



JEWISH COALITION *for*
IMMIGRANT JUSTICE NW

Newsletter

September 12, 2023 • 26 Elul 5783

A DROP OF HONEY

"Hayom harat olam" - Today the world is conceived - from the machzor (prayerbook) for Rosh HaShanah.

As a classroom teacher for many years I found a sweetness in preparing for school to open, and often thought about this quote. What world will the students and I create this year? What will be our struggles, our culture, our moments of connection? Rosh HaShanah offers a moment of hope, an opportunity to begin anew and create our world as we see it should be. We dip sustenance in sweetness, apples in honey, roll up our sleeves and get to work. - Beth Fine

Support JCIJ this New Year!



DONATE

Help kick off a sweet new year for immigrant justice with a donation today to fuel JCIJ's advocacy, accompaniment, and community engagement. Your support allowed us to incorporate into a nonprofit earlier this year. Now we can build a sustainable Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice NW together.

Your gift creates opportunities to volunteer to monitor ICE flights and attend asylum hearings like Wilfredo's below. Your support creates a Jewish voice in state and federal immigrant advocacy and engages Jewish community members.

Want to support JCIJ year-round? [Become a monthly donor today!](#)

Recipes for Sweet High Holidays



For migrants and their descendants, food is a memory of home. As author Claudia Roden recalled in [The Eater](#): In Egypt, recipes were closely kept secrets. No one ever shared. But in exile, things were different. “They were desperate,” Roden has recalled to [multiple interviewers](#). “They would say, ‘Please, give me your recipe for that. It’ll be something I’ll remember you for because I might never see you again.’ And for most of those people, we never, ever saw them again. And those recipes were so precious, I found.”

Jewish Honey Cake from Hungary by Joan Nathan

Recipe from *The New York Times* [here](#).

Rice Pudding with Apricots/Roz bi Halib wal Mish mish from Syria and Turkey via Egypt by Claudia Roden

Recipe from *The Guardian* [here](#).

Sephardic Pumpkin Borekas by Leah's Catering

Leah Jaffee of Leah's Catering Seattle makes delicious borekas and she shares her recipe for the [dough](#) and [pumpkin filling](#). It is also Sephardic tradition to have a Seder for Rosh Hashanah. Learn more from the Sephardic Brotherhood's [booklet](#), which includes Ladino.

JCIJ NEWS

JCIJ on KNKX: Volunteers watch as immigrants are deported out of King County



Activist Stan Shikuma and volunteers from the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice Northwest count white plastic bags of belongings are placed on the tarmac next to an airplane used for ICE deportation flights.



It's time to shut down deportations from King County International Airport! Jewish Coalition, La Resistencia, and Tsuru for Solidarity volunteers were featured in KNKX 88.5 public radio for tracking ICE flights in partnership with the UW Center for Human Rights.

“After a four-year hiatus, immigrants are being deported out of Boeing Field again because of a court ruling. Each week, community members are watching as detainees at the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma are taken to King County’s airport to be put on a deportation flight.

They’re hoping to call attention to the mistreatment of deportees and ultimately, once again, put an end to the deportation flights. Approximately 16 deportation flights have left from Boeing Field since May.”

Shikuma instructs several volunteers from the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice Northwest how to count the people getting on and off the plane.

Watching this scene, Jewish Coalition co-founder Ruth Eggers is reminded of Jewish history. “I can’t help but think about the Holocaust, putting them on the bus, the trains [...] We could be sending them to a terrible existence,” Eggers says.

[Read or listen to the full article.](#) Volunteer to track ICE flights [here](#).

Accompaniment for Wilfredo’s Asylum Hearing



On August 29th, 14 members of the Jewish community attended an asylum hearing in support of a young Honduran immigrant named Wilfredo. Wilfredo has received support from JCIJ and the wider Jewish community since he was in the NW Detention Center in Tacoma, over two years ago.

His younger brother Oscar (seated to the left of Wilfredo, center of photo) is also seeking asylum and arrived here seven months ago. JCIJ has been providing support for him as well. The immigration judge's decision in Wilfredo's case will be issued in writing at a later date.
-Michelle Mentzer

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer with Colectiva Legal del Pueblo

"I am enjoying working at Collective Legal. The staff is friendly and very willing to answer questions if they arise. And they have told me that the work JCIJ is doing is invaluable and much appreciated." -Allan Paulson

"I enjoy volunteering in the Colectiva Legal office. The staff is welcoming, friendly and professional! I enjoy helping them, whether it be translations, filing paperwork or whatever needs to be organized in the office." -Debbie Adatto

Colectiva Legal offers pro bono and low bono legal support to immigrant community members. Language fluency other than English is generally not needed to support Colectiva Legal with

- Clerical tasks
- Organizing their clothing and diaper bank
- In-person accompaniment for their clients

If you are interested in participating in any of these volunteer opportunities, please fill out and submit the [JCIJ Volunteer Interest Form](#). You will be contacted by Colectiva's volunteer coordinator to schedule. At the end of each volunteer shift, you may speak to Quinn McTighe or contact them at quinn@colectivalegal.org to schedule other shifts. Colectiva Legal del Pueblo is located at 13838 1st Avenue South , Burien, WA 98168.

