

day worker center of mountain view



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RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 27—Celebration of Leaders
- Feb. 13—Blood Drive, 9 pints donated!
- Feb. 14—Los Charros Valentine's Day Musical Performance
- Feb. 19-23—NDLON National Assembly
- Mar. 5—Personal Emergency Preparedness Class
- Mar. 8—International Women's Day
- Mar. 19—Cake Decorating Class
- Mar. 21—Film Screening of *A Better Life*
- Mar. 28—Healthy Cooking Class
- Date tbd—Ceramics Class, date

Mission

The Center's mission is to provide a safe and supportive environment to connect day workers and employers. In addition, the Center strives to empower day workers and improve their socio-economic condition through fair employment, education, job skills training, and community service. The Center also supports advocacy efforts on issues that affect day workers.



María and Craig at the awards dinner.

Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Year 2011!

On Friday, January 27th, approximately 200 people gathered at the Four Seasons Hotel in East Palo Alto for the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce's 17th Annual Celebration of Leaders. The Center attended in recognition of our Volunteer of the Year, Craig Sherod. Thank you once again, Craig, for all the time and work you dedicate to the Center! We honor you and your invaluable contributions.

Valentine's Day Lunch and Performance

Los compañeros put their musical talents to work and formed a musical group with the support of one of our volunteers, Christine. On Valentine's Day they performed for their peers at lunch, and then later that evening at Los Charros Restaurant. They were encored three times at Los Charros! One of the workers and acting producer, Jorge, reflected on the experience:

February 14th was a very special day, as a group of friends led by music teacher Christine Chatwell had the opportunity to perform musically. This performance took place in a well-known restaurant at 7pm. There were about 15 people from the Day Worker Center as well as some guests, like the wonderful presence of three Santa Clara University students.

It was a very beautiful evening because we dared to do something that we don't do everyday, and although we were nervous at the beginning we overcame that. It was an experience that I won't forget, because I know that my situation isn't easy. Although I'm far away from my family, here I have met some amazing, personable people. Together we made sure that the night was a success. Many thanks. (Translated by Jeannette Westwood.)



Performing at Los Charros

Healthy Cooking Classes

One of our wonderful volunteers, Namita, graciously put her expertise to use and gave a healthy cooking class here at the Center. She is a holistic health coach and holds a Ph.D. in Foods and Nutrition. Six students learned how to make a carrot pineapple salad, watermelon spinach salad, and whole meal soup. In addition to the hands-on experience, Namita also reviewed the benefits of different ingredients like lentils and carrots, why one should avoid eating packaged foods, and the importance of eating seasonally.

One of the workers, Francis, said, “La ensalada de sandía con espinacas y queso de cabra me sonaba algo absurdo...se veía que tenía mala cara de ensalada. Pero al final de la preparación y probarla, me llevé el chasco de mi vida, ¡era una cosa riquísima!” *The idea of a watermelon spinach salad with goat cheese sounded ridiculous to me...you could see that it didn't look like a very good salad. But after preparing it and trying it, I received the surprise of my life, it was absolutely delicious!*”



Preparing the goat cheese.

On the Road to Justice, Ni un paso atrás...



Delegates from left to right: Antonio, José, Ester, María, Teresa, and Félix.

From February 19th to 23rd María and 5 workers went to Los Angeles to participate in the 6th National Assembly of Day Workers. The conference was put on by NDLO, the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, of which we are a member. The goals of the conference included:

1. Strengthen member organizations and the national network in order to be able to have a large impact in the struggles against police-ICE collaboration and for just immigration reform and dignified working conditions.
2. Build a shared analysis of the context in which the day labor community lives.
3. Promote the creation of workers' centers and public policies that protect the labor and civil rights of the day labor community.
4. Improve leadership development and promote the direct involvement of the day labor community in future plans.

5. Strengthen and create alliances with other organizations and groups.
6. Promote culture as an organizing tool.

Speakers included María Elena Durazo, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO); Raymond Pocino, Vice President of the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA); Tom Saenz, President and General Counsel of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF); Tavis Smiley, talk show host and author; and Richard L. Trumka, President of the AFL-CIO. María and the workers also participated in a variety of workshops, and attended a screening of *A Better Life*, a film featuring a day worker as the main character.

One favorite workshop was “Democratic Leadership and Facilitation in Organizing and Educational Work,” in which participants talked about and practiced how to bring people together to accomplish goals. Participants interviewed each other to find common ground and see how they might combine their skills and experiences.

Taking part in a puzzle exercise was another experience that, while simple, had big impact. Participants were each given two pieces, and told to assemble the puzzle without communication—no talking, not even hand gestures. “No sabíamos qué hacer,” said Ester. *We didn't know what to do.* Eventually they were allowed to communicate, and suddenly everything came together. Teresa explained that they learned and experienced the importance of communication, and that furthermore, “Aprendimos que es bien importante **aprovechar** el poder que tenemos para expresar nuestros ideas y opiniones.” *We learned that it is very important to **take advantage** of our ability to express our ideas and opinions.*

Everyone came back with new perspectives, hope, energy, and knowledge!