



November 2014

# Washington Newsline

## 2014: A Year of AFOP Successes

By Daniel Sheehan, Executive Director, AFOP

It is my happy duty to report that AFOP, despite challenging times in Washington, D.C., had a very fine year. While the November 4, 2014 federal election results will likely bring some uncertainty, we should rejoice in the fact that this year saw the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) preserved as a national program, temporary sequestration relief enacted into law, and the United States

Department of Agriculture's (USDA) career up-training grant program reauthorized, among other victories. The Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP) thanks you for your commitment, hard work, and perseverance that made these outcomes possible.

### *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*

This past summer, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed into law a compromise Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorization bill preserving NFJP as a national program. The bipartisan bill, called the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), includes the nation's primary programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation activities. The Opportunity Act takes the place of WIA and is now the law of the land for workforce systems in the states and local areas, Job Corps, national programs (like NFJP), and adult education and literacy. In addition to reauthorizing NFJP, the Opportunity Act also changes NFJP competition to once every four years, reserves funding for migrant and seasonal farmworker youth activities when appropriations for overall youth workforce investment activities exceed a set amount, and makes fish



Obama signing the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
Source: Whitehouse.gov

farming labor an eligible program activity. Congress approved the measure in overwhelming, bipartisan fashion with the Senate voting 95-3 on June 25, and the House 415-6 two weeks later. The Opportunity Act will likely be the signature piece of legislation for the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### *Appropriations*

Late July, AFOP received good news that the Senate's version of the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill, the measure that funds the Labor Department, includes \$1 million more than Obama requested for NFJP in fiscal year 2015.

The president's budget proposal he sent to Congress this past spring sought \$81,896,000 for NFJP. In contrast, the Senate bill requests \$82,896,000. While cheered by that plus-up, we also appreciate the very real

2014: A Year of Success—continued on page 2

## This Issue...

- 1 2014: A Year of AFOP Successes
- 4 Pesticide Drift
- 6 EPA Launches Voluntary Star-Rating Program
- 6 Child Labor Receives International Spotlight with Nobel Laureate Selections
- 8 NFJP Grantee Applauds Local Winners of AFOP's Essay and Art Contest
- 10 Champions of Change
- 11 NFJP Employment and Training by the Numbers
- 12 Success Stories

2014: A Year of Success—continued from page

difficulties that lie ahead for senators in negotiating final funding amounts with members of the House of Representatives. That said, the AFOP thanks Senate Labor-HHS-Education Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and his subcommittee for their crucial support. Should Congress in its lame duck session pass a clean year-long continuing resolution, NFJP funding in fiscal year 2015 would remain steady at \$81,896,000. Alternatively, should lawmakers opt to cobble together an omnibus spending package, House and Senate negotiators will determine our appropriations for the program year beginning July 1, 2015.

#### *USDA Agricultural Career and Education (ACE) Training Grant*

February produced another highlight when Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the Farm Bill that reauthorized the federal Agricultural Career and Education grant



The AFOP *Washington Newsline* (ISSN# 1056-8565) is produced by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP), a national federation of agencies serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers. AFOP's mission is to improve the quality of life for migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families by providing advocacy for the member organizations that serve them.

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program, or "ACE," at \$10 million a year for five years to "improve supply, stability, safety, and training of [the] agricultural labor force." We now need the Obama Administration to request appropriations for ACE in its fiscal year 2016 presidential budget, and for Congress to fund it. While that effort will take some work, we look forward to the day this important program receives its federal funding.

#### *Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides*

Also in February, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released long-awaited draft revisions to the Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides (WPS). AFOP strongly supported these proposed changes, submitting comments during the public comment period and alerting member organizations of the opportunity to weigh in with the agency concerning farmworkers and their experiences in and around fields treated with pesticides. I am proud of the solid response from the AFOP community, and look forward to final WPS revisions, hopefully by mid-May 2015.

