

day worker center of mountain view



RELIABLE WORKERS ☉ READY TO SERVE

➤ Heart of Our Home ➤ *You Make Kitchen Make-Over Possible!*

In your home life revolves around the kitchen, where family and guests gather to share meals and stories.

It's no different at the Day Worker Center.

Before the County closed our home-like kitchen for commercial upgrades in April, many workers depended on the breakfast and hot lunch served at the Center —

which might be their only substantial meals that day.

Or, arriving early on a frosty morning with stomachs growling from hunger, compañer@s found hot coffee and a quick bite a welcome respite before heading out for a day of heavy labor. At the lunch table, workers brain-

stormed problems and ideas, shared stories and dreams, and built bonds.

Beyond meals, the Center's kitchen served many functions. Workers prepared meals for each other and learned food preparation and catering skills.

Serving daily meals and accepting foodstuff donations places us in the same

category — with the same high standards — as any other food business, so meals and kitchen training were put on ice when the County required a full commercial kitchen upgrade.

Even though this causes temporary hardships and program pauses, it's a

thrilling opportunity to expand our services. The new kitchen is designed for more storage, better work flow, and it will be much more energy efficient. Best of all, we'll be able to soup-up our training in catering and other kitchen skills.

Of course, this unplanned renovation is expensive. Thanks to your speedy response and overwhelming generosity to our kitchen SOS, we collected the money needed to hire architects and contractors in record time.

Construction begins as soon as we receive all the necessary approvals and permits — we'll keep you posted on the progress! Keep your eyes out for an invitation to celebrate with us when we bring back the heart of our home.

We're well on our way to the exciting opening of our new kitchen, but we still have tremendous daily operating needs. Please consider the Day Worker Center in your year-end donations.



WORKERS SING YOUR PRAISES!

Your donations and volunteer efforts make the Center a home-away-from-home for the workers. Caring volunteers create a positive environment for meaningful change: you transform lives! Sprinkled throughout this newsletter, you'll find tributes from the workers to our many dedicated volunteers.

"Cesar, the CPR instructor taught me how to help a person who is having a heart attack by applying first aid. It prepared me to assist those in need of medical attention until the paramedics arrive. I'm no longer just a bystander. Recently, I was able to help an elderly man who fell and entered into desperation. I feel good about myself and have complete confidence that I can use my skills to help my fellow constituents." — Ana M.



Who Volunteers at the Day Worker Center?

DOUGLAS ROBERTS: TEACH SKILLS, SHARE COMPASSION



Volunteer Douglas Roberts is a natural-born teacher. When supervising the workers from the Center who are hired to work at the Kiwanis Christmas Tree Lot in Los Altos he says,

"I'm always looking for a way to teach skills they can use in life."

After retiring from a career in home construction, Douglas looked for ways to serve the community. Much of his expertise is now offered to the Day Worker Center.

Each year for the past three, Douglas has hired about 10 compañeros to work steady eight-hour shifts at the Kiwanis Tree Lot. This provides much-needed steady income during the winter when jobs for day laborers are limited. Plus, with his career's-worth of experience directing construction crews, he's teaching some of those workers to recognize and develop leadership skills so that they can improve their income opportunities.

"Thanks to volunteer Douglas Roberts, I received a great crash-course in carpentry. I can now use those skills in a paying job." — Cornell F.

Recognizable on the tree lot in their Day Worker Center T-shirts, all of the men toil to earn their wages. "Selling trees is hard work, in the rain and cold," says Douglas. "Each tree is lifted multiple times on the way to a customer's car."

Proceeds from the 1,500 trees sold in November and December fund scholarships for local high school seniors. He explains, "These students would not otherwise go to college because of family hardship; it's probably the first time someone in their family has gone to college."

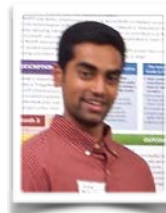
Douglas is involved with the Center through the Los Altos Methodist Church, too. Several times a year, he supervises the workers that the church hires to unload and sort donated goods and furniture, and load buyers' purchases into cars at the rummage sale and fall festival.

Using his home-building expertise to guide the Center's kitchen renovation project, Douglas is a valuable resource for staff on the myriad acronyms and processes that come with a project of this detail and scope.

His volunteer work with the Center encompasses the last five years, but his association with day laborers precedes the Center when, for his construction business, Douglas hired day laborers off the street corner to dig trenches or build fences.

