



MI Team

MULTICULTURAL INSTITUTE

MI LINKS & YEAR 2016

Celebrating

25 Years

*Of walking alongside immigrant families
in their journey to prosperity*



MI Board of Directors



Dear Friends,

The Multicultural Institute's (MI) focal point is to accompany immigrant families in their journey to be full participants in society. The people we serve are day laborers, immigrant families and their children. For the past 25 years our organization has made a difference in the lives of many by investing resources and keeping a commitment to serve low-income individuals and the poor in our communities. MI provides job matching services, wage claim assistance, food aid, housing, and immigration and health referrals in collaboration with partner providers. It also provides training in areas where workers experience a critical gap between what they know and what they need to know. I believe MI changes lives by making those we serve feel valuable and special. Our programs aim to help those we serve become more financially stable by offering job placement assistance, housing, educational opportunities and legal assistance.



*Fr. Rigoberto
Caloca-Rivas
Founder and CEO*

Life as a day laborer is marked by considerable hardship due to work opportunities being sporadic and unpredictable. MI's unique service model based on daily, street outreach allows staff to offer efficient job-matching and social services while also improving conditions on the street where day laborers seek work. This culturally responsive approach lends flexibility to the service provided and allows for cost-effective community partner engagement. Our Youth Program offers students a fun way to improve their writing skills and confidence. The main focus of creative writing prompts, hands-on activities, and field trips were on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics), offering students an early exposure to STEAM fields and careers.

MI has been able to reach significant milestones with the implementation of its programs and strategies because of the many institutional partnerships that have placed their trust in our work. We look forward to new challenges and opportunities ahead of us as we increase our institutional capacity to provide much needed services to immigrant families. *Peace, Fr. Rigo*



Educational Programs

“Educational services providing youth and adults tutoring opportunities, skills needed to develop or strengthen their business, and preparation to pass the GED.”



Mentoring for Academic Success (MAS)

- ◇ **135** Youth received after school mentoring every day during the academic year and a month long camp (Youth Writing Festival) during the summer.
- ◇ **42** Dedicated tutors helped the youth.
- ◇ **115** Parents

Business Entrepreneurship

- ◇ **16** Adults participated in business coaching for an academic semester through MI’s partnership with St. Mary’s College.

GED Preparation in Spanish

- ◇ **56** Adult students participated in the preparation courses.

Computer Skill Development

- ◇ **11**-Adults attended the basic computer skills courses.

Hope on the Ground Program

“Accompanies asylum seekers transitioning towards a safe life in a new country by helping the understand their rights all while connecting them to resources.”

- ◇ **462** Individuals have been assisted through asylum informational workshops, referrals to services, ESL classes, health care, and emergency supplies.

2016 Highlights

MI served a total of 2,907 People this year

Day Laborer/Life Skills Program

“Job matching services connecting employers with workers, & providing educational, health, & legal services.”

- ◇ **984** Day laborers registered
- ◇ **660** Other low-income
- ◇ **425** Employers registered
- ◇ **1, 142** Job placements and of those **88** were full-time jobs
- ◇ **17** Living in MI housing units in North Fair Oaks
- ◇ **3,130** Grocery bags/Hot meals
- ◇ **540** Health Referrals
- ◇ **199** Legal & Immigration Referrals

Volunteers

140 individuals volunteered at MI in at least one program, assisting with an event, through Project 22, or as part of our Board of Directors.



A glimpse of MI over the years...

MI served **2,907 individuals** during calendar year 2016 across the three sites. A tremendous feat for a small team working within the confines of a small budget.

MI enters a period of **regional expansion** serving communities in Redwood City (2006) and Richmond (2010).

Programs

Business Entrepreneurship (2013-Present)
Computer Skills Development (2015-Present)
Transitional Day Laborer Housing (2011-Present)
Hope on the Ground (2016)



In the beginning, MI's focus was to offer **Cross-Cultural Competence Workshops** and **Cultural Immersion Programs** that integrated individuals into communities different from their own. MI worked with the Tongan, Vietnamese and Latino communities providing leadership training.

Programs

Familias Unidas (1992-2008)
Master of Arts Program at FST/GTU (1993)
Wellness Goes to Church (1995-97)
Latino Leadership Training (1996-2010)
Vietnamese Leadership Training (2000-2009)

Present

2011

2006

2001

1995

1991



MI found its niche among the Latino population and began its **holistic approach** serving immigrant families.

Programs

Mentoring for Academic Success (1999-Present)
Life Skills/Day Laborer Program (2001– Present)
General Educational Development (2001– Present)
Youth Writing Festival (2005-Present)



25 Years of Service to Immigrants

32,832

Day Laborers and other low-income immigrants served through MI programs

3,134

Students and youth served since the Mentoring for Academic Success (MAS) and Youth Writing Festival (YWF) program began (1999) and through Familias Unidas (1992-2008)



8,423

Parents have been assisted through MAS and Familias Unidas (1992-2008)



2,135

Low-income immigrant adults participated in one or more of the following courses:
General Educational Development (GED)
Business Entrepreneurship
Computer Skills Development
Latino and Vietnamese Leadership Formation
Wellness Goes to Church



462

Asylum refugees served in Athens Greece through the Hope on the Ground Program



47

Day Laborers in transitional housing since 2011

10,239

Day Laborers registered with MI

5,103

Other low-income (non-day laborers) served through MI's programs

3,289

Employers registered with MI



7,720

Placements were made to short-term and long-term jobs since the start of the program in 2011

2,740

Permanent full-time jobs



7,767

Immigration, legal and health referrals have been provided since 2001



23,790

Food baskets, brown bags and snacks distributed

Left to Right (Picture 1): **Rodolfo “Rudy” Lara**
Rudy was born in Mexico and has experience working in different fields. Rudy joined MI in 2005.

