



**American Friends
Service Committee**

AFSC West Region News – June 2020

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.



Memorial to George Floyd in Minneapolis (photo: Shanene Herbert)

Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

AFSC recommits to dismantling the racist system

In the wake of the police murder of George Floyd and subsequent repression of protestors, AFSC offices across the West Region and around the world are standing in **solidarity** with all those who seek full equity and justice. On **Instagram**, the LA Roots for Peace Program writes: “We stand with our AFSC comrades in Minneapolis who are holding space for young people and are calling for defunding the police and investing in community. We need this in every city, including Los Angeles.” AFSC urges people to take the **People's Budget survey** and get involved in LA.

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.



Demonstrating outside an HP shareholder meeting

Economic Activism Program, Oakland

New summer school to teach corporate research for social justice

We're excited to announce the Economic Activism Program's inaugural [summer school](#) and service-learning session, which will bring together a cohort of about a dozen participants for online training in corporate research for activism. This two-month program will consist of weekly three-hour sessions, including basic economic and financial literacy, divestment and boycott strategies, and a skills lab guiding participants in corporate research and campaign research. All sessions will be online. Stipends available; [apply by June 10](#).



Photo: Jordan Garcia

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

For-profit detention center rejects masks as the virus spreads

In May, AFSC staff, family members of detainees, and partner organizations, including [Doctors for Camp Closure](#), attempted to [deliver](#) hundreds of surgical masks to immigrants detained inside the for-profit GEO Immigrant Detention Center near Denver. Their donation of masks was rejected even as cases of COVID-19 increase. "ICE should immediately act to safely release detainees to loved ones in the community and close the GEO facility," said Jennifer Piper of AFSC in this [article](#).



Celebrating San Ysidro Day in New Mexico

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Celebrating (and adapting) a spiritual and cultural tradition

AFSC's work to accompany land-based people in New Mexico in their struggle for self-determination includes supporting their spiritual and cultural traditions around love of the land and water. For hundreds of years on May 15, people have marked the Feast of San Ysidro Labrador and his wife, Santa Maria de la Cabeza, both patron saints of farmers. This year, in light of the challenges posed by COVID-19, they did what humans so skillfully do: adapt. [Learn more about this unique celebration.](#)



Masks made by Syrian refugees for farmworkers

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Protecting each other during the pandemic

PVI's COVID-19 activities through our "Protecting Each Other" project include mask making by Syrian refugees for farmworkers and advocating with local and state officials to ensure that testing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is accessible and free for essential workers. On May 26, PVI signed this [letter to Gov. Gavin Newsom](#) by a group of Central Valley Chicano/Mexican American activists, including Dolores Huerta and several Latinx mayors. Read [more](#) about PVI's recent work.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Support undocumented families today

67 Sueños is calling for support for our undocumented youth and mixed-status families during COVID-19. During our online sessions (see above), youth have told us about experiencing financial hardships and life difficulties such as unemployment and reduced work hours, food and rent insecurity, and lack of other basic needs. Because our federal government fails to provide undocumented and many mixed-status families with relief, it is important that we stand in solidarity with those who are particularly vulnerable during these times. **Please give today**, and follow 67 Sueños on **Instagram**.



Delivering masks to farmworkers. Photo: Beth Ronk

Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Standing in solidarity with farmworkers

AFSC is working closely with partners and friends to provide **popular educational materials** for hundreds of farmworkers while standing with workers who've initiated strikes at six fruit-processing companies. We're urging the companies to negotiate with their workers and not retaliate against them, and we're asking a simple question of government officials: "Why is the agricultural industry continuously allowed to put profit over the lives of farmworkers?" More on **Facebook**.

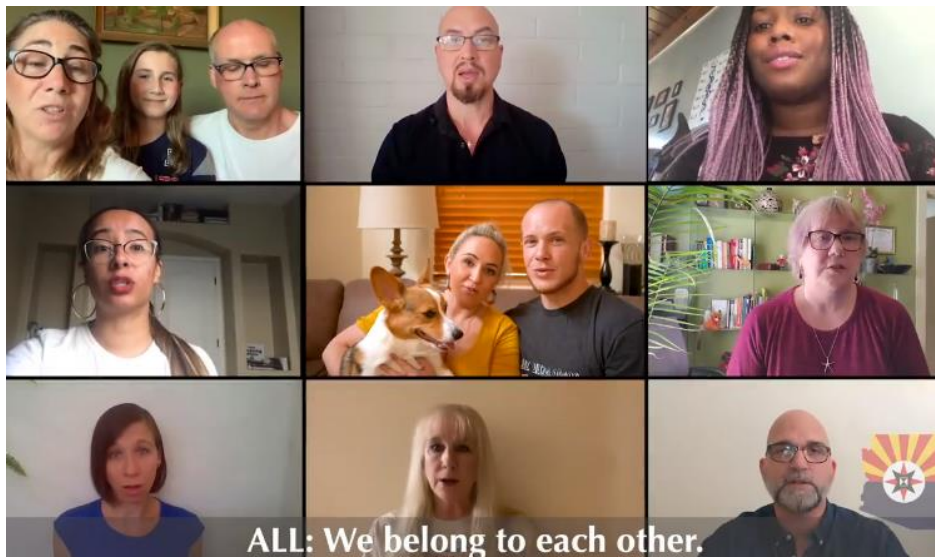


AFSC and partners attempt to deliver 800 facemasks to San Diego's Otay Mesa Detention Center. (Photo: Pedro Rios)

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Immigrant Relief Fund helping people left out

The **Immigrant Relief Fund** has benefited many people who have had their hours reduced, are temporarily not working, or have lost their jobs—individuals historically excluded from SNAP, housing assistance, and other social safety net programs because of their immigration status. AFSC staff was instrumental in directing a \$6,000 seed grant from Oxfam to start the fund, which has since grown with contributions from foundations, organizations, and individuals like you. The fund is now administered by AFSC's sister organization, Alliance San Diego. Please consider a **donation** today.



Arizona Program, Tucson

Acting in solidarity for justice for all

In light of the police killing of George Floyd and violent repression of protesters, the Arizona Program is asking people to review this **resource list** for Arizona organizations and bail funds you should financially support, elected leaders you should contact, and Black-owned businesses you should patronize. Also, AFSC encourages people to support **The Second Chances Act** and watch this inspiring **video**, entitled "We Belong to Each Other," highlighting AFSC's work to end the punishment system.



: Paul Redd with his sister, Alvina Williams (right) and attorney Danielle Harris of the SF Public Defender's Office. (Photo: Laura Magnani)

Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Freed after 44 years in prison, Paul Redd continues advocacy work

Paul Redd, an icon of the movement against solitary confinement in California, was recently **released** after 44 years in prison, 30 of them in isolation. AFSC first published Paul's ideas on isolation and consciousness in our Survival's Manual in 1998. Now he will join AFSC's legislative effort to require due process and corroboration before in-custody "information" is used against people in prison. The bill passed its first committee hearing May 20 and is on its way, attracting attention from all over the country. The key to such changes is lifting up the voices of those directly impacted either because they've been **gang validated**, over classified, or denied parole. All of these actions have been taken against Paul.



One next step

AFSC has shared this **action alert** to defund police, this **press release** on George Floyd's murder, and these **notes** for white people taking part in #BlackLivesMatter protests.

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!