

March 2024 - spring edition

# Farmworker Justice

Honoring the people who harvest the fields

## CEO Message

I'm excited to share fantastic news with all of you!

Continued funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration and new partnerships with the Environmental Protection Agency and the AT&T Foundation will allow us to provide additional services to farmworkers. And, thanks to your contributions, we exceeded our first-quarter revenue goal for individual giving.

Our programs continue to have impact - **Creating Safer Workplaces for Farmworker Women** reached over 10,000 women, and **Heat Stress Prevention Training** provided materials to over 3,000 promotores. In addition, we helped more than 25,000 individuals enroll in Medicaid and ACA coverage.

Moreover, we published ***Precarious Protection: Analyzing Compliance with Pesticide Regulations for Farmworker Safety*** highlighting health threats, regulatory failures, and structural racism that contribute to the unparalleled occupational risks for farmworkers. We worked with the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems at Vermont Law and Graduate School and the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic on the research.

We also published, ***The Price of Milk: Dangers and Exploitation in the Dairy Industry*** regarding the many hazards faced by dairy workers.

As our team continues to grow, so do resources to support and expand our work. We recently welcomed two new members to FJ and made additional resources available to our legal team.

We kicked off Farmworker Awareness Week by sharing our interviews with labor advocates and icons shedding critical light on the farmworker community. Please help us spread awareness by sharing and liking our various social media posts scheduled throughout the week.

With your continued support, we can expand our reach and services to help improve the living and working conditions of our nation's farmworkers.



"We remain thankful to our partners, funders and friends for their support. Working together we can continue our efforts to ensure farmworkers and their families are treated with the dignity they deserve."

Ron Estrada  
CEO  
Farmworker Justice



## Farmworker Awareness Week (March 25 - 31)

We kicked off National Farmworker Awareness Week with a digital campaign highlighting the critical role farmworkers play in our lives. The campaign features interviews with civil rights icon Dolores Huerta as well as farmworker advocates from the entertainment industry including :



**Constance Marie**  
Actor, Advocate



**Jenny Dorsey**  
Executive Director,  
Studio ATAO



**Olga Merediz**  
Singer, Actor, Filmmaker



**Ingrid Hoffmann**  
Author, Chef & Activist



**“Farmworker Justice along with its partners are responsible for keeping the labor movement alive and effecting change for farmworkers. We applaud their work and commitment to farmworkers.”**

**-- Dolores Huerta  
President and Founder,  
Dolores Huerta Foundation**





## Women's History Month

Women's History Month is an opportunity to celebrate the women who throughout history led and organized protests against abuse and inhumane working conditions. Their efforts often helped effect change for workers yet their stories and contributions remain excluded from history books.

Women like Dolores Huerta, Jessie de la Cruz, Maria Moreno, and Emma Tenayuca stand as pillars of empowerment within the farmworker community. Their contributions resonate profoundly with the women who work in the fields. Dolores Huerta co-founded United Farm Workers and brought the challenges of farmworkers to the mainstream. Jessie de la Cruz, a labor organizer, fearlessly challenged discriminatory labor practices and fought for fair wages and dignified working conditions. Maria Moreno's groundbreaking activism elevated the voices of marginalized farmworker women, advocating for gender equality within the labor movement. Emma Tenayuca's bold leadership during the 1930s included organizing against the inhumane working conditions for pecan shellers in San Antonio, Texas.

These trailblazers paved the way for future generations of farmworker women to demand fair wages and safe working conditions. Their collective impact transcends generations and serves as inspiration to all women that their voices can be catalysts for change.



**Dolores Huerta**  
1930 - present



**Jessie de la Cruz**  
1919 - 2013



**Maria Moreno**  
1920 - 1988



**Emma Tenayuca**  
1916 - 1999



## Programmatic Update

Over the past three years, Farmworker Justice and partners have worked together to implement **ReUnidos: Farmworker Connections to Skin Cancer Care**, a research study documenting health disparities in farmworker communities and assess the impact of trained patient navigators in facilitating the timely diagnosis and follow up treatment of farmworkers who screen positive at community skin cancer screenings.

Studies of farmworkers have shown an excess risk of melanoma and other skin cancers due to prolonged sun exposure and certain pesticides. Farmworkers also experience numerous barriers that may impede timely diagnosis and treatment, including limited English proficiency, lack of health insurance, and limited transportation options. Perceived low risk levels of melanoma and skin cancer have resulted in delayed diagnosis, advanced disease at presentation, and a poorer prognosis among farmworkers and Latinx populations more generally.

