



August 2013

## Washington Newsline

### United States Senate Advances AFOP Priorities

By Daniel Sheehan, Executive Director, AFOP

**A**FOP is very happy to report that the United States Senate this summer has moved forward on matters of importance to the association, its member organizations, and the nation's migrant and seasonal farmworkers they serve. AFOP applauds the Senate for its hard work over the last two months, but cautions that Congress faces a long road ahead before securing enactment of critical legislation.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) authorizes the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) through which AFOP member organizations provide life-changing job training to migrant and seasonal farmworkers, helping put them to work in good jobs that employers need to fill.

Congress passed the original WIA in 1998, but has been unable to deliver on the law's needed reauthorization, dating back to 2003.



Secretary Perez sworn in as new Labor Secretary, July 23, 2013

To address that need, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) approved on July 31 a compromise Senate WIA reauthorization bill (S. 1356) with a strong bipartisan 18-3 majority voting for it. AFOP strongly supports this measure because it reauthorizes NFJP as a national program, eases eligibility requirements for potential NFJP customers, and increases the competition term from two years to four.

The bill's next stop is the Senate floor where amendments are expected. While Senate leaders have not yet set a time for that consideration to begin, Chairman Harkin has said he would like to

see a bill before the Senate this summer. Should the Senate pass the legislation, it must then meet the House of Representatives in a conference to hammer out a final bill. That will not be an easy task, however, given the House-passed plan to consolidate most programs into state block grants.

Turning from NFJP *authorization* to actual NFJP *funding*, the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved its version of the fiscal year 2014 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill July 11 that would fund NFJP at its enacted, pre-sequestration fiscal year 2013 level of \$84,123,000- a very welcomed development. That figure includes \$77,949,000 for formula grants, of which not less than 70 percent must be for employment and training services. The bill would also provide \$5,667,000 for migrant and seasonal housing, of which at least 70 percent must be for permanent housing. The measure would also provide Department of Labor \$507,000 in discretionary funds. All this funding would be available for the program year starting July 1, 2014. Senate appropriators hope to see the full Senate consider this and the other 11 regular yearly spending bills in September, prior to the September 30 fiscal year-end.

### Inside...

- Legislative updates
- Intern Point of View
- NFJP: Finding Stability
- Does Occupational Health and Safety training work?
- Advocating for Brighter Futures
- Success Stories

Continued on page 9

# Newsline Brief: New Director of Communications

It is with pleasure that I joined the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs in July as the new Director of Communications. I have received many warm welcomes and look forward to working on behalf of all our member agencies and the farmworkers we serve.

My responsibilities include: this newsletter, all media and other communications issues both nationally and here in D.C. Additionally, I work to promote the many successes of our program directors: Norma Flores López, of the *Children in the Fields Campaign*, Levy Schroeder of the *Health & Safety Programs*, and Jeanna Vaughn of *Workforce Development*. Of greatest importance is the work I do to ensure that the accomplishments of our 52 member agencies are known and understood by our respective communities and congressional representatives.

I bring to my position an appreciation for people who tirelessly work to provide a safe, secure, and affordable food source. Of particular interest is how we as a community work in tandem to break the cycle of poverty. It is a shame that America has banned factory workshops and child labor, except when it comes to farm work. It is a shame that in America we still have a "Sweatshop of the Soil." I bring to my position a passion for helping fellow human beings reach their full potential as contributing members of our society.

In my spare time I volunteer with the National Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Association, also in Washington D.C. Their Executive Director, Cleofas Rodriguez Jr. and I developed and implemented a summer internship for current college students who come from seasonal or migrant farm worker families and who also attended a Migrant & Seasonal Head Start program. One such intern, Eleazar Gutierrez, partnered with Norma Flores López to implement the *Children in the Fields* program. Be sure to enjoy his article as it brings full-circle the journey of one seasonal farmworker from the fields, to education, and back to the fields.

Regards, Robert Crumley ♦

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Guest Article
- 5 NFJP: Finding Stability
- 6 Occupational Health: Does it Work?
- 7 2013 AFOP National Conference
- 9 Advocating for Brighter Futures
- 13 Success Stories



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.

The publication is funded by subscriptions and the members of AFOP. The *Newsline* receives no financial support from the federal government.

**Managing Editor:** Daniel Sheehan

**Editor/Lead Reporter:** Robert J. Crumley

# A Change In Our Lives

By Eleazar Gutierrez, Intern, AFOP

In my sleep I hear the sounds of farmworkers in my trailer park community getting ready to go to work in the fields. In the morning darkness I hear the revving of engines, Spanish radio, men and women talking softly so as not to wake others. I hear small children as their parents ready them for a long day at their Migrant & Seasonal Head Start center.

