



**American Friends
Service Committee**

AFSC West Region News – November 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.

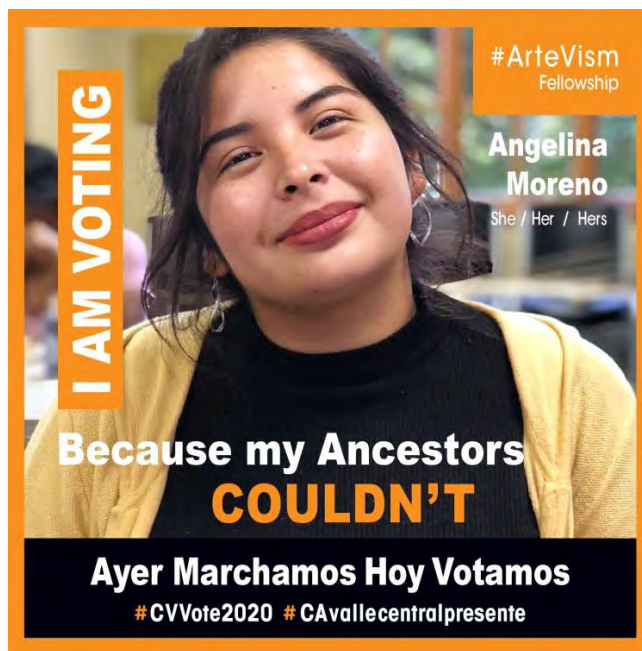


Arizona Program, Tucson

Arizonans approve Prop 207, the “Smart and Safe Act”

Caroline Isaacs of AFSC offers this [recap of election results in Arizona](#), including overwhelming approval of progressive changes regarding marijuana possession, DUI laws, expungement of certain records, and a new Justice Reinvestment Fund to support community-based programs. Colleague Becca Fealk is quoted in this [article about the marijuana law changes](#), Joe Watson shares about the [challenges to voting](#) for people incarcerated but not yet convicted of a crime, and new #ReFramingJustice organizer Enrique Olivares-Pelayo talks about [voting rights restoration](#).

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.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

ArteVism Fellows develop social media campaign on voting

Myrna Nateras Martinez of AFSC [writes](#) that PVI's ArteVism Fellows developed a social media campaign to provide a platform for Latinx, Indigenous and other youth of color to express why it was important for them to participate in the 2020 elections. The Fellows developed graphics and crafted the messaging. Voting provides hope for a future in which youth of color would be free to walk on the streets without fear of being stopped by the police.



Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Addressing militarized policing and decarceration in California

On a recent [AFSC Facebook Live](#), Chris Chavers and John Lindsay-Poland talk about AFSC's work to end militarized policing and build support for decarceration. Along with AFSC's 67 Sueños staff and partners, they invite you to a [Youth-led Town Hall on Militarized Policing in Oakland](#) on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 5 pm PT. Fatimeh Khan of AFSC shares this [summary of healing justice legislation](#) in the California Assembly and propositions considered by voters.



photo: Angelina Lopez-Brody

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Great Carrot Crunch is a win-win for youth and sustainable farmers

Angelina Lopez-Brody writes about AFSC New Mexico's latest **Great Carrot Crunch Campaign** that's supporting local farmers while getting nutritious food into the hands of hundreds of youth. "We believe all people, regardless of income, should have access to healthy food," Angelina writes. "AFSC continues to focus on supporting our small-scale sustainable farms during this pandemic. We hope these practices can become a model for how we can shift systems in the face of increasing climate change."



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Denver more than doubles immigrant defense fund

From **Facebook**: Years of organizing by AFSC and its partners, including Coloradoans For Immigrant Rights and Not1More, resulted in an important victory recently. The City and County of Denver voted to increase their funding of the Immigrant Legal Services Defense fund by \$300,000 for a total of \$500,000 for 2021. We'll continue to organize to make that funding permanent and to create a statewide fund until we reach universal representation. With COVID outbreaks at the GEO immigrant detention facility in Aurora, access to effective legal counsel is needed now more than ever.



