

# The Desert Angels

The [Desert Angels](#) are a non-profit, humanitarian group of volunteers, based out of San Diego, Calif. They conduct search and rescue missions of lost people in the desert areas near the United States and Mexico border. Rafael Larraenza is the organization's director. He has helped in not only finding undocumented immigrants who become lost in their journey to the United States, but also in recovering bodies of those who have lost their lives along the way.

More from Larraenza on Sunday, Dec. 22, 2013, in regards to the proposed immigration reform.

---

# Cult ures trik e to Host Even t on



Migrants ride on top of a northern bound train toward the US-Mexico border in Juchitan, southern Mexico, Monday, April 29, 2013. Migrants crossing Mexico to get to the U.S. have increasingly become targets of criminal gangs who kidnap

# Central American Migration

them to obtain ransom money.  
(AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

The pro-immigration magazine [CultureStrike](#) in collaboration with [Verso Books](#) and [Impact Hub Oakland](#) will be hosting “Before the Destination: Migrations from Central America to the United States,” in an effort to shed light on the dangers that Central American immigrants face on their journey to the United States. The multidisciplinary event scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2013 will feature the work of award winning journalist Óscar Martínez, photographer Edu Ponces and artist [Favianna Rodriguez](#).

Martínez, author of “The Beast: Riding the Rails and Dodging Narcos on the Migrant Trail,” will be doing a reading from his book. In October 2013 he was featured in NPR’s [Alt.Latino](#) show for his work in documenting the story of Central American’s who travel through Mexico to the U.S. border on freight trains known as *La Bestia*.

Ponces is an award winning, Spanish, photojournalist whose work has centered largely on the topic of migration. He co-authored the book “*En el Camino: Mexico, la Ruta de los Migrantes Que no Importan* (On the Way: Mexico, The Route of the Migrants Who do Not Matter).” Ponce’s exhibit will focus on the experiences of women on the Train, who face additional risk factors.



Artist Favianna Rodriguez at the pro-immigration event "Face to Face: Action. Healing. Solidarity" in collaboration with French artist JR and his project Inside Out, on Thursday, July 25, 2013 in Oakland, Calif. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez)

Rodriguez is an interdisciplinary artist and activist. She is an international lecturer, coordinator of CultureStrike and co-founder of the national organization, [Presente.org](http://Presente.org). Her work will be present via an art installation.

Despite the many dangers of making the trip from Central America to the U.S. through Mexico via freight train, according to [The New York Times](http://TheNewYorkTimes), the number of American arrests of undocumented immigrants from Central American countries increased from 46, 997 in 2011 to 94,532 in 2012.

The event will take place at The Hub Oakland located at 1423 Broadway Ave., Oakland, Calif.; from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Admission will be free. Register for the event via the [Facebook Event](#) page or through [Eventbrite](#).



A group of Central American migrants read the news of their ordeal from a local newspaper outside of a shelter after they were attacked on the freight train they were riding through Mexico, in Acayucan, Mexico, Thursday, May 2, 2013. The United States-bound migrants had hopped on the train in southern Mexico and were traveling through the Gulf Coast state of Veracruz when attackers shot and cut them with machetes. Some jumped from the train to escape and others were thrown off, said migrants' rights activist Tomas Gonzalez Castillo. At least 10 Honduran migrants are recovering from wounds suffered in the attack. (AP Photo/Felix Marquez)