These are daily and comforting sounds for me. However, my current reality is not my future. My future will include waking up at 7 AM eating a bagel and drinking a cup of coffee on the front porch of a home that I hope to own, then dressing in a suit and driving to my office. I don't plan to leave my community- I plan to return and work on behalf of my community.

My day begins with strength- strength I learned from seeing my parents wake up before the sunrise to prepare for the long day they have ahead cultivating the agricultural fields of the Central Valley. I know my parents do not want me to come home as my father did, with muddy shoes he leaves at the front door, or like my mother, removing a sweaty bandana revealing awkward tan and dirt lines.

These are the images that drive my passion and give me strength to continue my education. I use this fortitude to create a new vision for my life- a vision that does not include farm work, but instead, involves the rewards of education. Higher education is giving me opportunities in life that my parents could not. Through education my vision of life is becoming a reality.

My dad says that my only responsibility is to do well in school and to not worry about anything. When I first wanted to join him in the fields, he said "No." I didn't understand at the time, but I later came to realize that he was working hard with his body so that I had the resources to work hard with my mind.

With my family's support, I am soon to complete my bachelor's degree in sociology at California State University, Bakersfield. Education is opening doors I could never have

imagined when I was younger. I have traveled, met incredible people doing amazing jobs, and made connections with professionals. The biggest door in my life opened this summer when I was selected to complete an internship through the National Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Association. With this opportunity I discovered that I can continue working to achieve a better life for myself and my family, as well as contributing to the growth of the farmworker community.

My placement was at AFOP with the *Children in the Fields Campaign*. I learned that there are currently thousands of children actively working in agricultural fields alongside their parents harvesting crops that we will eventually eat at our dinner tables. I learned about the many dangers farm working children face, including heat stress and exposure to pesticides.



Eleazar with children in Blair, North Carolina  
Photo taken by: Norma Flores López

During a trip to a camp in Bailey, North Carolina, I met the families and children AFOP works for and had the most emotionally challenging experience of my internship. More than 400,000 children are harvesting the crops of our nation. Childhoods are spent in tobacco, blueberry, grape, and onion fields instead of in a safe or playful environment.

Continued on page 4





# 2013 AFOP National Conference

Contact  
Cat Nguyen at  
[nguyen@afop.org](mailto:nguyen@afop.org)

or go to  
[afop.org/about/  
events](http://afop.org/about/events)  
for any  
questions.

- Receive **specialized training** on working with migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Get updates on the **NFJP**
  - Intensive training on **workforce development**
- Opportunities to meet and **network** with other professionals in your field
  - Share best **practices**

**Register online today!**

## A Change in our Lives continued from page 3

With the help of Norma Flores López, I developed educational materials that discuss the risks of children working in agriculture.

Farmworker children is a reality not only in the fields of North Carolina, but also in my hometown. Through my internship, I visited the migrant and seasonal farm worker families of the East Coast Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Center. Although mine is also a farm working family, witnessing the living conditions of other migrant seasonal farm workers led me to tears. The conditions are unjustifiable and the images will forever remain in my heart. The experience of visiting North Carolina helped me realize that I want to contribute to the change that is needed in our farm working communities.

This change begins with taking everything I have learned here in Washington, D.C. and applying it not only to my personal growth but also informing my community back home about the different opportunities and programs that exist for bettering their lives. This change involves motivating farmworker youth who have been raised in similar conditions as mine

and letting them know they have options.

I will return home, work, and collaborate with organizations to inform my community about the National Farmworker Jobs Program. I want to work with these programs to not only better my life, but also the lives of the youth around me. I will share my story with others and serve as an example that the hard work and dedication of a family can lead to the growth and success of their children.

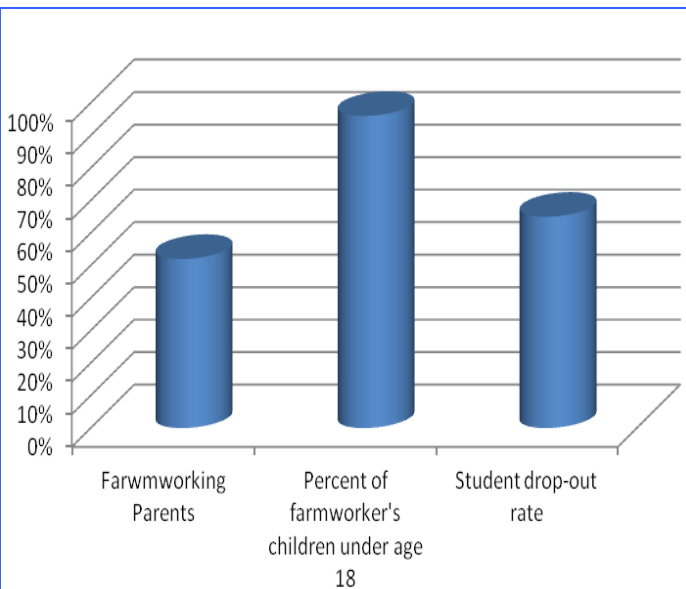
I am proud to know that the hard work and dedication of my parents has deeply affected my life. With determination and strength, my parents walked the miles of agricultural fields picking fruits and vegetables. With their bare hands they picked and worked in the cold and heat to provide their sons with a better future. Today I walk the streets of our Nation's Capital as a product of their determination for a better future. I continue working hard to make my parents proud and am continuing my education so that my children will have a better life too. I will make that future that my parents dreamed of for their children a reality for mine. ♦

