



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**

## **AFSC West Region News – February 2022**

*Highlights 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](mailto:WestNews@afsc.org).*



*Economic Activism Program, Oakland*

### **Helping divest from Israeli apartheid**

In light of Amnesty International's new [report](#) detailing Israeli apartheid against Palestinians, AFSC encourages people to learn more by visiting our [Investigate](#) database and taking action with our partners at [No Tech for Apartheid](#).

Dov Baum of AFSC adds that, under the radar, more and more companies are stepping away from their unlawful and highly controversial business in the occupied Palestinian West Bank. Both Avgol Industries (now owned by the Thai Indorama Ventures) and Energix Renewable Energy divested last year from their settlement activities in the West Bank. Both were highlighted by the [UN list](#) of companies which support illegal settlements, and both were the targets of campaigns in the U.S. asking them to divest. [General Mills](#), which owns Pillsbury, is another target of divestment activism.



Sayrah Namaste co-directs AFSC's work in New Mexico

*People of the Land Program, Albuquerque*

### **New video thanks AFSC donors**

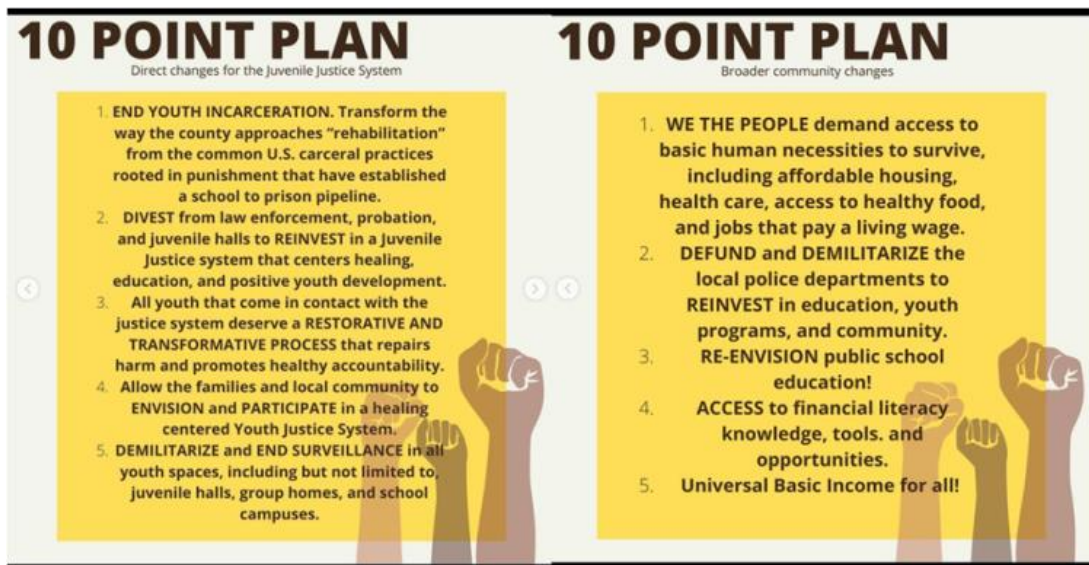
Sayrah Namaste, co-director of AFSC New Mexico, joins colleagues in [thanking](#) donors for their ongoing support of AFSC. Sayrah shared about AFSC's work to purchase over 22,000 pounds of produce from more than 30 family farms. AFSC then donated that food to New Mexico's largest food bank and 12 other food pantries. On this [podcast](#), co-director Patrick Jaramillo joins Sayrah in discussing AFSC's work to promote climate justice.



*Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington*

### **Deadline is February 22 for Project Associate applications**

Do you know someone interested in advancing the human rights and self-determination of migrant communities? AFSC in Oregon-Washington is hiring a new position to support policy advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels. This person will help develop and implement an advocacy plan in collaboration with local immigrant leaders and human rights committees. Learn [more](#).



67 Sueños, Oakland

### Plans reimagine juvenile justice, reinvestment in community

From [Instagram](#): Through Free Our Kids in the Youth Coach Up space, we the youth have been thinking critically about the impact of the criminal justice system on our community here in Oakland and beyond. Inspired by the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords, we created a 10-point plan that demands our county reimagine the juvenile justice system. We need to shift away from the current hyper-criminalizing and punishment of youth of color and instead focus on rehabilitation and a healing approach that centers community.

