



## December 2022 Newsletter



### A message from Nada:

Dear Friends and Members of WESPAC!

I hope this newsletter reaches all of you in good health and spirits as we enter the holiday season and hopefully find time to rejuvenate in anticipation of a busy 2023 in our collective pursuit of a more just and peaceful world.

We had a wonderful community meeting and gathering recently at the Yonkers Library with a very diverse group of people attending. You will read about one of our featured artists below. We also have three students who will start interning with WESPAC in January and will learn about progressive organizing and campaign work. WESPAC members will be participating in several lobby day trips to Albany early in 2023 in support of #communitiesnotcages, #parolejustice, #cleanslate, #FairPay4HomeCare, #NYPublicBankingAct, #EndQiNY and more! Please sign up if you are able to attend. We need the numbers as we continue to build our power. Transportation and food are provided.

Our members continue to work on a wide range of social, environmental, racial and economic justice issues in pursuit of a more healthy, just, sane and sustainable world, as you will see from the clips below. From local, regional, national and international issues, WESPAC continues to serve as a hub for progressive organizing in both Westchester and beyond. We connect people with each other and we continue to

educate both ourselves and our local communities on crucial issues relating to the well being of ourselves and our planet. I hope you enjoy reading about these updates, and we always welcome your feedback!

For the WESPAC community,

Nada

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## Artist Spotlight: Ibrahim Asad Siddiq



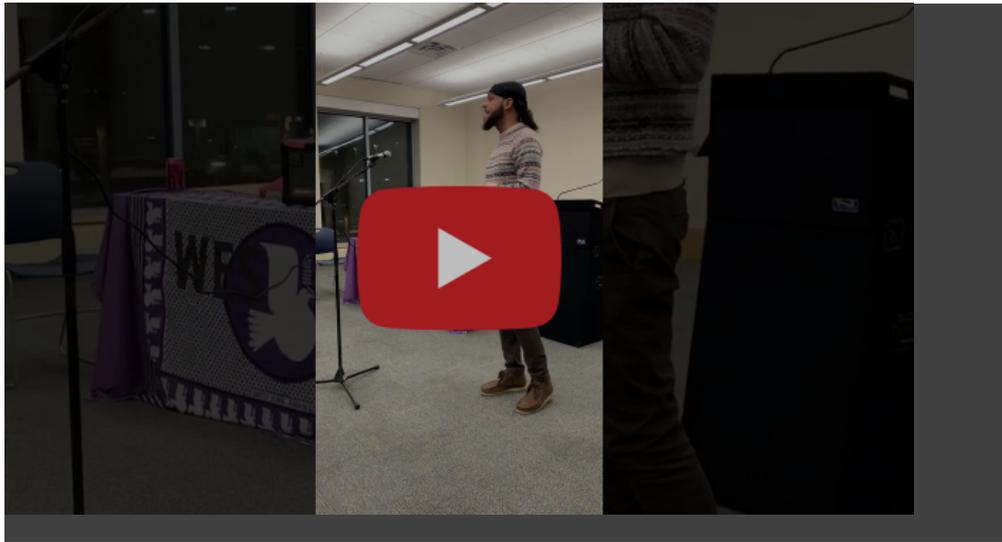
Ibrahim Asad Siddiq is a gifted spoken word poet and founder of The Artist Collective, a movement to revolutionize the education system while using art as a vehicle for social change. Originally from Rockland County, he grew up in Peekskill and now lives in the Bronx. Ibrahim performed his poetry at the WESPAC Holiday Party on December 13. Attached below is one of the clips! We spoke with him to get to know his art, his approach, and him a little better:

What got you into poetry?

“So basically what got me into poetry, I was fifteen years old my father had recently passed away and I was just in my room just thinking about his death, thinking about his life, thinking about death in general, life in general, and I was just jotting down some questions on the paper and I noticed accidentally that the first few questions rhymed, and so I was like “oh, that’s funny,” so I tried to keep that up and at the end I realized I had a poem, you know, and I realized it was a way to kind of organize my thoughts, gather my thoughts, process my thoughts. So, from I guess 15 to 18 I kind of loosely did it and then when I was 18, 19 first time I went to an open mic and I got to perform and saw the spoken word scene and really started to realize that I could also write for other people. I saw a lot of people were resonating with my thoughts and my views and things like that so I turned it from an inward perspective to focusing on socio-political, economic issues and using my voice, my art as a vehicle for activism and social change.”

What is your artistic approach?

“Like I said all my writing has been focusing on issue in the world that I take issue with, things I want to change or I want to address. Most of my poems are addressing some sort of socio-political, economic issue. That’s the basis of my art, I always have a purpose to my writing, I try to get people to think. A lot of my stuff can be, I guess, controversial because a lot of the time those are the things that get people to think the most, you know when the get upset there is usually something there. So yeah, that’s the basis of my work, to have a purpose, and make a change in some sort of way.”



**Ibrahim's Social Media Links:**

[Instagram.com/akapoet](https://www.instagram.com/akapoet)

[Instagram.com/theartist.collective](https://www.instagram.com/theartist.collective)

[Facebook.com/FreedumbMovement](https://www.facebook.com/FreedumbMovement)

More of Ibrahim's spoken word from the Holiday party is on the WESPAC Youtube Page [here](#)

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## Passing Clean Slate



Photo Courtesy of Andrew Courtney. Nada (with Cora Miles next to her) speaking at the Clean Slate Rally in Ossining in front of the Hudson Link Headquarters. December 1st, 2022.

Dear friends and members of WESPAC!

