



# Fact Sheet

## Our Mission

The lessons of the Salem Witch Trials compel Voices Against Injustice to celebrate today's champions of human rights by presenting the annual Salem Awards, stewarding the Salem Witch Trials Memorial and inspiring members of our worldwide community to confront fear and social injustice with courage.

## What does the VAI do?

For those interested in understanding how our shared past can influence our present and drive future change, Voices Against Injustice uses the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials to inform and inspire individuals and communities to advance social justice and celebrate today's defenders of human rights.

**Catalytic Remembrance:** Maintain the Salem Witch Trials Memorial in partnership with the City of Salem and Peabody Essex Museum and use lessons to inspire action. Visited by over six million people since its opening in 1992, this monument is nationally acclaimed by the American Institute of Architects.

**Amplify:** Recognize individuals and/or organizations working to help those who suffer discrimination and injustice.

**The Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice:** This cash prize award is conferred upon those taking action to alleviate discrimination, promote tolerance, and achieve justice for contemporary victims of social injustice. We acknowledge the significance and consequences of award recipients' work and join them in fostering tolerance, compassion, and reconciliation within communities.

**The Rising Leader Awards:** Publicly recognize local high school students for leadership in human rights and social justice with a book award and a cash prize.

**The Salem Advocate for Social Justice:** Presented in collaboration with Salem State University at the Speaker Series, the Advocate is awarded periodically to luminaries in their field who use their platform to champion social justice issues and advocate for the underrepresented.

**Inspire:** Partner with others to create, commission, and implement programming to educate and compel to action based on the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials. In 2017 we partnered with the City of Salem and the Peabody Essex Museum for citywide 6-word memoirs on the theme of Inclusion; supported the launch of a social justice curriculum at Salem High School; created Salem's Black History Audio Tour; organized and co-sponsored a symposium at Salem State University commemorating the 325th anniversary of the Salem Witch Trials; and partnered with Essex Heritage to host annual Trails and Sails events.



## Salem Award Recipients

- 1992**  
Greg Allan Williams, aiding someone being beaten during the Los Angeles riots
- 1993**  
Morris Dees, opposing the Ku Klux Klan and founding the Southern Poverty Law Center
- 1994**  
William Johnston, director of the Boston Police Hate Crimes Unit
- 1995**  
Harry Wu, exposing human rights violations in China, particularly the Laogai Prison, where he was held for 19 years
- 1996**  
Aaron Feuerstein, supporting labor in the aftermath of the Malden Mills fire
- 1997**  
Dr. Vicky Guzman, providing medical care advocating for the rights of the rural poor in El Salvador
- 1998**  
Barbara Vogel, founder of STOP (Slavery That Oppresses People)
- 1999**  
Leonard Zakim, Executive Director of ADL New England
- 2000**  
Dr. Jane Schaller, as president of Physicians for Human Rights
- 2001**  
Robert Raiche, promoting friendship among opposing groups, Catholic and Protestant teens in N. Ireland, Jews and Arabs in Israel
- 2002**  
James C. McCoskey, overturning wrongful convictions
- 2003**  
Jane Elliott, diversity trainer (blue eyes/brown eyes experiment)
- 2004** Fahima Vorgetts, advocacy for Afghani women and children
- 2005**  
Paula Donovan, helping to eradicate HIV/AIDS in Africa
- 2006**  
Lt. Cmdr. Charles Swift and Prof. Neal Katyal, lead counsels in Supreme Court case, Hamden vs. Rumfeld defending Yemeni prisoner held in Guantanamo
- 2007**  
Eric Reeves, championing human rights and peace in Sudan
- 2008**  
The Coalition of Immokalee Workers, work to end slavery in the US agricultural industry
- 2009**  
Greg Mortenson, educational work, especially for girls, in Pakistan and Afghanistan
- 2010**  
Dr. Jonathan Shay, advocacy for soldiers and veterans with PTSD
- 2011**  
City Life/Vida Urbana, fighting economic injustices associated with mortgage availability abuse
- 2012**  
Rededication of Salem Witch Trials Memorial
- 2013**  
Thomas Doyle, outing sex abuse in the Catholic Church and Horace Seldon (2012-2013) for a lifetime of work combatting structural racism
- 2014**  
Brian Concannon and Mario Joseph, efforts to restore democracy, justice and human rights in Haiti
- 2015**  
José Vargas, advocacy for undocumented Americans
- 2016**  
Anne Driscoll, groundbreaking work in overturning wrongful convictions
- 2017 -18**  
The GroundTruth Project and its founder Charles Sennott, truth, integrity, and sustainability in journalism