



# JEWISH COALITION *for* IMMIGRANT JUSTICE NW

Spring is here! A year ago for Shavuot we came together as a powerful community for the Jewish Coalition's *Share Our Harvest* fundraiser to support the Fair Fight Bond Fund. The surge of detentions has led to an increase in the need for bond support. We are asking our community to come together in solidarity with immigrants and refugees. Push back against ICE and the Biden administration's ongoing detention of our neighbors. Help us ensure that all of our community members who are eligible for bond can be freed from cages by [donating to the Fair Fight Bond Fund today](#).

## Shavuot Reflection from Beth Fine

Shavuot, the holiday of first harvest and receiving a set of laws, approaches. I imagine baskets of wheat and barley, babies strapped to backs as women work the fields, sweaty people speaking in many languages having come from many places in search of work and safety. It's a scene similar to harvests in our beautiful northwest. Why is this both the holiday of harvest and of the law, the Torah? I think people have always found it easy to disrespect the farm worker, to resent the other, to ignore our shared humanity. And so the Torah states, "The strangers who live with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." May our work with the JCIJ-NW lift up our shared humanity and further the laws and policies that protect everyone's rights.

## EVENTS

### Join Us for Never Again Seattle's JOY & JUSTICE Sunday, June 5th



The Jewish Coalition joins with Never Again Seattle to celebrate Shavuot by supporting La Resistencia.

“Never Again invites you to gather with us to amplify and help to grow our migrant siblings’ incredible organizing! By doing so, we’ll embody the Torah’s framework for living morally in the world: “You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the Land Egypt.” When we say *Never Again* we mean *¡nunca más para nadie!*

Never Again is proud to produce this event in partnership and solidarity with [La Resistencia](#) and in partnership with the Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites (CARW) and the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice Northwest.

We’ll be out there on June 5th in the sun or rain (with pop-up tents). See you there!”

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Accompaniment Committee

We are coming to the end of our strategic plan process! We will soon update our mission to reflect our best fit in the world of immigrant accompaniment. We look forward to your participation.

### Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee is building up our rapid response toolkit to mobilize our coalition and digging into issues around Title 42 and defending the right to seek asylum.

We celebrate a win with the ICE announcement that they will begin a phased return to social visitation in ICE detention facilities. Visitation from family and community members was initially revoked in March of 2020. COVID levels, staffing and “other limitations,” however, may affect implementation. While this policy change reflects a victory for immigrant justice advocates who pressed persistently for visitation, there remains discretion at the local level, intended to accommodate CDC guidance.

We will continue to monitor the situation at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma and consult with Never Again Seattle and La Resistencia about future action.

Join us at our upcoming meeting on Sunday, May 15 at 4pm. **Sign up for the Zoom link [here!](#)**

### Congregational Collaboration Committee

We met with Student Rabbi Emily Katcher of Beth Hatikvah in Bremerton, and with the social action committee of Beth Chaverim in Des Moines. We look forward to partnering with them!

Do any readers have connections to Jews in Ellensburg, Wenatchee, or Tri-Cities? We would love to meet them.

### JCIJ Book Group

The Jewish Coalition’s first book group was a great success! Eleven people joined in the discussion of *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* by Jose Antonio Vargas.

Our next book group meets on Tuesday, May 31st at 7 p.m. We'll read *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, edited by Viet Thanh Nguyen. This book is a collection of works illuminating the experiences of 20 prominent refugee writers from around the world. Maaxa Mengiste exhumes the human cost of a refugee's journey; Kao Kalia Yang recalls the courage of children in a camp in Thailand; Aleksandar Hemon recounts a fellow Bosnian's answer to his question, "How did you get here?" This is a poignant, insightful collection of essays and a powerful look at what it means to be forced to leave home and find a place of refuge.

Interested? Sign up here to get the zoom link: [Virtual Immigrant Justice Book Group](#). Thanks to Ruth Egger for organizing the book group.

