



**American
Friends
Service
Committee**

AFSC West Region News – August 2022

Stories of work from around the region

Welcome to the American Friends Service Committee’s West Region monthly newsletter. We look forward to connecting with you regarding our shared work for peace and justice. Thanks for your interest and support; please send feedback to WestNews@afsc.org.



Roots for Peace (R4P) Program, Los Angeles

Celebrating collective ancestral wisdom

From [Instagram](#): The three sisters (corns, beans and squash) were planted, cared for, and harvested collectively at our community farm. The roasting/asada of delicious purple and yellow corn has been a summer highlight. Folks kept remarking that the corn reminded them of their homelands in Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. R4P also recently hosted an “awesome” Freedom School for young people.



Jennifer Tu presents on [Getting Eyes on the Armed State](#)

Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Webinar series to focus on restorative justice

Restorative Justice is based on the philosophy that we are all interconnected, that we live in relationship with one another, and that our actions impact each other. This September, AFSC is offering a [three-part webinar](#) series in which participants will develop an understanding of restorative justice and its practices, and how to strengthen your community through accountability. Fatimeh Khan of AFSC CA Healing Justice is a collaborator on this series.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Join our team!

PVI is looking for [volunteers](#) for administrative work and social media support. Tasks include reviewing mail, assisting with meetings, taking notes, helping with outreach, and creating content to post on social media. This is a great way to complete your college volunteer hours, enhance your skills, develop leadership, and network with our partners. To learn more, please contact [Minerva Mendoza](#) of AFSC.



From left: Guisela Ramos, Yajaira Flores, Ericson Amaya and Garcia-Martinez

67 Sueños, Oakland

AFSC work with youth in Oakland receives prestigious award

This year, AFSC’s 67 Sueños program received the Youth Power Partner Award from The California Endowment Fund. Founded in 2010, 67 Sueños is a youth organizing and leadership development program for undocumented youth and youth from mixed-status families living in Oakland. Learn more in this [video](#).

No 30-Foot Walls at Friendship Park Instead of 30-FOOT WALLS, we want to build community, maintain a binational garden, support family reunions, and continue to gather for Border Church!

SPEAKERS:



Pedro Rios is director of the American Friends Service Committee’s U.S./Mexico Border Program and has worked for AFSC since 2003. He oversees a program that documents abuses by law enforcement agencies, collaborates with community groups, advocates for policy change, and works with migrant communities to build collective leadership locally and throughout the border region. Pedro has a master’s degree in Ethnic Studies from San Francisco State University. Pedro is also a photographer and a writer.

Pedro Rios of AFSC on a virtual panel discussion to save Friendship Park

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

AFSC and partners push for a halt to border construction

For several weeks, AFSC San Diego and community groups have protested plans for replacement 30-foot border barriers at Friendship Park. For decades, the park has served as a binational meeting place on the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Recently, the Biden administration responded to concerns. It [announced](#) it would halt construction and continue conversations with community members.



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Coloradoans rally for people with DACA

AFSC and allies in Denver recently gathered in support of people with DACA. (View coverage on [TV](#) and [Facebook](#).) AFSC and partners have also published a [bilingual guide](#) about next steps for people with DACA, their families and communities. Over the last decade, more than 830,000 young people have been protected under DACA. The vast majority of DACA recipients in the workplace are employed in jobs deemed “essential.” DACA is under threat of being ended in the courts this fall, making congressional action even more critical. Learn more [here](#) about why the DREAM Act isn’t so dreamy and what Congress can do instead.



People pray at the Rio Grande Photo: Patrick Jaramillo

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Seeking a new consciousness around water and all beings

“In the last days of July, the Rio Grande ran dry for the first time in 40 years,” [writes](#) Patrick Jaramillo of AFSC. “The sight of the dry riverbed was a look into our future, and it made people feel things that they had not felt when reading articles, looking at charts or watching news stories. To honor those feelings and to create space for people, AFSC New Mexico and partners invited people to gather at the river to offer prayers and reflections, to grieve and mourn and find hope.”



Pedro Sosa, left, and Alonso Oliveros

Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

AFSC welcomes Alonso Oliveros

Pedro Sosa of AFSC recently announced the hiring of Alonso Oliveros as program associate. Alonso writes: “I’m the son of immigrant parents from San Luis Potosi and Venado, S.L.P., Mexico. I was born and raised in Oregon. I previously worked for Causa Oregon, an immigrant’s rights organization where I had the pleasure of collaborating with Pedro and where I learned about the great history, mission and people of AFSC. I’m very excited to join AFSC and look forward to meeting everyone.”



Protesting at General Mills HQ in Minneapolis Photo: Emma Leigh Sron

Economic Activism Program, Oakland

The Pillsbury family celebrates a win for Palestinian rights

Last year, Pillsbury family members made the tough decision to call for a boycott of their own family brand, established by their ancestor 150 years ago. They joined AFSC and partners to urge General Mills to stop manufacturing Pillsbury products on stolen Palestinian land. Today, they’re enjoying cookie dough again after [celebrating General Mills’ decision to divest from the occupation.](#)



At a migration gathering in Mexico last weekend, AFSC staff from around the world took this photo to show solidarity with colleagues and all Palestinians in Gaza.

End the blockade on Gaza

Recent Israeli attacks on Gaza killed at least 45 people and wounded hundreds more. While a ceasefire is welcome, the violence of Israel's ongoing blockade on Gaza continues. The Gaza economy has been destroyed, and over 80% of people rely on international assistance to survive. [**Tell Congress: Call for an immediate, complete, and unconditional end to the blockade.**](#)

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, and support the AFSC West Region by [**donating**](#) today. Please share this subscription [link](#) for this newsletter with others. Thank you!

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Founded in 1917, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is an international Quaker organization that works on many social justice issues, including immigration, mass incarceration, youth civic engagement, and human rights in Palestine/Israel. With programs in 24 states and 15 countries, AFSC engages communities experiencing marginalization in the pursuit of shared security, based not on arms or coercion, but rather on creative nonviolence, sustainable economics and respect for all peoples.