



October 19, 2020

Hello AIDNW Community,

The AIDNW Board of Directors has begun the process of discerning goals for AIDNW in 2021. The combination of the Covid-19 pandemic and current Federal immigration policies has significantly impacted our ability to offer assistance to immigrant detainees in 2020. The largest impact has been on our Welcome Center and Hospitality House Programs.

Welcome Center Program: In September 2020 only 7 immigrants released from detention were served by AIDNW. In September 2019 that figure was 99 immigrants who came from 21 different countries.

Hospitality House Program: After the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Hospitality House was essentially empty with the exception of the office and Nixon, our Host Coordinator. The AIDNW Board recently expanded the opportunity for longer-term immigrants to reside in the house, based on referrals and negative Covid-19 testing. The house currently has two such residents. By comparison, in September of last year AIDNW hosted 21 residents of varying lengths of stay.

The AIDNW Board reviewed several potential 2021 goals for expanding our support of the immigrant community. Board members overwhelmingly support the expansion of Hospitality House for residence of up to 6 months. The current capacity of Hospitality House is three (3) single occupancy rooms for men and one (1) single occupancy room for women. The Board voted to proceed with the renewal of the lease for the current property. The possibility of potentially seeking a more permanent facility was thought to be premature in this highly turbulent environment.

The second potential goal is to offer assistance to immigrants who remain in the local area with rental and/or food assistance. A Board member is in preliminary discussions with Tacoma Community House regarding the possibility of adding this program.

The third potential goal is to offer assistance with posting bonds for detainees housed in the detention center. This program will require a lot of work to understand the risks/rewards, in addition to significant funding requirements should this program be implemented.

We hope to prepare and circulate a survey to all volunteers this Fall for volunteer feedback to the Board. Please stay tuned!

Sincerely,

Timothy Chen

Chair, AIDNW Board of Directors

Advocates for Immigrants in Detention NW is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible, non-profit organization (27-1031009) that serves immigrants detained in the Pacific Northwest through assistance, advocacy, and increased awareness.