



Wind of the Spirit Breathing Free News

Who we are: we are a resource center for immigrants and together we work to make our mission a reality in favor of our rights and responsibilities, and for a fair and humane immigration policy that allows us to live with dignity.

October / www.wotsnj.org / Box 345 Morristown, NJ / 973.538.2035 / Year 23

Updates on Immigration

TPS for Venezuela

On September 20, 2023, Secretary Mayorkas announced the extension and redesignation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Venezuela for 18 months. This covers Venezuelans who were in the United States as of July 31, 2023. This measure was taken based on Venezuela's increased instability and lack of safety due to enduring humanitarian, security, political, and environmental conditions. People of Venezuelan nationality who have been in the USA as of July 31, 2023 or before, can sign up for (or renew) TPS in order to receive temporary relief from deportation, as well as a work permit. TPS for Venezuela is a great advance, however, our undocumented communities need their rights and dignity to be prioritized, so we continue fighting for a pathway to citizenship!

DACA Update

The infamous Judge Hanen has ruled against DACA again — horrible but not unexpected. People who have DACA now can still renew; people who are eligible can still apply, but USCIS won't process the new applications until the litigation is concluded (if it goes our way). Pressure is building on Pres. Biden to use other tools to protect Dreamers if the Supreme Court ends the program (they are expected to hear the case sometime in their 2024-25 session).

Accelerating processing for work authorization

As of October 1, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will accelerate processing for employment authorization applications filed by undocumented migrants and those who scheduled an appointment through CBP One (the App for individuals to present themselves at the USA border). The plan is to process document requests for employment authorization submitted by undocumented migrants on parole within a period of 30 days instead of 90 days, according to the Department of Homeland Security. In addition, the USCIS is willing to provide additional personnel to reduce time in processing work documents within the 30-day limit, for parolees of the following nationalities: Cuban, Haitian, Venezuelan and Nicaraguan.

Increase Military Personnel to the Southwest Border

The Joe Biden administration, through the Department of Defense, has authorized the increase of military personnel to the U.S.- Mexico Border. Therefore, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has also expanded its capacity to hold people in its facilities, and has expanded the Family Expedited Removal Management (FERM) program — under this process families are placed into expedited removal proceedings to occur within 30 days. We need to keep fighting for the government to extend asylum for those who need it, and to invest in humanitarian programs!

Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) corruption case

The Hispanic Heritage Month celebration planned by Senator Robert Menendez has been postponed after the latest news about his corruption scandal: as part of a federal criminal investigation, the US Attorney's Office announced at a press conference on Friday, September 22, that they are bringing federal charges for corruption against Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), for a second time in his career as senator. Menendez has been accused of participating in a bribery scheme in which, according to investigators, he took advantage of his political influence to benefit third parties, in exchange for luxuries and money.

The senator and his wife currently face three criminal charges: (1) conspiracy to commit bribery, (2) conspiracy to commit honest services fraud, and (3) conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right.

Fire in Dover

A fire was reported on Saturday, September 16 in Dover at 71, 73 and 75 Blackwell St. Latest reports verified that around 70 people were affected by the fire that damaged their homes, and many people were not able to hold on to their belongings. Institutions such as the Red Cross, among others, helped families with resources and temporary accommodation. Meanwhile, Mayor Carolyn Blackman proposed to work on a GoFundMe to collect donations and help out families affected by the incident. If you are a part of a family that has been affected by the incident or want to help out a family affected by the fire, please contact us.

Show Up for WOTS on Bottle Hill Day!

Calendar

Saturday, October 7 is a crucial opportunity to meet with the community and get our message out. Bottle Hill Day is the annual autumn street festival in Madison. WOTS will have a booth, and introduce more people to our services and campaigns. We plan to have postcards to the State Senate President and Assembly Speaker to pass the Values Act, which people can fill out at our table and we will then send. **We need volunteers to help staff the table!** If you can take an hour or so, any time between 10am and 5pm, please let us know: en inglés, Adam at adam@wotsnj.org; en español, NAME at EMAIL. (More info on the festival is here: <https://www.rosenet.org/1005/Bottle-Hill-Day>)

WOTS Plainfield Activists en La Lucha

The many families displaced in Plainfield continue to need services and to find permanent, safe and affordable housing. WOTS members from the community and beyond have attended Plainfield city-government meetings to call for immediate help and wider reform. We are allied with Seton Hall University School of Law's Center for Social Justice, who have testified at these meetings and are helping the displaced families. To find out the next opportunities to get involved, please contact Martha at martha@wotsnj.org or Jessica at domesticworkers@wotsnj.org.

Advocacy Agenda

On Aug. 29, WOTS Volunteer Advocacy Committee members visited Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman's office to promote the Registry bill, and State Senator Scutari's office to promote the Values Act. We visited State Assembly members Brian Bergen and Aura Dunn's offices on Sept. 5, to try and find common ground on immigration issues. With our NDWA partners, we returned to Scutari's office on Sept. 12 to push for the NJ Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights. On Sept. 19, a WOTS ally from Plainfield testified to the need for the Values Act in a zoom with Assemblywoman Linda Carter and our friends at NJAIJ, AFSC and ACLU. To keep up with these issues or get involved yourself, please contact Adam at adam@wotsnj.org.

Stay informed

To connect with our campaigns please reach out to our organizers in our different towns or send an email to adam@wotsnj.org.

October: Hispanic Heritage Month 2023

Dover:

Tuesday 10: Dover Townhall: Rent Control, 7pm.
Tuesday 24: Dover Townhall: Rent Control, 7pm.

Madison:

Thursday 5: Madison Committee, 8pm.

Morristown:

Monday 25: Domestic Workers Committee, 7pm.

Plainfield:

Thursday 05: Domestic Workers Committee, 7pm.
Sunday 08: Plainfield Colectivo, 8am.
Monday 09: Plainfield Townhall, 7pm.
Thursday 26: Community Forum 7pm.
Thursday 19: Leaders Committee (to be confirmed)
Saturday 28: Saturday Council.
Tuesday 31: Ophthalmology Service with the Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired NJ, 9am-12pm.

ESL Class:

↳ **Dover 2:00pm to 5:00pm:**
Level 2: Sunday / **Level 5:** Saturday

↳ **Madison 2:00pm to 5:00pm:**
Level 4: Saturday

↳ **Morristown 2:00pm to 5:00pm**
Level 5: Saturday




↳ **Plainfield Saturdays:**
Level 1: 9:00am to 12:00pm
Level 4: 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Affiliate or become a member of Wots and be part of this fight for dignity and immigrant rights.

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Organizing Hubs: Dover, Morristown, Plainfield

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"If you let the wind be still, what will you hear in prayer?"