



FALL 2020



RELIABLE WORKERS  READY TO SERVE

# day worker center of mountain view

## FINDING HOPE IN DIFFICULT TIMES

### A Message from Executive Director María Marroquín

This has been a year like no other.



When the pandemic struck in March, day laborers faced increasing anxiety. Would they or their loved ones get sick and need medical care? Would they be able to find enough work? How would they buy food and pay rent?

Working low-wage jobs with an uncertain number of hours, compañer@s are already the most vulnerable members of our community. They have no health insurance and don't qualify for public assistance. Many are homeless and live in a car or RV.

With the pandemic, many jobs that workers depend on suddenly dried up. Families were going hungry. Cell

Workers line up for a hot meal from the Center's kitchen, prepared and served by other workers.



María Marroquín ladles hot soup to feed waiting workers and their families.

phones—those crucial links to jobs and family—became unaffordable.

Since March, the Day Worker Center staff and workers have banded together to:

- **Feed hungry workers.** We provide 2,000 meals a month. That's 340% more than last year.
- **Distribute money** to help workers buy food for their families, keep a roof over their head, stay in touch by phone, and buy gas to get to work. Since March, nearly \$248,000 has been distributed to support our compañer@s in this time of crisis.

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## Workers Care For Our Community

Even while facing personal crises in these uncertain times, our compañer@s have gone the extra mile to give back to the community by:

- Sewing almost **10,000 masks** and donating them to the United Farm Workers union and the Navajo Nation.
- Making and distributing more than **2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer.**

A huge *gracias* to our workers for helping others and promoting health and safety!



A worker sews a batch of masks to be donated.

Without your support, the lives of our compañer@s are in jeopardy. We are deeply grateful for your [donations to the Day Worker Center](#) that allow us to keep our doors open to welcome and support workers.

# DAY WORKERS HELP THE COMMUNITY



## 24 YEARS!

In October the Day Worker Center celebrated 24 years of serving our community with a [Facebook Live virtual party](#) hosted by Executive Director **María Marroquín** and journalist [Celina Rodriguez](#).

### Honoring One of Our Own

For 20 of those years, **Alberto Resendiz Aguilar** has been associated with the Center. Affectionately and respectfully known as “**Don Beto**,” our master gardener helps keep our grounds beautiful and grows vegetables that are transformed into meals for workers. Don Beto’s greatest joy is teaching valuable gardening know-how to younger workers, growing their skills and enabling them to find more work opportunities.

For his dedication over the years, Don Beto was awarded a certificate of appreciation in a ceremony aired during the virtual party. (For more about Don Beto, see “[Challenges of Mobile Living](#)” on the front page of our 2019 newsletter.)

### Gracias!

Our 24th anniversary celebration was scaled down and aired online to meet these pandemic times. We send a huge thank-you to [Red Rock Coffee](#) for letting us broadcast live from their cafe. And special thanks go to Volunteer Coordinator, **Alejandra**

Look for the Day Worker Center’s in-person party in October 2021 saluting our 25th anniversary!

**Pinto-Garcia**, and volunteers **Sergio Ciccolella**, **Naomi Sneiderman**, and **Frank Mercado** for their hard work in putting together our virtual celebration.



Executive Director **María Marroquín** awards worker **Don Beto** a certificate of appreciation for his 20 years with the Day Worker Center of Mountain View.

## CHANGE LIVES!

### LOOK WHAT YOUR GIFT CAN DO!

**\$25**

Seasonal vegetable seeds to feed workers.



**\$50**

Train 6 workers for 8 hours.

**\$75**

Buy ESL books for 10 classes.



**\$100**

Keep our doors open for an entire week!

MAIL YOUR **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE** CHECK IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE, OR **DONATE AT OUR WEBSITE**



**Maria's Message** continued from page 1

• **Connect more than 700 workers to jobs every month**—even while unemployment in the Bay Area has skyrocketed. Our employers and workers follow public-health guidelines to keep everyone healthy and safe.

While day worker centers throughout the U.S. were forced to close, the Day Worker Center of Mountain View kept our doors open. We changed our focus on the fly—while staying true to our mission and beliefs—to meet the new emergencies facing day laborers.

Although we must limit the number of workers allowed at the Center due to new public-health regulations, we continue to offer a safe space for a few. For those who can't be here in person, we keep in touch by phone. Our compañer@s know that we will always be here to support them.

These are unsettling, challenging times for everyone — especially for day laborers who push on in spite of incredible odds.

We are incredibly grateful for the support of our community, employers, and dedicated volunteers. We especially give thanks for everyone who stepped up with additional support to keep us afloat in these most challenging times. *You* make possible these reflections on joy and hope!

A worker irons cloth that will be made into masks. At right, some of the 2,000 hand sanitizer bottles and nearly 10,000 masks that were donated to the United Farm Workers union and the Navajo Nation.



# Working for Justice

Did you know that Santa Clara County has one of the highest levels of wage theft?

Day laborers are especially vulnerable. Employers know that day workers are not in position to negotiate. They may not speak English and may not know that regulations protect how they are paid. The pandemic has only made these problems worse and complaints of not getting paid for work have increased since March.

**Carlos Arreola Jr.**, coordinator of the Center's **Outreach and Education Initiative** program, reaches out to day laborers throughout the community, inviting them to "Know Your Rights" sessions where they learn about minimum wage laws, overtime pay, and other rights such as rest and meal breaks. If workers have been cheated of wages, Carlos connects them with legal help offered by the **County Office of Labor Standards and Education**, acting as go-between and case manager. Begun as a pilot in 2019, the Outreach and Education Initiative program is now fully funded.

"Every day I wake up and thank God that I'm here," says Carlos of the Day Worker Center. He knows first-hand the importance of wage justice for workers, having helped his parents in their cleaning and landscaping businesses begun after they immigrated to San Jose. Fluent in English and Spanish, Carlos earned a bachelor's degree in political science and hopes to become an attorney working for justice for day laborers. Says Carlos, "Helping others has led me to grow as a person and find out what community really means."



Outreach and Education Initiative Coordinator  
Carlos Arreola Jr.



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