



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC West Region News – January 2025

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 Sosa of AFSC Oregon addresses a Popular Assembly in Salem.

Oregon-Washington Project Voice

Popular Assembly draws 100

Last fall, AFSC Oregon convened over 100 immigrants and allies in Salem to learn how to defend our communities against the next wave of anti-immigrant policies. AFSC is a leader in providing training, planning and strategizing for ways to keep ourselves and our communities safe.

Next steps include meeting with everyone who signed up for the Hotline and Know Your Rights trainings. AFSC is also supporting local Rapid Response Networks and Defense Committees.

“In these dangerous times, immigrants understand that no one is coming to rescue us – only the people save the people,” says Pedro Sosa of AFSC. “And so we are saving ourselves -- city by city, block by block.” Follow on [Facebook](#).



67 Sueños, Oakland

Youth cohort blends art and activism

AFSC's 67 Sueños program is very pleased to welcome Jessica, Jose and Araw, our new youth leader cohort. "As mentors, it's our job to provide the oncoming generation with our knowledge so that they can pass it on to the next," Jessica says. Araw sees their work as "centering around art and freeing the people and land." Catch this beautiful [video](#) about their most recent mural and follow all of 67's work on [Instagram](#).



An AFSC gathering on police demilitarization - *Photo: Brooke Anderson*

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Stopping excessive force in California prisons and jails

In California, AFSC has documented the use of militarized weapons against people in prisons and jails. Over just three years, prison staff used rubber bullets, pepper spray, and other kinds of force over 22,000 times against incarcerated people in the state. Now AFSC is working with activists across California to advocate to stop this state violence. In Alameda County, our collective efforts moved the county to reduce the number and use of some weapons, while we continue to call for eliminating them entirely. Read [more](#).

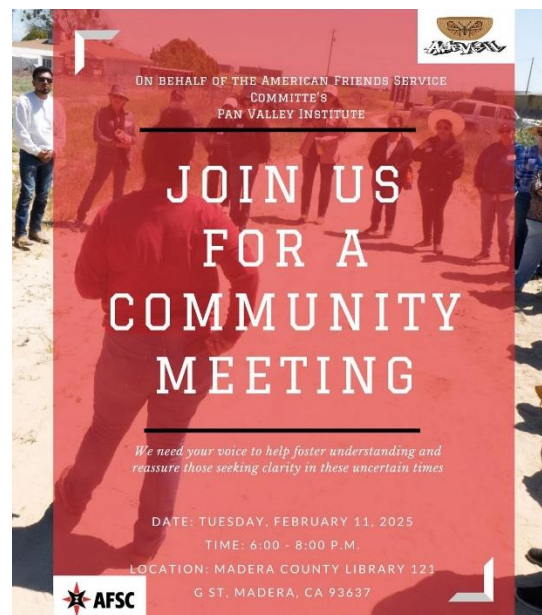


Pedro Rios speaking on solidarity, not charity

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Organizing to keep loved ones together