# NFJP: Finding Stability In and Out of Agriculture

By Jeanna Vaughn, Director of Workforce Development, AFOP

The instability of farm work is one of the most stressful aspects of working in this industry. Farm work is unstable because in most places it is seasonal, which means that for months out of the year, no work is available. Once picking season is over, some farmworkers choose to migrate to other parts of the country in order to find more work, while some may stay in the area and look for employment outside of agriculture. Farmworkers that cannot find any work remain unemployed until the next harvesting season begins.

The uncertainty of finding work and housing makes migrant farm work an unstable way of life. According to the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), 52 percent of farmworkers are parents and many migrate with their entire families. A family may travel from their home in Texas to Iowa with the promise of a job, only to find they are no longer needed once they arrive or that the farmworker housing is already full. Because many parents rely on this income, losing it has devastating and far-reaching implications, such as not having enough money to return home or for basic necessities such as food.



Children of migrant farmworkers may attend multiple schools within a calendar year, causing

disruption to their education and difficulty establishing relationships with their peers. As a result, farmworker children stay behind in their studies and more than half drop out of high school.

In addition to the seasonal nature of farm work, employment and income depend on a myriad of other factors that are out of their control, such as how crops fare during the growing season. If crops fail, there is little to no work at all for farmworkers. Work is also dependent on the weather; if farmworkers cannot work in the fields because of storms, they lose out on the income for that day. When a farmworker becomes ill and is unable to work, they simply do not get paid. They do not have sick leave, unlike 73 percent of all other full-time workers in the US, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Not knowing how much one will be able to earn creates a difficult way of life for farmworkers and their families.

To address the instability of farmwork and the effect it has on the workers and their families, the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), a federal job training program authorized under Section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act, aims to help workers find higher-paying and more stable employment opportunities. In assisting farmworkers, the NFJP works with each person on an individual basis, assesses their skills and strengths, and then identifies what types of education and job training programs will benefit the participant.

In order to get jobs with more stability for their families, farmworkers need to obtain further education and skills to be competitive with other job seekers who may have more years of experience in that field. The NFJP staff works diligently to make sure each individual has the tools and knowledge they need to be successful. Additionally, staff work to identify employment opportunities for farmworkers that will provide them year-round work and a consistent paycheck.

Continued on page 11

# Occupational Health & Safety Training: Does it Work?

By Levy Schroeder, Director of Health & Safety Programs, AFOP

AFOP and our member organizations came together in 1971 and continue to provide much needed occupational health and safety training to migrant and seasonal farmworkers around our nation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and AFOP have been partners since 1996 and continues to enjoy a win-win relationship as we work to improve the health and wellness of farmworkers around our nation.

The Health & Safety Programs has undergone various incarnations and evolved into a solid training program for farmworkers and agricultural employers. Our signature *Train-the-Trainer* certification course and training materials in low-literacy, bilingual format are of greatest value to our end users.

Our national network of over 100 AFOP certified trainers are able to use the curriculum and materials as a platform for program outreach and recruitment. To the credit of our trainers, we referred over 5,000 eligible farmworkers to the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP).

