

# day worker center of mountain view



RELIABLE WORKERS ✕ READY TO SERVE

## ✕ Job Drive ✕

### PUTTING MORE PEOPLE TO WORK

Could you and your family survive on \$600 a month? And then send so-called “extra” money to loved ones back in your home country waiting anxiously to make medical or school payments?

Most of us could not survive on \$600 a month, let alone feed a family or support others in the old country. Yet this is the plight of the average worker.

During the rainy winter months, prospects for income are even more bleak. According to one worker, when it rains “... employers don’t come to hire us. You can see the worry on many of our faces as we wait to work, since ... rent is due and many other things get closer.”

On any given day, about 73 workers sign in to wait for a job. Only about 23 of those will be hired. Although they fervently pray for more hours each week, on average a worker receives just 12 hours.

While waiting, workers can dine on a hearty, nutritious meal – perhaps their only hot meal that day. They can also take ESL, CPR, computer, and other classes to improve their job skills (easier for workers, now that classes are offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings), or even learn a craft to supplement their income.

However, they come to the Day Worker Center because they *want and need to work*. More



Untitled, Miguel Mota

jobs means more workers will work – and more will earn money desperately needed for rent and food.

To increase jobs, bring in more employers, and put more people to work, we led our first Job Development Drive this year. We temporarily hired a job development coordinator who, for three months, led a team of 10 volunteers in weekly brainstorming and strategy sessions. Most of the efforts went into speaking engagements and a “media blitz” of the TV ads they created. *(More at “See Us on TV,” at right.)*

Your response to our job drive, even during the economic downturn, was overwhelming – you made it a huge success! During the second quarter alone, around 525 more jobs than the previous year were created, bringing

the total number worked during the three-month span to almost 2,400. The drive ended in July, but the benefits keep rolling in: In October, we came close to meeting our goal of a 50% increase in jobs!

“Getting our own building and developing great programs are major accomplishments,” says Craig Sherod, president of the Center’s board of directors, “but our mission is to connect workers with employers. This is really the first time we have focused such intense energy on the task of bringing more jobs to the Center.”

Since putting people to work is the **most important** thing we do, we would love to be able to pay a full- or part-time job development coordinator. If you can help, please call Maria at (650) 903-4102.

### SEE US ON TV!

Three new TV spots touting the Day Worker Center of Mountain View, its workers and what they can do for you now regularly air on KMVT–Channel 15 in Mountain View, Cupertino, and Los Altos. We thank the volunteers and everyone at KMVT Community Television, who filmed the three commercials. Here’s a link to one of the ads, “Overview”:

[www.youtube.com/user/dayworkercentermv](http://www.youtube.com/user/dayworkercentermv)



Worker-made jewelry in a variety of fibers.

### Hidden Talent on Display CITY HONORS WORKERS WITH EXHIBIT

Day worker’s creations filled City Hall in Mountain View to the rafters. For two weeks in October, the multi-media exhibition of paintings, drawings, photographs, jewelry, and fiber arts (knitted and crocheted pieces) showed off projects crafted in the Day Worker Center’s popular hobby classes. In these workshops, workers learn a relaxing hobby. More importantly, they can add to their income by selling their beautiful pieces. You’ll find some their art sprinkled throughout this newsletter.



## Twirling for Dollars

Spurred to action by spending time with workers at the Day Worker Center and viewing the *Borderless Dreams* documentary, two students and a teacher from Castilleja High School pulled out all the stops to organize a fundraiser for us – and brought in more than \$1,600!

At the Dance Showcase & Fundraiser, dance teams from Castilleja, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Menlo, Gunn, and

Atherton high schools as well as the Dance Connection performed, and Maria and a few of the workers demonstrated *ballet folklorico*. Workers sold handicrafts of all types, from knit and crocheted pieces to hand-made shoes and jewelry.

We extend special thanks to Hannah, Sarah, and Joseph of Castilleja for putting together this wonderful evening in May.

*“Consistently you get people who work hard, don't complain, and do what you ask them.... They negotiate fairly and honestly about hours and payment.”*

## THE ROAD TO JUSTICE

In February, Maria and five workers from the Day Worker Center traveled to Los Angeles to attend the 6<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of Day Workers hosted by the National Day Laborers Organizing Network.

A networking organization of day worker centers across the US, NDLOM strives to improve the lives of day workers by working to protect and expand workers' rights. The organization works toward safer, more humane environments for day workers so that they can earn a living, contribute to society, and integrate into their communities.

Maria and the workers participated in a variety of workshops, and attended a screening of *A Better Life*, a dramatic film with a day worker as the main character.

Speakers from the AFL-CIO included L. Trumka, president, and Maria Elena Durazo, executive secretary-treasurer. Talk show host and author Tavis Smiley also spoke.

