



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC West Region News – November 2023

Stories of work from around the region

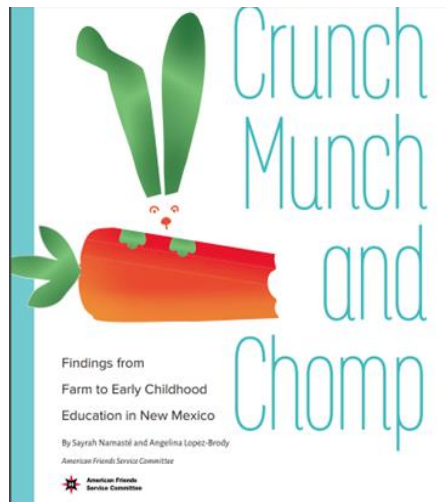
Welcome to the American Friends Service Committee's West Region monthly newsletter. Please send feedback to WestNews@afsc.org.



November 13 Day of Action

On Monday, Nov. 13, people across the United States will visit the district offices of their senators and representatives to honor the dead and demand an end to the mass killing of people in Gaza. Congress votes to send billions of dollars to Israel to buy even more bombs -- already more than 11,000 people have been killed in less than a month, including over 4,500 children.

Join AFSC in demanding a cease-fire now, humanitarian access to Gaza, and no tax dollars for war crimes. [Register to host or attend an event here](#). For AFSC resources on Gaza and Israel, please click [here](#).



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Foundation highlights AFSC’s Farm to Preschool work

The most recent [Every Child Thrives newsletter](#) from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation includes this update about AFSC: In 2015, the American Friends Service Committee of New Mexico, a social justice organization supporting local farmers as well as people lacking access to healthy food, began a Farm to Early Childhood Education Center (ECE) project. After five years of trial and error, and helpful feedback from farmers and ECE staff, the organization decided to [document](#) what they did to share with others interested in Farm to ECE and to amplify the voices of those on the frontline of this work.



Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Oregon park honors American Nobel Peace Laureates

As shared on [AFSC Oregon’s Facebook page](#), the only Nobel Peace park in the U.S. honoring American Nobel Peace Laureates is in Eugene, Oregon. Low walls, serene alcoves and a flowing path through a beautifully landscaped garden offers a tranquil setting. Twenty-six plaques honor each Nobel Prize recipient, including AFSC. The grounds cover two acres of Eugene’s Alton Baker Park.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Community creates altars for Dia de Los Muertos in Oakland.

From [Facebook](#): “Feeling so grateful to be in community with so many incredible people. Thank you!” For the altars, 67 Sueños partnered with community artists and organizations to create work that honored women, men, elders, children and the universe.



Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

Honoring Seeds and Cultural Knowledge through Dia de Los Muertos

From Crystal Gonzalez: At our Community Farm we grew small cempasuchil (marigold) flowers. The seeds have been passed down for generations. Mothers showed their daughters and other children how to make garlands with the flowers to decorate the altar. Traditional foods were also grown and prepared. One participant shared, “It’s very important to me that my children and grandchildren can learn how we honor the dead and the living. And that they can taste foods that are native to my lands.” Follow R4P on [Instagram](#).



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Vigil to honor ancestors – and call for cuts to ICE and CBP

A [November 13 Dia de los Muertos vigil](#) at GEO Detention Center in Aurora, Colorado will be an opportunity to invite our ancestors into this space, to honor each other's ancestors, and to remember the people whose lives were lost in the care of ICE and CBP. We will be honoring Melvin Ariel Calero-Mendoza who died one year ago in Aurora while in ICE/GEO custody. We'll also call on our Colorado congressional delegation to cut funds to ICE and CBP.



US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

AFSC hosts Pilgrimage to Heal Our Communities

The US-Mexico Border Program was pleased to host the [2023 Pilgrimage to Heal Our Communities](#), an interfaith, spiritual pilgrimage to Bakersfield, Adelanto, Calexico, and San Diego. This is part of a multi-year effort to transform the six remaining immigrant detention centers into thriving communities with a priority on well-being and life-sustaining economies. More [photos](#) on Facebook.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Traveling exhibit looks at Americans and the Holocaust

PVI is supporting our friends at the Fresno County Public Library in hosting [The Americans and the Holocaust: A Traveling Exhibition](#) through December 30. The exhibition addresses essential themes in American history, including Americans' responses to refugees, war, and genocide in the 1930s and '40s. It will challenge the commonly held assumptions that Americans knew little and did nothing about the Nazi persecution and murder of Jews as the Holocaust unfolded. Here's a related [story](#), written by Rufus Jones, from AFSC's Archives.



California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

New report looks at health risks for people in prison

Fatimeh Khan of AFSC has been active with the [Close California Prisons Campaign](#). A recent in-depth [report](#) by coalition partner Ella Baker Center looks at California prisons' health risks. These include extreme heat/cold as well as wildfire (smoke inhalation which permanently damages lungs), flooding, and valley fever. Earlier this year, our coalition had to cancel an in-person rally at the state capitol because of the risk of flooding. It was extra sobering to know that just a few blocks away, people were trapped inside Sacramento Jail and at risk of being abandoned to drowning from the flooding.



AFSC alum Lois Mastrangelo holds a banner reading “*Raytheon weapons kill Palestinians: Stop Raytheon arms sales to Israel.*” Photo by Ryan Fatica

Short takes

A [protest](#) held at Raytheon in Tucson includes a photo and quotation from AFSC alum Lois Mastrangelo... AFSC is part of a coalition in Atlanta working to stop Cop City. Beginning November 14, we’re hosting a [webinar series](#) exploring the parallel struggles of this effort... Some good news -- millions more kids will get [free school meals](#)!...Give by November 20 to take advantage of AFSC’s largest match of the year! Your [gift for peace and justice](#) will be 100% matched up to \$500,000.

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