

Humboldt, Calif.: Protecting Our Youth From Military Recruitment!

Contributed by Communities for Justice and Peace
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Communities For Justice and Peace, Humboldt, exposes media bias and demonstrates why this government must be accountable for military recruiters in schools. Additional reports: Anti-war groups challenge NAACP on military recruiters, and military-backed public schools failing to educate students.

It is only a small victory in a long and continuing battle, but the Spirit of activism is alive: Eureka has joined Arcata in supporting appeal of lower court denial of our rights to protect our youth locally from military recruiters. The case now goes before the 9th Court of Appeals.

Thanks to the great number of people who made numerous calls, emailed and/or spoke to the City Councils urging them to recognize our deep concerns about the practices used in recruiting our youth and the legitimacy of our right to follow through with an appeal of our democratically won election.

Other reports from around the nation:

New York City -

Anti-War Groups Challenge NAACP on Why They Have Military Recruiters at Their National Convention, July 14-16

As part of its 100th anniversary convention opening Saturday in New York City, the NAACP jobs fair will include Army recruiters. The Army Strong tour lists the NAACP convention on its itinerary. The NAACP jobs fair opens at noon on Tuesday, July 14.

Iliana Correa, a New York City high school student, active in protesting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wrote to Benjamin Jealous, CEO of the NAACP a few weeks ago, "It is unacceptable that the NAACP, which has historically played such an important role in the struggle for racial equality and human rights, would encourage Black youth to join the military which will turn them into war criminals and cannon fodder for these racist unjust wars."

Today, July 8, a letter signed by historian Howard Zinn, Gold Star mother and anti-war leader Cindy Sheehan, and hundreds of others is being sent to the NAACP Board and CEO:

"We call on you to dissociate the 2009 NAACP National Convention from hosting or supporting the Army Strong national recruiting tour. The Army Strong tour schedule lists county fairs, malls and sporting events as part of the military's \$5 billion recruiting effort to increase the size of the US military.

It's bad enough that military recruiters, through the No Child Left

Behind law have virtually unlimited access to students in public high schools, roaming the halls and lunchrooms, and the corners after schools. But it's completely unacceptable and shocking that your organization, identified for many decades with fighting for the civil rights of oppressed people, is participating in the expansion of a military machine involved in two illegitimate occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and associated with torture and abuse of detainees in Bagram and mass civilian deaths.

The NAACP took historic action and real risks to create a movement to stop lynching in the United States. It fought in the courts for basic rights of the people. It's fighting for justice for Troy Davis and to stop his execution. Why is it willingly providing the military access to youth and students at this important annual event?

Bring your convention policies in line with social justice and don't offer up more fodder for these unjust wars. Dis-invite the Army Strong tour and the US Navy recruiters."

World Can't Wait is organizing the protest.

Military-backed public schools: On the rise despite protests

By Dorie Turner, Associated Press

(excerpt)

ATLANTA -- The U.S. Marine Corps is wooing public school districts across the country, expanding a network of military academies that has grown steadily despite criticism that it's a recruiting ploy.

The Marines are talking with at least six districts -- including in suburban Atlanta, New Orleans and Las Vegas -- about opening schools where every student wears a uniform, participates in Junior ROTC and takes military classes, said Bill McHenry, who runs the Junior ROTC program for the Marines.

Last year, Congress passed a defense policy bill that included a call for increasing the number of Junior ROTC units across the country from 3,400 to 3,700 in the next 11 years, an effort that will cost about \$170 million, Defense Department spokeswoman Eileen M. Lainez said. The process will go faster by opening military academies, which count as four or more units, McHenry said.

Other military branches also are aiming to increase their presence in school hallways... the Marines leading the charge.

Critics like Mike Hearington, a 56-year-old Vietnam War veteran whose son attends Shamrock Middle School in DeKalb County, say the schools are breeding grounds for the military.

"To pursue children like they are is criminal in my mind," Hearington said.

Students at the public military schools in Chicago have struggled. Just 27% met standards in 2008 -- the most recent data available -- compared to the district average of 60% and the state average of 74%. At Carver Military Academy in Chicago, just 8% of students passed muster on state tests.

None of the Chicago military schools made "adequate yearly progress" last year...

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