About the vastly different experiences of hiring workers off of the street or from the Day Worker Center, he says, "There's a professional attitude that comes with having an office — plus it's easy to reach them by phone." He sees immense improvement for the workers, too. "They have food, plus classes and workshops, all kinds of ways to improve themselves as they sit and wait for work — all in a warm, dry place."

ABHI VENKATARAMANA: IMPROVE HEALTH THROUGH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Closing the kitchen for upgrades means no meals for workers who depend on them and diminished wages for those who cook the meals. It also halted two important volunteer-led projects that use the Center's cooking facilities as a teaching tool.

One of those is the Healthy Catering Workers' Cooperative. This project while improving the nutrition of meals served at the Center, shows day workers what it's like to own and run a small business. Six workers are given a weekly budget of \$500 to develop

original recipes, buy ingredients, and cook nutritious meals.

The Healthy Catering Cooperative is researched and led by volunteer Abhi Venkataramana, a senior at Stanford University who plans to become a community health physician. Abhi became interested in immigrants' health issues while working in Oaxaca, where he saw firsthand some of the distressing reasons people are driven to leave their homeland. Asked about issues affecting immigrants' health, Abhi says the many, complex issues are interwoven. "Besides nutrition,

work and income, stress and fear of deportation have a huge impact on workers' health." He sees the cooperative as addressing several of these health problems. "A cooperative shows workers they can be responsible for their own livelihood and become more financially secure."

Helping workers become self-sufficient is one reason he enjoys volunteering at the Center. "I feel like I can have a real impact on their lives."

The other project on hold is the Nutrition Literacy Campaign. While some workers were learning how to run a healthy catering business, many others were learning how to judge for themselves what constitutes a healthy meal. Student volunteers from Stanford's Office of Community Health used the *Mi Plato* balanced-plate poster, shared simple, Latino recipes, and led cooking demonstrations and grocery store visits to encourage healthy home-cooking. Instruction in healthy living also included fun physical activities such as Zumba, plus ways to decrease stress, like yoga and meditation.

Both the Healthy Catering cooperatives and the Nutrition Literacy Campaign will gear up again as soon as the Center's kitchen re-opens.

Meanwhile, Abhi says he really appreciates his time volunteering at the Center. "I have nothing but gratitude for everything that María and the staff sacrifice to make the Center what it is."

He continued, "It's inspiring — it has shaped my own path. I found it meaningful getting to know the individuals and their problems, seeing them come to work each day with smiles on their faces."



YOUR GIVING TREE

Put food on the table for a worker now ... help a student pursue college dreams next year!

Kiwanis Christmas Tree Lot
Lucky Supermarket's
parking lot
2175 Grant Road, Los Altos
(Foothill Expressway
& Arboretum)
Christmas trees and decorations



You're the Wind Beneath Their Wings

We're astounded: Nearly 13,000 hours were volunteered this year! Passionate, committed people help with every aspect of the Center to share knowledge in classes, workshops and presentations; assist with office work and operations; help the community; spread the word about the Center; sit on the board of directors; produce this newsletter; and even maintain our Web presence. The Day Worker Center simply could not exist without our amazing volunteers.

Then there are the angels who volunteer their dollars to keep us aloft. Whether it's daily operations or a huge capital project like the kitchen rebuild, knowing we can count on you to help us meet our financial needs allows us to focus our efforts where they're most needed: on the workers.

Donor or volunteer, YOU help fulfill the hopes and dreams of so many people! Without you, we could not help others strengthen their wings to fly. You are the wind beneath their wings.

— María Marroquín, Executive Director



YOU CHANGE LIVES, ONE AT A TIME

Want to know how your volunteer efforts and donations make a difference? Here is one worker's story.

"Their impact has been enormous — not only for me, but for my family, too!" exclaims Paul Ramirez, who recently found the Day Worker Center.

"The Center was my last option. In reality, there was nowhere else to go," he explains. "I was hungry, and I went to the Center. This was not easy, especially for me — being that I have 20 years of experience in construction — [but] I found the center to be a marvelous place."

"My first day a fellow co-worker asked me if I had eaten yet ... was I hungry. I hesitated to answer, but I overcame it and said, 'Yes.'"

"Next thing I know, I was sitting at the table eating a hot plate of food! I realized I had found a wonderful place where everything was already well-organized and ready for me to work."