The assembly discussed just immigration reform, dignified working conditions, and struggling against the police-ICE collaboration.

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



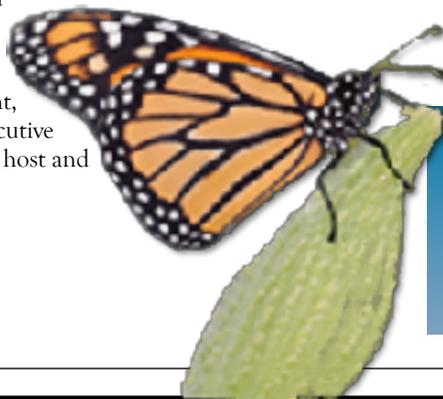
*Child's Portrait, Christine Chantwell*

## GIVING BACK

At the Day Worker Center, the work-week doesn't end on Friday. Many weekends, you'll find Maria and crew staffing an information booth at local events, including the popular two-day Art & Wine festivals in Los Altos and Mountain View, as well as the Diwali Festival in Cupertino.

When we host blood drives for the Stanford Blood Center, workers line up in droves to donate. This year, the Day Worker Center gave 38 pints! With each pint saving as many as three lives, that's blood from the heart.

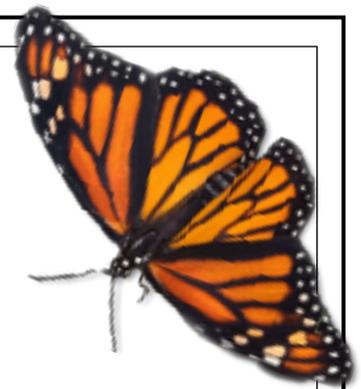
Explains executive director Maria Marroquin, “When you have nothing else to give, you give of yourself.”



*“Great people, easy to work with, low cost and [they] always do a great job.... The process is so easy and efficient, it only takes a few minutes to walk out with the right support.”*

— E.R. of Mtn. View, on Yelp

# Behind the Controversy: SEE THE REAL FACES



"I had a stable job, but the salary was too small because of the expenses to support my two children," says a young woman worker. Then, "about two years before I came here, my daughter got very sick. It's been 6 years that I haven't been with my children. I've missed all those things."

cured and healthy or hospitalized. But if not, regrettably, you die."

These are just two of the voices you will hear in *Borderless Dreams*, a film that digs deeper than headlines to reveal the human faces and suffering behind the controversy of immigration.

Made by and about day workers, the documentary features several laborers from the Day Worker Center who talk openly about their desperate search for jobs in the US and the heart-wrenching decision each made to leave their families behind.

To quote another gentleman in the film, "It's something sad, no? It's something difficult leaving your home because you don't know how long you'll be away. My mother took my decision with a bit more wisdom than my wife. But in the end, they both agreed that we needed something better. We needed money to move ahead, and so they had to accept it."

*Borderless Dreams* is available to schools and organizations. Shown frequently to sell-out

crowds throughout the peninsula, this 20-minute film always prompts lively and compelling discussion.

For helping to fund the filming of *Borderless Dreams*, we extend our gratitude to the [Silicon Valley Community Foundation](#) and the [Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People](#).

Want to hear more from day laborers? Workers journal in both English and Spanish about a myriad of subjects — from work experiences, to outings at the beach, to childhood memories — on the Day Workers' Journal Blog. Visit the blog at [dayworkers-](#)

Says a middle-aged man, "I started thinking about coming to this country when my mother got sick. I didn't have enough resources to pay the medical expenses. You either have money to get



*Dolphins/Delfines*, Daniela Villegas Garcia

## Volunteers With Heart

With only two staff members, the Center could not function without an army of volunteers donating their time.

\* Generous souls from all walks of life teach ESL, manage our databases, maintain the website, take on graphic design projects, and much more. Last year, they donated nearly 15,000 hours of their precious time!

\* A multitude of students give their time to the Day Worker Center each year. They find they can brush up on their Spanish while tutoring or by chatting with workers over lunch or on outings. We'd particularly like to thank devoted students from Castilleja, Notre Dame, Saint Francis, Los Altos, and Mountain View high schools, as well as De Anza and Foothill colleges, and Santa Clara and Stanford universities.

In May, the Center held its first Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue. Mi Pueblo donated meats and produce which day workers transformed into a delicious meal. For entertainment, Maria led three workers in dancing *ballet folklorico* and another worker serenaded the guests then led a sing-along. Country Gourmet, Hobe's, Pier 39, Laser Quest, Clocktower Coffee, and Yoogl Yogurt donated items for the raffle. Our treasured volunteers were sent home with traditional Mexican cookies and cards signed by all the workers.



