

FMC News



January-February 2017 Edition

Filipino Migrant Center
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The official newsletter of the Filipino Migrant Center

FMC Stands with Immigrant, Refugee and Muslim communities

Filipino Migrant Center rejects President Trump's immigration executive orders attacking and criminalizing immigrants, refugees and Muslim communities.

The executive orders calls for the suspension of refugee programs and limits the number of refugees the United States it welcomes, bans entry of individuals from seven Muslim-majority countries (Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen). Furthermore, it aims to punish cities who pledge to provide sanctuary and protection to undocumented immigrants, increase resources to carry out mass immigration enforcement and deportation on the national and local level and construct a border wall.

As a community organization serving the Filipino immigrant community in Southern California, we stand in solidarity with the thousands of advocates, community groups and organizations, elected officials and majority of the American public in denouncing these orders which have already resulted in human rights violations this past weekend. Hundreds of individuals were illegally detained in various major airports throughout the country, prevented from boarding the plane headed for the U.S., and prevented from receiving legal counsel. Many were legal permanent residents.

The recent pronouncements made by President Trump only promotes and legitimizes irrational acts of hate, violence, discrimination, bullying and harassment of our communities.

Our communities continue to suffer from harmful mischaracterizations that portray us as threats to the economy, national security and public safety of the country. We are witnessing the detrimental impacts these have on our children. Discriminatory, xenophobic, and unjust policies and laws targeting immigrants, refugees and Muslims in the United States are not new. They have historically been used as weapons to divide our communities and distract us from the real threats--those who are responsible for and benefit from the systematic oppression of our Black, Brown and poor, working



class communities.

We oppose the impending mass deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrants that will break apart thousands of families, leaving children without their parents. They are not criminals but a resilient and courageous people who have experienced great sacrifices to keep their families alive.

We are against the policing of our communities and demand that the planned increased resources for immigration enforcement must be re-directed towards education, health care and other severely underfunded social services.

We believe in respecting the rights and humanity of all people regardless of religion, national origin, legal status, race, ethnicity and gender.

The Filipino Migrant Center is committed to continue providing education, resources and support to Filipino immigrant families in Southern California. We encourage members of the Filipino community to join us in raising our voices, organizing and building our collective power in solidarity with other vulnerable communities to uphold and defend the rights of all immigrant, refugee and Muslim families.

FMC Marches with Long Beach Community in Inauguration Day March

January 20, Long Beach — the Filipino Migrant Center marched in Downtown Long Beach with other community groups to condemn President Donald Trump's stances that can drastically worsen the conditions of many people, particularly low income communities.

The peaceful march, attended by about 200 community members was planned to coincide with Trump's inauguration that same day. Throughout his campaign and after the elections, he has repeatedly promised to deport immigrants, expressed

plans that would limit access to health care for many, and has used inflammatory speech that harms immigrants, women, the LGBTQ community, the black community, and many others.

The march was organized by May Day Long Beach Coalition, which the Filipino Migrant Center is a part of. The coalition aims to unite the community to resist the anti-people policies that the new administration is pushing for. Only through an organized and united community can we stand up to this challenge.

Filipinos Reaching for Education and Empowerment (FREE) Youth Leadership Program

Inaugural Leadership Cohort

15 Filipino high school youth from Carson and Long Beach completed six-week leadership development workshops to cultivate their collective leadership skills and enhance their capacity and participation to improve their health & wellness, education, schools and neighborhoods. The workshops were held every Saturday at Veterans Park Sports Complex in Carson from January 14-February 18, 2017. The youth engaged in dialogue with one another about issues that are important to them and were equipped with tools to develop solutions with their voices and perspective at the center.

Some of the concerns they identified were: mental health, safety, bullying, constant violence between different ethnic groups and students inside their schools, family issues, lack of understanding in schools about challenges facing Filipino migrant youth and resources to support pathways for college and higher education.

In the next coming months, the youth committed to using the skills they have learned to reach more Filipino youth in their schools and communities to connect them with resources, provide mentorship and support, and engage them in youth-led activities that nurture youth leadership and empowerment.



Photos from some of the various F..R.E.E. workshops



Cabrillo High School Afterschool Program

The F.R.E.E. (Filipinos Reaching for Education and Empowerment) leadership program will continue at Cabrillo High School in West Long Beach by providing Filipino youth with opportunities to receive after school academic tutoring and mentorship to support them in reaching higher education and developing their leadership in their school and community.

The F.R.E.E. program at Cabrillo HS will be from February 22 – May 31, 2017 and will take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (3:00pm-5:00pm) in Mrs. Banares room

(Room 1105). The students will be tutored and mentored by community volunteers and college students from Cal State Long Beach and surrounding universities and colleges. In addition, Filipino youth will participate in social justice educational and cultural workshops grounded in community organizing and action.

For more information, please contact Alex at alex@filipinomigrantcenter.org



Protecting the safety, health and dignity of immigrant families

Know and Defend our Rights as Immigrants

Los Angeles- On January 24, the Filipino Migrant Center, Migrante Los Angeles, and Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IFMHI) co-sponsored a Know Your Rights training in Eagle Rock. Reverend Art Cribbs, from the Filipino American United Church of Christ, welcomed all to his church and opened the training with a prayer.