"In the past years I was able to provide for my children," Paul continued, "but in 2013, I became unemployed and suffered a severe hardship."

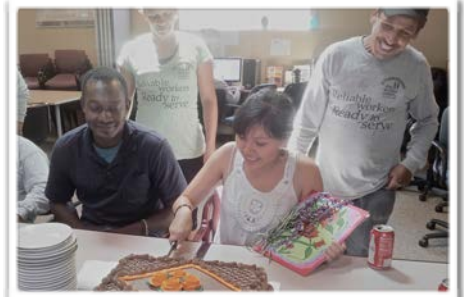
As Christmas approached, Paul worried about stretching non-existent finances to include gifts for his children. "December is when [we are surrounded by] love and peace. I desired so much to give my kids lots of presents. But I did not have money."

Working with Center volunteers, Paul was able to make gifts for his kids. "[Volunteer] Naomi and [compañera] Josefina taught me how to sew and knit. I made a purse for my daughter and a dress

for my son's chihuahua. I felt really bad that I was not able to buy them better presents. It was hard for me to go home and bring them what I had made, but they were delighted and very appreciative. This was incredible!"

"I explained to [my kids] that two wonderful volunteers taught me to make these gifts," he continues. "They gave me the material and spent their time showing me how to make the purse and the dress."

"Now I am steadily working and able to support my children," Paul says. "I think about the people who make the Center a reality for me and others like me who need to find work, and I am overwhelmed with gratitude. Thanks to all the volunteers who share their time and experience with me and all the workers at the Center."



PARTY FOR VOLUNTEERS!

Do you volunteer for the Day Worker Center? You're invited to bring your family to a party celebrating your dedicated support. The workers and staff will "Celebrate the Fruits of Your Service" with food, drinks and cultural entertainment on **Dec. 20, at 5 p.m.**, at the Community Center (201 S. Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View).

TRAVELING STITCHES

This art project is just one of the many worthy activities your donations support.

While waiting to be employed, about 100 men and women from different countries learn to express their memories, dreams, and hopes through the art of quilting from volunteer and project coordinator Naomi Zamir.

Quilters find talking to each other in class a fun way to practice English. As each person creates their pictorial square, it “opens a window to their

inner world,” says Naomi, and “provides a focal point for conversations among them.”

Last year, an exhibit of eight quilts and an accompanying photo essay showing how they were made was a popular exhibit in Mountain View, both at the City Hall and at the School of Music and Arts. In 2014, this traveling

ambassador for the Day Worker Center visited Berkeley (La Peña Cultural Center), Menlo Park (Zoe Café), and even Los Angeles where it had a special showing on the University of California campus before coming home to another exhibit at City Hall.



Learn to Earn

Your dollars support these and many other great workshops, presentations, and classes that *compañer@s* attend to improve themselves and their job skills while waiting for work at the Day Worker Center. Here are just a few of the trainings offered in 2014.

★ **Fire Safety:** *Center member Richard* demonstrated how to put out different types of fires.

★ **Toxics in Construction:** how toxics affect workers' health and how to eliminate safety hazards at job sites, by the *State Building & Construction Trade Council*.

★ **CPR and First Aid:** taught in both Spanish and English by *many dedicated volunteers*.

★ **Drivers' Licenses:** in 2015, CA law AB60 allows

anyone to apply for a driver's license, regardless of documentation status — *Services Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN)*.

★ **Preventing Work-related Injuries & What to Do If Injured On the Job:** a workers' safety and rights presentation by *repre-*

“I thank the volunteers who come from different walks of life bringing varied perspectives to workers. For example, Jeff the music teacher gave [me] a different perspective on musical scales and taught me to comprehend guitar scales.” — Lev M.

sentatives from the Katherine & George Alexander

Community Law Center at Santa Clara University Law School.

★ **Green Cleaning:** *compañera Maria Martinez* showed “green” housekeeping methods and products.

★ **Restaurant Skills:** *friend of the Center Jorge Resendiz* talked about his hard work rising from fast-food to four-star restaurants, then gave hands-on training

teaching students about edible landscaping and sustainable gardening.

★ **Water-wise Planting:** with a *master gardener* from Santa Clara County.

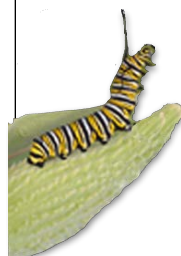
★ **Exercise, Nutrition, & Diabetes:** three-part health workshop with

students from Stanford University's School of Medicine.