Proposed changes include:

- Increased frequency of mandatory trainings (from once every five years to annually) to inform farmworkers about the protections they are afforded under the rule, including restrictions on entering pesticide-treated fields and surrounding areas, decontamination supplies, access to information, and use of personal protective equipment.
- Expanded mandatory posting of no-entry signs for the most hazardous pesticides. (No-entry buffer areas surrounding pesticide-treated fields will help protect people from exposure to pesticide overspray and fumes.)
- Measures to improve the states' ability to enforce compliance, including requiring employers to keep records of application-specific pesticide information.

- Personal Protection Equipment, specifically respirators, must be consistent with the Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards for ensuring they are providing protection. This includes fit test, medical evaluation, and training.

#### *Regression Analysis and Program Year 2014 NFJP Performance Goals*

For program year 2014, the United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA) applied an economic regression analysis to set grantee performance targets. As a result of follow-on negotiations with DOLETA, more than half of AFOP members that negotiated saw their goals adjusted by the agency.

#### *AFOP National Conference and Mini-Conference*

In September, AFOP gathered in San Diego, California for its annual training conference. Titled, "NFJP at 50: Bringing Change and Securing Futures for America's Farmworkers," the conference boasted six training tracks, including for the first time separate breakout sessions for fiscal policy, and a keynote address by DOLETA Region Six Administrator Virginia Hamilton. At the conference, AFOP graduated 175 agency staff



Daniel Sheehan, DOLETA Regional Administrator, Virginia Hamilton, Jesús Gamboa, and Lee Foley at AFOP's 2014 National Conference  
Source: AFOP

from its AFOP Training Institute credentialing program, gave out excellence awards to deserving staff, employers, and program partners, and heard directly from winners of the 2014 Essay and Art Contest sponsored by AFOP's *Children in the Fields Campaign*. Over 400 individuals

attended the conference, making it a huge success for AFOP and its members.

In February, despite bad weather in much of the country, AFOP directors gathered in Washington, D.C. for a board meeting and mini-conference, including a day of training directed by the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. While cancelled flights prevented a few members from attending, we had a productive board meeting, attended substantive training sessions, and presented to United States Representative Jim Clyburn, the House Assistant Democratic Leader, the AFOP President's Award for



Bernadette Herbert and Barbara Coleman of Telamon, South Carolina with Congressman Clyburn  
Source: Telamon

his enduring commitment to helping the nation's migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

AFOP continues to meet with lawmakers and professional staff of both parties in Congress to carry on the crucially important mission of educating Washington decision-makers about AFOP and the good work its members do for farmworkers.

#### *2015 and Beyond*

Looking ahead to 2015, it is still too early to forecast how the results of this year's federal elections will play out. Regardless of these and other challenges we are sure to face in the coming years, we know that AFOP and our member agencies are up to the task of overcoming them. After all, we share a common commitment to serving farmworkers that moves us to do all we can to make the lives of people laboring in our fields a little bit more stable, a little bit healthier, a little bit better. In accomplishing our work, we make a real and important difference in the lives of people we serve. Not everyone who gets up and goes to work in the morning can say that, and for that we ought to be thankful. ♦



# Pesticide Drift

By Melanie Forti, Director, Health & Safety Programs, AFOP

More than one billion pounds of pesticides are used annually in the United States, with three-quarters used in agriculture. Scientists link long-term pesticides exposure to Parkinson's, Autism, respiratory diseases, and many kinds of cancer, including brain, stomach, kidney, and leukemia. These findings are particularly relevant to people who are exposed to those chemicals daily while working on American farms and harvesting crops for consumption.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines pesticide **spray drift** as "the movement of pesticide dust or droplets through the air at the time of application or soon after, to any site other than the area intended. Pesticide droplets are produced by spray nozzles used in application equipment for spraying pesticides on crops, forests, turf, and home gardens. Some other pesticides are formulated as very fine dry particles (commonly referred to as dust formulations)." EPA does not include in its definition the movement of pesticides to off-target sites caused by erosion, migration, volatility, or contaminated soil particles that are windblown after application,



unless specifically addressed on a pesticide product label with respect to drift control requirements.

Pesticide drift naturally results from spraying and/or dusting plants, most frequently agricultural crops. Consequently, people living and working in rural areas are more at risk of pesticide exposure than urban populations. However, everyone will come in contact with a pesticide at some time in their life whether it is an insecticide, herbicide, or some other toxin. Neighbors may spray their lawn or trees, a farmer their crops, or a government agency may spray a national forest, roadside, or public park.

