

Advocates for Immigrants in Detention NW - 2021 Annual Report

Shifting immigration policies and COVID-19 significantly affected the number of detainees housed in and released from the NW ICE Processing Center, Tacoma, Washington. The year 2021 started very slowly with very few immigrant detainees released daily. That all changed the third week of June 2021. During the first two weeks of June, the Welcome Center served **38 immigrant detainees**. The last two weeks of June **164 immigrant detainees** were served. The first two weeks of July **208 immigrant detainees** were served. The peak was in August when **459 immigrant detainees** were assisted! Welcome Center volunteers have worked well into the night to get the immigrants on their way to their friends and families all across the country. Some excerpts from Welcome Center daily reports:

... greeted one releasee... He was so emotional, surprised and thrilled to be out. Over and over, he called it a miracle as it was completely unexpected. He was only there for 13 days for a 14-day quarantine and was going to be deported to Mexico on day 15. It seemed to be a medical release.

We had a total of 25 releases...[with] many countries represented: Peru, Nicaragua, India, Brazil, Haiti, Senegal, Colombia, Eritrea, and Somalia... [Two volunteer drivers] each took two trips to the airport, and S. took three men to the airport bus. One man was picked up by a relative.While we had the usual name-on-ticket issues (one man's ID card had his first and last name switched) ... we got it sorted out. We closed the Welcome Center at 8:45, and S. took one man whose family could not buy a ticket until Tuesday to the Hospitality House.

AIDNW's Visitation Program's Pen Pals, art supply donations and Telephone Access program all help to alleviate the isolation experienced by the immigrants while in detention.

- **Visitation Program:** In person visits are not allowed due to COVID-19, so AIDNW volunteers shifted to support immigrants in detention through cards and letters. Art supplies and books are provided for distribution within the detention center. Telephone communications credit is distributed to detainees. A special campaign, in cooperation with area faith-based organizations, raised funds to provide each detainee with commissary funds for the Christmas holiday.
- **Welcome Center:** The RV parked outside the NW ICE Processing Center was augmented by two heated tents to encourage "6 foot separation" while assisting released immigrants. Personal protective equipment is available for both volunteers and released immigrants. Those immigrants who must remain in the area awaiting transportation to their final destination are offered housing in the Hospitality House.

In 2021 AIDNW welcomed and assisted **1,196 immigrants** from **91 countries**.

Advocates for Immigrants in Detention NW is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible, non-profit organization (27-1031009) that serves immigrants in detention and when released through welcoming services focused on transitional support and connection to vital resources for resettlement.

Advocates for Immigrants in Detention NW

- **Hospitality House Program:** COVID-19 safety protocols are maintained for the safety of the AIDNW office staff and the AIDNW Hospitality Host Coordinator

In 2021, 97 released immigrants were provided housing for a total of 291 nights.

- **Post Detention Accompaniment Network (PDAN):** Volunteer drivers provide immigrant detainees with area transportation to the Hospitality House, bus station, train station and airport.

We are fortunate to have been able to recruit new volunteers to fill in for those among the 200 active volunteers who are unable to participate in the person-to-person activities because of COVID-19. The health of our most valuable asset--AIDNW volunteers and staff--is of utmost importance. To the extent possible AIDNW has implemented measures to ensure the safety of all.

The immigration courts continue to operate. The need for the services provided by the AIDNW is still present.

2022 will offer AIDNW new challenges as Federal immigration policies change. The continued financial support of individuals is critical to the operation of AIDNW. AIDNW is financed 100% through donations from private organizations and individuals.

Thank you for your financial support.

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 in detention and when released through welcoming services focused on transitional support and connection to vital resources for resettlement.