

AFSC West Region News – March 2024

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.



Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

Youth Organizing Program kicks off

Crystal Gonzalez of AFSC reports that Roots for Peace recently launched the second year of our Youth Organizing Program. Seven youth interns, most of whom are alumni from Summer Freedom School and other programming, represent four local high schools.

As interns they will put their leadership skills and divest/invest frameworks into practice. Youth will organize on their respective campuses to grow the movement for divesting from policing on public transit and push for a fareless transit system in Los Angeles. On their first day, youth built community, shared food, and discussed hopes for the months ahead. Stay tuned on [Instagram](#).



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

“For Cause Eviction” bill gains traction in Colorado

From [Facebook](#): A neighborhood is more than just the place we live. It's the people in our community that make it feel like home. Yet, corporate landlords remind us every day that our homes belong to the highest bidder. A “For Cause Eviction” law protects renters by limiting the reasons a landlord can evict or not renew a lease, ensuring that corporate landlords cannot unnecessarily uproot families from their homes and communities. AFSC and allies encourage Coloradoans to urge their lawmakers to support this bill.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Story circle looks at sustainability and stewardship

Twenty small-scale farmers, food entrepreneurs, and farm workers from the Central Valley recently took part in PVI’s “Sharing Land Stewardship Practices Story Circle.” The diverse group shared both their accomplishments and challenges in their food production practices. They looked at how small and indigenous farms can contribute to building a closer connection to the land, a more sustainable environment, and food and climate justice. See [photos](#) from Eduardo Stanley and stay tuned for more from Myrna Martinez Nateras of PVI.



Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Workshop looks at the power of community organizing

Project Voice Director Pedro Sosa and Associate Alonso Oliveros recently offered a workshop on “The Power of Base Community Organizing” to a cohort of Latinx leaders. Through popular education methodology and interactive activities (aka “*dinamicas*” in Spanish), participants learned about the everyday challenges and struggles of disenfranchised communities. Simulations evoked empathetic and sympathetic responses to the plight of undocumented immigrants. Read [more](#).



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Annual Farmer Gathering promotes learning and cooperation

AFSC New Mexico’s 11th annual Farmer Gathering at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque was one of our best yet. Twenty-six farmers and their families participated from ten communities. The purpose was to provide a space for peer-to-peer learning and build a cooperative network of small-scale sustainable farms across New Mexico which can support each other instead of compete against each other. Read [more](#) from Sayrah Namaste of AFSC.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Exhibit looks at history of labor and power in the Americas

67 Sueños youth attended the recent exhibit of the [Braceros and The Rubber Soldiers](#) at Cal-Berkeley. Images on the wall were our *abuelitos*, our ancestors. These narratives, absent from our history books, remind us of the importance of honoring our unsung heroes who shaped the world we know today. Follow 67 on [Facebook](#).



The California State Capitol (photo: Shutterstock.com)

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

New bill to protect the integrity of restorative justice processes

The [Restorative Justice Integrity Act \(AB 2833\)](#) – a bill that will safeguard the integrity of Restorative Justice processes across California – was recently introduced in the California State Assembly. “As we shift our responses to harm to a more restorative method, it is key to ensure people can engage fully and honestly in the Restorative Justice process,” said Fatimeh Khan of AFSC.

AFSC CA Healing Justice staff also recommend this [article](#) that challenges the idea that more policing leads to lower crime.



Cleaning the wound a 15-year-old Guatemalan migrant sustained when she fell crossing the border into California. Photo: Adriana Jasso, AFSC

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Calling on courts to safeguard children at the US-Mexico border

Migrant children are facing deplorable conditions at open air detention sites at the U.S.-Mexico border. Inadequate food and shelter, withholding of medicine, and untreated injuries are among the many examples that led advocates to file a motion in court recently. AFSC has provided photo evidence and documentation to move the complaint forward. We join in calling for immediate action to protect children's rights. Read [more from CNN](#).



From a transnational protest on the US-Mexico border calling for an immediate #CeasefireNowInGaza and an end to the occupation. The border wall is in the background, and behind it, another protest in Tijuana in solidarity with Palestinians. Photo: Pedro Rios, AFSC

Gaza and Women's History Month

This Friday, March 8 at 9 am PT, AFSC's [Action Hour for Gaza](#) will be joined by journalist and activist [Leila El-Haddad](#). Mark your calendar to join us the rest of the month as we highlight more incredible women in our movement: [Sahar Vardi](#), Israeli activist and anti-militarist on Mar. 15, [Rabbi Alissa Wise](#), Lead Organizer for Rabbis for Ceasefire on Mar. 22, and [Sandra Tamari](#), Executive Director of the Adalah Justice project on Mar. 29.

Upcoming immigration webinars from AFSC

- March 26: US Border Policy – [register here](#)
- April 23: Detention and Deportation
- May 28: Employment and Immigrant Worker Rights
- June 25: How to Have Hard Conversations

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