(Picture 2): **PhurbuTsewang**
Phurbu was born in Tibet and has over 25 years of experience working as an Accounts Officer. Phurbu joined MI in 2007.

(Picture 3): **Cesar Meza–Esveile**
Cesar was born in Chile and has extensive experience working in the field of education. Cesar joined MI in 2006.



Providing Assistance

“As an immigrant myself, I understand first-hand the obstacles immigrant families we serve have to go through. I have gone through similar struggles. That is why I have a devoted passion for the work done at MI. I believe in the mission and vision and every day I witness how our work helps immigrants in their transition from poverty to prosperity.”

-Rudy

The Multicultural Institute is a nonprofit organization. Donations and contributions are tax-exempt as allowed by law.

Federal Tax ID# 91-1823468

MI is fortunate to have employees that not only believe in its work but that also embody its mission. Rodolfo Lara, Cesar Meza-Esveile, and Phurbu Tsewang are celebrating decades of service to day laborers and low-income individuals. They not only provide assistance to the people MI serves but they also offer support to the communities that are often left in the shadows. MI thanks these team members for all their hard work and dedication to the people MI serves!

While out on the street the Day Laborer Program Directors hear and see many things. In one of many occasions Rudy encountered a unique urgent case:

A day laborer known as “Guapo”(34 years old), looking for work on the streets in West Berkeley, approached him after 1 week of working on a tree service job. He had gauze over the side of his left eye and his teary eye was red in color. He explained to Rudy that a tree branch had poked and severely scraped his eye. He had not gone to the hospital or to a clinic because he had no health insurance or money to pay for the attention he needed.

He explained that he had attempted to cure himself at home but that his vision was beginning to blur. Due to the severity of his problem Rudy didn’t think it was adequate to refer Guapo to a clinic risking time they did not have. So, he immediately referred him to the Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless (ACHCH) mobile van that happened to be providing the regular semi-monthly visits for day laborers at the MI site. ACHCH staff quickly accessed his medical situation and right away sent him to Kaiser.

Guapo was provided with same-day services and follow-ups for the duration of his problem at no cost. Doctors said that if he would have waited any longer, he would have lost his vision. Thanks to the quick response of Rudy and the help of MI partners Guapo did not lose his eye sight.



and So Much More

Celebrating Decades of Service

MI staff connects individuals to resources and provides navigation support. Earlier this year Cesar had to say good-bye to a day laborer dear to MI:

Alvaro is a Guatemalan young man who came to the U.S. in search of a better life. He was part of the MI programs since 2007 where he and Cesar met for the first time. On one occasion Alvaro came to talk to Cesar as he began to experience severe back pains. Sadly, Alvaro was not going to recover simply by resting, he had to endure surgery. He did not have any relatives in the U.S. nor did he have a steady income. The possibility of being able to afford surgery and recovery time seemed to be slim.



"I have many years of nonprofit experience working for my own community in India. So, I really enjoy working in the nonprofit sector in the US. Working for MI has allowed me to work in a positive place, in a good atmosphere and with friendly people who care about the community we serve."

-Phurbu

"I have always considered that the human being has in each moment of his/her existence a place in which to be and a mission to fulfill. During these last ten years I have been where I should be and I have tried to fulfill my mission of serving those in need in this beautiful family called the Multicultural Institute."

-Cesar

surgery was not performed soon. Cesar and the NFO team were there to assist him with the necessary paper work to make it affordable for him to get surgery. The team provided him with housing and support during his recovery process. Staff would visit him at the hospital and offered the sense of hope Alvaro needed at the time. Within a year, Alvaro recovered his health and returned to work. He was one of the first day laborers to live in MI housing in NFO and he helped with the administration of one of the houses for 5 years. Earlier this year he decided to return to his home country.

The role MI plays in the community goes beyond the direct services it offers.

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Cesar Meza-Esveile
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Day Laborer Program Director

Oscar Macias
North Fair Oaks Day Laborer
Program Assistant

Stephanie Martinez
North Fair Oaks Site Coordinator

A word from a couple MI friends

"MI does more helpful things with less money for more people than any other organization I know. Their staff are committed and resourceful. I am proud and honored to be associated with this well respected organization."

-Victor Weisser, MI board treasurer

"Before MAS, my kids and I would get angry with each other. We would end up fighting. We were frustrated because we didn't understand the homework and I didn't know how to help them. Now it's love. It's amazing. MAS changed my life completely." **-Rafael, parent of 3 MAS students**

"I am extremely grateful to MI for having the GED program which helped me tremendously to continue my education. The hours were great and accommodated my work schedule. There was a pleasant environment and the GED instructor was excellent! She was really professional and motivated us to study more." **Maria de los Angeles, GED student and graduate**

"Eliseo did so much good work! I'm so grateful. He worked hard consistently for two full days. I do appreciate MI's role as intermediary. You have a great model." **-Laura, employer registered with MI**

How YOU can help....

Volunteer your time and talents or Donate today!

To volunteer at one of our sites call MI's main office to schedule a site visit:
(510) 848-4075 ext. 301

To donate to MI's work mail a check to the main office at:
1920 Seventh Street, Berkeley CA. 94710 or
call to make a donation over the phone.



Our MISSION

We accompany immigrants in their transition from poverty and isolation to prosperity and participation.

Our VISION

We envision a community in which immigrants, regardless of their immigration status, are embraced and valued in the communities.

Questions or comments?

Contact Mirna Cervantes Newsletter Editor at
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Learn more about MI at:
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