## SUPPORT

### Temple Beth El Sponsors AIDNW Lunch Program

The [Sisterhood](#) of Tacoma congregation Temple Beth El (TBE) is now a sponsor of AIDNW's lunch bag program. [AIDNW](#), housed in a trailer outside of the Northwest Detention Center, provides resources and orientation to immigrants leaving the Center, as they prepare to join family members around the country. TBE has committed to providing lunches on the second Monday of every month. As TBE gears up, it's finding that shopping for the recommended items and preparing the bags are the easiest part of the process. Recruiting donations of non-perishable food and money has proved more challenging. TBE has reached beyond its membership, generating support from the Church of Christ on Fox Island, Temple Beth Am, and Congregation Beth Shalom, as well as individual community members who have read about TBE's commitment. To support TBE's lunch bag program, please contact the Jewish Coalition at [jcij.nw@gmail.com](mailto:jcij.nw@gmail.com).

### Immigration 101 and Resources

Here's a tangible way to reunite an immigrant with their family. [Miles4Migrants](#) is a 501(c)(3) organization that collects donated frequent flyer miles to support people impacted by war, persecution, or disaster to start a new beginning in a new home. [Miles4Migrants](#) partners with JCIJ-NW ally AIDNW to provide tickets for people leaving the Northwest Detention Center who have families in other cities. If you would like to donate your unused frequent flyer miles or credit card points, please [donate here](#).

## NEWS

### Title 42 Repeal Stalled Before It Starts

Trump appointee Judge Robert R. Summerhays of Louisiana granted requests from Missouri, Louisiana and Arizona to "halt to any action that 'formally implements' the termination of Title 42." In their lawsuit, the three states said that migrants from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala were already being processed as before the policy had gone into effect, although it isn't scheduled to lift until May 23rd.

Enacted in March 2020, Title 42 was billed as a public health ordinance. By May 2020, [over 50 public health experts](#) sent a letter to the DHHS and the CDC, asserting the order was speciously justified: "The nation's public health laws should not be used as a pretext for overriding humanitarian laws and treaties that provide life-saving

protections to refugees seeking asylum and unaccompanied children.” In line with Trump’s immigration policy, Title 42 effectively repelled over 1.7 million asylum seekers from the border, back to the life-threatening circumstances they sought to escape. In a recent data analysis, Tom K. Wong and Nicole Prchal Svajlenka laid out the [statistical fallacy that border expulsions under Title 42 resulted in lower COVID-19 case rates](#) in the United States.

Republicans and Democrats alike have balked at the repeal of Title 42, alleging potential for chaos at the border. However, Trump’s [Migrant Protection Protocols](#) codified border chaos when implemented in 2019, forcing tens of thousands of asylum seekers to remain in Mexico for years, in encampments as dangerous as the circumstances they fled in their home countries.



Read how these selectively enforced policies affected [Ana and Flor, one family seeking asylum](#). Join JCIJ’s Steering Committee in supporting [Ana and Flor’s Gofundme](#) for legal support to fight for asylum.

As demonstrated by the language in Judge Summerhays’ motion, confusion around rescinding Title 42 impacts Central American immigrants more severely than their European counterparts, although their circumstances are equally dire.

**TAKE ACTION:** [Tell Congress to protect asylum seekers:, Do Not Reinstate Title 42!](#)

## Protective Fast Track for Ukrainian Refugees

President Biden has announced a temporary protection pathway, [Uniting for Ukraine](#), for Ukrainians who have financial supporters in the U.S. to stay in the States on humanitarian parole for up to two years. This fast-tracking, while a tremendous boon to Ukrainian relief efforts, also throws into high relief the disparities in treatment between refugees from different countries. [Over 6 million refugees have fled Ukraine](#) so far.

In 2021, President Biden raised the cap on refugee admittance from 15,000 to 62,000, but the U.S. admitted only 11,411 refugees, the lowest number in 40 years. For 2022, the cap is set at 125,000, with 100,000 spots now promised to Ukrainian refugees. [26.4 million previously displaced refugees](#) will be affected by the outpouring of attention and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Refugees of all nationalities are worthy of the same protections readily extended to Ukrainian refugees at this moment.

With U.S. media attention squarely on the war in Ukraine, [ongoing armed conflicts around the world](#) receive the barest acknowledgement, indicative of the disparities in treatment among refugees of different nationalities, especially those from the Global South.

**TAKE ACTION:** [Donate to Mission of Mercy](#), a U.S. based, Ukrainian immigrant led nonprofit supporting the hardest hit victims of the war in Ukraine. HIAS is also collecting donations to support the [HIAS Ukrainian refugee relief response](#).

