

Consultant Report: Field Organizer and Outreach Consultant
February 2017 – May, 2017
May NWTRCC Gathering in St Louis, MO

There has been lots of day-to-day email and phone calls with folks from around the network. Increasingly I am getting emails and calls from people who are interested in tax resistance and wanting more information. Aside from all those little day-to-day things though, here are some of the bigger projects I have completed in the last quarter...

I have continued convening the NWTRCC Outreach Committee Conference Calls. The Outreach Committee was formed in order to maintain communication between people who are doing on the ground WTR organizing in their communities, and coordinate outreach to other national groups such as the Movement for Black Lives and Veterans For Peace. It also is a place for me to give updates on my ongoing work and to get feedback on that work. So far, it has achieved some of these goals but not all. It is a good space for sharing about what is happening around WTR outreach in different areas but we have had limited success in collaborating with other national organizations. We are starting to experiment with a change in focus to start skillbuilding for people on the Committee. This means having calls dedicated to discussing organizing strategy and tactics as well as trainings around how to use social media effectively, etc. I conducted a poll of Committee members in the middle of April to get a sense of how useful and effective our time is spent, and will have the results at the May meeting.

At the November gathering, there was a discussion about the possibility of a collective redirection effort that would give tax money to Black, Brown, and Indigenous resistance organizers. I spent time working on this effort during the spring, including talking with war tax resisters one-on-one, leading workshops and webinars, and national publicity through online avenues as well as phone calls. From what people have reported to me so far, over \$15,000 was redirected to Black, Brown, and Indigenous organizers as part of this effort this year in Philadelphia, San Diego, Los Angeles, New York City, and Asheville combined.

I organized and led a number of workshops in the last quarter, both online and in person. We hosted a webinar series in February to help meet the demand and calls for more war tax resistance: we had 2 webinars on War Tax Resistance 101 and one about the redirection effort. I managed the back end of this webinar series, including registration, some of the social media, drafting the powerpoint presentations, and follow-up. They were a pretty solid success with over 50 people attending the webinars and over 200 views of the recordings in the month to follow. Not the massive influx that some people called for, but more interest than we have had in the past. For our first “toe-in-the-water” with webinars, I think it went well and we were able to manage issues such as maintaining people’s privacy as well as our organizational privacy pretty well I believe. Dave Gross is leading another War Tax Resistance 101 webinar on April 23rd so will see how that goes. People also expressed interest in webinars on weekday evenings as another option. Might mean another webinar in the works for the weeks to come.

I led a small house workshop in Philadelphia in March on tax resistance and racial justice for a group of friends, which was a fun space to be in. They want to have me back to talk with more of their friends — i like the model of having friends talk to their friends about it and have it be more of a hangout and discuss war tax resistance along with other issues. Remains to be seen if any of them commit to become tax resisters, but did put me in touch with a number of folks who have been resisting already on their own in the friend group. We talked about the history of radical black organizers who don't pay taxes for a variety of reasons, including not wanting to support a government that is trying to kill them. We began a discussion of how the "war tax resistance community" as a whole has not supported that crew as much. Food for thought about how the community has framed "war tax resistance" in the past and who that is intended to include.

I did a traveling tour through upstate NY with Tom Joyce and Mary Loehr, my aunt. It was from March 20th to 27th. We presented in Ithaca, Syracuse, and Rochester. There were 18, 11, and 17 people at each presentation, respectively. The focus of the presentations, yet again, was on racial justice and tax resistance — connected the dots for longtime war tax resisters as well as helping to bring more young people and activists involved in racial justice work into thinking about resisting taxes. We also partnered with a number of local groups to highlight their work during the presentations, including the Workers Center of Central NY, BLACK (building leadership and community knowledge), the Gandhi Institute, Syracuse Peace Council, Ithaca Catholic Worker, and the Ithaca Friends Meeting. Folks seemed most interested in the redirection effort, and Tom Joyce & Mary Loehr are following up with people about next steps for resisting taxes. The Gandhi Institute decided to affiliate with us following the workshop there, and looks like we will continue to build that relationship over time. It also sounds like there will be a regional gathering in upstate NY this coming fall put together by Tom Joyce and others.

Smaller projects: I wrote the fund appeal for War Resisters League this spring, as we are hoping to work more closely with them going forward (a possible training for staff there in the works...). I finished calling affiliates, counselors, and area contacts that we have not been in touch with for a while... it sounds like it varies area to area about how much renewed interest there is in tax resistance. Some communities are seeing an upswing and new membership while others like Louisville and Nashville are seeing older members pass away and not having anyone to carry the torch. I have been on the calls for the New England War Tax Resistance gathering, after much deliberation looks like they are officially going to invite us to be a part of a joint gathering this November. I am hoping to help support that gathering so that it can go smoothly, especially around getting local contacts and younger people involved. I am traveling to Burlington, VT for two smaller workshops on April 22nd and 23rd at the World Beyond War conference and a quaker meeting the following day. We shall see how it goes.

