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

67 Sueños, Oakland

Summer youth cohort restores, adds to mural celebrating feme energy

From Facebook: This summer, we have the pleasure to restore and add to Nuestras Raíces: Our Divine Lineage, a beautiful, youth-led mural created back in 2019. This mural honors our Madre Tierra and protecting the sacredness of life. Over the years our mural has been through a lot and needs some community love. We are excited that this year’s summer youth cohort will get to adapt and envision what honoring Mother Earth can and should look like today.
Roots For Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Youth Organizing Internship culmination

On June 1, seven youth completed a five-month Youth Organizing Program. They learned skills from seasoned organizers and with partners took action around care-first alternatives to policing, successfully calling for increasing green shirt ambassadors in public transit. As a result of meeting in the program and sharing passion for social justice, interns also launched a student-led Palestine Solidarity network across four high schools they represent. AFSC Roots for Peace looks forward to continuing work with these amazing young people in this summer’s Freedom School and beyond!

Nu’u Yaví Cooks, from left: Silvia Rojas, Maria Cortez, Ciria Arenas Cruz, Daisy Mejia, Marcelina Bautista López, Kenia Guzmán Paz, Rosa Hernández, Mireya Agustín Lopez Photo: Tudor Stanley

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

For the love of ancestral cuisine

During a perfect May afternoon, Madera’s Courthouse Park was transformed into an Oaxacan Nu’u Yaví—a vibrant public space celebrating Mexican indigenous heritage. A recreation of an Oaxacan plaza or market, Nu’u Yaví featured colorful decorations, music, art installations, children playing, unique food, and a community enjoying delicious food while engaging in conversation. Read more from Myrna Martinez Nateras of AFSC.
Oregon-Washington Project Voice

**AFSC and partners rally to close immigrant detention center in Tacoma**

On June 15, immigrant rights advocates caravanned to the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC) to demand the release of people detained there. In advance, youth with Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS) gathered to make posters. Alonso Oliveros of AFSC interviewed Alondra Sanchez of LUS about the detention center’s impact on her family and why it needs to be shut down.

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**US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego**

**AFSC decries continuing border wall injuries as public health crisis**

Near San Diego, the federal government raised the U.S.-Mexico border wall from 18 feet to 30 feet in 2019. Since then, border wall falls and other injuries have risen dramatically. “We should really be considering the construction of border walls as a public health crisis,” says Pedro Rios of AFSC. “It is a crisis. There are limited resources. There are limited hospital beds, there are limited providers, there are limited funds.” Read more.
Watch the video above for a quick recap from Jennifer Piper of AFSC.

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Colorado staff explain latest executive order on immigration

On June 18, the Biden administration announced new legal protections for some undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens and a small number of young people. The move is a step toward a more welcoming, dignified, and just immigration system. Unfortunately, it will benefit only a fraction of the 12 million immigrants living in the U.S. without any legal path forward. Learn more from Jennifer Piper of AFSC.

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Indigenous corn farm-to-preschool guide now available!

From Facebook: AFSC New Mexico Co-Director Sayrah Namaste (above left) recently celebrated with farmers from Isleta Pueblo and Navajo Nation, a teacher from Acoma Pueblo, and an artist from Laguna Pueblo who worked almost two years together to create an indigenous corn farm-to-preschool guide. The guide is for tribal early childhood centers and tribal home visiting programs. Contact us at NewMexico@afsc.org if you are interested.
California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Alameda County leaders consider Care First recommendations

On June 26, the Care First Task Force presented 58 recommendations to a joint meeting of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors’ Health and Public Protection Committees. After the presentation, all of the more than 30 members of the public spoke in support of the Task Force’s vision of diverting people from county jail to mental health care. Each person called on the Supervisors to approve all recommendations.

Read more from Jennifer Tu of AFSC. She says it’s critical to adopt and fund these recommendations to divert people sent to jail for mental health issues. It is critically needed from humanitarian and fiscal standpoints, and also because it’s literally a life-or-death situation. The county jail is deadly: in the time since the Task Force was created, 21 people have died in the county jail. Adopting and funding the recommendations will literally save lives.

Short takes

Joyce Ajlouny, AFSC General Secretary, explains what students mean when they demand divestment – and why we should listen....Check out these testimonies from Palestinians in Gaza....Watch AFSC’s recent webinar on Rebuilding Education in Gaza: What Can We Do?....Rick Wilson of AFSC explores the solidarity economy....Tell Congress to act now to stop the war in Sudan....Hear these messages from divided Korean families....Learn how AFSC is working to defend civic space around the world.

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