

Quaker House

Quaker house has had a busy year. Consider these numbers:

Meetings with community, military groups 90

Protests attended 9

Presentations and trainings: 19

Individuals receiving DV, MST and Moral Injury counseling: 52

GI Right Hotline Counseling Calls: Over 3,000

Times Quaker House in newspapers: 28

Community Forums: 22

Hearings for Bowe Bergdahl: 5

Visits to Meetings and churches: 18

Conferences attended 9

Tabling for Quaker House: 15

Books published 2: Help for Moral Injury: Strategies and Interventions and Conscientious Objection: Is This for You?

Quaker Speak Videos: 2 The GI Rights Hotline and How to Become a Conscientious Objector

Awards received: 3 Fayetteville/Cumberland Human Relations Commission Award for Improving Race Relations and Promoting Peace in Fayetteville; NC Peace Actions' 2016 Peacemaker Award; Better Carolina Award from Mountaire Farms

Meetings held at Quaker House: 160

In addition to this tremendous work output, Steve and Lynn Newsom have reached the end of their agreed-upon term of service. A search process resulted in the hiring of Kindra Bradley, who will take over as Director of Quaker House in September. Kindra has been working with Steve and Lynn over the Summer.

Kindra is an attorney. In her practice she represented nonprofit organizations. Previously, she has been an Immigration case manager for Experis, Chapel Hill police officer and firefighter, and Red Cross Disaster Action Team Coordinator.

The SAYMA Rep is a Board Member of Quaker House, *ex officio*. Due to distance, I have not been able to attend Board Meetings, but was kept well informed by the best Board Meeting preparation materials I have seen in the multiple non-profit Boards of which I have been a member. In addition, I have participated in Board discussions on the Quaker House mail list, which functions through a Google Group.

Quaker House is truly Quakerism in Action. They serve not only service members seeking Conscientious Objects (CO) discharges, but work to provide CO information to the community at large. Their book on CO has 3 separate courses on CO, 1 for parents and teachers, the other 2 of different lengths for those wanting information on CO.

Their work on Moral Injury helps service people who are suffering from the result of being in the military in conflict situations. Quaker House also works with family members who have suffered as a result of PTSD/Moral Injury to a family member.

Quaker House works with other faith and social justice organizations, organizing and participating in Moral Injury conferences and workshops, as well as other trainings, including the Alternatives to Violence Program.

Quaker House has had an emphasis on fundraising in the last few months. A major continuing donor passed away, leaving them with a future projected shortfall. The emphasis now is on encouraging individual Quakers to become sustaining givers to Quaker House with automatic small monthly contributions, as led, providing a steady source of income so that Quaker House can focus on giving to those who need their specialized services.

I am attaching the Quaker House Annual Report for 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Hank Fay
SAYMA Representative to Quaker House

June 11, 2017



Quaker House Military Counseling Center Report 2016-2017

“A Place of Peace in a Military City”

The Quaker House GI Rights Hotline answers thousands of calls from active duty military, veterans, and their families annually. The number of calls to the hotline continues to increase. This year our Hotline

counselors answered an average of 301 calls per month for 3,616 calls. The counselors most rewarding yet most time consuming work is helping service members obtain conscientious objector status, guiding and providing moral support as they move through regulations, delays and at times deliberate roadblocks of the command structure. They also have been busier than ever helping service members who are being threatened with other-than-honorable discharges. They are being accused of "misconduct" or "personality disorder" when they actually suffer from PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, Moral Injury, and/or Military Sexual Trauma. We help them prove their medical condition so that they can receive an honorable discharge and their medical benefits. We have helped bring national attention to this problem.

Quaker House also continues the important work of providing free and confidential counseling and support for the victims of military domestic violence, sexual assault, and moral injury. Our therapist, Joanna, is a valuable support for our GI Rights Hotline counselors. They have been able to refer several suicidal service members to her and know that they will be in good care. The reputation of the program has grown both in the community and on base at Fort Bragg. The service is often the last resort for those in need of help. Funding for the program is tenuous and any and all contributions are appreciated.

We continue to travel to reach out to new audiences providing education and information on moral injury. We presented for a military chaplain's retreat for the officers in the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, for the Baptist Peace Fellowship conference, the Asheville Veterans hospital social workers, the Tony A. Biles Clergy Convocation in Concord, NC, a community forum organized by New Garden Friends Meeting, and others.

