



## AFSC West Region News – February 2026

*Stories of work from around the region*

Welcome to the American Friends Service Committee's West Region newsletter. Please send feedback to [WestNews@afsc.org](mailto:WestNews@afsc.org).



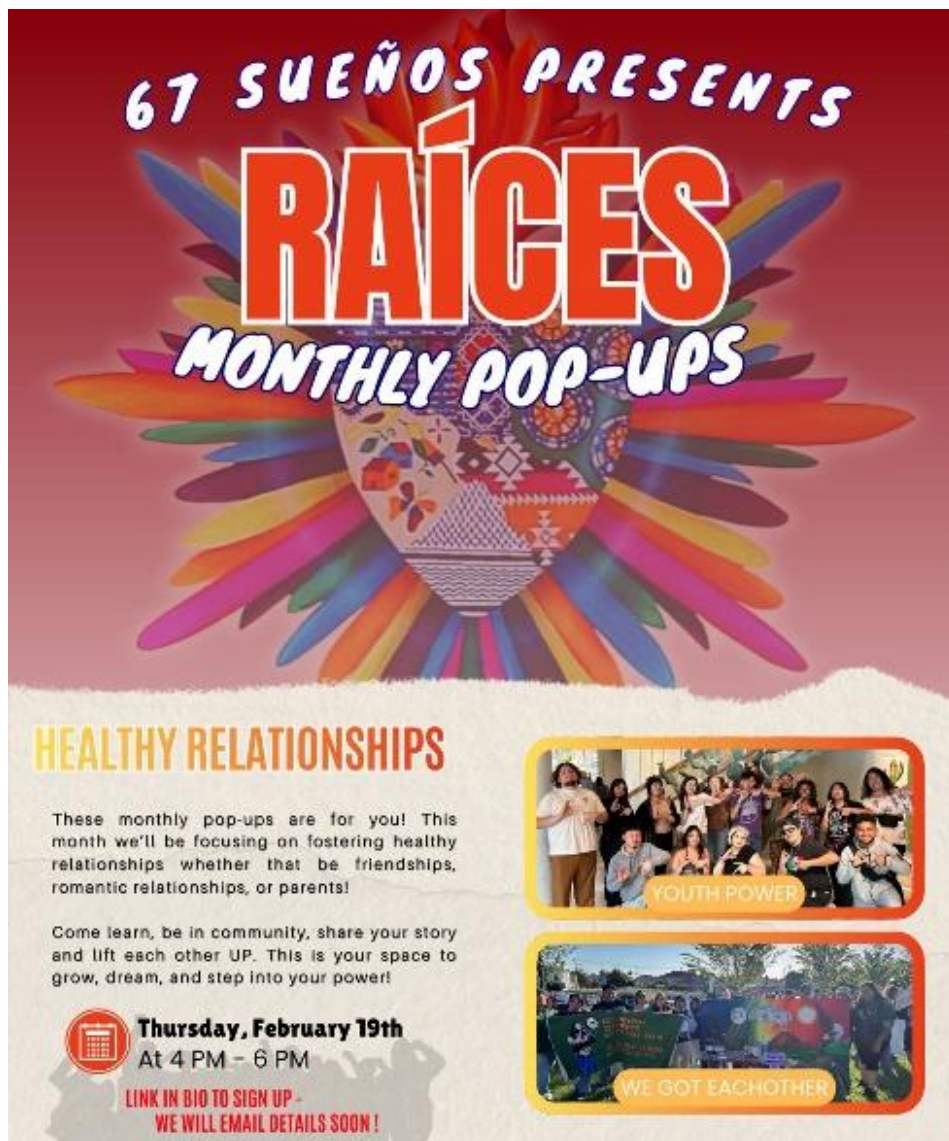
*Roots for Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles*

### **In LA, weekly gatherings support high school youth impacted by ICE**

In Los Angeles, Roots for Peace staff are hosting weekly sessions for high school youth from mixed status families who are feeling the impacts of ICE kidnappings in their community. Similar to AFSC's Freedom School model, weekly programming offers a space for critical thinking, organizing for change, and for building a sense of community.

Students are making the link between immigration enforcement, militarism, and authoritarianism -- all as impediments to peace. Students have said "I feel heard," "We don't have a place at school to really talk about this," and "I feel hopeful to be around people who care and want to make the world a better place."

AFSC plans to continue to grow this space for young people as we work against authoritarianism and for true safety in our neighborhoods. Follow on [Instagram](#).



*67 Sueños, Oakland*

## **Monthly community gatherings provide space for youth in Oakland**

On the fourth Thursday of every month, 67 Sueños hosts our Raíces Pop Ups, a community gathering where youth, artists, and organizers come to learn and build together. It's a space to grow their awareness of current events, connect with others who care about change, and tap into their creativity.

