



# ACLS LEADING EDGE FELLOWSHIP

<b>Project:</b>	Testimonies of the Detained: Understanding the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Incarcerated People
<b>Organization:</b>	American Friends Service Committee
<b>Location:</b>	Newark, NJ [Fellow will work remotely]
<b>Stipend:</b>	\$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
<b>Start Date:</b>	January or February 2021

## ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1917, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action. Among its other programs, AFSC works to end mass incarceration, improve conditions for people who are in prison, stop prison privatization, and promote a reconciliation and healing approach to criminal justice issues. AFSC also works toward a fair and humane immigration policy, which includes ending immigration detention and deportation. To learn more about the American Friends Service Committee, visit <https://www.afsc.org/>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The American Friends Service Committee's work in New Jersey supports people in prison by monitoring and documenting human rights abuses, providing direct legal representation in immigration cases, as well as advocating for change at the policy level and oversight at the community level. AFSC's Prison Watch Program and Immigrant Rights Program have worked together on initiatives including lowering phone rates at NJ County Jails, ending solitary confinement, and more recently, on a campaign to #FreeThemAll, which focuses on advocating for release of all people in prison as we live through the dangerous COVID-19 pandemic.

Because of our long history of work in these areas, AFSC immediately recognized the impact that COVID-19 was having in prisons, jails, and immigration detention centers in New Jersey and throughout the country. Both our programs received multiple daily phone calls from those incarcerated, as well as from their family members. They described how they were forced to be in close quarters, without Personal Protective Equipment or access to quality medical care. The facilities were not engaged in proper testing, and information was rarely shared with incarcerated individuals, their families, or advocates, who felt helpless to respond. Despite the efforts of AFSC and partnering organizations in NJ to bring attention to these problems, COVID-19 continues to spread in prisons and detention centers, and incarcerated people are inadequately supported upon release.

The Leading Edge Fellow at AFSC will help us to document this ongoing situation, and provide recommendations to policymakers for the future. Their primary project will be to research and develop a report on incarceration under COVID-19 that highlights the experiences and needs of people in prisons, jails and immigration detention centers in New Jersey. Drawing from the testimonies and stories of incarcerated and detained people, the report will highlight the troubling way in which individuals who complete their criminal sentences are often turned over to ICE for additional detention, as well as the chaotic conditions of release from detention under COVID-19. We expect that the report will incorporate policy and practice recommendations gleaned from people in prison, their families and communities, and other advocates. The fellowship tenure is 12 consecutive months, with an expected time commitment of approximately 40 hours per week.

This position is *only* available through the Leading Edge Fellowship program.  
You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.

### **Responsibilities and tasks:**

- Develop survey questions that help AFSC understand the specific needs of people in prison, jails and immigration detention centers, as well as their families, during COVID-19
- Identify partners and resources (including AFSC staff) to create a list of people in prison, jails and immigration detention centers and their families to be interviewed
- Conduct and transcribe interviews (as far as possible, using remote communication methods)
- With the AFSC team, compile data and develop policy recommendations
- Create monthly blog posts or other media pieces to bring some of the stories to the public
- Work with media outlets to publish stories prior to the release of the report
- With the AFSC team, create an outreach and distribution plan for the report
- Write a final report to be published online and shared with policy makers
- Share testimonies during organizing and advocacy activities, as opportunities arise

### **Qualifications:**

- PhD in any field of the humanistic social sciences, so long as the applicant's research contributes to the scholarship and understanding of religion, theology, or ethics. Read more about eligible fields [here](#).
- Strong writing and communications skills
- Excellent project management abilities
- Interest in and understanding of inherent problems in criminal and immigration systems
- Ability to work collaboratively in multicultural contexts
- Ability to use Excel to collect, process, and synthesize clearly interview data, including demographic information

#### *Preferred:*

- Proficiency in Spanish

### **APPLICATIONS**

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: 9pm EST, November 2, 2020

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