



We're Still Walkin' Down the Road

Mission & Peacemaking News and Resources - Summer 2020 2nd Edition

News to Share

ICE Offering "Citizens Academy" Course with Training on Arresting Immigrants!?

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency is set to launch a six-week "Citizens Academy" course on immigration enforcement, which will include training for citizens on how to arrest undocumented immigrants.

A letter published online by the St. Louis *Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America* (IFCLA) appears to show ICE Chicago Field Office Director Robert Guadian inviting shareholders to participate in the course, which includes six days of training over a six-week period starting in September.

"You have been identified as a valued member of the community who may have interest in participating in the inaugural class of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Chicago Citizens Academy," the letter states.

Noting that the program is "the first of its kind," Guadian states that the program will "serve as a pilot for nationwide implementation." During the training, stakeholders would receive training on a number of "facets and responsibilities of ICE/ERO operations," he says. Included in the course would be training in "defensive tactics, firearms familiarization and targeted arrests."

Chicago Congressman Jesús 'Chuy' García said he was disturbed by the program, which he fears will lead to racial profiling, surveillance and potential violence.

"The first thing I thought was, 'is this a prank or fake news or what is this?' because it's appearing on social media and neither I or any of my staff had been alerted or reached out to by ICE," he said.

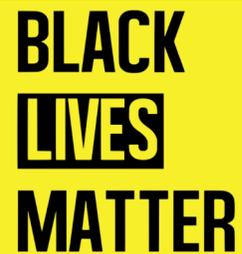
As a member of Congress, García had thought a program like this would have been brought to lawmakers' attention prior to its rollout, but it never was.

[Newsweek article on the controversial program.](#)



Special points of interest:

- "Citizens Academy"
- Asylum Advocacy Days
- Note from Cynthia Lorch
- Recovering Together:
Getting Cash to Communities



**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

*Mission
and
Peacemaking
Meets the 2nd
Monday of the
month, 7 p.m.
via Zoom -
Join Us!*

Summary—Asylum Virtual Advocacy Days

Sponsored by the Asylum Working Group (AWG) and the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC), 400 individuals from 46 states and the District of Columbia participated in 150 virtual legislative visits with Members of Congress. July 14 -16, 2020

Congress should stop inhumane treatment of asylum seekers and restore the asylum system. People of faith and conscience oppose the immoral, illegal, cruel anti-asylum, anti-family policies. We are facing a humanitarian and moral crisis—exacerbated by this administration that cruelly turns away asylum seekers, closes and limits access to ports of entry, and militarizes the border. Our faiths remind us that we are called to love—fully, fiercely, and compassionately. So-called “Migration Protection Protocols” (MPP) violate US and international law

and expose asylum seekers to harm.

Since January 2019, the Trump administration has expelled 65,000 + children, their families, and other asylum seekers using MPP (better known as “*Remain in Mexico*” policy). This lacks a public health rationale. We are exporting Covid 19 to Mexico and Central America. Expulsion of unaccompanied children violates the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

Since September 2019, the administration’s illegal third-country transit asylum bar went into effect banning virtually all asylum seekers on the southern border. Over 14,000 asylum seekers are stranded on “metering” lists in Mexico.

The new “*Prompt Asylum Case Review*” pilot program apprehends individuals in the El Paso area and forces them to navigate the asylum process while detained in CBP (Customs and Border Patrol) within 24 hours.

Rev. Noel Andersen (National Grassroots Coordinator for CWS (Church World Service)) was the facilitator/accompanier for the WA contingent (11 participants from throughout Washington State).

Preparation on July 14th using prepared [talking points](#), [policy questions](#), [agenda](#) (for Congressional meetings—30 minutes each). Meeting with Sen. Cantwell on July 15.

Meetings with Sen. Murray and Derek Kilmer on July 16.

If you want more detailed information **You can visit [this webpage with an action alert](https://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2020/07/08/virtual-advocacy-days-for-asylum-2020/), sample social media posts, and more:** <https://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2020/07/08/virtual-advocacy-days-for-asylum-2020/>. And remember, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Peace, Ursula Bannister, Mission and Peacemaking Session elder

Notes from Cynthia Lorch

I hear Spanish from the kitchen as Eliezer speaks en el telefono con un amigo Honduran. I’m expressing the limits of my high school Spanish. I was away for a few days recently and came home to a clean home, clean refrigerator, and small bouquets of Shasta daisies here and there! It’s wonderful living with a 26 year old “grandson” who likes things clean and tidy!

Like all of you, Eliezer’s life changed with the pandemic. He was working nearly full-time and attending English classes several evenings a week prior to everything closing down. In the midst of this he is cheerful and I often hear him singing. We frequently walk together in our neighborhood or at the waterfront. On my agenda is teaching him to mow the lawn. Both of us look forward to the time when there’s a vaccine and all of us are safe.

I’m so grateful for the many IPC efforts to keep us connected.

Best wishes to all of you! Cynthia



Recovering Together: Getting Cash \$\$\$ to Communities

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, our communities have been hit hard. Communities of color, undocumented folks, and those with low incomes are disproportionately impacted by the dual health and economic crisis. COVID-19 has exposed just how many people across the state were one paycheck away from being unable to meet their basic needs. People who were experiencing economic hardship before this crisis are falling further behind.

Federal action to expand unemployment protections and provide stimulus payments were important first steps, but too many people – especially

undocumented workers – were excluded, and much more needs to be done to ensure everyone can meet their needs while staying safe. Learn more about why Washington must put cash assistance at the heart of its recovery plan: [Washington Budget and Policy Center](#)

The scale of this economic crisis warrants bold, unprecedented action from Washington state lawmakers. Now is the time for lawmakers to invest in a statewide Recovery Rebate – direct cash assistance for people with low incomes – including undocumented immigrants. This puts cash directly into the pockets of the people who drive our

economy and who have been most impacted by the fallout of COVID-19.

Recovering Together means investing in communities: In light of the state’s revenue forecast in June, FAN along with more than 70 partners across the state asked lawmakers for progressive revenue solutions.

(from Faith Action Network)

