



**American Friends
Service Committee**

AFSC West Region News – March 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.



The UN Human Rights Council

Economic Activism Program, Oakland

UN lists companies doing business in illegal Israeli settlements

In February, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights [published](#) a list of companies doing business in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory. The U.N. list is incomplete and omits many companies with confirmed, ongoing, and significant involvement in the Israeli settlements. Nevertheless, the mere publication of this list is a major victory for human rights, as the governments of the U.S. and Israel managed to block its publication for almost three years. To view the full list, and to screen your investments for human rights violations, check out [AFSC's Investigate website](#).

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.



Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

Exploring resistance in gardens and communities

Young people involved with AFSC's Roots for Peace Program recently met with Freemont High School's Gardening Apprenticeship Program. AFSC youth program facilitators gave an "Intro to Inequity & Resistance in the Food System" workshop where people explored topics like colonization, systemic inequity and the amazing forces of resistance in our communities and worldwide. Coming soon is AFSC's sixth annual Freedom School to be led by R4P alumni Brenda, Marlen and Xochil. Follow [R4P on Instagram](#) to learn more.



Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

Celebrating the legacy of Norman Mineta

PVI was proud to be a community partner for a February screening of [Norman Mineta and his Legacy](#), followed by a fireside chat with Secretary Mineta. The documentary "follows his experience as a Japanese American inside a US concentration camp to his rise to prominence, making him one of the most influential Asian Americans in US history. A bipartisan visionary who championed political civility, he is a change maker whose legacy includes a lifelong commitment to social justice."



Photo: Pedro Sosa

Project Voice Immigrant Rights Program, Oregon-Washington

Opposing concentration camps—then and now

AFSC joined with other groups, including [Doctors for Camp Closure](#), for a day of remembrance and action at Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA. NWDC is one of the largest immigration prisons in the country with a capacity of 1575 people. Some people are held for months and even years awaiting the outcome of their deportation cases; nearly 90% lack legal representation. Survivors and descendants of Japanese American WWII incarceration stood united with immigrants and allies to say, “Stop Repeating History!”



*From left: Ivette Alé of Dignity and Power Now, California Assembly Member Sydney Kamlager from Los Angeles, and California State Auditor Elaine Howle
(Photo: Office of Sydney Kamlager)*

Healing Justice Program, Oakland

Scrutinizing the jails in California

Grassroots campaigns in California to hold sheriffs responsible for their use of public funds to run county jails took an important step forward at the end of February, when the state legislature [authorized an audit](#) of jail operations in Los Angeles, Alameda and Fresno counties. In Alameda County, AFSC has been part of a coalition to audit the performance of Sheriff Greg Ahern, who runs Santa Rita Jail, the fifth largest jail in the country. The jail has had [47 in-custody deaths since 2014](#), including two in the last month alone, and paid out more in civil rights abuse settlements than any other law enforcement agency in the San Francisco Bay Area. Eighty-three percent of prisoners in Alameda County have not yet been sentenced, one of the highest rates in the state. Read [more](#) about this important opening.



From left: Kathy Bougher of Colorado and AFSC El Salvador staff Berta Guevara, Rebeca Sandoval and Flora de Maria Beloso

Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

Connecting Colorado and El Salvador

[Kathy Bougher](#) is an educator, writer and volunteer with [Coloradoans For Immigrant Rights](#) (CFIR), a project of AFSC Colorado. In this wide-ranging [interview](#), she talks about connecting with AFSC staff in El Salvador and shares about her immigrant rights work in El Salvador and at home in Denver. Kathy has spent years supporting and researching the rise of feminist organizations in El Salvador, including their connection to migrant justice. She was recently quoted in this [Yes! Magazine article](#) about AFSC’s new resource, [Crossing South](#).