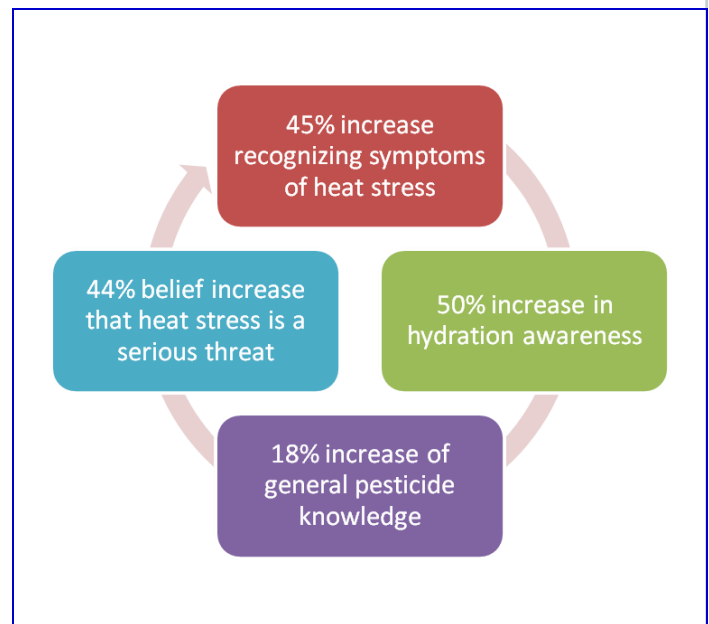
Funders require us to provide evidence-based reporting to support our efforts in the farmworker community. In 2013 we implemented a three-tiered impact evaluation process that includes: customer satisfaction surveys, a pre/post training knowledge test and a pre/post training study of work safety habits.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) partnered with AFOP in 2008 funded AFOP to develop a heat stress curriculum. We have found that 74 percent of farmworkers have received only minimal training on how to prevent heat-related illness or death. This is vitally important since the human body engaged in heavy physical labor can lose approximately 2 liters of water per hour. A farmworker spends 12-14 hours each day in the fields, working in temperatures that

are 8-10 degrees higher than the National Weather Service recorded highs.

We agree that all workers need basic occupational safety training on issues that are fundamental to their work. However, when farmworkers are 20 times as likely to die from heat stress as workers in other industries, and when an estimated 300,000 acute pesticide poisonings occur among farmworkers each year, there is an obvious and clear problem. Workers need support such as greater enforcement of the law and worker safety training. The good news is that AFOP's Health & Safety trainers are filling that training void.

Results from the first quarter pre/post training knowledge tests indicated a 15 percent increase in general knowledge about heat stress and pesticide safety.



When we drilled down to specific safety messages, the results were more striking: recognizing symptoms of heat stroke increased

Continued on page 12

# 2013 AFOP National Conference

**Location:** Conference will take place at the Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria, Virginia. Located on the skirts of DC and recently renovated, the hotel offers rare natural scenery. Adjacent to 43 acres of botanical preserve and a lake, you can enjoy on-site services such as a fully equipped fitness center and inviting indoor and outdoor pools.

**Registration:** Register today for the conference by going online and filling out a simple form. The link is located on the AFOP website, under 'Events.' The early bird fee (before August 16, 2013) is \$495 per registrant and the regular registration fee (after August 16, 2013) is \$545 per registrant. Registration fees are due before September 13, 2013. After you fill out the form, you will receive a link with access to your answers. Please print one copy and send with your registration fee(s) to AFOP's office at the following address.

AFOP  
Attn: National Conference  
1726 M Street, N.W., Suite 602  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**Hotel Reservations:** The Hilton Mark Center is located at 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22311. You can make reservations by calling (703) 845-1010.

Room rates are \$226 per night for single or double room, an additional \$20 for triple rooms. Rooms include complimentary high-speed internet for all AFOP guests.

All reservations must be made before 5:00 p.m. (EDT) FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 2013 in order to receive the negotiated rate. Individuals are responsible for their reservations. When you register, please confirm that you are with the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP). Cancellations MUST be made 72 hours in advance of your reservation.

**Travel Info:** The nearest airport is Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA). The hotel provides a regular shuttle service that picks up from DCA. The approximate cost of a one-way taxi ride is \$30. Self-parking is \$10 per night and valet is \$24 per night.

**Breakout Sessions:** Session themes are: Employment & Training, MIS/Management/Finance, Health & Safety, Agency Board Member Training, Policy, and the AFOP Training Institute. Specific details on breakout sessions will be forthcoming. All presenter information and breakout session content will be provided through email and displayed on the AFOP website, once available.

**Excellence Awards:** AFOP is pleased to sponsor the 7th annual "NFJP Excellence Awards" at this year's conference. We are honored to bring national recognition to your high level of success and hope this awards event will assist with replication of promising practices throughout our farmworker workforce community.

**Cancellations and Substitutions Policy:** Cancellations will be accepted through Friday, September 13, 2013. Send all requests to Cat Nguyen. An administrative fee of \$75 will be charged per cancellation. You will be invoiced if you do not send notice of cancellation prior to this date. No refunds will be issued after September 13, 2013.

Substitutions are accepted. Be sure to inform Cat Nguyen immediately to make the necessary accommodations.

