



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC West Region News – August 2023

Stories of work from around the region

Welcome to the American Friends Service Committee's West Region monthly newsletter. Please send feedback to WestNews@afsc.org.



Benjamin Prado of AFSC speaks with the media.

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Amid high heat, AFSC calls for safe border crossings.

As the U.S. faces record heat, advocates continue to call for more just, humane migration policies. In this [CBS8 story](#), Benjamin Prado of AFSC says it's important to communicate to lawmakers that "this border strategy is a failed strategy; a deadly strategy; and re-direct some of those resources to make sure that people can cross safely without having to cross mountains and deserts." Benjamin is also quoted in this [story](#) about one particularly dangerous area.



67 Sueños, Oakland

New mural celebrates intergenerational healing

From [67 Sueños' Facebook page](#): “Shoutout to this dope group of artists, of all the ages - the youngins & the OGs. The ones who just picked up a brush for the first time this summer and those who have been painting forever. We appreciate all of you *por igual*. This mural is very special. It shows us intergenerational healing. We paint to honor our community. We paint to share the beauty of our culture & traditions. And we paint with intention the future we want to see.” Learn more in this recent [profile](#) of the program.



Sara is a member of Albuquerque Friends Meeting and an AFSC volunteer.

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Give peas – and farmers and kids – a chance

Sayrah Namaste of AFSC writes: “How are AFSC New Mexico's healthy food campaigns making a difference? Regarding our Give Peas a Chance campaign, one preschool teacher told us, ‘This is a perfect activity for my class. It was hands-on development of fine motor skills, and it introduced new vegetables to them. The children loved the way the peas tasted, and they also love planting and getting their hands dirty.’” Read [more](#).



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Coloradoans rally for passage of the Registry Act

From [Facebook](#): Thanks to 9NEWS (KUSA) for their [coverage](#) of an August 8 rally at the State Capitol in Denver to advocate for passage of the Registry Act. The bill would update existing law from a 1972 arrival date to a 2015 date, thus allowing people who've made the US home for seven years or more to register and access a path to permanency. Most undocumented Coloradans, DACA and TPS beneficiaries, and essential workers would qualify under this simple bill. It's been reintroduced in both the US House and Senate. On August 9, AFSC and partners lobbied congressional offices and called for a general strike.



A folkloric dancer at Blossoms of Resistance (photo: Eduardo Stanley)

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Ceremony celebrates past and present work of ArteVism Fellows

Rodolfo Robles Cruz writes: On July 22, the PVI ArteVism Fellows and Interns hosted “Blossoms of Resistance,” a closing ceremony celebrating the creative work of the 2022–2023 ArteVism cohort. In a block-party approach, we came together with dynamic stations, provocative programming, and an artistic atmosphere. Our vision was a party for the community by the community. Each Fellow and Intern had a station that represented some form of cultural artifact that represented some interpretation of “resistance.” Read [more](#).

IN 2020 THE OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY PASSED THE OAKLAND MILITARY EQUIPMENT ORDINANCE, THANKS TO LEADING EFFORTS FROM ORGANIZATIONS LIKE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, BAY-PEACE, COUNCIL ON AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS AND OTHERS

BAY-peace

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Work builds to demilitarize police

AFSC continues to support advocacy around California for AB 481, the state law on military gear used by police. We're providing policy analysis and other support to activists in San Jose, Santa Cruz, Chula Vista, and San Francisco. In Oakland, we worked with BAY Peace, CURYJ, and others to bring public comment to the Police Commission meeting discussing military equipment. Watch this powerful [15-minute video](#) created by BAY Peace! It includes testimony by Ericson Amaya of AFSC's 67 Sueños.



Pedro Sosa of AFSC joins other indigenous interpreters in Oregon.

Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Working for indigenous language justice in Oregon

Pedro Sosa and Alonso Oliveros of AFSC are working in coalition on a bill in the Oregon legislature called [Fair Shot For All](#). The bill would develop language proficiency evaluation mechanisms, invest in indigenous language interpretation, and establish a formal commission for Original Peoples from South America, Central America, and Mexico to have direct influence in policy and law solutions.

Roots For Peace



Roots For Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Freedom School showcase event set for August 11

Roots For Peace's summer Freedom School is wrapping up this week. Freedom School is an intensive social justice training where young people of color analyze intersectional systemic inequalities. At the same time, they envision and organize local projects, policies, and practices that build personal and community healing. We believe young people are the lifeline of movement building and should have the power and right to shape the world we live in! Stay tuned for more stories and photos.



Short takes

A warm welcome to Edith Sargon (above, she/her), who began this week as Associate Regional Director of the West Region. She comes to AFSC after working for years in labor, reproductive justice, and civic engagement....Here's the latest [AFSC alumni newsletter](#)....Please consider [nominating](#) yourself or someone else for service on an AFSC governance body.... Here's the latest [news from AFSC work in the Midwest Region](#).

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