The training, which brought together community and church members, aimed to educate community members on the rights that all people have in the event that they are stopped or searched by law enforcement on the street, in their cars, at home, or at work. The presentation included information regarding possible ways to adjust one's immigration status in the US via various types of immigration visas or under pertinent laws, such as: the Violence Against Women Act, a T Visa for victims of human trafficking, and a U Visa for victims of crimes. During the presentation given by



FMC, attendees also had the chance to ask questions to the legal resource speaker.

The event was organized by as a response to the recent deportations, raids, and attacks against migrants and muslims. Organizers encouraged all attendees to join FMC, Migrante Los Angeles, IFMHI, and other community based organizations as a way to build our community power to defend our rights. For information on future Know Your Rights trainings and forums in your area, please contact FMC at info@filipinomigrantcenter.org.

Immigration Community Dialogue

Twenty community leaders and members from Torrance United Methodist Church, Wilmington United Methodist Church, Cal State Dominguez Hills, El Camino College, LA Harbor College and Carson High School participated in a community dialogue organized by the Filipino Migrant Center in response to President Trump's immigration executive orders. FMC presented a brief overview of the executive orders and the harmful consequences these policies would have on the safety and well-being of all our communities, immigrants and non-immigrants.

Participants had the opportunity to share their concerns for and stories of immigrant families and young people in their churches and schools. They developed action steps to ensure Filipino families receive accurate education, tools and resources to understand



and protect their rights, and enhance partnership with other churches, community groups and individuals. As a result of the engaging dialogue, the community members committed to forming a support network for Filipino immigrant families especially those living, studying and working in Carson and Torrance.

FMC Partnership with Churches

In our commitment to protect our immigrant communities, the Filipino Migrant Center is partnering with churches throughout Southern California to provide sanctuary and other resources to vulnerable immigrants at risk for deportation.

On February 1, the Filipino Migrant Center attended a Sanctuary Training co-sponsored by various faith groups including the Episcopal Sanctuary Task Force of the LA Diocese, the Presbytery of the Pacific, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) Los Angeles and the United Methodist Cal-PAC Immigration Task Force.

At this training, FMC staff joined with over 125 other individuals who were concerned about the situation of immigrant communities and wanted to begin to find ways to meet the needs of the community.

The training focused on the Sanctuary Movement of offering refuge to immigrants in need and offer a safe place to stay while their legal case is in process either for a few days or extended amount of time.

Churches are recognized by USCIS as sensitive locations which means that ICE is not supposed to come into churches.

FMC will be actively partnering with churches to create support networks for families vulnerable to the increasing threats of arrests, detention and deportation





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ABOUT US

FMC is a community based organization that educates, organizes and mobilizes low-income and working Filipino families in Southern California to address the issues and concerns we face in our daily lives.

FMC joins community groups to push for strong local policy in Long Beach ensuring the safety of immigrant families

On February 7, 2017, dozens of FMC members, supporters, and allies filled the Long Beach City Council meeting to urge the council to support state policies that would turn California into a "Sanctuary State".

The California Values Act consists of two bills: SB 54, which prohibits state and local law enforcement from assisting in deportations, and SB 31, which blocks the collection and sharing of data for a registry based on religion or national origin.

"While this is a great first step, we also need to make sure that we pass local policies that keep people safe," said FMC staff member Alex Montances in a press conference prior to the City Council meeting. "Let's make our places of worship, our community centers, our schools, our great city of Long Beach a sanctuary for all."

Public comment on the issue lasted for more than an hour, with a long line of residents from across the city voicing their support not only for the state bills, but urging the City of Long Beach to enact its own local "Sanctuary City" policy. FMC's allies from Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition, Housing Long Beach, Greater Interfaith Community Organization, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Building Healthy Communities, and many others urged the City Council to stand up for undocumented immigrants and residents of all backgrounds.

Nikole Cababa of FMC spoke during public comment and outlined the demands of local residents and organizations for



a future local sanctuary policy: 1) Prohibit the use of local Long Beach resources that would facilitate deportations, 2) Provide diversion and alternatives to incarceration for low level offenses, 3) Defend pro-immigrant policies from any attacks by the federal government, 4) Oppose any registry based on religious identity, and 5) Protect sensitive and confidential information.

While support for the California bills passed unanimously with a 7-0 vote, FMC was among many of the local residents and organizations who were dismayed that City Council voted to include an additional amendment for SB 54 "to include the participation in multi-agency federal task force operations with the intention of fighting organized crime, such as human and drug trafficking."

The Filipino Migrant Center strongly encourages the City Council to reconsider this harmful amendment as it creates a loophole for local police cooperation with ICE that can easily be used to target all undocumented immigrants. Along with local allies, FMC continues to urge the council to overturn this loophole by heeding the demands of local residents and passing a stronger local "Sanctuary City" policy.

Become a Sustaining Member!

Your continuing support ensures we are able to sustain and grow our programs for low-income Filipino families in Southern California.

Become a Member, please visit:
filiipnomigrantcenter.org/become-a-member

Donations are tax-deductible:
You can go to our website
filiipnomigrantcenter.org/donate

or make checks out to:
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