ReUnidos has increased access to skin cancer screenings for rural and low-income farmworkers by providing regular opportunities to be screened for skin cancer at no-cost events open to the community. Through the program, over 700 farmworkers have been screened for skin cancer at community screenings organized by two clinic sites in San Diego County, CA and Upstate NY. As a result of the program's interventions, ten patients found to have suspicious lesions were enrolled in the study and three patients were able to confirm an early diagnosis of skin cancer and receive expedited treatment with a dermatologist.



**GuideStar and Charity Navigator are important platforms that provide information and ratings for nonprofits. GuideStar offers comprehensive data on nonprofits, while Charity Navigator evaluates charities' financial health and transparency. Both help donors make informed giving decisions. Farmworker Justice is proud to receive high rankings from both platforms.**







## Programmatic Update (continued)

Through the dedicated efforts of the project's navigators, promotoras, clinic staff, and volunteer providers, Reunidos has helped to illuminate the gaps in our healthcare system that make it extremely challenging for farmworkers to access the care they need. As the project draws to a close this month, it is clear that trained patient navigators are essential to bridging these gaps and building an affordable and culturally appropriate treatment pathway for this chronically underserved population.

## Litigation Update

We continue to support farmworkers through impact litigation in partnership with legal services organizations across the country.

In February, Farmworker Justice, represented by Public Citizen's Litigation Group, submitted an amicus brief largely in support of the Department of Labor and its 2023 AEWB Final Rule. The amicus brief urged the Court to affirm the district court's denial of a preliminary injunction against application of the Final Rule.

In March, the Western District of Michigan court approved a class action settlement agreement in the matter of Lopez et al. v. Mastronardi Produce USA and Maroa Farms Inc. Farmworker Justice acted as class counsel for the plaintiffs, a group of migrant farmworkers, along with the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center. Under the settlement agreement, class representatives will each receive \$6,000 and other class members will receive up to \$400 each to compensate them for unpaid wages, exposure to harmful pesticides, and other unlawful practices.





## MSHS Recognizes Alexis Guild

Congratulations to Alexis Guild, Vice President of Strategy and Programs, for receiving the 2024 Plate of Bounty Award from the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Collaboration Office.

The award recognizes Alexis' contributions through her work at Farmworker Justice to make a meaningful difference in the lives of farmworkers and their families.



### The Plate of Bounty Award

In 1999, the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Conference Steering Committee instituted the Plate of Bounty Awards to acknowledge an individual who has made significant contributions to migrant and seasonal farmworker families. This year, the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association (NMSHSA) once again invited the MSHS community to nominate a deserving individual who has made a difference in MSHS programs, children and families.







## New Staff Hires

Our team continues to grow! We are excited to welcome Tharma Philogene as Finance and Operations Specialist and Paloma Zuleta as Director of Development and Communications.

**Tharma** joined Farmworker Justice as the Finance and Operations Specialist. Tharma's professional experience includes serving as General Finance Assistant at the University of Baltimore, Chief Executive Officer/Founder of G&B, and Consulting Analyst at DIFFvelopment in Newark, NJ. She is fluent in English, French, Haitian Creole (Native), and has a basic proficiency in Spanish. Tharma holds a Bachelor in Business Administration from the University of Baltimore, where she graduated Cum Laude, and an Associate Business Administration from Montgomery College, where she received the Spirit of Service Award.

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**Paloma** joined Farmworker Justice as the Director of Development and Communications. Prior to joining Farmworker Justice, Paloma served as interim Vice President of Marketing and Communications and Media Relations Director for Power to Decide. Paloma's professional background also includes Director of Communications for the League of United Latin American Citizens, Director of Strategic Alliances at DCI Group, Deputy Director of Public Policy for The Campaign for High School Equity as well as Legislative Assistant/Acting Communications Director for Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson. Paloma holds a Juris Doctor from the New England School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas.



**Tharma Philogene**



**Paloma Zuleta**

# Join Our Team

Farmworker Justice continues to grow. If you have a passion for being part of a team that works to improve the living and working conditions of farmworkers, find our open positions below.

Legal and Policy

Staff Attorney/Policy Analyst

Remote

Legal Director/Senior Attorney

Remote



**Make sure to visit our website to learn more about Farmworker Justice and our various resources for farmworkers, advocates and elected officials.**

**[www.farmworkerjustice.org](http://www.farmworkerjustice.org)**