**The legislative session is beginning soon, and we're ready to bring our power to Albany.** This January, join two advocacy days with press conferences, rallies, and meetings with lawmakers. Transportation and food provided from across the state. Let's end perpetual punishment and win passage of Clean Slate & Communities Not Cages NOW.

[RSVP here for #CleanSlateNY Advocacy Day on Jan. 17](#)

**We need ALL OF US to make sure Clean Slate gets passed this year.** 2.3 million New have an old conviction record and face barriers to jobs, housing and education years - and even decades - after completing their sentence. Clean Slate will seal these records allowing all of us to support ourselves and our families. Clean Slate is about dignity, humanity, and an opportunity to thrive. Now is the time to end perpetual punishment. Clean Slate can't wait.

Will you join the fight for Clean Slate on January 17? [RSVP here.](#)

## Tour of Buenos Aires with Delia Marx!

Another successful tour through the cooperative experiences in Buenos Aires took place from November 12th through 20th!

Participants visited worker cooperatives and spoke with the protagonists of the struggle to not only survive, but prosper in the midst of an economic crisis. Video to come! For now, enjoy these photographs and starting thinking of joining us next year ;-)!

[2022 Brochure](#)

[Updated Itinerary](#)





## Andrew Courtney Photographs

**11.19.2022** Vigil for Kenneth Chamberlain Sr., marking eleven year since his tragic killing at the hands of the White Plains police. People gathered to honor his life and continue to fight for accountability.





Kenneth Chamberlain, Jr. and Julie Davis Carran, the two co-founders of the Westchester Coalition for Police Reform. The coalition meets monthly on Zoom and has four active working teams. Please contact [WCPRNY@gmail.com](mailto:WCPRNY@gmail.com) to get involved!

## Jewish Voices for Peace (JVP)

### Greenburgh Antisemitism Forum Explores African American and Jewish Unity



Jewish Voice For Peace - Westchester and the WESPAC Mideast Committee supported the recent Greenburgh forum on antisemitism. Originally scheduled as an exploration of growing antisemitism and its connection with other forms of supremacist and right wing racism and hatred, recent events led the panel to an examination of the relationship between the African American and Jewish communities. The panelists referenced the

long history of both tension and unity between the two communities and the need to bridge the misunderstandings that continue to polarize rather than heal.

The forum was hosted by the Greenburgh Human Rights Committee. Expertly hosted by Lynn Goodman of the committee, the four panelists included Reverend Lane Cobb, Rev. Dr Erwin L. Trollinger, Jr., Rabbi Becky Jaye, and Professor Kenneth Stern. The panelists all emphasized the importance of alliance between the communities based on clear and honest communication. They noted the importance of active listening in building understanding and mediating any power dynamics that may interfere with true solidarity.

It is important to note that both WESPAC and JVP-W are committed to the freedom, human rights, and dignity of all people. As such, and contrary to the recent Town of Greenburgh statement on antisemitism, criticism of the Israeli government policy should never be construed as antisemitic, but rather, as an expression of free speech that moves us toward a more just world.

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## **Connie Hogarth Celebration**

# **Celebrating Connie Hogarth:** *Protest and Survive*

**1926 to 2022**



**Sunday, April 30th, 2023 at 2pm**  
Yonkers Riverfront Library Auditorium  
1 Larkin Center, Yonkers, NY 10701 (across the street  
from the Yonkers Metro North Train Station)

Join the WESPAC Community as we spend an afternoon  
with Amy Goodman, Phyllis Bennis and others to celebrate  
the life of our founder, Connie Hogarth.

*In-person and virtual*

In honor of the loving memory of our founder, Connie Hogarth, a group of WESPACers are putting together an afternoon to celebrate Connie, with Amy Goodman and Phyllis Bennis among others, on Sunday, April 30th at 2pm at the Yonkers Riverfront Library Auditorium. Due to limited seating, RSVPs are required. You can fill out the brief RSVP form online [here](#)

[Emma's Revolution](#) is the music band coming to perform at Connie's celebration! See their past performances and music [here](#)

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## **Upcoming Communities Not Cages Rally and Lobby**

# COMMUNITIES NOT CAGES

Will you help bring the fight for Communities Not Cages to Albany on Jan. 24? [RSVP here.](#)

Right now, over 30,000 of our loved ones, neighbors and friends are incarcerated in state prisons. 3 out of 4 are Black or brown and 98% of convictions came through guilty plea - not trial - making a mockery of any notion of justice. Together, we'll demand the end of racist and unjust sentencing laws and call for passage of the Eliminate Mandatory Minimums Act, Second Look Act, and Earned Time Act.

On January 24, we'll converge on Albany for rallies, press conferences, and meetings with lawmakers. Transportation and food provided from across the state.

[RSVP here to join us in Albany on Jan. 24 to fight for Communities Not Cages.](#)

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## Concerned Families of Westchester



Concerned Families of Westchester is based in Westchester's "Rivertowns." Organized in 2001, we hold a peace & justice vigil/protest each Saturday in Hastings. We also have "Black Lives Matter" vigils in Yonkers, twice-weekly Zoom meetings, and a weekly newsletter. Our current project is called "Beauty as Fuel for Change," focusing on using the arts to see beauty in the work that people are doing in our common quest for progressive change. - An exhibit of these works will be shown at the Masters School, Fonseca Center, Wenberg Family Art Gallery, 49 Clinton in Dobbs Ferry. Please join us for an opening reception on Sunday, January 15th from 2 to 5 pm. For more information email [fbrodhead@aol.com](mailto:fbrodhead@aol.com).

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