



## **Connections Among Friends**

The Section of the Americas will communicate and transmit the inspiring power of our work in order to involve more Friends in FWCC's ministry - transforming lives and faith communities through cross-branch understanding. This work will include : responding to inquiries from Friends and seekers about Quakers around the world; orienting of new Representatives to be better bridges among Friends; maintaining the [Voices of Friends](#) website, our Facebook page, the [directory](#) of Quaker meetings and churches; promoting [World Quaker Day](#) activities, assisting yearly meetings in developing sister yearly meeting relationships; translating Quaker writings, and other connecting activities that may not involve long distance travel. The Connections program area is also responding to the first goal of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, “to increase understanding among Friends from different traditions, connecting Quakers of all traditions in the Americas.”

### Representative Engagement

Representatives and Regional Coordinators have primary responsibility for communications within the Section connecting the Section to Yearly Meetings and Associations as well as local meetings and churches. Representatives carry the interests and concerns of the yearly meeting that appoints them and in return bring the FWCC message back to the yearly and monthly meetings in their region. Their primary role is that of a liaison charged both with listening to and telling the stories of faith and action across theological and cultural lines within the hemisphere.

The Section of the Americas will work closely with Yearly Meetings as they choose Representatives to ensure that those who are selected have a commitment and skills to be effective liaisons that benefit both FWCC and the yearly meeting.

Regional Coordinators are the portals through whom Representatives have their first official acquaintance with the vision and mission of the Friends World Committee. They assist Representatives through training, mentoring and sharing resources. Regional Coordinators will bring Representatives together in the region each year via telephone, web-conferencing, or in person. The Regional Coordinator assists the Representatives in locating resources and with setting up visitations within the region. Regional Coordinators constitute the Representative Engagement Program Group.

### Communications and Correspondence

Representatives with interest and skills in technology, writing, and ministry are urged to share these talents through the FWCC newsletter, Facebook page, Voices of Friends and other social media and technological means. Stories about transformation coming from a local meeting or church or yearly meeting may be shared in person, in writing or via electronic means. Experiences from consultations are shared within yearly meetings not only at their annual session but through visitations with local meetings. Representatives need to be able to say why it is important to hear the stories of Friends who worship differently than their own meeting or have a theology that is expressed differently.

Weaving a tapestry of love demands not only the colorful weft strands of visitation across the hemisphere where face-to-face and heart-to-heart encounters enrich us, but also the sturdy, less colorful but critical warp strands of attention to details that create the opportunities to listen and tell our stories of witness and transformation within and across our cultures. The Section of the Americas seeks Representatives who will share their talents within these groups:

- Representative Engagement Program Group: develop training and mentoring practices for Representatives, develop webinars or training materials related to Representative roles and activities.
- Communications Program Group: keep the websites engaging and accurate; write and encourage others to develop materials for the newsletter, seek materials in Spanish and English for social media; assist with translations and promotion of the Section.
- Correspondence Program Group: respond to inquiries received electronically, by mail and telephone, and train other Representatives to do this ongoing work
- Representative Handbook Revision Working Group: short term project to review and update the Handbook.
- Directory Update Working Group: keep the directory of meetings updated annually.
- Statistical Map Working Group: oversee the process of publishing and distributing the Statistical Map in 2017.
- Sister Meeting Working Group: develop guidelines for yearly and monthly meetings wishing to create an ongoing relationship with a yearly or monthly meeting in another region of the hemisphere and provide assistance to those meetings wanting to do this.

The various groups in the Connections program area will have position descriptions, numbers of members needed and time lines relating to the activities of the group. Additional volunteers may be tapped for specific short term projects to help achieve the strategic goals for the Connections program area. As we move into these transitional years, your spiritual discernment will be required as we work out the pattern of love to weave into this tapestry.

**Where will you put your talents to work? Will you be the warp threads or weft threads - or both? What are your stories of crossing cultures, connecting Friends and changing lives?**