**Other:** All other questions, please contact Cat Nguyen at [nguyen@afop.org](mailto:nguyen@afop.org).



## Request for Nominations: Effective Workforce Practices for Farmworkers

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is compiling a collection of effective workforce practices in serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers. This collection will be published on ETA's forthcoming on-line resource page, *The Agricultural Connection*, for the benefit of practitioners that work to promote economic opportunities for farmworkers.

In collaboration with Social Policy Research Associates (SPR), ETA is requesting nominations for "Innovations in Action," which are noteworthy and promising workforce practices for serving farmworkers.

While workforce practices on all topics are welcome, ETA is particularly interested in:

- Models for collaborative partnerships, such as with community colleges, American Job Centers (One-Stop Career Centers), or other federal/state-funded migrant programs.
- Effective approaches to serving specific target populations, such as farmworkers with criminal backgrounds.
- Unique service strategies, such as providing integrated ESL/occupational training to farmworkers or effective outreach strategies.

**Please follow the instructions below and submit nominations to Jeanna Vaughn at [Vaughn@afop.org](mailto:Vaughn@afop.org).** To ensure that practitioners in the field will be able to access the optimum resources available, we ask that your submissions represent the very best practices that you are implementing or have encountered.

Questions? Contact Jeanna Vaughn at [Vaughn@afop.org](mailto:Vaughn@afop.org) or (202) 828-6006 ext. 109.

### Submitting Nominations for "Innovations in Action"

#### **Innovations in Action nominations must be:**

- ⇒ Practices designed to promote employment opportunities for migrant and seasonal farmworkers;
- ⇒ Practices currently being implemented that demonstrate potential for continued success and impact; and
- ⇒ Practices that can be implemented at the local or state level.

#### **To submit an Innovation in Action, email a word document that contains the following information:**

- ⇒ Your name, organization, e-mail address, and phone number;
- ⇒ The name or title of the workforce practice being nominated;
- ⇒ The organization implementing the workforce practice;
- ⇒ The location (city/state) of the workforce practice;
- ⇒ A complete description of the workforce practice; and
- ⇒ An explanation of how the practice demonstrates potential for continued success and impact.

Submissions of nominations for Innovations in Actions should not be longer than two pages. Individuals submitting practices may be contacted with follow-up.



On the other side of Capitol Hill, the House Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Subcommittee attempted to consider its version of the fiscal year 2014 measure July 25, but had to postpone its mark-up indefinitely. Leading appropriators blamed a scheduling conflict on the delay, but some in Washington say lawmakers, once details about the bill's deep cuts to popular programs began to get out, began worrying about political perceptions and making painful votes. Given the near certainty that Congress will have to resort to a continuing resolution again this year to keep the government open and operating past September 30, it is entirely possible that House appropriators may not reschedule the bill for subcommittee mark-up. The draft bill, which has not been made public, reportedly cuts spending 23 percent from the \$157 billion fiscal year 2013 enacted level to \$122 billion.

The Senate also approved comprehensive immigration reform June 27. Strongly supported by farmworker groups, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744) seeks to modernize the nation's immigration system and would provide an earned pathway to citizenship for unauthorized farmworkers who are so vital to our nation's agriculture industry.

The House for its part seems unmoved by the Senate's action. Rather than consider the Senate bill as passed, the House has chosen instead to consider "bite-sized" bills to make incremental changes to the immigration system, putting in doubt somewhat the Senate-passed legislation. The House is moving forward with a series of bills to strengthen

border security and implement the E-Verify system for employment, among others. The House would only consider a pathway to citizenship once those measures are in place. Certain House members, meanwhile, have publically warned House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) against allowing any Senate-negotiated legislation providing such a pathway to come before the House for a vote. Indeed, some influential members have been reported as predicting comprehensive immigration reform could die a "slow, months-long death" in the House.

The Senate bill's proponents are not giving up hope, however. Most of the measure's sponsors have come together with the White House, business groups, evangelicals, labor unions, and others, to seek to pressure rank-and-file lawmakers on the matter when they are back in their home states for the August recess. Proponents hope enough supporters of comprehensive immigration reform will strongly and persuasively communicate their desire to see the House approve the Senate bill, and in doing so, will convince enough legislators to support consideration and final passage. Whether that will be successful or not remains to be seen.