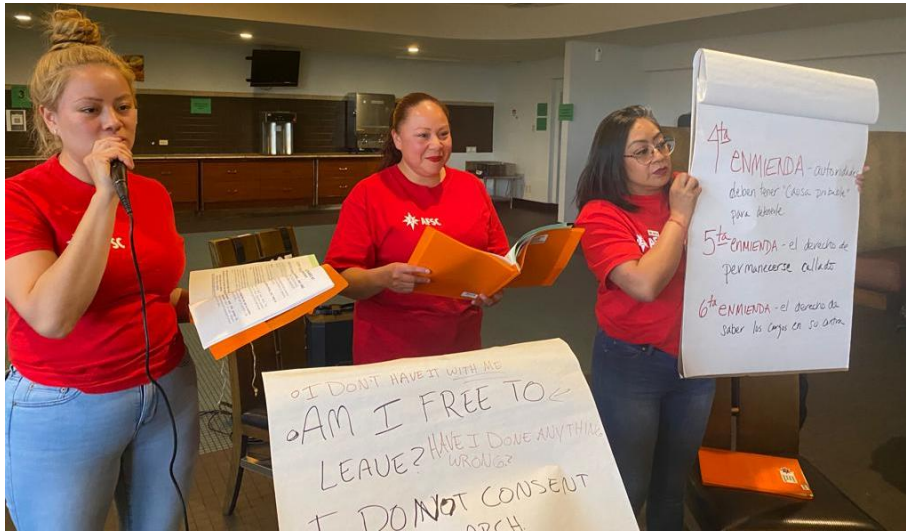
President-elect Trump has pledged to begin mass deportations efforts soon after taking office. In this [interview](#) on MSNBC's PoliticsNation with the Rev. Al Sharpton, Pedro Rios of AFSC's US-Mexico Border Program discusses how immigrants, their loved ones, and other community members are organizing to stop that from happening. "We're working directly with communities, providing information about what their rights are, and helping them organize themselves so they can defend basic constitutional rights," Pedro says.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Community meeting to address immigrants' concerns, resistance

Indigenous women are convening a [community forum](#) addressing immigrants' concerns on February 11 in Madera. The meeting will include local and state elected officials and leaders and immigrants who may be directly or indirectly impacted by potential ICE or Border Patrol raids in Madera County. "Our intent is to ask officials and leaders how they will protect and defend their constituents if ICE or Border Patrol starts raiding immigrants in Madera," says Myrna Martinez Nateras, Founding Program Director of PVI.



AFSC immigrant leaders (from left: Betty, Hilda, and Maria) conduct a Know Your Rights training in Colorado. *Photo: Gabriela Flora*

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

What immigrants need to know about their rights

In the face of potential mass deportations, a coalition of immigrant rights groups in Colorado, including AFSC, is banding together to help communities prepare by getting to know their rights. There's power in learning your rights, and those of your neighbors, says Jordan Garcia of AFSC. Learn [more](#). AFSC Colorado will [celebrate our 70th anniversary](#) on February 1 in Denver.



Cindy Alonso, an intern with LA RFP, addresses an LA Metro board meeting.

Roots for Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Metro as a Sanctuary

From Adalberto Rios of AFSC: To close the year, the Roots For Peace team took part in an end of the year strategizing session with the ACT-LA coalition for our Metro as a Sanctuary Campaign. The campaign encompasses advocating for frequent and reliable bus service and fareless transit. It focuses on funding care-based safety alternatives to policing on transit to ensure a rider experience welcoming and safe for all. RFP staff members are excited to continue supporting the South Central community and our youth's organizing around these efforts. Follow RFP on [Instagram](#).



From left: David Henkel, Sayrah Namaste and Mari Simbana
Photo: Alicia Lueras Maldonado

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

AFSC New Mexico turns 50!

From Sayrah Namaste of AFSC: Since 1974, the AFSC New Mexico program has been supporting traditional people’s land and water rights, sustainable agriculture, and local food systems across our state. Thank you to everyone who joined us recently to celebrate our 50th anniversary! Farmers, community partners, Friends, and supporters commemorated our five decades of community impact. The anniversary party featured local food from farmers in our network, music by the social justice band Lasotr@s, and recognition of key community members who have supported land, water, sustainable agriculture and self-determination in New Mexico. Here’s a short [video](#) about our work.

Short takes

Join AFSC’s monthly webinar series to learn about concrete ways we can all take action for migrant rights, economic justice, and peace. Starting January 21, these webinars will be held on the third Tuesday of every month at 5 pm PT. [Register now](#). If you live in Arizona, join Brian Blackmore of AFSC for his presentation on Quaker Engagement at Tempe Monthly Meeting on Jan. 25 and Phoenix Monthly Meeting on Jan. 26.

Read AFSC’s [remembrance of Jimmy Carter](#) and [AFSC’s statement](#) about the New York Times’ rejection of our ad using the term “genocide.” Check out AFSC’s recent work in the [Midwest](#) and [Northeast](#).

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