



AFSC West Region News – July 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 speaks outside an immigrant detention center.

Oregon-Washington Project Voice

Work with partners yields important wins for immigrant justice in Oregon

AFSC staff Alonso Oliveros and Pedro Sosa are very pleased to report on these 2025 legislative wins in Oregon:

1. \$15 million for Universal Legal Representation to help detained community members without status to access lawyers to mitigate or stop deportation proceedings
2. \$2 million for the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund
3. \$750,000 for Indigenous Language Justice to facilitate access to interpretation services for indigenous speaking communities
4. Partial investment in the Home Fund to provide rental assistance for working families

Alonso's [report](#) includes a list of all our partners in this work to “ensure that Oregon welcomes and values our immigrant neighbors, friends and family.”



Juneteenth celebration in Fresno (photo: Carlos Sanchez)

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Juneteenth celebration confronts history, celebrates cultural solidarity

Carlos Sanchez, PVI ArteVism Fellow, reports that on June 14, “PVI held a Juneteenth celebration rooted in reflection, resistance, and cultural solidarity. Rather than trying to erase or obscure the country’s complex past, this gathering created a space for community members to engage in meaningful dialogue, share culture, and honor the spirit of Juneteenth as a time to confront history, not shy away from it.” Read [more](#).



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

New Mexico staffer connects with Friends at IMYM Annual Gathering

In June, Patrick Jaramillo, co-director of AFSC New Mexico, attended the [InterMountain Yearly Meeting Annual Gathering](#). Its theme was “Beloved Community: Gathered in Courage and Care.” Patrick says, “I loved how welcoming and family oriented it was – not in the nuclear family sense, but in the sense that we are all family. There was an intergenerational aspect and genuine appreciation of being in community. It was really nice for me to be in a space where faith was centered -- along with the many terrible issues we are facing as a society.” Rosemary Blanchard, a longtime AFSC volunteer, joined Patrick in presenting about AFSC’s work locally, nationally and globally. Read [more](#).



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

Roots for Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Youth speak truth to power in LA

Roots for Peace continues its work in coalition to push for non-police responses on the LA transit system. Their approach includes bringing young people to the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. One youth participant reflected, “With sweaty palms and a shaky voice, I garnered an immense amount of courage to display solidarity with people who had been directly impacted by Metro’s decisions. I addressed people who would be in danger of being detained based on negative assumptions due to the color of their skin. I told the story of a mother who unfairly lost her son because of a police altercation on a bus. But most importantly, I addressed generations of people who needed hope in a moment of despair.”



photo: Gabriela Flora

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Hundreds rally to free civil rights leader in Colorado

Dozens of organizations, musicians (above) and clergy hosted an all-day action in Aurora, CO on July 7 to call for the release of Jeanette Vizguerra, an incredible civil rights activist, leader, and mother in Colorado who has been fighting for justice and safety for undocumented communities for decades. The action also called for sufficient food and medical care for all detainees --and the closure of ICE's for-profit detention run by GEO. Jennifer Piper of AFSC is quoted about the event.



Pedro Rios of AFSC as shown on ABC10 in San Diego.

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Speaking out against increased ICE raids and human rights abuses

Pedro Rios of AFSC was recently [interviewed](#) about the huge increase in ICE arrests in the San Diego area – and what’s to come. “The unprecedented budget for increasing ICE operations, including detention, including all of how they’re able to operate with other government agencies, is reckless,” Pedro says. “What we will see is a trampling of [not just] basic constitutional rights but human rights as well.”



67 Sueños, Oakland

Weekly walks help us “move through these times together”

From [Instagram](#): “Lately, our team at 67 Sueños has been taking one day out of the week to walk together -- a simple but powerful way to ground ourselves, connect with nature and grow together. Every week, we pick a different location to explore. This is part of our ongoing commitment to HYPHY: Heal your People, Heal Yourself. We’d love for you to join us on our next walk ([Tuesdays at 10 am PT](#)). It’s a moment to unwind, breathe, and move through these times together.”



California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Restorative Justice update – and upcoming meeting on militarized policing

While AFSC works to reduce the prison population and limit police authority and militarization, we also promote healing and restorative practices as alternatives to violence and punishment. Check out this [interview](#) with Fatimeh Khan of AFSC about our statewide work in support of Restorative Justice.

Together with Ericson Amaya of 67 Sueños, Jennifer Tu and John Lindsay-Poland of AFSC are once again serving as community members of a committee to consider Oakland Police's policies on militarized equipment. While policies can be dry and technical, they're important: they define when weapons can be used against communities. In Oakland, these weapons have historically been used disproportionately against Black and Brown residents – and they've also been used against protesters. Come observe the next meeting! Meetings are on [Zoom](#), and the next one will be Tuesday, July 15 from 6:30-7:30pm PT. More info [here](#).

Third Tuesday webinars

AFSC's Third Tuesday [webinar in June](#) focused on the trans agenda for liberation. Edith Sargon, Associate Regional Director for the West Region, facilitated the discussion, which featured AFSC San Diego alum Anna Castro. On July 15, the focus will be on ending deportations and genocide. Sign up [here](#).

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