Pesticide drift threatens human health as well as wildlife and entire ecosystems. The biggest health risk from pesticide drift is to people living, working or attending school near large farms that employ elevated spraying equipment or crop duster planes. However, due to the developmental process of the human body and our immune system, developing fetuses, infants, and young children are the most vulnerable to both acute and chronic health effects from drift.

Pesticide drift causes two types of poisoning: acute and chronic. **Acute** poisonings result in symptoms immediately, or shortly, after the exposure occurs. Some symptoms of acute poisoning are obvious, such as eye, skin and respiratory irritation, asthma attacks, nausea, vomiting, headache, tremors, numbness and more. Symptoms are usually easily remediated by a shower or leaving the offending environment. On the other hand, **chronic** poisoning results from pesticide exposure over an extended period of time with limited or no symptoms until long after exposure. Due to the lengthy nature of exposure, quick medical intervention may have no affect on insidious complications such as cancers or birth defects.

The EPA is responsible for a number of important regulations that help protect people and the

environment from potential adverse effects of off-target pesticide application. These regulations include restricting how pesticides are used, certification and training of applicators, and enforcement and compliance of pesticide laws. In late 2009 the agency rolled out new guidelines directing pesticide manufacturers to include labeling on their products indicating how to minimize off-target spray and dust drift. As of January 2012, any spray pesticide manufactured or labeled for sale in the U.S. must display this warning on its label: "Do not apply this product in a manner that results in spray (or dust) drift that harms people or any other non-target organisms or sites."



Typical crop dusting technique.  
Source: Google Images

AFOP's Health & Safety Programs' **Limiting Exposure Around Families (LEAF)** curriculum increases awareness and mitigation of pesticide drift. Through this training, and other education materials, we address ways families can protect themselves from both drift and take home exposure of chemicals such as on shoes, clothing, skin, tools, etc. Additionally, all training and educational materials are in a bilingual, low-literacy format that offers information on how to reduce, or even eliminate, the possibility of exposing any family member to pesticide residues.

These are some things we can do to protect ourselves and our families from pesticide exposure due to pesticide drift:

- Evacuate the area
- Close windows

- Turn off air conditioners
- If possible, warn neighbors
- If hit with spray drift (droplets or dust particles) that contacted your skin, shower as soon as possible
- When there is spraying, cover bicycles and toys left outside.
- Wash toys, if left outside, before playing with them
- Clean floors and around windows
- Avoid playing in water runoff from the fields.

If you experience any symptoms of pesticide exposure, immediately see a doctor or call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

AFOP's Health & Safety staff is engaged in helping protect farmworkers and their families – but let's not forget about all individuals living on or near farms and the outreach workers frequenting agricultural communities to serve the farmworker population. For more information please contact Melanie Forti at [forti@afop.org](mailto:forti@afop.org). ♦





## EPA Launches a Voluntary Star-Rating Program to Reduce Pesticide Drift and Protect People, Wildlife and the Environment

Retrieved from [www.epa.gov/pesticides](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides)

The EPA is announcing a new voluntary Drift Reduction Technology (DRT) program to encourage the use of verified, safer pesticide spray products to reduce exposure and pesticide movement while saving farmers money in pesticide loss.

DRT is a voluntary program that encourages manufacturers to test their technologies (such as nozzles, spray shields and drift reduction chemicals) for drift reduction potential. The EPA encourages pesticide manufacturers to label their products for use with DRT technologies. The four DRT ratings represented by one, two, three or four stars are awarded for technologies that demonstrate at least 25 percent reduction in potential spray drift compared to the standard.

Spray technology manufacturers interested in participating in the EPA's DRT program may now submit data verifying their technology reduces pesticide movement. The EPA will evaluate each data submission and, if appropriate, assign a drift-reduction star rating to the product based on its ability to reduce spray drift. When available, the EPA will post these ratings online at <http://go.usa.gov/fzKh>. A pesticide manufacturer can choose to label a product for use with a DRT of a particular rating after receiving approval from the EPA.