## Merchants Give, Too

Each days' hot meal is prepared by a few day worker women, and the workers themselves pay the cooks' wages out of their meager earnings. These daily meals would not be possible without "in-kind" donations from many the stores and restaurants that donate food. An enormous bouquet of gratitude to: Safeway, Milk Pail Market, Trader Joe's, Pinnacle Organic Farms, Second Harvest food bank, Le Boulanger, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Starbucks, Los Charros Restaurant, and Panera Bread.

AT THE DAY WORKER CENTER,  
WE PUT YOUR MONEY  
TO GOOD USE.  
HERE ARE JUST A FEW  
EXAMPLES OF HOW WE  
STRETCH YOUR DOLLARS.

**\$20**

buys meals  
for **100** day workers  
for one day!

**\$60**

buys materials for the  
ESL volunteer teachers  
for two weeks!

**\$100**

keeps our doors  
open and lights on  
for an entire week!

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

# "O, Christmas Tree . . ."



Paciano displays two of his exquisite wood carvings.

"How lovely are thy ... tree lots"? Well, yes. Thanks to the Los Altos Kiwanis Club, quite a few Center workers will have steady work wrangling pine trees for part of the holiday season.

When you stop by the Kiwanis Tree Lot, you'll find several workers in distinctive Day Worker Center tee-shirts cutting trunks or helping customers wrangle the piney behemoths to their cars.

This job windfall comes at a time when jobs are scarce due to bad weather, and the exposure may help drive more business in general to the Center. "I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for this great opportunity," says Maria Marroquín, executive director. "I hope this will help us get more jobs."

An added benefit of this project is that it allows workers to feel that they are giving back to the community by contributing their

efforts to a worthy cause: Tree sale proceeds go to grants and scholarships for local youth. This cause is particularly special to them because a daughter of one of the workers received a Los Altos Kiwanis Club scholarship.

Pick up your tree through Dec. 16, at the Kiwanis lot in front of Lucky's at Foothill Expressway and Arboretum Drive, 3-7:30 PM on weeknights, and 9 AM-6 PM on weekends. For more information, go to [www.kiwanistrees.org](http://www.kiwanistrees.org).

## More Hours . . . Classes!

- To hire a worker, stop in any time Mon.-Sat., 7 AM-5 PM. (Sun. hours by arrangement.)
- If you've ever wanted to make authentic tamales or other dishes, you can learn from the pros in our new cooking workshops! Check our website for class times.
- We're delighted to now offer even more classes for day workers Mon., Wed. & Fri. evenings until 9.

## TWO BIRDS...

If your budget is tight but you'd like to donate to the Day Worker Center, there's an easy way you can help that won't cost you a penny.

Simply collect your cans and bottles, then drop them off here at the Center. You'll help raise cash for DWCMV and help clean up the environment!

## A Butterfly's Mission

As a graceful symbol of resilience and survival, the monarch butterfly is a natural fit for the national migrant movement. Like butterflies, day workers are not limited by borders. Leaving behind loved ones, they follow desperate dreams of jobs across borders.



Let it snow! Consider a day worker-made knit or crocheted hat or scarf to fill your holiday gift list.

Yet the butterfly also stands for transformation and growth: To soar to our dreams we must shed our cocoon. As the caterpillar may find, growth might not always be comfortable but it's certainly rewarding.

Thanks to you, our friends and supporters, our rewards have been abundant this year. We've grown and transformed substantially since our birth in 1996, yet our mission remains the same: We strive to connect workers with employers in a safe and supportive environment.

— Maria Marroquín, Executive Director



## ¡Viva la Música!

Don't miss the Day Worker Center Latin Band when they perform a mix of traditional, contemporary and Mexican fusion music in both Spanish and English:

• Dec. 3, 5:30-7:30 PM at the Community Tree Lighting Celebration at the Civic Center Plaza in downtown Mountain View.

• "First Friday" in downtown Los Altos, every month starting Dec. 7, at 6 PM. Merchants stay open late and offer discounts and treats. There's music on the streets and plenty of free parking.

## Do we have your Email address?

To save on mailing costs, we announce many events by email. Please make sure we have your most recent address!

- Write your email address on an envelope and send it to: 113 Escuela Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94040. (Better yet, tuck a donation in your envelope!)
- Call us at 650.903.4102.
- Send a note from your email address to [info@dayworkercenter.org](mailto:info@dayworkercenter.org).

## Web Wise

Check out the Day Worker Center on these popular sites.

- \* **Facebook:** Be sure to "like" us!
- \* **YouTube:** Watch *Borderless Dreams*, see some of our important visitors, check out our three ads, and much more!
- \* **Yelp:** Read the enthusiastic reviews from people who have hired Day Worker Center workers. Leave one yourself!



In photo, above right: Mountain View Dayworkers Love Music, by Jackson Reyna; a knit purse in Mexico's colors by an unknown artist.