Lastly, the Senate on July 18 voted 54-46 to confirm former Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez to head the United States Department of Labor. In winning his confirmation, Secretary Perez became the first Dominican American to serve in a cabinet position in a presidential administration. AFOP congratulates Secretary Perez on his confirmation and looks forward to working closely with him and his department. ♦

## Advocating for Brighter Futures

By Robert Crumley, Director of Communications, AFOP

Through the *Children in the Fields Campaign*, AFOP has brought the hardships faced by farmworker children across the country to the national stage. AFOP works with community partners to help educate policy leaders and the public on the plight of farmworker children in the U.S. Through community events, media

coverage, and educational materials distributed across the country, we highlight the powerful stories of the children who give their health, education and childhood to feed America. One of our most popular

continued on page 10

## Advocating For Continued from page 9

ways to gather these testimonies from farmworker children is through AFOP's National Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Children's Essay & Art Contests. The review process is currently underway and the winners will be announced on the next edition of the *Newsline*.

Our advocacy efforts on behalf of farmworker children are more important than ever; the prevalence of child labor continues to grow in many agricultural states, especially those experiencing labor shortages on farms. With labor enforcement on the decline, underage child labor and abuse in the fields is of great concern to the advocacy community.



Photo by: Heather Anderson, former AFOP staff

Many of the successes by advocates for child workers have been achieved through coordinated efforts with the Child Labor Coalition (CLC), of which AFOP is a member. The CLC is a national network for the exchange of information about child labor; provides a forum and a unified voice on protecting working minors and ending child labor exploitation; and develops informational and educational outreach to the public and private sectors to combat child labor abuses and promote progressive initiatives and legislation. Together, AFOP and the CLC membership can address the needs of farmworker children by advocating for legislative protections that can protect their futures.

The Children's Act for Responsible Employment (CARE Act) was introduced on June 12, 2013 – World Day Against Child Labor – by Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard. The CARE Act addresses the inequities and harsh conditions faced by the estimated 500,000 children currently employed in agriculture in the U.S. The CARE Act aims to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA) by bringing the age and work hours standards for children working in agriculture up to the standards set under FLSA for all other forms of child labor. In the 2009 introduction of the bill, the CLC worked with Congresswoman Roybal-Allard to gather 107 bill co-sponsors – a record for the bill. While the high support in the U.S. House of Representatives was celebrated, the bill was not receiving the bipartisan support needed to pass through Congress.

Recent bipartisanship seen in relation to comprehensive immigration reform provides hope for further cooperation in regard to the CARE Act. As immigration reform makes its way through Congress, the CLC will be identifying leaders on both sides of the aisle who can be champions for farmworker children's futures through the CARE Act.

Furthermore, other policy leaders outside of Congress can make a difference in the lives of farmworker children. The CLC holds hope for the newly-confirmed Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Pérez to be a champion for farmworker children. We urge him to act quickly to protect vulnerable child workers in agriculture through increased enforcement of current child labor laws, and through updates to the outdated U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) regulations that allow young children to perform work we know is hazardous to their health.

You can stay up to date with our efforts to advocate for brighter futures for our farmworker children by following our social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter. You can also visit our page on the AFOP website: [www.afop.org/children-in-the-fields](http://www.afop.org/children-in-the-fields). ♦

## NFJP: Finding Stability

continued from page 5

Farmworkers who participate in the NFJP show remarkable success. In fact, the NFJP is the most successful job training program operated by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Participants take part in a variety of programs where they earn degrees and credentials, and go on to find permanent, full time employment with benefits in a variety of industries, including health care, construction, information technology, truck driving, and many more.

Some farmworkers, however, do not want to leave the agricultural industry. They may have grown up doing this type of work and feel more comfortable staying within it. Consequently, the NFJP has been working to identify positions in agriculture which are year round and offer higher wages versus working in the fields harvesting crops. These positions, also called agricultural upgrades, require further skills and training for NFJP participants. Some recent participants have become tractor drivers, fork lift operators, and mechanics in agricultural settings.

AFOP and DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) recently facilitated a training webinar for NFJP staff on how to develop agricultural upgrades for their participants. Pam Frugoli with O\*NET and the Competency Assessment Team Lead at ETA presented information on career ladders within agriculture and where to access pertinent labor

statistics and data, such as O\*NET and My Next Move websites ([www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org) and [www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org), respectively).

Two NFJP directors, Patricia Stovall with the PathStone Corporation and Barbara Coleman with Telamon-South Carolina, also presented and discussed their experiences with helping participants move into higher paying and stable jobs within agriculture. They stressed developing relationships with growers to facilitate these opportunities, and identified what skills training and education is most appropriate for the participants.