Drift-reduction ratings may appear on pesticide labels as early as fall 2015. More information on the EPA's DRT Program, including how to test technologies, is available at <http://go.usa.gov/fzkP>. ♦

## Child Labor Receives International Spotlight with Nobel Laureate Selection

By Norma Flores López, Director, *Children in the Fields Campaign*, AFOP

This year's Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi — two tireless and courageous advocates for the universal education of children and child rights. The media exposure surrounding the announcement raised the profile of the important work child rights advocates, such as AFOP's *Children in the Fields Campaign*, carry out to ensure the promise in our future - our children - is protected.

Yousafzai – better known by her first name, "Malala" – was only 15 when the Taliban



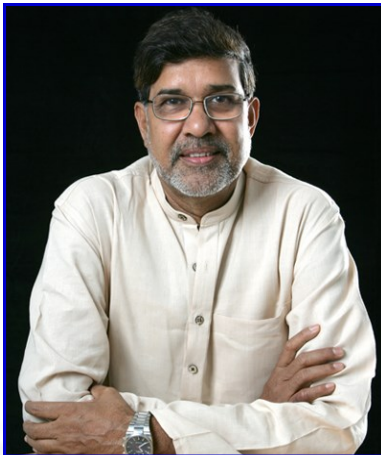
Malala Yousafzai, 2014  
Nobel Laureate  
Source: [Malalafund.com](http://Malalafund.com)

attempted to assassinate her for speaking out on a BBC blog about life under Taliban control in Pakistan. Since her recovery, she has advocated for global access to education for all children, especially girls. At 17 years old, she is the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize and one of only 16 females.

Speaking to the press in England, Malala said, "I believe the committee didn't just give this award to me. It is for all the children whose voices are not being heard around the world."

The *Children in the Fields Campaign*, through its work with the Child Labor Coalition, has worked with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Satyarthi in his efforts to eradicate child labor. For more than 30 years, Satyarthi has directly liberated tens of thousands of enslaved children in various countries and has raised global consciousness on child labor and oppression.

Satyarthi played a pivotal role in the development and adoption of International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182, the "Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention," that is widely considered the leading international law against child labor. Since ILO Convention No. 182 entered into force in 2000, the number of child laborers in the world has decreased from



Kailash Satyarthi, 2014 Nobel Laureate  
Source: KailashSatyarthi.net

246 million to 168 million.

Child labor can deprive children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and can be harmful to their physical and mental development. Today's estimated 168 million child laborers account for about one in 10 of the world's children. While the majority of child laborers work alongside their parents, about four percent of child laborers are in forced or bonded labor, prostitution, or fighting in armed conflict. In recognizing the important work of the Nobel Peace Prize recipients, the Committee reminds us of the suffering of millions of children around the world, including the nearly 500,000 child laborers in the United States. It reminds us that the issue of child labor is not only faced by developing countries

oceans away, but is also a pressing issue hidden on America's farms.

The current focus on child suffering has shined a spotlight on the lack of progress seen in the United States for its child workers, despite its perceived leadership in human rights. The US is not fulfilling its commitment under ILO Convention No. 182 "to take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor as a matter of urgency." Current US law allows children to work long hours in hazardous jobs, including working in tobacco fields.



Tobacco farmworker children's hands  
Source: Poder Juvenil Campesino

In May, the Human Rights Watch report, *Tobacco's Hidden Children: Hazardous Child Labor in US Tobacco Farming*, documented hazardous child labor on tobacco farms in North Carolina, as well as in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia – four states that account for 90 percent of tobacco grown in the US. Children reported vomiting, nausea, headaches, and dizziness while working on tobacco farms, all symptoms consistent with acute nicotine poisoning. Many also said they worked long hours without overtime pay, often in extreme heat without shade or sufficient breaks, and wore no, or inadequate, protective gear.