## Otro Mundo Es Posible: Marcha Campesina 2022



“Making the revolution irresistible,” says Community to Community Development leader Brenda on [Familias Unidas por la Justicia \(FUJ\) live video stream](#), looking over the gorgeous, intricately sewn and painted signs that took to the skies on May Day in Mt. Vernon. Farmworker-led independent labor union, Familias Unidas, and Community to Community (C2C), an eco-feminist food sovereignty organization, hosted the Marcha Campesina, honoring and advocating for farmworkers in Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

Hundreds marched in solidarity with farmworker families, celebrating the recent pivotal union victory for tulip workers. A workers’ committee negotiated [16 demands for access to clean bathrooms, fair pay and protective equipment](#), reaching a settlement with employer Washington Bulb, which signed an agreement, recognizing the committee as a section of FUJ. FUJ political director Edgar Franks hopes the Marcha Campesina will become an institution again, as it once was in the 1980s and 90s. “This is a restarting of a march and a tradition here in Skagit County,” Franks said. [“We have a lot of farmworkers — young farmworkers — taking leadership.”](#)

Among signs, “Union Berries Taste Better,” “Pan & Tulipanes,” and “The Future of Food Belongs to Farmworkers,” many said: “NO H-2A.” H-2A guest workers visa allows the U.S. to employ nonimmigrant workers for year-long or seasonal agriculture jobs. [H-2-A visas pit workers from other countries against farmworkers in the U.S., most of whom are immigrants themselves](#). Temporary workers risk abuse, violence and deportation for asserting their rights.

C2C, with support from FUJ and other partners, have called for years to [end temporary and guest worker programs, legalize all undocumented people and reform immigration policy based on human, civil and labor rights for all](#). The tulip workers' victory is a hard won victory for immigrant and food justice in the United States. ¡Sí, se puede!



*Jewish Coalition Members at the Marcha Campesina*

## “Our Visa Status Controlled Our Lives”: Temporary Work Visas Tear Families Apart

Children who grew up legally in the U.S. under the protection of their parents' temporary work visas face deportation when they turn 21. These “Documented Dreamers” status makes them ineligible for the DACA program, whose focus is undocumented youth. As with DACA, [temporary work visas like the H-1B and the accompanying H-4 dependent visa do not provide a path to citizenship](#). A chronic backlog of green card applications from workers seeking permanent residency leaves children aging out of their protected status while their families wait for years.

More than 10,000 children age out of green card eligibility each year, and more than 200,000 children in the U.S. live with this threat. Once legal dreamers become undocumented, they may bounce through a series of temporary protected statuses like the student visa, that demands proof of intent to leave the U.S. upon completing one's studies. If they are able to secure a student visa and graduate from college, these young Americans must find employers to sponsor their own H-1B visa, “then be sponsored for an immigrant visa and [re-enter the green card queue from the back of the line](#).” Living with such uncertainty takes a severe toll on documented dreamers.

Athulya Rajakumar, who grew up in Seattle and organizes with [Improve the Dream](#), tells her family's story at the Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing on Removing Barriers to Legal Migration: “[I learned very young that every aspect of my life would be controlled by my status](#).” Listen to Athulya's testimony at 00:52:35 mark about the sacrifices she and her family made to live an American life under the conditions mandated by a work visa, the devastation they faced from that undue pressure, and how [America's CHILDREN Act](#) could mitigate the cruelty families endure in the broken immigration system.

## MUSIC IN THE KEY OF JCIJ

This month I have to shine the light on the music of strong women. Take this, Supreme Court conservative majority!  
-Dina Burstein

Here is a beautiful version of Debbie Friedman's **Miriam's Song**, sung by women in NY and Ukraine.  
[Project Keshar - Miriam's Song \(Official Music Video\)](#)

And A Beautiful Noise  
[Alicia Keys, Brandi Carlile - A Beautiful Noise \(Official Video\)](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support for immigrant justice!

Be in touch with the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice NW at [jiij.nw@gmail.com](mailto:jiij.nw@gmail.com) and follow by liking us on [Facebook](#). Invite others to [subscribe](#) to our Newsletter and Action Alerts.