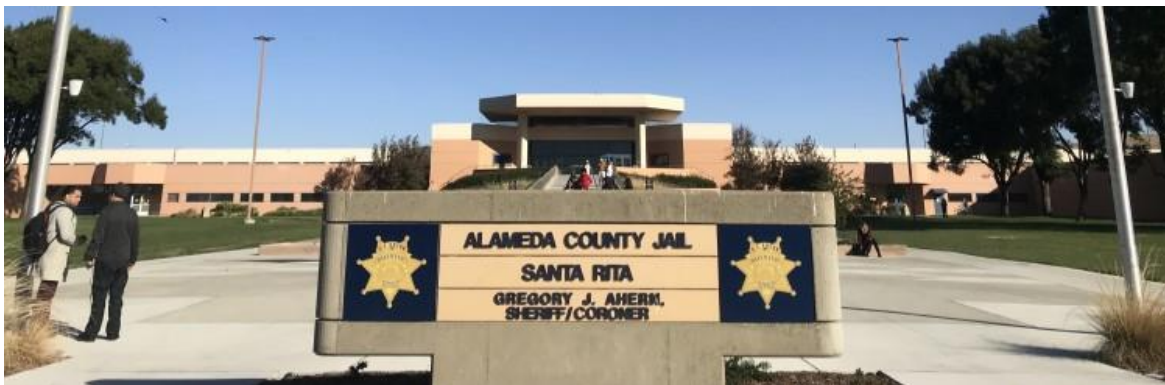


photo: Davis Vanguard

Healing Justice Program, Oakland

### Building concern over millions proposed for county jail

AFSC recently mobilized people to attend a press conference in connection with a federal court hearing on a [proposed settlement](#) for the Alameda County Jail, which has horrendous conditions for people with mental illness. According to John Lindsay-Poland of AFSC, the proposed settlement would hire hundreds of new permanent deputies, making the jail the “go-to” for mental health care. In December, AFSC collaborated with other groups on an extensive objection to this settlement solidifying this commitment of the county budget to the jail.





*Immigrant Rights Program, Denver*

### **Valentines say: Love knows no borders, no walls**

On Friday, February 11 at noon MT, AFSC Colorado will deliver hundreds of handmade Valentines to the GEO immigrant detention center to demonstrate our “Love Knows No Walls.” We will livestream the delivery and conversation on [Facebook](#). You can support this action by sharing this livestream and completing the phrase “When Love Knows No Walls, I/we will...” Join us on February 11 and post your comments and/or a picture with a heart you've drawn for someone. This action is part of AFSC’s national campaign to [#FreeThemAll!](#)



*From left, Paulina Rodriguez Ruiz and Michael Piña*

*Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno*

### **Creating safe spaces for QTBIPOC people in the Central Valley**

AFSC PVI ArteVism Fellows Paulina Rodriguez Ruiz and Michael Piña were interviewed recently in connection with *Queer in the Valley—Celebrating Past, Current, and Future QTBIPOC People in The Central Valley*. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to the Omicron surge, yet it’s well [worth a listen](#) to Paulina and Michael as they share their thoughts about the need for safe spaces for QTBIPOC people to express their intersectional identities.



*The Border Patrol – photo Pedro Rios*

*US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego*

### **The US Border Patrol is hiding information – and Congress needs to act**

“At least since 1987, the United States Border Patrol has operated unsanctioned cover-up units known as Critical Incident Teams,” writes Pedro Rios of AFSC. “These special units have concealed, altered and destroyed evidence to obstruct justice, and now Congress has requested an investigation into them and asked that Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Border Patrol’s parent agency, turn over documents related to them. But Congress doesn’t have to wait for the documents. It can end these secretive units now and open the door to prosecuting agents who have obstructed justice.” Read [more](#).



*Another pollinator for justice in Los Angeles*

*Roots for Peace (R4P) Program, Los Angeles*

### **Roots for Peace is excited to welcome our new program director**

Adalberto Rios joins AFSC with a background in curriculum development, youth empowerment and community organizing. He brings eight years of experience working with youth, developing and running youth programs, and centering community-driven praxis in his organizing work. At his core, Adalberto believes that if any meaningful change is to take place in combating the inequities in communities like his own of Compton, people who live in the center of the margins have to be at the helm of shaping their realities.



AFSC regional staff celebrate with Just Communities Arizona.

## Short takes

The work of some of AFSC's newest alumni, the staff of Just Communities Arizona, is the subject of this [podcast](#)....Read AFSC's statement on military escalation in Russia and Ukraine – and [take action](#).... Join AFSC's [#FreeThemAll](#) actions around the country on Valentine's Day weekend; this [Facebook Live](#) includes more info.... Check out AFSC's new [Planned Giving website](#), our new [Emerging Leaders for Liberation](#) youth cohort, and the work of AFSC in the [Midwest](#) and [South](#).

## 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.*