Under US labor law, children as young as 12 can be hired for unlimited hours, outside of school hours, on a farm of any size with parental permission. For work specifically on small farms there is no minimum age for

*Continued on page 8*



Continued from page 7

children to work. At 16, child farmworkers can do jobs deemed hazardous by the US Department of Labor. Children in all other sectors must be 18 to do hazardous work. Existing US law and regulations do not limit work by children in tobacco farming, despite the hazardous nature of the crop.

Child labor in American tobacco fields is only one example of the many dangerous occupations 12-year-olds are able to legally work in. The repercussions of this type of hard child labor have been felt for generations by the farmworker communities. They are seen in the alarmingly high dropout rates, the deadly health disparities, and the never-ending cycle of deep poverty that perpetuates child labor on US farms.

World leaders are taking note of the US failure to honor its commitment. At the III Global

Conference on Child Labor in Agriculture in Brazil, advocates from around the world shared their concerns with the US delegation, that included the Director of the *Children in the Fields Campaign*, and at the opening plenary. Currently, the US child labor laws fall behind many countries, including India and Brazil.

The United States has the opportunity to renew its commitment to international standards for children's rights, and to join the efforts of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize laureates in providing all children with healthy childhoods and access to quality educational opportunities. ♦

## NFJP Grantee Applauds Local Winners of AFOP's Essay and Art Contest

By Victor Portillo, America's Job Center of California, Oildale Affiliate

**E**mployers' Training Resource (ETR), a member of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP), congratulated four local children from Bakersfield, California who participated in AFOP's annual *Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Children's Essay & Art Contest*. On November 10, 2014, ETR brought four winners to America's Job Center – Oildale affiliate for a special reception and recognition.

Lizeth Cabellero, 13, placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the Essay Contest for the 10-13 age group; Alondria Macario, 12, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Essay Contest for the 10-13 age group; Javier Alejandro Soto-Gonzalez, 16, placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the Art Contest for the 14-18 age group; and Norman Gonzalez-Carmona, 13, placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the Art Contest for the 10-13 age group.

The 2014 theme was "From Our Hands to Your Table" and drew entries from throughout the United States, with the winners selected by the Child Labor Coalition.

The contest winners received cash prizes to support their education, allowing them to purchase school supplies, books and school clothes. First-prize winners were invited to present their winning entries at AFOP's 2014 National Conference held September 23-25, 2014 in San Diego, California.

Their entries will also be included in educational materials that will be presented to members of Congress. You can view all winning entries and get next year's contest guidelines by visiting the website at [www.afop.org/children-in-the-fields/connect-with-cif/](http://www.afop.org/children-in-the-fields/connect-with-cif/). ♦





# Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs

## Success Story Basics

- Include a clear, high resolution picture (.jpeg). (Be sure to have a signed release form.)
- Describe the length of time and type of farm work your client performed.
- Define his/her earnings/benefits both before and after participating in the NFJP.
- Explain how he/she learned about the NFJP and why they enrolled.
- How has this transformed his/her life and family? What are his/her current goals? How will this training help him/her achieve future goals?
- Be sure to emphasize the role and impact of NFJP.

### Additional Tips:

- Clients hired by new employers are more compelling than ones hired by a training organization.
- Use active voice to make your story more dynamic.
- Describe the individual hardships. Details help your reader gain a clear and compelling picture of the great successes achieved through NFJP training.

Maria, a single mother of three, worked for the last six years tying vines in California's vineyards, stooping to fill pails with delicate blueberries, and harvesting asparagus. Despite starting work at 4:00a.m. in the dark and damp mornings; the threat of heat exhaustion during the sweltering summer days; and a sore body when she left the fields after dark; Maria was supporting herself and children on just \$10,000 per year.

- Include a quote:

"Thinking I could ease my parents' financial burden, I dropped out of high school to also work in the fields. I didn't know it at the time, but that was the worst decision I ever made. The best decision I ever made was to participate with NFJP and return to school!"

- Specific dollar amounts are KEY as they speak to the NFJP Common Measures.

"Maria went from \$7/hr. with no benefits to \$14/hr. with insurance, leave, and vacation."

- Remember, most people are blind to the manual labor and human cost involved in getting safe and affordable food to their tables. It is up to you to paint the picture.

