

friends:

Prompted by the impending elections, we at Pangea are thinking about what electoral politics means for the immigrants rights movement. We are sharing some of what we know in this month's newsletter.

IMMIGRANTS HAVE A VOICE,
POWER, AND HOLD IN THEIR HANDS
THE KEY TO THEIR OWN
LIBERATION



Throughout our nation's history, immigrants and people of color have mobilized for the minimal rights and dignity they have in spite of whoever was in political office.

The criminalization of immigrants was and is a bipartisan project. The anti-immigrant laws that the current Administration employs were enacted in 1996 by a Democratic Administration and the machinery for mass detention and deportation were created by the Obama Administration.

Since then, directly affected immigrants have been agents of change in their own communities, taking direct action despite lacking the right to vote: shutting down major cities in La Gran Huelga of 2006, laying in front of buses driving migrants out of detention centers, staging hunger strikes, organizing rallies, and holding sit-ins at the offices of prominent public officials.

City by City

County by County

State by State

**Immigrants have cut the
capacity of the U.S.
deportation machine**



**BY MORE THAN
ONE-THIRD!**

Sanctuary policies that prevent cooperation between local law enforcement and ICE are so widespread, that even the most overtly anti-immigrant administration in recent memory cannot fully reverse the progress we have made.

We dedicate this newsletter to immigrants who, despite not having the right to vote, continue to lead the way towards a more inclusive future for this country. We hope this newsletter inspires people to believe and invest in not only our country's political leadership but in the leadership of immigrants.

Regardless of the
outcome of this
election, our
community will
continue to advocate
for our shared
**humanity, dignity, and
freedom.**

**BIANCA, CELINE, EDWIN, ESPERANZA, ETAN, GLADYS,
JEHAN, LUIS ANGEL, MARIE, MARIEL, NILOU, PETE,
ROXANA, SEAN, AND XIMENA**

Papeles Para Todos

Pangea clients and other immigrant leaders create a Documents for All campaign, inspired by the Portuguese government who granted citizenship to its immigrants during the pandemic.

“

The United States has done much to create our traumas and to use them to silence us, to try to make us believe that we are not worthy of the same rights as citizens. But we know this is a lie. We are part of this world. And just as we have served the people in power, the people in power will serve us.

”


PASOS: CAMPAÑA PAPELES PARA TODOS
("DOCUMENTS FOR ALL CAMPAIGN")

Who is PASOS?

Despite being denied the right to vote, the undocumented community in the United States is organizing for a better future. Immigrants are on the frontlines of the pandemic as essential workers yet excluded from any relief. This has caused immigrants to rely on their own collective power to create political solutions. In Santa Clara County our clients joined together with other immigrant leaders to form PASOS (Personas Activas Sobresalientes Organizando Soluciones), a group of more than 30 community leaders building and exerting their community's political, economic, and moral power to advance immigrant rights.

Inspired by the victory of immigrants in Portugal who were granted citizenship during the pandemic, PASOS launched the “Papeles Para Todos” (Documents for All) campaign.

Together with immigrant leaders from Monterey County, Los Angeles County, and upstate New York, immigrant leaders in Santa Clara County are building a mass immigrant rights movement so that they can live without fear or worry about their immigration status. PASOS members developed the following five demands.



Documents for all.

No one is excluded.

**Moratorium on raids
and deportations.**

**Rescind the restrictions on asylum,
at the border and in the courts.**

Rescind the Muslim Ban.

Close the detention centers.

No more cages.

The Papeles Para Todos campaign builds leadership through community education at the grassroots, and by building alliances with other exploited and oppressed communities fighting for justice. When police murdered George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, PASOS members joined Black Lives Matter protests in the streets, while also organizing campaigns to address anti-Blackness in the immigrant community itself. Regardless of who wins the presidential election, immigrant leaders are building a movement capable of holding whoever sits in power accountable.

“Our fate is in our hands, not in theirs. We must speak our demands with the voices of 11 million undocumented immigrants.”

- Campaña Papeles Para Todos.

