



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**

## **AFSC West Region News – September 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](mailto:WestNews@afsc.org).



*Immigrant Rights Program, Denver*

### **Colorado joins national day of action calling on Biden to end detention**

AFSC Colorado is participating in the National Call to Action on September 15. We're calling on President Biden to fulfill his promise to close for-profit detention centers and on Congress to reinvest billions in our community needs! The [event](#) will be held at GEO Detention Center in Aurora on Friday, September 15, 2023 at 6:00 pm MT.

We must defund ICE and Border Patrol and insist that the rapid increase in apprehension and detention is unacceptable. Our families and communities should be together, not behind bars! And our communities should be supported with funds to slow climate change, support the mental health of youth and access to affordable housing. Here's a [toolkit and action steps](#).

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## Militarized Policing: AB 481 & the Role of Community

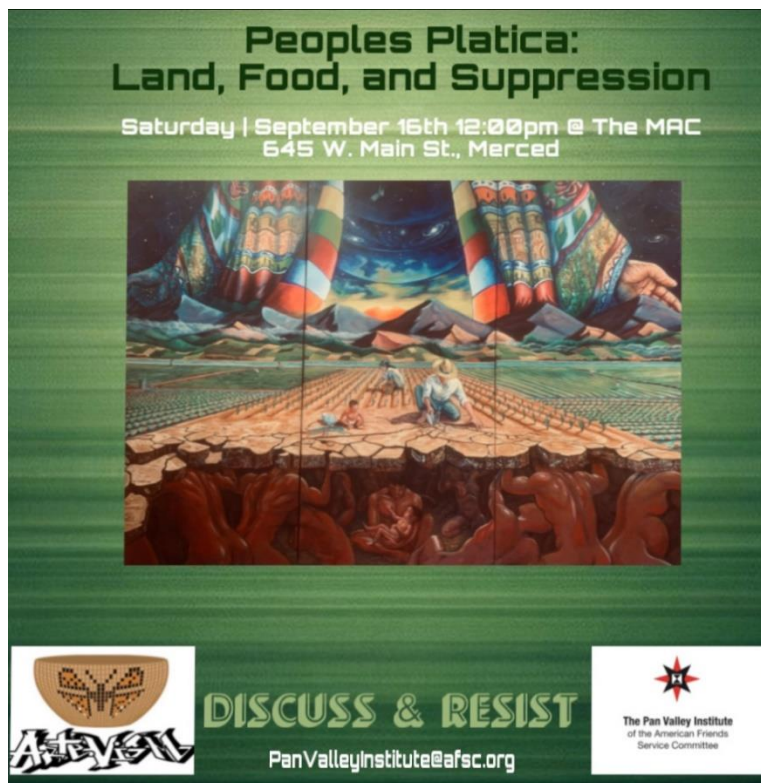
A Conversation with  
John Lindsay-Poland



California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

### Pushing for community oversight of militarized policing

Are police becoming too militarized? Does the use of military-grade tactical gear intensify or de-escalate conflict? How can local communities ensure transparency and accountability in the use of acquisition of military combat equipment by law enforcement? John Lindsay-Poland of AFSC recently spoke at the Monterey Peace and Justice Center to discuss Assembly Bill 481, a law intended to increase transparency and accountability around the acquisition and use of military-grade weapons and equipment by state and local law enforcement. He emphasized the role of community oversight in ensuring compliance. Please visit our [website](#) for resources.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

### Platica (or dialogue) to look at land, food and suppression

On September 16 in Merced, CA, PVI is hosting a *platica*/dialogue about land, food, our voices, and the influence of our votes. We're also pleased to share this three-minute [highlight video](#) of our Salt of the Earth *encuentro*/gathering held last April.



Photo: Pedro Rios

*US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego*

### **AFSC calls for centering immigration policies around human rights**

The Biden administration's anti-asylum policies have contributed to increased deaths, forcing people who are migrating to take more dangerous routes to reach the United States. "The U.S. and Mexican governments and all the other governments need to center their policies on immigration around human rights," [says](#) Pedro Rios of AFSC. "Until we address those things, you're going to continue to see a high number of people that are dying."



*67 Sueños, Oakland*

### **Film looks at navigating immigration and the criminal justice system**

67 recently hosted a screening and conversation of *Sansón and Me*. Rodrigo Reyes' film tells the story of Sansón, an undocumented Mexican immigrant who was sentenced to life without parole. Sansón and Reyes worked together over a decade, using hundreds of letters as inspiration for recreations of Sansón's childhood. The [film](#) will premiere September 19 on PBS.





Building a cold frame - Photo: Patrick Jaramillo

*People of the Land Program, Albuquerque*

### **Helping small farmers serve their communities**

Patrick Jaramillo of AFSC [writes](#) that small farmers are essential to meeting the needs of people in communities throughout New Mexico. But too often, federal government programs fail to help those who farm a small number of acres. That's one reason why AFSC NM's material and technical assistance work is so important. Building on our years of farmer training work, AFSC supports small farmers and community organizations by providing the resources they need to be sustainable and thrive.



*Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington*

### **Indigenous Language Justice funding passes Oregon legislature**

At the close of the 2023 Oregon legislative session, [Fair Shot for All](#), the state's economic justice coalition and AFSC partner, celebrated the passage of its priority policy agenda, including \$2.5M for Indigenous Language Justice, a bill on Reproductive Health and Access to Gender Affirming Care, and Stable Homes - Homelessness Prevention Package.



### **“Light in Gaza” book tour set for West Coast, October 1 - 13**

Do you live in Portland, Seattle, San Diego, or the Bay Area? If so, join AFSC in person for a [conversation with Palestinian author Yousef Aljamal](#) (above), a contributor to our anthology *Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire*. He'll share stories of Palestinians in Gaza living under Israeli blockade and what we can do to support their efforts for freedom, dignity, and rights.

### **Short takes**

Listen to [Mosaic](#), AFSC's new podcast episode on Palestinian rights...AFSC alums with Just Communities Arizona just released their report on [Reimagining Community Safety](#)... Speak out in support of [conscientious objectors in Russia and Ukraine](#)...Win a chance to [meet Joan Baez](#) – and support AFSC, too.

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