# Champions of Change - Promoting Citizenship In the Workplace

By Robert Crumley, Director of *Communications*, AFOP

**A**FOP recently attended the White House's *Champions of Change* ceremony where nine corporate leaders were honored for their innovative work helping their immigrant employees.

Honorees shared insights that may also be of value to National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees as we continue meeting needs of both job seekers and employers.

All honorees shared the belief that an exchange of perspectives, ideas, and approaches among a multi-cultural staff sets the stage for dynamic success. One of the honorees has fully one-third of his staff (50+) from countries other than the United States.

Honorees agreed that they hire based upon intelligence, personality, and loyalty, with the understanding that a specific skill can be acquired. For example, language is often a barrier to promotion. To counter this challenge, they encourage and support language and professional skills development to help employees reach, and contribute, their full potential. This allows employers to keep valued employees, and in one case, promoting from pool attendant to hotel manager.

The benefits of a multi-dimensional and holistic relationship fosters trust, longevity of employment, increased productivity, giving back through referrals, and positive individual citizenship—all goals common with NFJP.

Sharing stories of triumph helps connect people and bring additional partners to the table. This is particularly relevant when we share success stories of NFJP graduates to recruit additional farmworkers for skills training, new employers for placement, and advocate for increased federal funding.

Honorees underscored their need for a stable, loyal, competent workforce and their willingness do "whatever it takes" to get and maintain one.

When municipalities, community colleges, partners like Cities for Citizenship, or corporate citizens such as CitiGroup come together to face a challenge, everyone wins. As an example, Citi Community Development (CCD) actively helps H1 visa workers and other immigrants attain their citizenship. One of the main hurdles to individuals is cost, so CCD offers small loans for that purpose. These loans help people build credit identities that in turn help them become "real" people who can purchase cars, houses, or other items that stimulate the economy.

To further this point, 50% of Silicone Valley businesses were founded by, or in partnership with, an immigrant. In Los Angeles, California, 500,000 business are owned by immigrants or their children.

Clients, employees, and partners are more than a costly line-item: they are a form of capital and, if treated fairly, can be your greatest asset.

If leadership does not have a passion for the work they do, or place value or trust in the people they work with, everything will be a struggle and nobody truly wins. Effective leadership begins with a passion, shared vision, and ability to harness relationships to develop a committed team who will gladly go the extra mile on a journey toward success.

If you would like to learn more about the *2014 Champions of Change*, please visit [www.whitehouse.gov/champions](http://www.whitehouse.gov/champions). ♦



# NFJP Employment and Training by the Numbers

By Katy Nelson, Director of Workforce Development, AFOP

The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) strives to reach the hardest to serve among a population with multiple barriers to traditional employment.

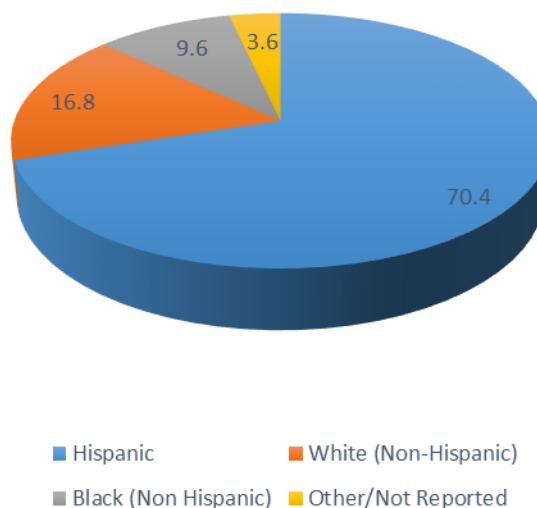
Here is a picture of the people who Exited Employment and Training Programs in PY 2012.

They all received intensive case management and worked with case managers to develop individualized employment training plans to improve their skills, and change their lives. Many moved through programs that included basic skills training, occupational skills training, worker safety, language skills, and on-the-job training. Exiters

- ◆ **8,735** Migrant or seasonal farmworkers or their dependents impacted
- ◆ **3,707** Women
- ◆ **1,388** Single heads of households with children
- ◆ **71.5%** Did not have a high school diploma or equivalent
- ◆ **26.5%** Spoke limited English
- ◆ **15.4%** Lacked transportation
- ◆ **34.7%** Lacked basic literacy skills
- ◆ **1.5%** Were homeless
- ◆ **46.7%** Attained a certificate, credential, diploma, or degree
- ◆ **87.3%** Entered unsubsidized employment; that's more than **7,600** people placed upon exit.

