

# LATIN AMERICA WORKING GROUP

*Action at Home for  
Just Policies Abroad*



**2014**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

## As our three boats arrived

at the little fishing village of Cojimar, Cuba, the entire town and the national and international press corps were there to greet John and Patrick Hemingway, Ernest's grandsons. Hemingway had written *Old Man and the Sea* in Cojimar; Hemingway's bust still adorns the tiny town square today.

We had arranged this trip with John, Patrick and environmental and maritime experts to highlight one of the ways the United States and Cuba could work together on noncontroversial issues—bringing the Hemingway legacy to call for preserving the fish that, sensibly ignoring the U.S. embargo, swim back and forth in the ocean in the Florida straits.

This amazing trip reconfirmed our commitment to urge our nation to construct, with all of you, a just—and, finally, sensible!—relationship with the Latin American and Caribbean region.

*Cover: Coming into Cojimar's harbor, LAWGEF's Hemingway Commemorative delegation receives a fishermen's welcome.* PHOTO BY MAVIS ANDERSON.

*Lisa Haugaard*



*Bringing Mexican migrant rights' activists to the State Department.* PHOTO BY JENNIFER JOHNSON.

# Who We Are

**T**he Latin America Working Group serves a coalition of nongovernmental, religious, grassroots and humanitarian agencies. We bring coalition partners together to create advocacy and public education campaigns to encourage U.S. policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean that favors human rights, justice, peace and sustainable development.

The Latin America Working Group (LAWG), a 501(c)4 nonprofit, carries out advocacy and grassroots education. The Latin America Working Group Education Fund (LAWGEF), a 501(c)3 nonprofit, sponsors educational events and produces publications. In the list of this year's activities, lobbying activities were carried out by the LAWG, and educational activities by the LAWGEF.



*A representative of Colombia's Campaign Against Rape and Other Sexual Violence visits the Martin Luther King Memorial.*

PHOTO BY DIANA ARANGO.

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS\*

AFL-CIO

AFL-CIO Solidarity Center

Alliance of Baptists

American Jewish World Service

Center for Economic and Policy Research

Center for Global Education at  
Augsburg College

Center for International Policy

Church of the Brethren

Church World Service

Colombia Human Rights Committee

Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

Conference of Major Superiors of Men



*Hemingway Commemorative delegation caravan of classic car taxis, passing Cuban Capitolio.*

PHOTO BY MAVIS ANDERSON.

## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Cuba: Travel for All**

- Planned, coordinated and led, with LAWGEF board member Jeffrey Boutwell, the Hemingway Commemorative delegation to Cuba, headed by John and Patrick Hemingway, grandsons of Ernest, to celebrate the strong ties between the renowned author and Cuba. This people-to-people trip not only focused on the legacy left by Hemingway, but also demonstrated the ways in which the United States and Cuba can work together to protect and preserve the natural resources of the Gulf Stream and Florida Straits. More than 100 media stories (video, print, radio, and digital) reported on this delegation around the world, from CNN, NPR, the Miami Herald and the New York Times to Japan's Kyodo News and the Sydney Morning Herald.
- Organized and led an arts and culture people-to-people delegation to Cuba, licensed by U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), for 23 U.S. citizens to learn about Cuba and to experience its amazing culture.



*Mavis in a classic car.*

PHOTO BY LISA HAUGAARD.

- Hosted educational delegations to Congress and the Obama Administration to call for increased dialogue between our two nations, removing Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, increasing travel and exchange with Cuba, in the context of significant reforms going on in Cuba: Cuban Americans for Engagement (CAFÉ), and Cuban pastors representing the Cuban Council of Churches.
- Encouraged returned travelers and other Cuba policy advocates to contact the White House to urge executive action on travel to Cuba and to remove Cuba from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism.
- Motivated the on-line community in our campaign to end the travel ban through LAWG's Facebook page, EndtheTravelBan, which has grown to nearly 35,000 "likes."

