The Guild Beats Back the J

Fort Benning
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while the legal work was distributed evenly.

The office was staffed 24 hours a day to support the protest, allowing the collective to respond quickly to new developments. When Fort Benning officials blasted ‘patriotic’ music in an attempt to drown out the protest, protestors responded in several ways. While media outreach workers organized thousands of complaining phone calls to Fort Benning, the collective began drafting a federal injunction preventing the school from broadcasting the music as a First Amendment violation. Within a couple of hours, a Fort Benning public relations representative met with representatives of the SOA, and a few minutes later, the music stopped. After the incident, the collective met, this time outside under a large juniper tree, and discussed the event and future plans.

“I escorted puppeteers, informed people of their right not to be searched without cause, drafted a complaint, and discussed legal strategy all in one day. The collective was truly that—a collective of people with different backgrounds working together for a common cause,” says Amber Ramauscas, a 2L from CUNY.

The spirit of the collective was inspirational, courageous, and welcoming. By the end of the protest, many participants built lasting relationships. The SOA Watch Legal Collective is, in Quigley’s words, a contradiction to conventional lawyering.

Next year in late November, thousands of people again will gather at the gates of Fort Benning. The collective looks to recruit more people to participate. Interested folks can email Bill Quigley at quigley@loyno.edu.

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