Friends in Guatemala

Part 2--Board President Alice Foltz continues to share what she learned on her recent trip to Guatemala

In Guatemala, amazing trucks and buses roar into the isolated areas over rough roads, occasionally under construction but seldom complete. Homes and farms nestled in high valleys seem to touch the clouds.

Life in these valleys has never been easy, but for hundreds of years the isolation and difficulty of travel also protected indigenous culture against destruction by waves of invaders who came, took resources, and left. Each area kept its own language, special food, education, and colorful dress.

Then came the 36-year civil war, that began in 1960. The military targeted mountain towns for special punishment, accusing community leaders of “communism.” Over 200,000 died or were lost during this time, and people still light candles in village churches and squares in remembrance of the losses.

- continued p. 2 -
Friends in Guatemala cont...

The war left behind widows and orphans, destroyed trust, and deepened poverty. It was a harsh test for the resiliency of strong and beautiful mountain people.

Local leaders say that the greatest problem villages face today is the hopelessness of young men, who see few opportunities for their future. The average daily pay for those who find work is a few dollars, so many chose to leave. Migration is an old and common pattern: for the last century many indigenous families migrated to coastal plantations for seasonal harvests. Yet the war made economic conditions more desperate and migration paths longer and more dangerous.

- Alice Foltz, CIF Board President

---

Join us!

**Nov 15: Immigrant Advocate Summit**

With the political landscape heavily focusing on immigration, CIF has increased its advocacy and has helped coordinate the 9th Virginia Immigrant Summit Advocate Summit hosted by VACOLAO (Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations) and other immigrant rights organizations. The summit will focus on immigration policy at the state level and will cover a wide range of topics relating to immigration such as wage justice, fundraising for deportation and bond, Temporary Protected Status, public charge, and how faith groups can taking practical steps to support the immigrant community. This all-day event will help advocates understand changes in immigration policy and actions needed to protect and expand immigrant rights in our commonwealth. The summit will take place November 15, 2018, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Annandale United Methodist Church, 6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale. REGISTER at https://9thvirginiaimmigrantsummit.eventbrite.com

**Dec 12: Wage Theft Forum**

Wage theft is a big problem in Centreville: so far this year, over $33,000 in unpaid wages have been reported to the Centreville Commission for Labor Justice. With only two state investigators, most of Virginia's unpaid wages don't get paid. Join us Dec. 12, 2018, at 7 p.m. at Centreville Regional Library to learn about wage theft legislation designed to improve this system.

Read about wage theft beforehand: https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/18/minimum-wage-not-enforced-investigation-409644
Jim Daniels and Ed Duggan both joined the CIF Board as founding members in October 2010 and are rotating off this year. Ed was Treasurer for 7 years, and in 2018 became our first Vice President. He has been a loyal supporter and participant in CIF projects, from public actions to work sessions. He always speaks up for the vision of CIF, to support immigrants.

Jim Daniels has been our IT specialist since the beginning. He secured donations of equipment and software and helped us to use it—troubleshooting on many occasions when we were lost. Thanks to Jim, Sales Force continues to be the backbone of our data collection and access.

CIF elected two new Board members—Raul Berrios and Rose Mary Flores—and four new Directiva members: Claudia, Petrona, Francisco, and Rafael. Raul Berrios is president of RulyScapes, a highly respected local landscaping firm that is known for giving back to the community. Raul will be a big help to the Board, as a businessman and a community leader. Rose Mary Flores is herself an immigrant who understands the needs of the community we serve. She is a district marketing representative for BB&T and has already engaged the bank to finance upgrading our space with new desks and a new kitchen area.

Claudia, Petrona, Francisco and Rafael are involved members at the Labor Center and bring an important perspective, having used the programs.

CIF also recognized outstanding Committee volunteers: Barb Shaiko (Human Resources), Rosemary Theurer (Fundraising), John R. Kennedy (Finance), and Jerry Foltz (Assistant Bookkeeper, and driver/accompanier).

Staff recognized Juliana Cortes (operations assistant, Commission for Labor Justice, and event volunteer), Jessica Jacobs (translator, event volunteer, and Family Reunification instructor), Rosellini Tep Chung (Commission for Labor Justice), Brian Green Carino (Commission for Labor Justice), and Jorge (Directiva member and community event planner/coordinator).
Thank you to everyone who attended the Centreville Immigration Forum's 4th Annual "Celebrating Our Global Community" dinner on September 21 at The Waterford at Fair Oaks. The 130 attendees included elected officials, board members, donors, staff, members of the Centreville Labor Resource Center, and other community leaders.

CIF’s three honorees clearly exemplified the important role immigrants play in our community. Rodrigo Velasquez is a Senior Legislative Aide for Delegate Kathy Tran and former leader of Mason Dreamers. Ilryong Moon is an attorney and Fairfax School Board Member-At-Large. Afeefa Syeed is a cultural anthropologist who founded Al Fatih Academy, a nonprofit independent school with a curriculum based on integrating peace and civic education. At the CIF dinner, each spoke of his or her own immigrant experience and reminded us that we are part of a global community that includes immigrants and refugees who strengthen it every day.

Part of the CIF mission is to build community recognition of our strength in diversity. Recognizing and celebrating immigrant contributions to the community at our dinner is just one way CIF accomplishes this. We look forward to continuing this tradition in 2019.

- Rosemary Theurer, Fundraising Chair
When CIF’s board and Directiva met for the September monthly meeting to listen to staff reports, the proposed budget for 2019, and other updates, Raquel Villarobos and Ricardo Avalos provided interpretation for Spanish-speaking members. Towards the end of the meeting, these two Centreville High School seniors asked for the floor.

Raquel told the board about wanting to celebrate Hispanic heritage month at Centreville High School. When she shared this idea with the Hispanic Honors Society, a member of the society, Ricardo Avalos, said that he would like to help plan something. He suggested a Latino empowerment comedian, “Ernie G”, whom he had seen at a Hispanic event held at Virginia Tech, and thought was very inspiring. Ricardo and Raquel took this idea to the school administration who agreed on the importance of Hispanic Heritage Month but did not have funds in the budget for an event. That didn’t stop the students!

Since Ricardo is a regular volunteer for CIF, he decided to ask the organization for help with the project. He and Raquel proposed that CIF sponsor Ernie G at CVHS to celebrate Hispanic heritage in the community. The board voted in favor of sponsoring the event and brought Ernie G to CVHS on Oct. 4, 2018, for an after-school program, where teachers, staff, and students enjoyed comedy while being empowered and celebrating Hispanic heritage.
The CLRC's goal is to increase hiring in the winter months. Compared to 46% in 2017, the average hiring rate is 48%. 

Employer Satisfaction: 
- Excellent: 73% 
- Good: 20% 
- Average: 3% 
- Poor: 4%

Jobs by Type: 
- Landscaping: 40% 
- General Labor: 21% 
- Painting: 13% 
- Moving: 11% 
- Other: 15%

1,413 Jobs YTD