



AFSC West Region News – May 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.



A CA Healing Justice gathering. photo: Brooke Anderson

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Second statewide convening on police militarization and AB481 set for July

Are you a Californian who's directly impacted by police militarization? Are you already advocating locally using state law AB 481?

Please contact AFSC's California Healing Justice Program *today* for an invitation to our second statewide convening Sunday-Tuesday July 20-22 at the Ben Lomond Quaker Center! Over the short 48 hours of this intimate gathering, you'll build community with several dozen fellow advocates, learn effective ways to use AB 481 to demilitarize police locally, and reflect on the statewide landscape - and how we will continue to change it together.

Registration closes this week, so please contact CAHealingJustice@afsc.org *today* if you are an active AB 481 advocate or directly impacted Californian who wishes to attend!



At an anniversary of Anastasio's death (photo: Pedro Rios)

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

International tribunal condemns U.S. border officials for killing

In 2010, U.S. border agents brutally beat and killed Anastasio Rojas, a San Diego father of five. AFSC has supported his family's quest for justice since. In 2022, Anastasio's widow and attorneys brought their case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. They argued that the United States' "use of force" laws violate international human rights standards. Recently, the commission **ruled** that border officials were responsible for Anastasio's death. They also called for reopening the investigation and implementing sweeping reforms.



67 Sueños and Los Angeles Roots For Peace staff and youth connect in LA.

67 Sueños, Oakland

From the Bay to LA – AFSC youth programs connect

From 67 Sueños' on **Facebook**: Always special to get young people out of their routine and out into community learning from other programs, art and the land! Special thanks to the dope people who welcomed us and showed us so much love! Shoutout to the folks from @tiachuchas and @rootsforpeace.



Crystal Gonzalez of AFSC (far left) leads a Freedom School discussion.

Roots for Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Youth in LA uphold a history of resistance

Young people deserve the right to learn and grow in healthy and safe communities. But for youth who may be undocumented themselves or come from mixed-status families, the threat of ICE raids, detentions, and deportations is all too real. That's where Roots For Peace Freedom Schools come in. These multi-day sessions for youth offer community building and political education – and serve as a diving board for taking action. Through these workshops, youth learn how to organize to address systemic injustices and keep families, schools, and communities safe. Read [more](#).



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

“No one owns the water.” Podcast explores vital role of acequias in NM

Patrick Jaramillo, co-director of the AFSC New Mexico Program, recently joined other advocates on YUCCA Action for a [“powerful conversation](#) on acequias—the communal irrigation systems that have sustained New Mexico’s land and people for generations.... The guests talked about how climate change is impacting water and traditions, the importance of shared scarcity and shared abundance, and why acequias are essential to any serious conversation about climate justice.”



A May Day March in Madera (photo: Joshua Slack)

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

March calls for an end to deportations, attacks on immigrants

Joshua Slack, PVI Cultural Organizer, [writes](#): “On May 1, PVI and a coalition of residents and community partners organized a march to commemorate International Workers Day. The march was a part of a larger movement across California and the U.S. The march demonstrated solidarity with the disenfranchised people who keep our communities strong. This is a pressing issue for us, especially in the broader landscape of the current political climate.”



Pedro Sosa, right, describes his popular education work.

Oregon-Washington Project Voice

AFSC Know Your Rights trainings reach thousands of people in Oregon

Immigrants and allies in schools, organizations and places of worship are learning about their rights thanks to trainings led by AFSC and those replicated by sister organizations. The trainings “help to improve communication, empathy, self-confidence, and develops social skills,” said one therapist who attended. “They help us reduce social isolation and stress.” Read [more](#).



Jennifer Piper of AFSC, right, joins a Mother's Day rally at GEO Detention Center.

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Vigil calls for full funding for communities, not cages

On May 12, the Interfaith Immigration Network and AFSC hosted a Mother's Day-themed vigil calling for family reunification and for Congress to focus the budget on communities, not cages. "We call on Congress to think of families this week and fully fund health access, public schools and social safety net programs instead of inhumane and unnecessary detention, deportation and discrimination," said Jordan Garcia of AFSC. Stay in touch on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Short takes

Here's the [registration link](#) for Multnomah Meeting's screening of *The Palestine Exception* on Thursday, May 29 at 7 pm at the Clinton Street Theater in Portland....The latest [Acting in Faith newsletter](#) from AFSC includes a number of ways to engage on climate change, immigrant rights, Korea and Gaza....Thanks to the Visalia (CA) Friends Meeting for creating this [comprehensive resource guide for immigrant communities](#).

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AFSC Mission Statement: *Guided by the Quaker belief in the divine light of each person, AFSC works with people of all faiths and backgrounds to challenge unjust systems and promote lasting peace.*