The NFJP continues to improve the lives of migrant and seasonal farmworkers across the country amidst great challenges and with great success. The numbers speak for themselves!

**Ethnicity of NFJP Employment and Training Exiters**



Source: *The PY 2012 National Farmworker Jobs Program Databook* (October 2014) prepared for the US Department of Labor by Social Policy Research Associates. ◆

## Success Stories

### Becoming a R.N.

Submitted by: Telamon, Georgia

**T**elamon Corporation congratulates Antonio Taylor, a former farmworker, for his committed efforts in becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).



Antonio Taylor  
Submitted by:  
Telamon, Georgia

Antonio entered Telamon's youth program in January as a low-income, out-of-school adolescent with basic skills deficiency in math, and lacking skills required for employment.

Antonio was interested in obtaining a job but recognized that he needed training and experience.

A thorough skills and interest assessment resolved that he had a keen interest in nursing.

With guidance from the Youth Specialist, Antonio enrolled into Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classroom training. Becoming a CNA was Antonio's first step in his endeavor to earn a nursing degree. Now that he is a licensed CNA, he plans to get a job so he can support his siblings, and enroll in Ogeechee Technical College.

This fall he began studying for his Licensed Practical Nurses degree, and later his Registered Nurses degree.

Antonio applied for a position at Brown's Nursing Rehabilitation Center where he awaits clearance from the Director of Nursing.

Antonio's strong work ethic is an inspiring strength that will help him go far in his life.

Congratulations, Antonio! Telamon is proud of you! ♦

### Encouraging the Dream

Submitted by: Center for Employment Training, California

**W**hen Martha Uriarte's husband moved the family of six to the United States, her English language barrier did not change the young woman's focus. To support her family, she immediately found employment as a migrant field worker for which she awoke at 2:00 a.m., worked in all types of inclement weather, and received earnings that were under minimum wage.

Wanting something different for herself and family, she came to CET El Centro in August, 2013. Once it was determined she qualified for participation, she enrolled in the Retail Operations course where she learned valuable and marketable skills. Known as a "good student" student by her professors, Martha's successful completion of the program yielded a job as lead cashier at the Cardenas Market. Acknowledging that the skills and commitment Martha brought to her job were being under-utilized, management promoted her to the Human Resources Department in just three short months.

Martha frequently returns to CET and advises students to be attentive and respectful toward their teachers. She also enjoys sharing positive thoughts about her experiences with CET. "CET is a great opportunity," says Uriarte.



Martha Uriarte  
Submitted by: CET

With Martha's great character and discipline, in conjunction with CET staff guidance, she has achieved continued success by increasing her family's income, and encouraging the dreams of her children. Congratulations, Martha! ♦



# Success Stories

## Language Barrier

Submitted by: Elizabeth Millan, Central Valley Opportunity Center, California

**L**uis Alvares, a U.S. citizen, completed his high school education in Mexico, then returned to America to work as an alfalfa irrigator for \$8.75 an hour.



Luis Alvares  
Submitted by: CVOC

Luis now works as a welder for King Curb earning \$4,000 more per year than his previous job as a migrant hay farmer.

During a period of unemployment, and with a passion for welding, Alvares visited Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC).

In less than two months Alvares overcame many obstacles and completed his GED. Within the next ten months, and with perfect attendance, he also earned his certification in welding.

As a migrant worker with minimal English speaking ability, Luis' experience with job interviewing was not initially positive. However, with the encouragement and support of CVOC, Luis persisted and consistently visited potential employers. King Curb in Madera, California was his last stop. As always, Luis walked in and greeted them with his warm smile. This resulted in both an application in hand and a successful interview with the company the following day.

