



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC West Region News – May 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.



March 2026 construction of the border wall (photo: Pedro Rios)

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

From a park to a prison

Friendship Park was inaugurated in 1971 as a gesture of friendship between Mexico and the United States. For more than two decades, Pedro Rios of AFSC has been documenting this gathering space for people from both sides of the border walls. But in recent years, U.S. Border Patrol has restricted access to the park. It has also damaged delicate ecosystems and expanded the border wall, causing death and further harm to people seeking safety. Yet communities continue to resist. Through art, public witness, and mutual aid, they keep the spirit of Friendship Park alive. Read [more](#) from Pedro.



Middle school youth work on a collective banner. (photo: Joshua Slack)

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Reviving hope across generations

Spring proved to be a busy time for the work of Pan Valley Institute and its ArteVism Fellowship as we continue the work in our communities. Just days before our residential gathering, we had the opportunity of having middle school students come visit the PVI office to learn about ArteVism and work collectively on a banner. Read [more](#) from Joshua Slack, PVI ArteVism Fellow.



Photo: Mari Simbaña

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Annual Farmer Gathering builds solidarity during challenging times

AFSC New Mexico recently hosted our 13th Annual Farmer Gathering. Over 30 farmers and community partners got together at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque to reconnect with each other, share stories, photos, challenges and solutions from their farm from the last season. These yearly meetings include peer-to-peer learning, identifying challenges, and sharing strategies for success. Read [more](#) from Patrick Jaramillo of AFSC.



Nickenley Turenne

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

When state violence goes unanswered

Across the U.S., people are rightly protesting the presence of federal immigration agents in our communities. But where is the same urgency when lives are taken by local police? In December, Nickenley Turenne—a young, unarmed Black man—was shot and killed by police in New Hampshire. But his case has received little attention beyond the state. Cases like Nickenley’s are not isolated events. They reflect a broader history of racialized policing and limited accountability. John Lindsay-Poland of the AFSC CA Healing justice Program joins Ophelia Burnett of AFSC New Hampshire in [calling for police accountability](#).



AFSC staff and allies advocate for justice at the Oregon State Capitol.

Oregon-Washington Project Voice

Winning legislative protections for immigrants in Oregon

In Oregon, AFSC is supporting communities as they organize to protect immigrant rights. This advocacy has a real impact. The Oregon Legislature has passed a dozen new laws which protect health care access, prevent ICE agents from hiding their identities, and more. "This is a big win for immigrants and a huge setback for ICE agents who have terrorized our communities," said Pedro Sosa, Oregon Voice Program Director. AFSC has trained hundreds of community members and allies to serve as Human Rights Observers. By documenting and reporting injustices, we pave the way for new protections. Read [more](#) from Alonso Oliveros of AFSC.



Jennifer Piper of AFSC (far right) visits with Boulder Friends Meeting.

Immigrant Rights Program, Colorado

Building communities of love

Earlier this year, Jennifer Piper, Colorado Immigrant Rights Co-Program Director, shared with the [Boulder Friends Meeting](#) about AFSC's work supporting immigrant communities. In these [excerpts](#), Piper describes her work as communications based. AFSC tries to ensure all our media work brings in immigrant voice analysis and experience -- something missing from a lot of coverage and debate.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Bay Area High School Ethnic Studies Conference is a huge success

In April, youth from Bay Area high schools gathered at Merritt College for a day of poetry, song, dance and culture. A number of local artists held space for young folks to feel inspired, be in community, and make art. Be sure to save the date of November 13 for 67's Quinceañera celebration. Follow 67 on [Instagram](#).



Roots for Peace (RFP) Program, Los Angeles

Open House set for May 28 – join us!

We hope you'll join us in LA on Thursday, May 28 for Roots for Peace (RFP) [Open House!](#) Visit our community farm to enjoy local refreshments and learn more about AFSC's powerful work with youth.

In 2018 AFSC supported a group of migrant women in South LA to transform a blighted lot into an urban agricultural space. Since then, over 30 families actively grow food there and engage in intergenerational gatherings that promote ancestral practices and cultural foodways. A variety of activities, including immigrant support and mutual aid, take place at the community farm on a regular basis. The space was named by its members *Corazon de la Gente*, or Heart of the People. Crystal Gonzalez and Adalberto Rios of AFSC urge you to [join us](#) at the Open House!



[AFSC Love as Action event](#)

Lots more coming up in May

On May 1 at 4 pm in Berkeley, East Bay Quakers and AFSC are hosting a [Love as Action](#) public witness to continue our resistance to authoritarianism... International Worker's Day/May Day events are also on tap [across the country](#), including in [San Diego](#), [Madera, CA](#), [Albuquerque](#) and in [Salem, Oregon](#)... On May 5, AFSC Colorado is offering a [virtual training](#) on first aid after ICE detention. On May 6, AFSC CO is hosting a [vigil honoring immigrant mothers](#)... On May 9 in Fresno, join Pan Valley Institute for [My Relationship with America](#).

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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.