We conducted our annual Alternatives to Violence Project Training. Fayetteville NOW and the Fayetteville/Cumberland Human Relations Commission co-sponsored. The directors of Warrior Bridge, an employment service for veterans, and the Advocates for the US Army Wounded Warrior Program attended the training. They are interested in using AVP with "Wounded Warriors." This kind of attendance is the result of the bridges we have built with the military. They now trust us to want sincerely to help our service members and veterans

We provide Truth in Recruiting literature and information to people all over the country. We continue to host Mindfulness classes and an AA group, and musicians perform house concerts frequently.

We help conduct, in partnership with NOW, the Human Relations Commission, the public library, and the Cumberland County Association of Educators, regular public discussions on race relations called "Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity" and "Mirrors of Privilege." One of these series brings together students from Fayetteville State University, a traditionally African-American university, and Methodist College, a traditionally white university. We advocate for teaching Conflict Resolution in the public schools. We spoke to the Cumberland County Schools social workers about the importance of conflict resolution and also recommended the use of the Cracking the Code series. Viewing the "Cracking the Code" DVD is now required for all school principals.

We continue to witness and work against the use of torture (with the NC Stop Torture Now group) and militarized drones. We host educational forums on many subjects that relate to peace and justice issues.

Our relationship with personnel at Fort Bragg continues to grow. Through work with the military chaplains and mental health care professionals, a closer association developed which allows Quaker

House to provide information and services on base and personnel at Fort Bragg make referrals to our programs. In addition, we continue to attend and present at the Bragg Region Behavioral Healthcare Collaborative, Community Blueprint (we are now on their Advisory Committee), the Behavioral Health Professionals Association, Greater Fayetteville United, the Mayor's Coffee with the Clergy and serve on the board of CARE Domestic Violence Center. We were invited to be part of NCServes, a statewide network overseen by the USO that provides referrals and follow-ups to service members and veterans for all types of needs.

Quaker House took up the issue of the poor mental health care provided for the more than 250,000 incarcerated service members and veterans. This issue was brought to our attention by the tragic case of a service member in Fayetteville who was sentenced to 10-18 years in prison for an offense that was brought on by his severe PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury. We are working with his family and lawyer to help him, and we organized a petition and a vigil calling for "Adequate and Compassionate Mental Health Care for Service Members and Veterans" nationally. The Military Chaplains Association of North America published the petition on their electronic newsletter. Our Op Ed was published in the Raleigh News and Observer and the Fayetteville Observer. In April, the vigil, in front of the Airborne and Special Operations Museum, brought veterans, VA and DoD employees, the NAACP, members of the Cumberland County Human Relations Commission, and Quakers together. Our advocacy led to the formation of a committee composed of North Carolina VA and prison officials to advocate for "Veterans' Dorms" in prison, a program that is being utilized in several States. We also provide support for Bowe Bergdahl when he comes to Ft. Bragg for his hearings. His family is very appreciative of our support.

We published two books this year. *Help for Moral Injury: Strategies and Interventions* was written by Cecilia Yocum, Ph.D. She volunteered to write the book after hearing our moral injury presentation. It is selling nationwide and even as far as England. Curt Torell, our board treasurer, wrote *Conscientious Objection: Is This for You? Discerning a Claim and Documenting It with Selective Service*. It, too, is reaching a wide and appreciative audience.

Quaker House was featured in two QuakerSpeak videos this year. One was an interview with our GI Rights Hotline counselors, Steve Woolford and Lenore Yarger, about their work. In the other, Curt Torell discussed "How to Become a Conscientious Objector." Both videos bring attention to the work of Quaker House.

We led the November PFF/PFYM retreat, "Quaker House: Helping our Victims of War at Home," featuring one of our GI Rights Hotline Counselors and our domestic violence, sexual assault and moral injury counselor. The team shared personal stories of the service members and veterans that Quaker House helped.

Wilmington, NC, Friends School invited us to do a presentation on the "History and Mission of Quaker House." The kids had many questions for us!

The Fayetteville/Cumberland Human Relations Commission presented us an award for "our activities and programs which provide positive human relations and for being actively involved in the problems of the community." NC Peace Action gave Quaker House their 2016 Peacemaker Award.

We are working now to hire the new directors of Quaker House, who will begin in September 2017. We have good applicants so we are optimistic about the future of Quaker House. All our applicants seem

dedicated to helping the victims of war at home - our service members and veterans – and working to help our world understand that “war is not the answer.”

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