Cuban American Alliance Education Fund

Disarm Education Fund

Drug Policy Alliance

Episcopal Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,  
Global Mission

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,  
Washington Office

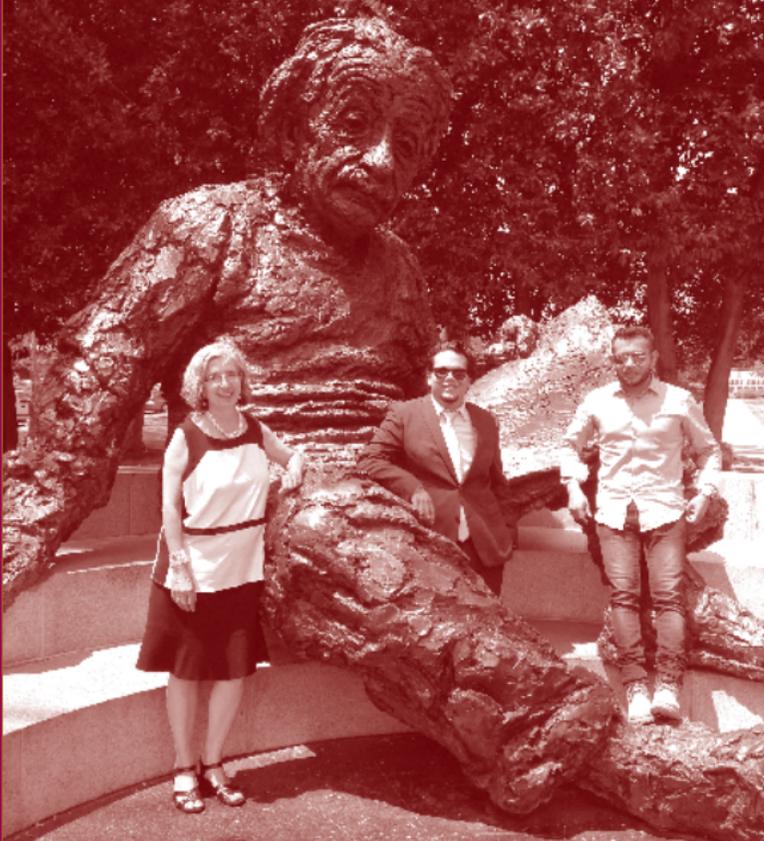
Fellowship of Reconciliation Task Force on  
Latin America and the Caribbean

Global Exchange

Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA

Institute for Policy Studies

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA



*Nelson Arambú from Honduras poses with Lisa, Omar, and Albert Einstein.*

PHOTO BY SERGIO MONCADA.

## Defending Human Rights in Central America

- Mobilized to protect the rights of child migrants as the massive numbers of unaccompanied children crossing the U.S. border hit the national headlines. We worked with faith and immigration groups to create letters and talking points for Congress and met with administration officials to encourage policies that protect children at risk and address the human rights and economic crises that cause them to flee.
- Brought Central American childrens' advocates and migrant rights advocates to meet with policymakers, shedding light on the root causes spurring migration during a contentious debate over the plight of unaccompanied migrant children and families.
- Organized a visit by Honduran LGBT leader Nelson Arambú to meet with the Human Rights Campaign and other LGBT advocates, the State Department, and Congress, along with the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America and a Honduran-American advocate.

## Colombia: Standing with the Victims of Violence

- Galvanized U.S. support behind the Colombian peace process, moving from the United States from tepid to enthusiastic support. We organized signers on a letter from Irish, Northern Irish, UK and U.S. members of Congress in support of peace; helped organize a country-wide faith leaders' letter; organized a briefing on women and the peace process, and brought Colombian human rights advocates to speak with the National Security Council and Vice President's office.
- Brought representatives of victims of violence to speak to Congress, government officials, press and public about what victims want to see in the peace process, including truth, justice, reparations and guarantees that the brutal past will not return.
- Created an infographic on the human toll of the Colombian conflict that was widely distributed and tweeted, including by Colombian rockstar Juanes.
- Organized a dynamic visit by the Campaign Against Rape and Other Sexual Violence, including a woman forced to serve as a child combatant in the ranks of the paramilitaries, recruited at age 11.

Lutheran World Relief Office of Public Policy

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mennonite Central Committee

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate,  
Justice and Peace Office

National Security Archive

Oxfam America

Peace Brigades International, USA

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice  
and Human Rights

School of the Americas Watch (SOA Watch)

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas



*Celebrating women's contributions to peace building efforts in Colombia.*

PHOTO BY ALLISON LOPEZ.

- Organized a visit by a courageous human rights leader from Huila, Colombia, to denounce lack of progress in investigating extrajudicial executions alleged committed by members of the army (with Fellowship of Reconciliation).
- Carried out a field investigation on Colombia's Caribbean Coast with Lutheran World Relief, revealing obstacles to land return, and the danger still faced by land rights leaders, indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. Our report, *Far from the Promised Land*, aims to spur improved protection for returning communities.

