

# Indivisible Skagit Immigrant Support Task Force

## 2022 Action Report



The **Immigrant Support Task Force** is a working group of Indivisible Skagit. The Task Force was formed in 2017 as Donald Trump was inaugurated US President on a platform of persecuting, excluding, and deporting immigrants. People in Skagit were concerned about the safety and well-being of our neighbors and community members, especially those who are undocumented.

We remain concerned about the well-being and safety of our community members despite the change in administrations. While leadership in the current administration speaks of policy changes, they have not yet demonstrated an ability to rein in the behavior of ICE/CBP in our community.

Our goal is to provide concrete, specific, tangible support to immigrants in Skagit by responding to the needs they express to us directly. We have continued this important work even during the pandemic, adapting what we do in light of health and safety guidance.

**We welcome new members.** We provide training for all our activities. You do not need to speak Spanish to join in. Many of our members do not. But, if you do speak Spanish, or any of the indigenous languages spoken by the local immigrant community, we need your help. Task Force actions are rewarding on many levels. Don't miss the chance to take action on your values. Get connected to the Task Force by email to:

[ImmigrantSupportTaskforce@indivisibleskagit.org](mailto:ImmigrantSupportTaskforce@indivisibleskagit.org)

## 2022 Action Report

### Members

The Task Force added new members this year bringing our total membership to 41. We measure membership by participation: we respond to messages, show up for events/meetings, etc., participate in the work of the task force, form working relationships with other members. Not every member does everything, but all members join in for the tasks they most have a heart for.

### Organizational Relationships

The Task Force continued **strengthening relationships with our ally organizations** during 2022. We also established a new working relationship with Skagit Legal Aid related to Tenant Support.

Here is a sampling of the actions Task Force members took to **support our ally organizations**:

Supported the WA Bulb Co farmworkers' strike by contacting the company and showing up on the picket lines.

Supported the Farmworkers' March led by C2C May 1, 2022

Supported IRIS' Mother's Day and Holiday fundraisers with donations

Participated for ACLU and WAISN Lobby Days

Supported WAISN's Fair Fight Bond Fund with donations

Holiday gift card drive to full Indivisible Skagit membership (1400) for CCS Farmworker Center

Supported former Red Group member in her first year of teaching with classroom supplies

Participated in the Farmworker Center's Art Studio Project for children (See description below.)

We continued to receive and respond to referrals from **Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN)**.

We responded to requests for assistance directly from community members, and worked with **Immigrant Resources & Immediate Support (IRIS)**, the **CCS Farmworker Center**, **Community to Community Development (C2C)**, and **Skagit Legal Aid** to meet these needs.

Here is a **sampling of the range of needs** we responded to in 2022:

ICE intervention for Antonio

Ukrainian asylum seeker without housing

Mom who's kid was being bullied at LaVenture Middle School

Letters in support of single mom for work permit

Funeral expenses for the family of a farm worker

Welding student needing expensive supplies for his program at SVC

A gentleman from India whose employment disappeared due to the pandemic.

Put together toiletry kits for people released from NWDC

### Connecting with the Community

**Tabling Handout**- We developed a handout outlining Task Force working groups and contact information.

Task Force members volunteered with WAISN for their **Washington Immigrant Relief Fund WIRF Clinic** at SVC assisting community members to complete their applications for relief funds.

We reconnected with the new SVC advisors for **the Red Group**, and CAMP, the program for first generation college students from the immigrant community.

Joined in for **Indivisible Skagit Picnic**. This was the first in-person event of IndiSkagit since the lockdown for the pandemic. As the most active of the IndiSkagit Action Teams, 6 members from the Task Force participated.

## **Government Accountability**

Task force members sent a letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas following fast-tracked deportation of a community member. Our letter was co-signed by WAISN and C2C. The letter outlined how announced policy changes from DHS are not being followed here.

## **Legislative Action**

Task Force members worked for passage of SB 5438 Unemployment for undocumented workers (not passed, but re-introduced this year)

Refugee Resettlement funding (passed)

Successfully lobbied for Biden Admin approval to allow WA to offer healthcare access to undocumented residents.

## **Citizenship/English Proficiency Group**

Three members of the original subgroup who received training continue to be active doing individual tutoring. "This past year, two volunteers each worked with students who successfully passed their citizenship exams! That is a big deal given how long it takes for candidates to get interviews, prepare for, and then pass their tests. One Task Force member is now tutoring the son of her former student in exam preparation. All three group members have also tutored individual students (5) in developing their English proficiency which is, of course, the foundational skill needed to pass the citizenship exam. While numbers are not huge, the profound difference this tutoring can make on quality of life means it is volunteering very worth continuing."

## **Farmworker's Center Art Studio Project:**

Two Task force members collaborated on this partnership between CCS Farmworker Center and the Museum of Northwest Art. The program has continued into the 2022-23 school year thanks to lots of volunteer support and the leadership of a Task Force members and a community member.

"We had our first session at the Farmworker's Center on October 5th, with 16 youth in attendance. We focused on introductions and establishing expectations for the initial class. We had our second session on November 2nd, with 18 youth in attendance. We focused on creating Nearikas based on the folk art yarn paintings made by Huichol Indians in Mexico. We had our third session at the Farmworker's Center on December 7th, with 14 youth in attendance. We focused on paintings inspired by Juan Miro. Five more sessions are scheduled for February-June 2023.

All of the work created will be featured in the Museum of Northwest Art's Outside In Gallery in June. The working title of that exhibition is: Exhibición de arte de los estudiantes del Estudio de Arte Familiar del Centro de Trabajadores del Campo/ Student Art Exhibition from the Farmworkers Center Family Art Studio and it will run from June 24 - October 1 , 2023. The curators include one Task Force member and two other members of the community. We're so grateful for volunteers from the Immigrant Support Task Force!"

Contact us at [ImmigrantSupportTaskforce@indivisibleskagit.org](mailto:ImmigrantSupportTaskforce@indivisibleskagit.org) if you'd like to volunteer.