

AFSC West Region News – April 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.



Pedro Rios of AFSC is [interviewed](#) regarding the preservation of the old border wall.

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Raising health concerns for migrant children at open-air detention sites

For months, AFSC and partners have protested Border Patrol’s practice of holding migrants outdoors, without access to basic services. A federal judge recently heard arguments over whether the government must provide food, shelter, and medical care to minors as they await processing. “There is no logic if the most powerful country in the history of humanity, the country with the highest concentration of wealth, is not able to provide for basic needs of children,” says Adriana Jasso of AFSC.

As the [New York Times writes](#), Pedro Rios of AFSC said he had encountered migrants who had been eating leaves because they had been there for five days without food, as well as mothers who had stopped producing breast milk because of traumatic stress and infants with no formula to replace it.



Photo: Care First Community Coalition

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

AFSC and partners defeat costly addition to the jail in Alameda County

John Lindsay-Poland of AFSC reports that in Alameda County, AFSC and partners recently defeated a long-standing proposal to build a “mental health” addition to the county jail, which would have cost \$81 million. The county will instead still build spaces for mental health treatment in the jail, but at a much lower cost. Advocates will continue to try to reduce the jail population in order to reach a constitutional level of care in the jail, since authorities can't increase staffing despite a federal court decree ordering it.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

The Central Valley meets the East Bay: PVI and 67 Sueños connect

PVI’s ArteVism Fellowship Cohort recently made a trip to Oakland to visit 67 Sueños, one of AFSC’s programs in Oakland. Although the Central Valley and the Bay Area share the same state, the cultural differences and similarities cannot be overstated. Through this visit, the PVI ArteVism Team learned more about the work that goes on in Oakland and how to apply that to their own work in the Central Valley. Read [more](#) from Joshua Slack, PVI ArteVism Fellow.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Youth make posters in honor of Women’s History Month

From [Facebook](#): In honor of Womyns hxstory month, we got to highlight some dope mujeres xingonas artistas. Our youth learned about our very own Leslie “DIME” Lopez, Hella Crafty @hellacrafty, Favianna Rodriguez @favianna1, among many others. Through an activity inspired by Favianna, our youth and visitor guests from the Central Valley got to make our very own movement posters!



Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

New Fellow talks about the importance of organizing skills

Adrian Alvarez is the new Youth Organizing Fellow with LA Roots for Peace. In this [interview](#), he talks about how he sees his role. “If you were to ask what defines me -- am I a teacher, artist, filmmaker? The term that best describes me is organizer. I think that we on the Left don’t pay enough attention to generating skilled organizers. There’s not a school where you become an organizer. There aren’t even good books.” Roots for Peace recently held an action outside the LA Metro Board meeting in support of fareless transit – [stay tuned](#) for more!



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Latino Advocacy Day focuses on human needs at state capitol

From [Facebook](#): AFSC's Coloradoans for Immigrant Rights recently organized our members from Aurora, Brighton, Denver and Fort Morgan to lobby state legislators for action on health care, housing and immigration. AFSC and the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition also hosted this [free legal clinic](#) to help immigrants file for Temporary Protected Status and work permits.



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Nourishing soil health for production and climate

On a recent beautiful spring day in New Mexico, Matthew Draper of North Valley Organics led five farmers and his own three-person crew in the why's and how's of building Johnson-Su Bioreactors. These bioreactors generate amazingly micro-biodiverse compost. This win-win appropriate technology helps both production and the climate. Read [more](#) from Angelina Lopez-Brody of AFSC.



Take action for Gaza

On April 8, Quakers for Peace in Palestine and Israel invite Friends to join them in a day of **fasting in solidarity with Gaza**. They aim to bear witness to the starvation that is being inflicted on the people of Gaza and hope the experience will connect all participants to the Light and Power that “take away the occasion of war.” See **5 Queries for Fasting**.

Check out AFSC’s **Tax Day actions** across the country on Monday, April 15. AFSC’s Palestine Activism Program’s weekly **meeting agenda** and **Action Hour** landing page contain more useful information for your activism.

Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Leadership trainings in the works

Stay tuned for more information about upcoming leadership trainings offered by AFSC’s Oregon-Washington Project Voice Program. In the meantime, check out this **article** recommended by Pedro Sosa about the invisibility of migrants.

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