Pioneer Valley No More Guantánamos

Video of our January 10, 2016, rally and protest marking 14 years of injustice at Guantanamo with readings from Guantanamo Diary by Mohamedou Ould Slahi. (Thanks to Dann Vazquez, videographer.)

Video of our May 23, 2014, day of action to close Guantanamo was created by Jeff Napolitano, Program Coordinator of the American Friends Service Committee of Western Mass. [1]

The Pioneer Valley group has been meeting in Northampton, MA, since May 2009. Its members come from several cities and towns, including Springfield to the south, Amherst to the east, Greenfield to the north, and many towns in between. It is currently working on outreach to other groups, including interfaith, and advocating on behalf of two current Guantánamo detainees.

We supported a resolution in Amherst [2] to welcome the men to our community, which passed Amherst Town Meeting on November 4, 2009, and a second resolution that passed Leverett Town Meeting [3] on April 24, 2010. We held a public forum in Northampton on November 19; watch the video [4]. We have also written letters and signed greeting cards to Ahmed and Ravil.

Join us! [5]

Our Mission

Pioneer Valley No More Guantánamos is a local coalition that has come together as part of a national effort to reverse U.S. policies and practices that have denied hundreds of detainees their rights and freedom and that have made the U.S. and the world less safe. Our goals are to:

- Assure that prisoners whom the United States continues to detain without trial are either charged and prosecuted for federal crimes, in accordance with the U.S. Constitution and international law, or released
- Shift public perceptions of Guantánamo prisoners from faceless, nameless “terrorists” to human beings who deserve human rights and a presumption of innocence until proven guilty
- Use prisoners’ stories to overcome unfounded fears within our community about these prisoners
- Enable prisoners cleared for release but who can’t return home to settle in the U.S. or help them get where they want to go

Human Rights Day Program Organized by Amnesty-Amherst [6]
12/06/2016 - 6:00pm - 8:00pm  
Jones Library Woodbury Room  43 Amity Street  
Amherst, MA 01002  Phone: 215-870-7809  
See map: Google Maps [7]

Location

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See map: Google Maps [7]

Please join Amnesty-Amherst for its annual program in honor of Human Rights Day. Pioneer Valley No More Guantánamos is proud once again to cosponsor this important observance.

- Read more [6]
- 1 attachment [8]

Resolution by the Town of Amherst, MA, to Assist in the Safe Resettlement of Cleared Guantánamo Detainees [9]

- Location: Amherst, MA
- Approved: 11/04/2009

Amherst Special Town Meeting

WHEREAS, President Obama has vowed to close the prison at Guantánamo Bay Naval Base by January 2010; and

WHEREAS, many detainees at Guantánamo have been cleared by our government of wrongdoing and have been determined to pose no threat to the United States; and

- Read more [9]

Ahmed Belbacha [10]
Current status: Cleared, no charges

Ahmed Belbacha has been returned to his native Algeria.

by Andy Worthington

A former footballer, Ahmed Belbacha was born in Algiers in 1969. He left his homeland in 1999, after receiving death threats from militants because he worked for a government-run oil company, and sought asylum in the UK.

• Read more [10]
A judge ordered Ravil's release on May 13, 2010, under the writ of habeas corpus.

Ravil Mingazov was born in Russia in 1967. He became a ballet dancer with several dance troupes. Enlistment into the Russian Army at the age of 19, he first served in the Army ballet troupe. After his conscription ended in 1988, he served voluntarily until 1996 and later returned to the military in the food supply section, where he took over a program that was in bad shape and transformed it into a model program, “the best in all the Army's.” In recognition of his achievement, he said that the General gave him a watch.

- Read more [11]
- 1 attachment [12]

Location

Northampton, MA 01060 United States
Phone: (413) 253-7991
See map: Google Maps [13]

Source URL: https://www.nogitmos.org/pioneervalleynomoreguantanamos

Links:
[8] https://www.nogitmos.org/humanrightsdayprogramorganizedamnestyamherst#attachments
[9] https://www.nogitmos.org/resolutiontownamherstmaassistsaferesettlementclearedguant%C3%A1namodetainees
[10] https://www.nogitmos.org/ahmedbelbacha
[12] https://www.nogitmos.org/ravilmingazov#attachments