## **Promoting Justice for Mexico & the Borderlands**

- Worked with border-based partners to advance a more meaningful dialogue with the Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP) to reform harsh deportation and detention practices that put migrants at risk. We also pressed for changes in CBP's use-of-force policy given the disturbing track record of more than 30 individuals killed by border agents.

- Brought multiple delegations of valiant migrant rights defenders to meet with policymakers and the public, raising awareness regarding the grave abuses and violence that many migrants experience in transit through Mexico.
- Provided international pressure to support partners in Mexico advocating for a reform to Mexico's military code of justice to ensure that abuses committed by the military against civilians are investigated and heard in civilian, not military, jurisdiction – a crucial reform that was passed unanimously by Mexico's Congress.

*Guatemalan and Mexican partners in front of the Capitol after we brought them to meetings with Congress.*

PHOTO BY EMMA BUCKHOUT.



United Church of Christ

United Methodist Church,  
General Board of Church & Society

United Methodist Church,  
General Board of Global Ministries

United Methodist Church, Women's Division

US-Cuba Cultural Exchange

U.S. Jesuit Conference

Washington Office on Latin America

Witness for Peace

\* This list includes some of the groups participating. Participation does not imply endorsement of all LAWG/LAWGEF efforts. Decisions to endorse statements and campaigns are made on a case-by-case basis by each participating organization.



*From left to right: Emma, Lisa, Omar, and Jennifer. See Mavis in a classic car on page 5.*

## Monitoring Military Aid

- Created a how-to on-line pamphlet to train human rights advocates in Latin America and the rest of the world on how to apply the Leahy Law, to block where needed U.S. training and support for abusive members of military forces (with the Center for International Policy).

## Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the following for their contributions to the LAWGEF's public education work: Foundation to Promote Open Society, Ford Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Moriah Fund, Christopher Reynolds Foundation, Stewart Mott Charitable Trust, Oblate Charitable Fund, United Church of Christ, and Washington Office on Latin America.

Many thanks to Atlantic Philanthropies, ELCA Global Mission, U.S. Jesuit Conference, Presbyterian Church (USA), Church World Service, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, and many other organizations that have contributed to the LAWG, as well as to the many generous individuals contributing to both organizations.

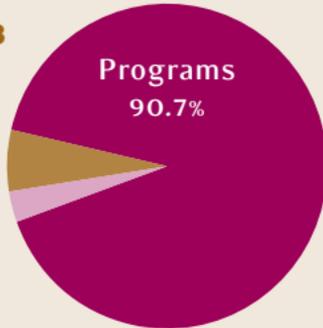
## Finances

LAWGEF's income of \$467,512 in 2013 came from foundations as well as from individual donors and nongovernmental organizations. Expenditures for 2013 were \$571,497. Some multiyear grants from 2012 were carried forward to cover 2013 and 2014 expenses. Contributions to the LAWGEF are tax-deductible.

LAWG's income of \$235,614 in 2013 came from contributions by coalition partners, including humanitarian agencies, nongovernmental and faith-based organizations, funders and individual donors. Expenditures for 2013 were \$116,400. Part of a multiyear grant received in 2013 was carried forward into 2014. Contributions to the LAWG are not tax-deductible.

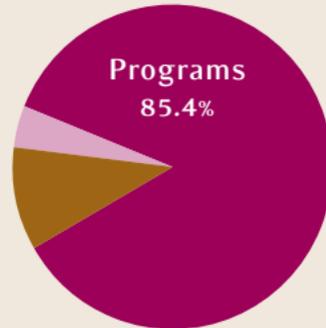
### LAWGEF 2013 Expenses

Fundraising  
6.1%  
Management  
3.2%



### LAWG 2013 Expenses

Fundraising  
4.3%  
Management  
10.3%



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See our website to:

- sign up for our newsletter, *The Advocate*, or for the LAWG blog;
- join our e-mail listservs on Cuba, Colombia, Mexico and U.S./Mexico border issues, low-volume e-mail alerts that let you know what you can do to call for just U.S. policies;
- order or view on-line our special reports;
- make a contribution.



*Luis Fernando Arias and José Antequera Guzmán at an event on peace proposals from victims of Colombia's conflict.*  
PHOTO BY WOLA.

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