AYDE ROBLES

IMMIGRANT LEADER AND PASOS MEMBER

In 2019, ICE arrested my husband. The lady I was working for gave me a card with the number of the Santa Clara County Rapid Response hotline. I had never heard of it before. I called, and an attorney got in touch with my husband in detention. The person on the hotline also invited me to a PASOS meeting. It was a know-your-rights workshop. I wanted to know my rights, and know how to defend myself if ICE came back. I wanted to teach this to my children.

Through my involvement with PASOS, I know the rights of immigrants in this country. We have rights, and they have to be respected. Even though we're not citizens, we can bring information to others. We have a voice to raise. We need to stand together and be united.

Next week, we are marching in San Jose. We are demanding that ICE stop arresting people during the pandemic. We are demanding that they liberate people in detention who are getting sick with COVID-19. San Jose is hiring a new police chief. We are showing up at community meetings and explaining that we want someone who is on the side of the people. Someone who will respect our Sanctuary protocols. Someone who will stop the shootings by police. Someone who will say that Black Lives Matter.

I.C.E: STOP ALL DEPORTATIONS AND ARRESTS



I.C.E continues to terrorize our communities! With the new attacks to sanctuary cities , our communities continue to be at risk of being separated. I.C.E continues to arrest our community despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

**JOIN US FOR OUR PRESS CONFERENCE
THIS WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28TH AT 6PM
AT THE FEDERAL BUILDING (280 SOUTH 1ST ST,
SAN JOSE CA. 95113)**

WE DEMAND:

**A stop to all
deportations
and arrests
immediately**

**The release of
everyone in
detention
centers**

**CITIZENSHIP FOR
ALL**

This event is a collaboration between Personas Activas Sobresalientes Organizando Soluciones (PASOS), Sacred Heart Community Service, LUNA, Amigos de Guadalupe, Promotoras of the Rapid Response Network and Pangea Legal services. For more information call (408)648-8780

Community Organizing and Advocacy is Stopping Deportations

Spotlight on Sanctuary Policies

By Sean McMahon, Immigration Attorney & Co-Director of Pangea Legal Services

Prompted by a colleague's question, I have been thinking about the work of the immigrants rights movement over the past 15 years and wondered whether years of trying to decouple the criminal and immigration systems at the local and state level has mattered. When I was in college, in the late Jurassic period, we were talking about the evils of the Secure Communities program. Today, we are still fighting cooperation with ICE even here in the Bay Area.

Recently reporter Jacob Soboroff synthesized TRAC data and academic work done by others, to show how drastically ICE detainers have declined in the past decade, and how that has radically limited the number of deportations the Trump administration has been able to effectuate. I was vaguely aware of this but hadn't seen how stark the numbers were.

ICE DETAINER REQUESTS

27,000

(2012)



8,000

(2019)

TOTAL REMOVAL

407,000

(2012)



267,000

(2019)

ICE “detainers,” requests for local agencies to hold immigrants and give them to ICE, have dropped to 8,000 nationwide, from a peak of 27,000 in 2012. Total removals in 2019 were down to 267,000, from a peak of 407,000 in 2012.

Each year, the Trump admin has not even reached 2/3 of the number of deportations executed in Obama's first term.

Soboroff doesn't draw the final conclusion, but I will: organizers and advocates have been so effective in the past 15 years--city by city, county by county, state by state--that we cut the capacity of the deportation machine by more than one-third. Even the most overtly anti-immigrant administration in recent memory cannot fully reverse the progress we made.

Onward, until the machine ceases to exist.

San Mateo County Community Advocates for Immigrant Rights

TRUTH Act Forum *to demand* **ICE out of San Mateo County**

Save the Date!

Virtual Forum Tuesday, October 27, 2020 @ 6 PM
RSVP at bit.ly/iceoutofsmc for more details

#StopICEtransfers

San Mateo County Coalition for Immigrant Rights



Photo by
Brooke Anderson

Did you know? From 2018-2020, the SMC Sheriff's Office handed nearly **100 people** to ICE!