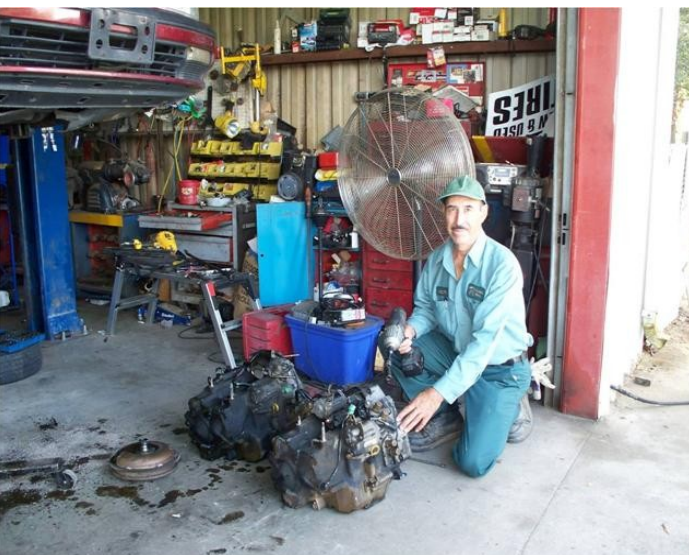
Ms. Coleman touched on one success story of



Photo by: Barbara Coleman of Telemon, South Carolina

Adolfo, a former farmworker who participated in an On-the-Job Training program in mechanics at a hay farm. Through his training, Adolfo became a mechanics assistant and went on to oversee an entire fleet of vehicles. He is now making \$13 an hour in a permanent position on the farm. To listen to the entire webinar, go to <https://msfw.workforce3one.org/>.

Finding stable employment is the key to financial stability, and having a job that offers year round employment is necessary to achieve this. The NFJP continues to look at new ways and methods to help farmworkers achieve this for themselves and their families. ♦



Adolfo at his workshop



## Does it Work? Continued from page 6

by 45 percent, and there was a 50 percent increase in awareness of the value of drinking water frequently throughout the workday.

Results for the pesticide safety training pre/post knowledge tests showed an 18 percent increase in general knowledge of dangers and precautions. Additional data revealed a 44 percent jump in the number of farmworkers who believe heat stress is a serious hazard to their health at work. More dramatic results were found in answers to particular questions about protecting oneself against pesticide exposures. Initially, 33 percent of farmworkers polled believed that pesticides were not dangerous to their health, and were not concerned about exposure. After receiving training on the Worker Protection Standard curriculum, 100 percent believed that pesticide exposure is a health concern. Our methodology allows us to track a small sampling of workers who receive our trainings. Although the trainings are available to all who wish to learn, the impact evaluations are done only with students who are willing to participate in both the study, and who will be available for a five-week follow-up. Trainers obtain their contact information and at the five-week mark, a second post-training test is administered. Of particular interest is their knowledge retention and behavioral changes such as work attire, heat/hydration preparedness, and precautions taken around pesticides.

So long as there are people working in agriculture, there will be health and safety concerns. However, we can educate workers to help them gain knowledge and reduce the risks they take while they are at work. Although many farmworkers have very little power over their general work conditions, they do have control over how they interact with those conditions. For example, if a farmworker knows that pesticides are used and that wearing a long sleeve shirt can significantly reduce pesticide exposure, they may choose to wear protective clothing. This will not eliminate all exposure, but it will reduce exposure and potential harm.

We believe that workers want to be safe and that through culturally specific education, their thinking about pesticide exposure or heat stress will transition into new and healthier behaviors. Our evaluation system seeks to capture data about those shifts in behaviors.

The five week follow-up discovered: 61 percent increase in people bringing drinking water to work; 47 percent increase in hand washing; 32 percent increase in workers wearing light colored clothing; and a 16 percent increase in wearing long sleeve shirts to work in the fields. We are confident our data set will grow and continue providing increased validation for the effectiveness of our trainings.



We are proud of our 103 trainers who work to share health and safety information. We applaud the employers who invite us to work with their employees, and most of all, we are proud of the thousands of unsung heroes in the agricultural industry who work tirelessly to bring food to our tables. By working together, we can provide a safe and secure food supply while also providing a safe and secure work environment.





---

## Success Stories

---

### Sailing the Luxurious Seas

In 1986, Jim Hadley was working as a seasonal farmworker on tobacco, peppers, hay, and cattle for a local farmer in Russell County, Kentucky. He was making less than minimum wage when he went to see Betty Sapp, an Employment and Training Specialist with the National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) through the Kentucky Farmworker Programs (KFP).

Because of his low-income and farmworker background, Jim was eligible for the NFJP. Once he enrolled, Jim went to work for a local houseboat company as a carpenter's helper through an On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract KFP had established.

Jim completed the OJT and the company hired him as a full time staff member. He moved up in ranks from carpentry to purchasing and eventually into sales. After saving enough money he eventually bought into the company as a 20 percent owner.

