“It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old, they grow old because they stop pursuing dreams.”

- Gabriel García Márquez, from Love in the Time of Cholera

The late great magical realist writer reminds us, with echoes of Martin Luther King Jr., that dreams unleash our imagination of what could be.

The Dreamers, the undocumented youth who struggle for legal status, show us the same thing. Since Deferred Action Policy has been instituted, people are starting to question the entire immigration, detention, incarceration and deportation system that especially targets poor and immigrant communities. Privatization and profiting of detention camps and prisons have only spurred more questions.

Social and economic inequality is widening in the United States. In recent years, even our college graduates have trouble finding work while shouldering increasing debt. Student debt has crossed the one trillion dollar mark, making even Forbes magazine concerned about how student indebtedness will cripple growth. The shrinking public investment in education, affordable housing, good paying and healthy jobs has led to growing class and racial inequality, while climate change is ignored to our peril. Continual war drains the public coffers.

Economist Thomas Piketty’s new book, Capital in the 21st Century, argues that without a global wealth tax, inequality will only keep rising. Piketty shows that the top one percent of American households accounted for more than 22 percent of the country’s income in 2012. That same one percent also received 95 percent of the income gains from 2009 to 2012. Attacks on the rights of those who, like unions and community groups, speak for the 99 percent are defended, while the highest courts strengthen the rights of the moneyed.

The Sixth Annual Labor, Social and Environmental Justice Fair is a place to dream, to understand, and to act. Organized by students, with support from the Labor Studies program, the fair brings together labor unions, workers’ centers, immigrant rights activists, grassroots environmentalists, feminists, LGBTQ advocates, and community rights groups. We encourage everyone to engage in dialogue, to find out what these groups are doing and find ways to dream, not just for yourself, but for us all.