasitiano cites PISFCC’s and UUSC’s shared goal in tackling the climate crisis as a unifying force bringing both institutions together. “[Both organizations] have consistently advocated the [UN] resolution and to see it come to fruition inspires hope that we can take collective action to address the climate crisis. It is only through collective action that we

can address the impacts of climate change.”

He hopes to further strengthen collaboration with UUSC to bolster the second phase of their campaign, which involves getting Global North nations to support the creation of an advisory opinion by the ICJ and getting more international organizations mobilized in support of the opinion process.

Go deeper and take action:

- Learn more and watch a video about PISFCC at ***uusc.org/guest***.
- Make a donation to UUSC today at ***uusc.org/givetoguest***.
- Engage in needed human rights advocacy at ***uusc.org/action-center***.



Please join UUSC in our work with these partners — make a contribution to support our efforts.

Your donation of \$40 or more earns you and your loved ones annual UUSC membership benefits. In addition, all individual and family unrestricted contributions of \$150 or more are eligible to be matched dollar for dollar by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y. — doubling the impact of your gift!

Complete the form on the other side of this page and mail it to the following address:

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UUSC is an independent, nonsectarian 501(c)(3) nonprofit member organization. We are a leading voice for human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. Please support our work — begin or renew your membership today!

As a member of UUSC, you join a community of over 40,000 supporters who share your principles and passion for justice. You also stay up to date on pressing human rights issues through periodic mailings, action alerts, and our semiannual newsletter, *Rights Now*. And most importantly, you join a coalition of others who put their hands to the arc of the universe and help it bend toward justice.

Advancing human rights is the work of many joining hands. Join us — with a gift that earns membership for you and your loved ones this year!

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