These pop ups are part of 67's Raíces program, one of the organizing arms of 67 Sueños created for youth who want to go deeper into understanding systems, culture, and community power. Each month has a different theme, from building narratives and mapping power. Youth don't need to know anything before coming; the standard is each person and their readiness to root in community.

The Raíces Pop Ups happen every fourth Thursday of the month, and they're open to all Oakland/Bay Area youth. Food, art supplies, and good energy are on deck. 67 staff want to make sure everyone feels safe and supported at our pop-ups. Sign up [here](#).



AnnaRose Craig (they/elle, at left) with fellow ELL participant Aide at the Community Care Day in Denver, November 2025. Photo: Jesse Saunders

### *Immigrant Rights Program, Colorado*

#### **Cohort unites youth in grassroots organizing for social justice**

In 2025, AnnaRose Craig (Arc), the Shut Down GEO Organizer with AFSC in Colorado, participated in AFSC's [Emerging Leaders for Liberation program](#). Over eight months, ELL participants develop their leadership skills and deepen their commitments to social justice through in-person convenings, virtual meetings, and the completion of a community action project. [Applications for the next cohort are open through March 8](#) to young people (aged 18-22) who have a relationship with an AFSC program, a Quaker Meeting/organization, or a Quaker college. In this [interview](#), Arc shares about their experiences.



Acequia Day march in Santa Fe (photo: Jason Rodriguez, NM Acequia Assoc.)

### *People of the Land Program, Albuquerque*

#### **AFSC helps celebrate Acequia Day and Treaty Day in New Mexico**

In early February, 300 people gathered at the state capitol in Santa Fe to celebrate and advocate for acequias, New Mexico's traditional system of water irrigation. In this [article](#), Patrick Jaramillo, NM Program Co-Director, explains why acequias are fundamental to the state – and why adequately supporting them is so crucial for the state's survival going forward.





From left, Juan Santiago, tsim+nuj (chee new) vang, and Anne Marie Richard

*Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno*

### **Board and staff describe what PVI means to the Central Valley**

Since 1998, the Pan Valley Institute (PVI) has strengthened immigrant leadership and fostered active citizenship across California's Central Valley. Based in Fresno and expanding to Tulare, Merced, and Madera counties, this immigrant-led organization creates intergenerational learning spaces that empower participants to become agents of social change. [Here](#), PVI's Advisory Board members and staff share what PVI means to them.



Pedro Sosa (center) leads an immigrant rights organizing workshop.

*Oregon-Washington Project Voice*

### **Collective healing session provides support**

In January, AFSC hosted a Collective Healing Session for two dozen Human Rights Observers (HROs)/Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) in Salem. This was an opportunity for HROs/RRTs to convene for emotional support and communal discussions about the crisis currently impacting our immigrant friends, family and community members. Local area mental health therapists facilitated the healing session with trauma-informed methodologies. Stay in touch on [Facebook](#).



Screenshot from [NBCSanDiego](https://www.nbcsandiego.com)

*US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego*

### **Advocating for a city council resolution opposing violent arrests**

In early February, the San Diego City Council unanimously passed a resolution critical of the excessive tactics of DHS agents. Prior to the vote, Pedro Rios of AFSC [said](#), "It puts San Diego on the map of being in opposition to these violent immigration arrests that we've been seeing around the country and in San Diego. It's an important step forward because it ensures that their residents, their constituents, are hearing how the city council is supporting them."



*California Healing Justice Program, Oakland*

### **AFSC and Berkeley Quakers to join national Love as Action witness**

On Saturday, February 21 at 1 pm PT, [Berkeley Friends and AFSC](#) will bear witness and show resistance to authoritarian actions in our country. Check out the national [Love as Action page](#) to organize your own event. Also in Berkeley, John Lindsay-Poland of AFSC recently testified against a proposal to loosen rules on the use of helicopters and canines by police. Read [more](#).

## Short takes

AFSC's next monthly Third Tuesday webinar is set for February 17 at 5 pm PT. It's theme will be "Love and Liberation." Register [here](#)....A warm welcome to [Karen Francis](#), AFSC's new Global Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion....Here are [four things to know](#) about the recent end of the US-Russia nuclear arms treaty....A memorial service for former AFSC staffer Mike Gray will be held at the Phoenix Meetinghouse on Saturday, April 4 at 2 pm. More details to come.

## Your support matters

Your gifts of time and money make a real difference. Please be in touch with any West Region program by visiting [afsc.org](http://afsc.org). Please share this subscription [link](#) for this newsletter with others. Thank you!

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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.*