Luis' story reminds us that with a clear vision and goal, we can work through what may seem like insurmountable obstacles. Together, CVOC and Luis identified and overcame those obstacles - a story we hope to repeat with countless migrant seasonal farmworkers in years to come.

Alvares says CVOC and his welding job gave him "The American Dream." ♦

## Excellence Award Winner

Submitted by: Proteus, Inc., California

**A**t three years old, Lorena Espitia and her family moved from Mexico to Oroquieta, CA to pursue careers in migrant farm work.

While her family continued field work across Washington, Oregon and Montana, Lorena chose a different path and ventured on a journey that would soon bring her the career change she desired.

As a high school graduate and single mother of three, Lorena began her own search for a new path to financial and employment stability. In February 2013 she discovered

Proteus Inc. and its wonderful staff who helped her enroll in job search assistance and case management services through the Department of Labor and National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP).

Within five months of her initial contact, Lorena earned her certificate in office automation and accepted a position as office assistant at the Dinuba Service Center. With her intelligence and fortitude, Proteus Inc. helped transform her seasonal migrant farm working skills into successful full-time employment earning \$11.54 an hour with benefits.

Lorena's journey from migrant farmworker to office assistant is a testament to the lasting legacy of determination and strength. Congratulations, Lorena! ♦



Lorena Espitia  
Submitted by: Proteus, California

## Success Stories

### Stabilizing his Family— From Iraq to the U.S.

Submitted by: Ana Nethken, Telamon, Virginia



Alias Khader  
Submitted by: Telamon

Alias Khader worked in the Shenandoah Growers Greenhouse as a seasonal farmworker since arriving from Iraq, his native country. He had limited English proficiency and lacked a sufficient work history to be gainfully employed in the United States. Alias was looking for a better

future to provide for his wife and son but was struggling to meet their basic needs. To stabilize his life, he needed direction and assistance.

May 15, 2013, Alias visited the Harrisonburg, VA office of Telamon and inquired about the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). After an informal interview, we administered a variety of assessment tests to identify his interests, aptitudes, and basic skills. Once he qualified for the program and we accepted him, we worked together to develop a plan designed to improve his skills, address all barriers, and achieve his career goals. Building trust allowed Telamon staff to coach and advise Alias during the initial weeks of discovery and planning, while providing short-term emergency assistance with nutrition and housing for his family. [We provided his family with both nutritional assistance and residential support.] We also referred Alias to community partners for additional services, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Once his immediate situation began to stabilize, we identified long-term opportunities available to Alias, such as enrollment in the Massanutten Technical Center for English as a Second Language. It was during this time that Alias'

wife was pregnant, resulting in his increased resolve and planning for the future of his growing family. To do this, he set a goal to apply for a coordinator position at a local greenhouse; however, he first had to improve his English communication skills. We also encouraged Alias to complete Computer Literacy and Job Readiness training to prepare him for interviews and to better equip him for the type of job he was seeking.

Throughout the process of achieving his goals, Alias always held firm to two fundamental values: persistence and perseverance. He never allowed challenges to prevent him from learning, and he endured through the most difficult times. Alias completed an important step toward reaching his goals by earning two English as a Second Language certificates from Massanutten Technical Center in Harrisonburg. His accomplishment was immediately rewarded with a promotion to coordinator in the receiving department at Shenandoah Growers Greenhouse. Because he is still working within agriculture, we call this type of promotion an agricultural upgrade, and for Alias it was great news.

The promotion earned him an additional \$3.00 per hour, raising his hourly income to \$11.00. Alias told us, "I am very happy with my promotion and I am doing a job that I enjoy. I appreciate so much the assistance I received from your program when I really needed it."

Alias is a great example of how education leads to better opportunities in life, and his story is another success of the National Farmworker Jobs Program.

At Telamon, we are committed advocates for people in need, and continue providing resources and creating opportunities in the communities we serve. ♦





Watch for details regarding the  
2015 AFOP National Conference in  
Las Vegas, Nevada



## AFOP Washington Newsline

Once social change begins,  
it cannot be reversed.  
You cannot uneducate the person  
who has learned to read,  
humiliate the person who feels pride,  
and you cannot oppress people  
who are not afraid anymore.

—César Chávez