Colectiva Legal Pro Se Asylum Clinic - December 2

Are you proficient in Spanish and would you be available to help Colectiva Legal del Pueblo at their upcoming Pro Se Asylum Clinic?

Colectiva conducts legal clinics to assist asylum seekers with filing their initial asylum applications. These clinics are usually a full day on a Saturday, and are conducted once a season. To increase capacity and help more community members, Volunteers can help by doing the following:

- Attend at least one legal clinic to observe the general process of a legal clinic and be trained by a staff member how to fill out asylum applications and navigate applicant intake.
- After attending a clinic to learn, assist applicants at future clinics by transferring information from their intake packets to the asylum application forms.
- Volunteers must speak Spanish in order to assist Spanish speaking applicants.

To volunteer for a Pro Se Asylum Clinic, please fill out and submit the [JCIJ Volunteer Interest Form](#) and contact reception@colectivalegal.org. **The next Colectiva Legal Pro Se Clinic will be held on December 2, 2023 at Colectiva Legal's office located at 13838 1st Avenue South, Burien, WA 98168.**

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) Mutual Aid Care Packages for New Immigrant Arrivals

Deliver mutual aid care packages to new immigrant arrivals to the Seattle area. Referrals come from the WAISN Hotline and packages are supplied by WAISN. Language fluency other than English is generally not needed.

Observe ICE Flights

ICE has resumed flying community members into and out of King County Airport (formerly known as Boeing Field) to either move them to the NW Detention Center or to deport them. Volunteers observe the flights every Tuesday morning on a screen in the airport terminal, and send statistics to [La Resistencia](#) and the UW Center for Human Rights. Language fluency other than English is not needed.

Immigration Court Accompaniment

Accompany community members to Immigration Court in Seattle. Referrals come from the WAISN Hotline or from legal service providers. Training is required and fluency in a language other than English may be needed.

If you are interested in participating in any of these volunteer opportunities, please fill out and submit the [JCIJ Volunteer Interest Form](#).

VOLUNTEER

TAKE ACTION



Each year, the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle and its Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) advocate in Olympia on behalf of both our local Jewish agencies, as well as the broader Jewish community. Last year, the top issues were: combating antisemitism and hate crimes, upholding civil liberties and human rights, and supporting immigrants and refugees. As a result, efforts were focused on those key areas in the 2023 legislative session. Check out some of the ways we made an impact together [here](#).

Now, we need to hear from you again! Please take a few minutes to fill out this year's [Public Policy Priorities Survey](#). Your answers will be critical in shaping our community's 2024 legislative agenda and will ensure your voice is heard in our state's Capitol!

Be sure to indicate you're a part of Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice NW when you fill out the survey! This will enable us to hear about your priorities. **The [survey](#) closes October 18, 2023.**

Support Recent Migrants through WAISN Care Packages and Riverton Park United Methodist Church

Many people seeking asylum arrive in the Seattle area each week. Most of these asylum applicants, who come from Angola, Somalia, Congo, Honduras, Venezuela, Peru, Columbia, and other countries, have no other support system in the area and find that our shelter system is beyond capacity. JCIJ has been asked by our partner organization, the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN), to assist in putting together care packages for these asylum applicants. Basic items are needed such as backpacks, socks, hygiene kits, first aid kits, blankets. WAISN has also been seeking the cooperation of governmental agencies to find sustainable housing for new arrivals.

Since December 2022, the Riverton Park United Methodist Church in Tukwila has provided shelter to some of these individuals and families but needs partners to help meet their overwhelming needs. Approximately 180 asylum applicants, including 60 children, 50 of them school-age, are living on church grounds, either in tents, on mats on the floor of church facilities, or in tiny houses. Kitchen and sanitary facilities have been built quickly. Supplies are needed to prepare for winter, including warm winter clothes, sweatshirts, solar lanterns, warm blankets,

and pallets to put under the tents. We dream of helping the church organize a homework help center and support with completing asylum applications in the near future, but we will start with a drive for urgently-needed supplies.



From left to right: Play area near tiny houses at Riverton Park UMC, One of three kitchens for tent village at Riverton Park UMC, and Bathroom at tent village at Riverton Park UMC.