★ **Woodworking:** *wood craftsman Fred from South Bay Woodworkers* showed different types of wood and their uses in construction and hobby wood-working.

in how to set a table and bus dishes.

★ **Sustainable Gardening:** hands-on workshop in the mobile green-house *Compass Green*, which tours area schools



Gifts from the Heart

The Center's incredibly generous workers give their time to the community in myriad ways. Here are just a few of the volunteer acts that compañer@s donated in 2014.



- ★ Teach arts and crafts, and plant flowers and vegetables at the Senior Center in Mountain View.
- ★ Clear brush and erect fences for Midpeninsula Open Space Preserve — twice this year!
- ★ Plant trees at Cuesta Park with City Trees.
- ★ Build shelves for the science classroom at Huff Elementary School.
- ★ Set up and clean up tables, etc., for: Run for Zimbabwe's Orphans; Art in the Park (Los Altos Rotary); and Glorious Fourth of July.
- ★ Pick up trash on Mountain View streets — monthly, or even more often!



OUR STRUGGLE, OUR VOICE NUESTRA LUCHA, NUESTRA VOZ

Day workers are central to the national discussion on immigration and workforce policy, and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network is a leading voice in the migrants' rights movement.

Six workers and María joined more than 200 day laborers, organizers, and advocates from all over the country as delegates at NDLO's 7th annual national assembly in Los Angeles in August. As the highest authority within the governance structure, delegates make important decisions about NDLO's program areas. They also attend leadership development training, and are immersed in alliance building, community actions, and cultural celebrations.

Gathering before the President announced a massive shift in deportation policy, delegates planned possible next steps, shared experiences and best practices on campaigns, and sought new solutions to the local and national challenges impacting their lives. Worker centers also redoubled efforts to train compañer@s in OSHA health and safety procedures to reduce accidents and increase job opportunities.

Four delegates from the Day Worker Center earned construction industry health and safety certification at the assembly.

MARÍA SELECTED FOR ROCKWOOD LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Developing Leaders of Immigrant Communities: a Fellowship for a New California, a fellowship program of the Rockwood Leadership Institute, seeks to develop leaders among those working to achieve fairness and democracy and remove the powerful obstacles to immigrants' full participation in society. Nearly 5,000 non-profit and social change leaders from around the world have gone through Rockwood's intensive leadership development trainings since 2000.

The Day Worker Center's own executive director, María Marroquín was nominated

and selected to attend because she is a key influencer and strong advocate for the power of community action to achieve social justice. She has worked tirelessly as an organizer, building community alliances, raising funds, and working for immigrant reforms on the national, state, and local level, including two terms as board president of NDLO.

Over 10 months, María will attend retreats and receive professional and peer coaching to deal more effectively with leadership and organizational challenges, and to create and sustain compelling visions for the

Center. Fellows also build strong partnerships with other movement leaders in the state.

The training is a unique and powerful process of transformation for leaders based on Gandhi's idea that "we must be the change we want to see in the world."

Hire a Worker IMPROVE A LIFE

Your dollars support the Center's crucial Job Development program, and it can celebrate a little success. New employers jumped by a dramatic 26% — 153 more for a total of almost 750 — even though slightly fewer new workers arrived this year than last! Including our returning employers, the Center placed 12,900 total jobs last year. That's more than 2,500 over the previous year!

While more workers had jobs, many are still underemployed. As the rainy season arrives and

"Volunteers share their knowledge and experience and do not expect any compensation. Thanks to their contributions, we can learn, collaborate, and work to provide for our families."
— Edi H.

people hire less help, we expect to see the yearly dwindle of jobs to just a handful a day.

You can help! Our reliable workers are trained, ready and willing to:

- ★ clean your home for the holidays,
- ★ put up and take down decorations,
- ★ help with your holiday party,
- ★ move furniture to make room for your guests, and
- ★ spruce up your yard before winter sets in.

Hire a day worker: Help yourself ... help to better someone else's life.



YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

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.

SCHOOL PARTNERS

When students from local schools perform community service requirements at the Day Worker Center, they learn firsthand about the challenges the workers face. Partnering with these students helps us accomplish our goals, plus it's a great opportunity to spread the word about our services. We thank the students and staff from our many school partners, including Santa Clara and Stanford universities, plus Notre Dame, Los Altos, Saint Francis, Archbishop Mitty, and Castilleja high schools.



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