Organizing Report for CC meeting
November 2016 – February 7, 2017

Here's some of what I have been doing since November:

- Put together and presented a webinar for folks in the national network who wanted to meet me and hear about some of my upcoming work. There was pretty good response, about 15 people joined in over the course of the webinar, with some follow-ups afterwards.
- Worked with Ari Rosenberg in Philadelphia to plan a workshop on tax resistance and racial justice, co-hosted by black-led resistance organizations in the city (Philly Coalition for REAL Justice & the Black and Brown Workers Collective). Took two months of planning to bring it all together, and we had solid success with 80 people in attendance and a great breakout group on tax resistance as a way of challenging our government's policies of white supremacy (connecting tax resistance to military, prisons, police, deportations, and occupation). The other breakout groups went well and it strengthened our relationships with both groups. We are planning to have our collective redirection effort here in Philly to support both groups, seems like folks are excited about it.
- On that note, hosted a Philly WTR potluck with Ari just for folks who have already been in the network to get them reconnected with each other, talk about our stories, and get them up to speed on the collective redirection effort. All told went well, despite the WTR older man syndrome needing to talk and talk taking hold at times. Good food and sounds like Philly WTRs are excited for some new energy in the city. 10 in attendance.
- Helped update the "What-If" flyer to include connections to other movements, like Black Lives Matter, anti-deportations and folks working against mass incarceration. Thanks Ruth for actually putting it all together. Seems like folks liked it and are wanting to use it after sending around over email, but not sure if anyone has actually ordered it as literature though...
- Presented to a church group in Ithaca, NY and they decided to support our work with a donation of \$600, could be increased next year to \$900 if they still like our work so we should stay connected to them. This could be a great way to do some fundraising so trying to put some more feelers out there to other congregations that are social justice focused (seems like having WTRs in their congregation would be the key element for a donation probably. Living Hope Fellowship, the Ithaca church, had a number of WTRs).
- Along with Bill G, got the new NWTRCC Outreach Committee together. Has been going pretty well with monthly calls, seems like it is a solid place for people to report back organizing in their communities. Have not had as much success lately with outreach to national groups which was a big piece of why it was formed in the first place... Seems that people volunteer to take stuff on but then don't have time to follow through. That said, it's been a good spot for me to report my ongoing work and get feedback. We also finalized and approved the 2017 collective redirection effort to Black, Brown and Indigenous Resistance. Thanks to Ruth's website skills, it is [now online and ready to be shared here!](#)
- Wrote the fall fundraising letter and sent it out to my networks. Seemed to get a good

response in terms of donations.

- Testified at the People's Tribunal on the Iraq War in DC. Also went on air beforehand to talk about the Tribunal as well as WTR. Made some solid connections with other organizations, including Dream Defenders and folks who worked on the Movement For Black Lives Policy Platform, we discussed the beginnings of the redirection effort.
- Have been working with folks at the Gandhi Institute in Rochester to plan a workshop there for the last weekend in March. Decided to turn it into a regional trip so hoping to do workshops in Ithaca, Syracuse, and Rochester all within a week. Planning ongoing... amazing how long the planning process can take to get things off the ground....
- Have been calling people within our network who we haven't heard from in a while, WTR contacts, counselors, and affiliates. This is an ongoing project as there are a bunch of folks to be in touch with. I've generally enjoyed these calls, it's a nice way to keep people in the loop and also get to know longtime WTRs. Seems fruitful to have more contact as oftentimes these are people who are very jazzed about doing more WTR advocacy and education but just need a little bit of a nudge to get it off the ground. On that note, I spoke with Carl Kline at the Sataygraha Insitute and he is excited about having someone from the Ad Comm or Coordinating Committee come to the institute to present on WTR in August (4-13). They could cover part of the cost to make sure you can get there without breaking the bank, and you'd be encouraged to stay and connect for the rest of the Institute time. It's in the Black Hills of SD and sounds powerful. [Check it out here](#) to see if you'd be interested, maybe someone in the midwest? Either way, Carl and other affiliates seem excited about incorporating more WTR information into their ongoing work, just might need more contact with us to make it happen. Fellowship of Reconciliation is another affiliate that we might do a joint webinar with this month.
- There seems to be an increase in the amount of interest in WTR post Trump being elected and in office. Ruth, Erica, and I all decided that it would be a good idea to do some webinars to provide information on WTR for this new influx of interest. We are planning three webinars in the coming weeks. Erica presenting WTR 101 on February 18th, Me presenting on the Collective Redirection effort on February 25th, Dave Gross presenting WTR 101 on March 4th.
- I also have attended a number of marches and street protests with information / signs on war tax resistance. Doesn't seem like the best avenue for getting the word out, but did talk with a few folks in the streets about tax resistance—my impression is that small groups based on existing relationships is still the most powerful way to present WTR.