JCIJ is asking you, as a supporter of immigrant justice, to join us in assisting WAISN and the Riverton Park United Methodist Church as they work to meet the fundamental needs of these new arrivals to our country. JCIJ, in consultation with WAISN, the Riverton Park United Methodist Church, and the Church Council of Greater Seattle, has developed a wish list of items you can provide.

DONATE TO THE WAISN CARE PACKAGES

DONATE TO THE RIVERTON PARK CHURCH

Let this act of tzedakah provide you with a meaningful way to enter into the New Year with Chesed (loving kindness), an open heart, and a spirit of welcoming solidarity.

EVENTS

Brivele concert with Seattle Folklore Society

Sep 23, 2023 (Sat), 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm

Buy tickets online: <https://knct.club/3P6s9W2>

Venue: Phinney Center Concert Hall, Brick Building, 6532 Phinney Ave N, Seattle



Seattle-based anti-fascist klezmer folk-punk trio who braid together oral history, Yiddish language, contemporary and old-country musical genres, American vaudeville, and visual arts, Brivele is wonderfully theatrical, musically proficient, and great at engaging an audience. They will be joined by Tzepl, whose sound combines elements of nineteenth century European string players with the brassy American style of the early twentieth century, with accordion, violin, & tuba/trumpet. [Read more](#).

WAISN Monthly Meeting - September 21 @ 3PM

Join the WA Immigrant Solidarity Network's monthly meeting for an opportunity to hear directly from WAISN about the fight for immigrant rights in WA state. JCIJ follows the lead of immigrant-led orgs like WAISN.

- When: 3rd Thursday of every month, 3-5 PM.

- Accessibility: Spanish and English Interpretation available. Please contact nazibah@waisn.org to request language interpretation or accessibility needs.
- Zoom link [here](#).

COMMITTEES

Accompaniment Committee

Please join us at the next Accompaniment Committee meeting! We meet virtually, the third Wednesday of the month, 7-8pm. Click [here](#) and we'll send you sign in information. All are welcome!

Advocacy Committee

We are getting ready for Legislative Session in January with two work groups focusing on 1) Storytelling to build a bank of people's stories navigating our immigration system as well as family stories/history as immigrants and and 2) Power mapping our state to grow our base of action takers in key districts to pass our legislative priorities: Unemployment Insurance for Undocumented Workers and Health Equity for Immigrants.

Join our next meeting October 8th from 4-5:30pm! Sign up [here](#).

Community Engagement

The Community Engagement Committee has organized a drive for donations to WAISN Care Packages for New Asylum Applicant Arrivals and to Riverton Park United Methodist Church.

If you are part of a congregation, we would like to come speak to your members! For more information and to join our next meeting, sign up [here](#). All are welcome!

Book Club



The JCIJ Immigrant Book Club read *Kantika* by Elizabeth Graver for the September meeting. Even if you missed it, we invite you to view the virtual program [Sephardic Stories from The Museum of Jewish Heritage](#) on September 14 at 4PM Pacific Time with author Elizabeth Graver along with Michael Frank, author of [One Hundred Saturdays: Stella Levi and the Search for a Lost World](#) a powerful book about Jews from Rhodes who endured the Holocaust.

Ladino Day at University of Washington Sunday, December 3 at 10am is also featuring Elizabeth Graver, the author of *Kantika*. **Register [here](#).**

The Book Club will not meet in October, but members are encouraged to read *We are Not Strangers* by Josh Tuiniga, a graphic novel about a Sephardic Jewish man and his Japanese neighbors who are interned during World War II. This book will be the subject of an event at Third Place Books in Lake Forest Park on October 23: [Josh Tuiniga in conversation with Dr. Devin E. Naar and Tom Ikeda — 'We Are Not Strangers' | Third Place Books](#). Reservations are suggested.

For our November meeting, which will take place on November 14, we will read *The Wind Knows My Name* by Isabel Allende. This powerful and moving novel traces the ripple effects of war and immigration on two children, one in Europe in 1938 and another in the United States in 2019.

If you would like to receive Book Club meeting details, [please sign up here](#). All are welcome!

COMMUNITY MEMBER JOURNAL

A New Column by Mohamed Ibrahim and Dina Burstein

In 2022, Dina was asked by a friend who is a leader in the Somali community to get to know Mohamed and help him in any way she could. Mohamed is a 36 year old Somali refugee from SE Seattle who has been sentenced to 40 years in the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla.

Mohamed and Dina hope this will be the first of many columns they write together about his life and story. We hope that it will give readers insight into the “criminal justice” system and its intersection with immigrant justice. Mohamed has enjoyed collaborating on the column so far, and is glad for the chance to tell his story. Almost every word attributed here to Mohamed is a quote from my notes of conversations with him from 2022 to the present. In today’s column, I have consolidated parts of several conversations into one.