Roots for Peace (R4P) Program, Los Angeles

Joy and celebration for accomplishments in a heavy year

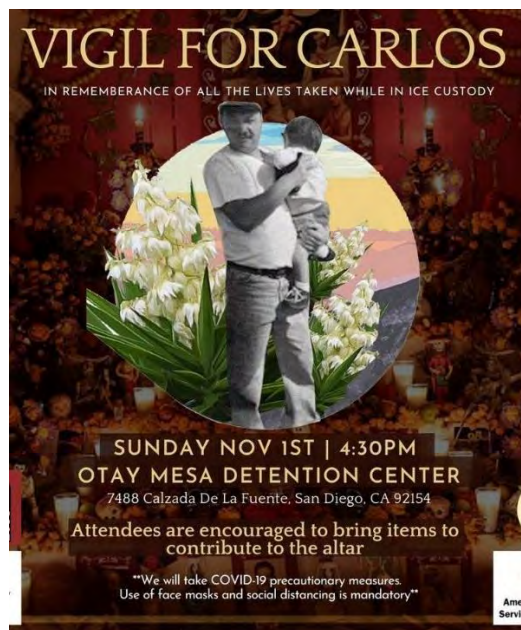
From [Instagram](#): Wow, what a year – it took a village to make all that we accomplished possible. As heavy as the year continues to be, celebration and joy are essential....First, we hosted the first ever R4P virtual freedom school...Then we supported a powerful multilingual international youth summit with AFSC sibling programs, and R4P youth rocked the open mic session. Finally, we teamed up with [@lacompost](#) on a workshop for youth and members of the farm. Gratitude to all the young people, facilitators, and adult allies who made this and so much more possible this year.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Celebrating *Dia De Los Muertos*

Every year during the fall, 67 Sueños youth spend time learning the history of *Dia De Los Muertos* and building an altar that highlights a specific theme while also honoring our community and loved ones. Although this year we could not build a physical altar together, we decided to create a digital altar on our timeline. Check out [67 Sueños on Instagram](#) for a series of posts showcasing our youth's art, stories, and poetry that were created for this special celebration.



US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Vigil memorializes first person to die of COVID-19 under ICE custody
For *Dia De Los Muertos*, AFSC and partners organized a [vigil in memory of Carlos Escobar Mejia](#). The vigil was held at the Otay Mesa Detention Center, where he was detained before being transferred to a local hospital where he died in May 2020 as a result of complications from COVID-19. Carlos was the first person to die of COVID-19 under ICE custody. See this related [article in Spanish](#).



Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Extending a helping hand to victims of wildfires

AFSC and a partner organization, *Mano a Mano*, recently brought donations from people in Salem and Portland to families affected by the wildfire in Talent and Phoenix, Oregon. [Pedro Sosa of AFSC](#) reports that the Almeda Fire sparked up in early September near Ashland. Driven by a warm, dry wind, it sped north to the commercial hub of Medford, Phoenix and Talent. According to conversations AFSC had with community members, more than 3000 houses burned.



Economic Activism Program, Oakland

As holidays approach, boycott Pillsbury

A recent [column in the Whitman Wire](#) explains why people should join the [Pillsbury boycott effort promoted by AFSC](#) and others. General Mills, which owns Pillsbury, is “exploiting Palestinian land and taking water and natural resources to supply their needs without any regard for Palestinian authority or autonomy,” writes Scout Hutchinson. “General Mills is simply continuing to profit from illegal occupation, no matter how much they frame it as a safe and inclusive working environment.” Check out [AFSC’s Investigate tool](#) for a profile of the company.

Short takes

[Give today to support Guatemalans](#) devastated by Hurricane Eta....AFSC is calling for the [restoration of funding for UNWRA](#), the primary health, education, and assistance provider to millions of Palestinian refugees across the Middle East.... Read AFSC’s statement on why [we can’t have healing without reckoning](#)....AFSC’s dynamic [Strategic Plan](#) for the next 10 years is now online....Catch up with other AFSC alumni through the [fall newsletter](#)....Learn these do’s and don’ts of [bystander intervention](#).... Read about AFSC’s latest work in the [Midwest Region](#) and [South Region](#).

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!