Photo: Angelina Lopez-Brody

People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Family farmers gather to share challenges, promote local food

“The best part is always seeing familiar faces and connecting with many new people.” That was the sentiment of one of many small-scale family farmers from around New Mexico, including three tribes, who came together recently at the [Indian Pueblo Cultural Center](#) in Albuquerque to participate in the 8th annual AFSC Farmer Gathering. The purpose of the gathering is to create a space for farmers to learn from each other about their sustainable agricultural practices, build relationships and find ways to cooperatively work together to feed their communities. Read [more](#).



Photo: Pedro Rios

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Mural to memorialize San Diego man killed by border agents

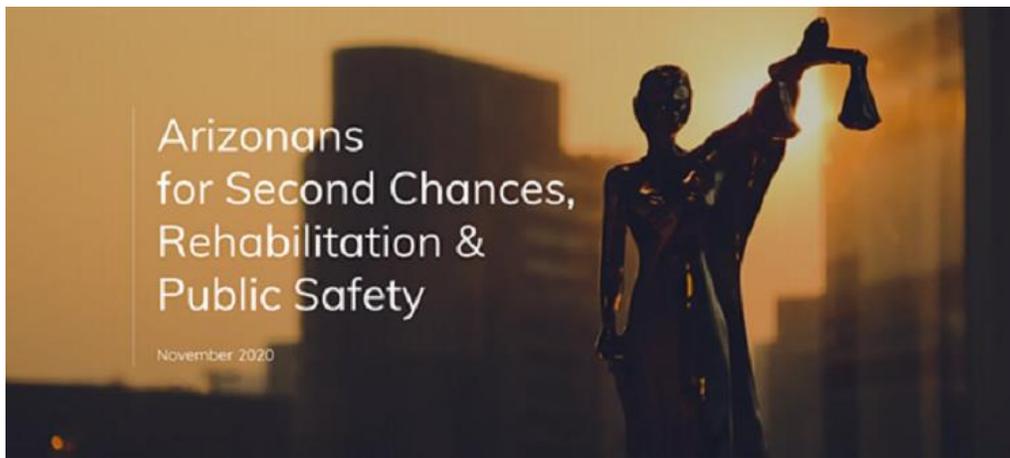
AFSC, Alliance San Diego, and the family of Anastasio Hernandez Rojas are teaming up to create a mural honoring the life of Anastasio, a longtime resident of San Diego who was beaten, shot with a Taser and killed by border agents at the San Ysidro Port of Entry, on May 28, 2010. Priming began recently on the surface for this important mural. Donations accepted [here](#). In other news, Pedro Rios was [quoted](#) about ICE subpoenas of the San Diego Sheriff's Department.



67 Sueños, Oakland

Youth explore art and symbolism

The photo above depicts an art project that 67 Sueños has been working on with our Moving Everyone to Achievement (META) youth. Each young person recently had the chance to learn about the Palabra symbol and give their own twist to it. We will be putting it together to make a 67 Sueños quilt. Stay tuned for the final project via [Instagram](#)! In other news, 67 Sueños has been partnering with other groups to get police out of the public schools in Oakland. The program's annual Undocurun is set for May 9.



Arizona Program, Tucson

Advocating for second chances in Arizona

In Arizona, AFSC filed a [ballot initiative](#) called the Second Chances, Rehabilitation, & Public Safety Act. More than 200,000 signatures must be collected by July 2 to ensure the initiative is included on the general election ballot in November. [Stay up to date](#) with AFSC's advocacy work in the Arizona legislature.

Short takes

[Steven Deutsch](#), Oregon labor leader and Quaker, passed away February 10....The next [White Privilege Conference](#) is set for April 1-4 in Mesa, Arizona....The next [retreat](#) for Friends of Color in the West will be held in Portland, Oregon April 17-19....Learn about the [Nakani Native Program](#), an outgrowth of AFSC's former Northwest Indian Program....AFSC has asked its staff to [work from home](#) for the rest of March due to the coronavirus outbreak.

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 AFSC by [donating](#) today. Please share this subscription [link](#) for this newsletter with others. Thank you!