After gaining the training and experience he needed, Jim struck out on his own and started Majestic Yachts. Prior to the downturn in the economy there were 13 boat manufacturers in the Lake Cumberland Area. Now there are only four. Majestic Yachts survived those lean years, and Jim, his partners, and his crew, are looking forward to a bright future.

Jim started his houseboat career making \$3.25 an hour as a carpenter's helper and now his company, which he owns 75 percent stake in, builds houseboats that range anywhere from \$150,000 to over \$1,000,000.

Jim Hadley's success can be attributed to the training and education he received from participating in the NFJP and he appreciates the help the Kentucky Farmworker Programs gave him at a time when he most needed it.

To quote the Majestic Yachts Inc. website: "Jim, Presiden/CEO, had his beginnings sweeping floors at a Houseboat Manufacturing Company and worked his way into heading up the best Houseboat Manufacturing Company around – Majestic Yachts, Inc. Jim posses the experience, insight, and futuristic outlook that serves as the backbone of Majestic Yachts. Jim not only has used his vast experience, but also his focused determination to lead Majestic Yachts Inc. through these tough economic times when many other yacht producers have fell by the wayside."

He continues to work with the program by hiring seasonal farmworkers when he can. According to Jim, "farm kids know how to work."

Photo and story submitted by: Vickie P. Hutcheson, Director Kentucky Farmworker Programs, Inc. ♦



Jim Hadley and Betty Sapp, KFP E&T Specialist

---

## Success Stories

---

### 20 Years of Migrating Comes to an End

Jorge Herrera came to our office in November 2012 after learning that MET was sponsoring a Green Retrofitting Technology program with our local community college, South Texas College. Jorge wanted to learn more about the construction industry and inquired about the curriculum. The classes and process were explained to him and he stated that he would very much like to be considered for this training. Jorge stated that he has been migrating for over 20 years and that this type of training would enable him to leave that type of work behind.

After determining his eligibility, an Individual Employability Plan was created. The barriers that were identified on his IEP were: limited English, long-term agricultural employment, and lack of significant work history. Jorge realized that he had difficult barriers to overcome but with this type of training and the skills he would develop, a career as a self-employed home remodeling contractor would be in his best interest.

Jorge completed his Green Retrofitting Technology program in February 2013. He received some basic equipment that he used to start his business. Jorge was able to utilize his last allowance check and his income tax refund to purchase a new generator and some extra equipment to assist him in his work. With the help of family members and people that he knew, he was able to begin his remodeling business as a self-employed remodeling contractor. Jorge is averaging about \$450.00 a job, and sometimes more, depending on the extent of the job. He enjoys all the benefits of being his own boss, such as: independence, control over his schedule, living in one location, and most of all, being available for his family.

Jorge is very thankful to the Weslaco, Texas MET office staff for all their assistance through the process.

Story submitted by: Ashley Myres Duggan  
of MET, Weslaco One Stop ♦



**Jorge Herrera  
MET Inc. CRT Participant  
(Weslaco Met Office  
Green Retro Fitting Technology  
Self Employed Remodeling  
Contractor**

---

## Success Stories

---

### NFJP-Powering our Nation



Neldyn Villarrubia Villanueva working on a wind turbine. Photo courtesy of PathStone

Neldyn now has a good-paying, stable job with future opportunities thanks to the training he received from the NFJP.

Prior to moving to the mainland, Neldyn worked on a plantain farm in his hometown of Aguada, Puerto Rico. He was earning \$5 an hour when he came to the PathStone office in Añasco. After we talked with Neldyn, he felt like it was a great match and enrolled in the Training & Employment Program. He learned job readiness skills along with the added component of training from the Pacific Institute, PX2. His eager participation benefitted everyone as he shared his own perspectives on life in Puerto Rico.

His goal was to acquire marketable skills to qualify him for better job opportunities. His single-minded dedication and eagerness to make as much as possible out of the opportunities provided, made him an obvious choice for a new Occupational Skills training opportunity to become a Wind Turbine Technician. During his interview for acceptance into the program, the training provider saw the same potential we had also seen. It was with great pleasure and anticipation that the offer to participate in the training was extended and accepted.

In preparation for the training, Neldyn was outfitted with work boots and other necessary work supplies. Ground and air travel was arranged along with lodging and meals for his month-long training in Tehachapi, California. He successfully completed all trainings, earned honorable grades and received 13 certifications, including one in CPR.

He is now qualified as a wind turbine technician and as a tower worker.

Soon after completing his trainings, Neldyn was hired as a tower worker at \$11.70 per hour with an additional \$70 per diem. Neldyn is extremely grateful to PathStone for the life-changing opportunities he received.

Story submitted by: Jeff Lewis, PathStone ♦



## 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