My phone rings. A voice says, “This is a call from Washington State Penitentiary....”

Hi, Dina, how are you? How was your big birthday party? 70 years old!

I am fine, I am good, same as always.

Mohamed, would you introduce yourself to the people who will read this column?

My name is Mohamed Ibrahim. I don’t know what to say. You know I’m pretty quiet when I don’t know the people I’m talking to. I like to listen. Would you ask me a question?

What is it like in the cell you wake up in?

Every day for almost nine years, I wake up in the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla. I have a single man cell with enough room for a bed, a table, a toilet, and a sink. I like having my own cell. The door is solid, with no bars, and slides to open. In the door there is a small window where you can see a little bit if you look straight ahead, but not if you look to the left or the right.

On days when we are in lockdown, which is a lot of the time, no one can leave their cells at all. No showers, and food is brought to the cell. I make myself a schedule: I pray, I exercise, I read my books. I do not talk to anyone on the inside. I have a tablet I can use to call people on the outside. On a no-lockdown day, we get 3 hours out of the cell, 21 hours in the cell. Two days a week I go to computer class. We switch off going to an outside yard that is for our own unit, and to a dayroom. The dayroom has two tvs, and a window. When I look out the window, I can see our exercise yard, and the prison walls covered with curled-up razor wire, and outside the endless desert.

“You have one minute left to talk.” Call me back, I ask.

The most important thing about the yard is, it is segregated. Skinheads, White boys, and the Mexicans share one side. Blacks, Muslims, Native Americans and Asians share the other side. There are very few Blacks. You can't say more than, Hi, how ya doin? to someone from the other groups. That's all I ever say to anyone here anyway, because I always keep to myself. I am always playing defense.

Can you tell us a little about your life before you went inside?

I feel like I have lived three separate lives. First in Mogadishu, Somalia, in our house. Then the war came when I was ten and we lived in a refugee camp in Kenya. Then our life in Seattle.

Now you have a fourth life in Walla Walla.

Yes. Almost all of my family is in Seattle. I mostly talk on the phone to my mom. She is a very strong woman, and I worry that she seems sad. In Seattle, before I was on the streets, I would always be around my mom, taking her shopping. My mother and my sisters were my priority. And I used to ride with my dad when he drove a taxi. He would teach me the Koran and the right way to live, to be a good man. I think I was his favorite. Once I started in the streets, everything he told me, I went the opposite way. It just happened. Slipped one time, saw a different world, kept slipping.

"You have one minute left." Call me back if you have time.

Are you kidding? I have 20 hours.

Mohamed, where do you find hope?

It is hard to find hope in this unit where I am so isolated. Talking to people outside gives me hope. It's like the prison staff are trying to make you feel hopeless. It is easy to lose hope. Some guys who have no one to talk to on the outside, they go crazy. I am 36 years old now. I will be 37 in October. If I have to serve my entire sentence, I will be released from here when I am 62 years old. I have learned from being here: I can't look backward, I can't look forward.

Next month: Mohamed tells us about his journey from Somalia to Kenya to North Seattle.

SONGS IN THE KEY OF JCIJ

Curated by Dina Burstein

[Las flores](#) a love song from the alternative rock band Cafe Tacuba from Mexico City.

They sing:

Don't let the sun rise,
don't let the the night fall,
don't let the sun rise,
just let me be with you.

[Achat Sha'alti - Aly Halpert](#) Listen to this beautiful setting of Psalm 27 sung by Aly Halpert and Joey Weisenberg. This is from the Institute for Jewish Spirituality: Psalm 27 is recited from Elul through Sukkot – it is a time of asking and seeking, a time to get clear – what do I really want? What am I honestly looking for? The High Holy Days are a personal time – it is about each person – the universal human condition. What am I asking for? The Psalmist answered like this – ‘to live in the house of Adonai all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of Adonai, and to frequent God’s temple.’ What do you seek? What are you asking for?

AND NOW IT’S TIME TO SING ALONG!!!

[Trini Lopez - If I Had A Hammer \(1963\) - HD](#) Sing along with Mexican-American singer Trinidad Lopez from Texas had a big hit in 1963 with this song. He died of COVID in 2020. According to NPR, If I Had a Hammer was originally composed by Pete Seeger and Lee Hayes, who wrote the first draft by passing a slip of paper back and forth between themselves during a meeting.

[Stand By Me | Playing For Change | Song Around The World](#) Just try to resist singing along to this!

**Be in touch with the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice NW
at goforth@jcijnw.org and follow by liking us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).**

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