Over the past two years, the San Mateo County Sheriff's office handed nearly 100 people directly to ICE when they were released from jail instead of letting them go home to their families and communities. This includes at least six San Mateo County residents that were transferred to ICE during the pandemic, risking people's lives and worsening our public health crisis.

On October 27th, Pangea as part of the San Mateo County Coalition for Immigrant Rights (SMCCIR), joined the TRUTH Act Forum with hopes of ending all of San Mateo County's cooperation with ICE and creating a sanctuary policy. There were over 70 comments at this public committee hearing, all in favor of getting ICE out of San Mateo. Speakers included undocumented immigrants, formerly incarcerated immigrants, survivors of domestic violence who were criminalized for their self-defense acts, a former San Mateo resident who had been wrongfully deported and called in all the way from Mexico, and a PhD student who studies infectious diseases who addressed the public health risks of ICE transfers.

Commenters highlighted that ICE is a rogue agency, routinely violates human rights, is a public health menace, that deportations harm other family members in the community, and that compounding criminal arrest with deportation is a double punishment that falls only on immigrants.

“I have lived in San Mateo for more than 20 years and I want to demand that the San Mateo Sheriff stop collaborating with ICE... Family separation that is caused by ICE affects our children. How would you feel if you were separated from your children? How would you feel if you got sick and did not receive medical attention?”

Public comment by Pangea client, Juan Jacop, who was formerly detained by ICE at the Yuba County Jail and unjustly separated from his children and family.

The outcome of this forum was unprecedented. While two supervisors did not support ending ICE activity in San Mateo County, two other supervisors, publicly agreed to get ICE out of San Mateo County for the first time ever. This is incredible progress and an enormous step forward.

Our community has never been so organized. We have grown massive momentum in San Mateo and will continue working together to put an end to the cruel tactics employed by ICE and our federal government, regardless of who takes the seat in November.

Spotlight on Joe Mejia



Activist, Writer, Paralegal, and Community Leader, Joe Mejia has a wealth of experience and knowledge that positively impacts every person who meets him. Joe is an asylum seeker represented by Pangea, who was released from the Yuba County Jail on July 28, 2020, after spending nearly 3 years in ICE custody following time served in state prison.

Joe experienced first hand how COVID-19 is ravaging prisons and jails across the state. Despite the threat of retaliation from jail guards, Joe along with other detained immigrants **organized** a work stoppage, hunger strikes, and acts of solidarity between detention facilities to highlight putrid detention conditions, lack of sanitary products, such as soap and hand sanitizer, lack of PPE for detainees and employees, and the impossibility of social distancing inside cages.

“They’re playing Russian Roulette with our lives. People are getting infected: Mesa Verde, Otay San Diego, I mean there’s infections right now as we speak in Bakersfield and these facilities know what’s going on, Gavin Newsom knows what’s going on and yet he’s doing nothing to prevent it, to stop it from further spreading. [ICE is] actually delivering, hand delivering, coronavirus to all these other countries when they’re deporting them: India, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, all these countries. [ICE knows] they have infected people and they continue to deport them into these countries that have little to no resources to combat COVID-19”

Joe Mejia on Democracy Now!
August 4, 2020



Since his release, Joe continues to support and uplift the demands of hunger strikers at the Yuba County Jail to meet directly with the captain to fulfill immediate needs.

Joe is currently attending Hartnell College where he is studying drug abuse treatment in the hopes of giving back to his community. He is also pursuing a fellowship to research ethnics studies, mass incarceration, immigration, and the issue of equity behind all these subtopics.

Today, Joe is working on his first book, based on his family's journey to the United States. See below for a snippet from the latest draft of his book, titled, "Dying to Belong" -

"The thick and dense jungle gave them a sense of security, they prayed that they would not be seen by the guerillas. The sound of combat boots racing, breaking foliage just a mere couple feet away from them. Slowly they could hear the terrifying sounds move further away from them until they eventually disappeared."

what do you think?

tell us!

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