



CALIFORNIA RURAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INC.



ANNUAL REPORT 2006



Adelante Creando Luz.

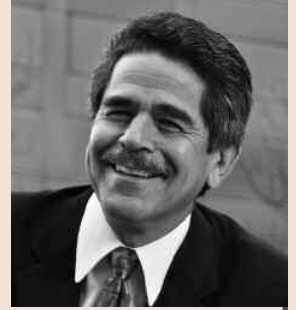
Forward Creating Light.

The rule of law must exist equally for the wealthy as for the indigent, otherwise it is weakened for the whole.



Dear Friend of CRLA,

CRLA's mission of creating justice for the rural poor of our state is at the same time, a laudable responsibility and a political pursuit. CRLA's annual report not only allows us to highlight accomplishments in meeting the responsibility, but it also must inform the caring public regarding the obstacles that sometimes intrude to deny efforts that would provide equal rights to California's poor communities.



The responsibility to serve rural low-income communities is a daily endeavor now stretched to more than 4 decades. It is accomplished because of the dedicated staff who choose "rural justice" as their cause of service. It is also accomplished because many others decide to join us as justice-partners and provide us with pro bono legal assistance or with private donations so that our work is expanded. This annual report speaks to a myriad of such direct and supportive efforts. On the one hand, injustices to our farm worker communities - be these labor law violations, or sexual predation in agriculture, or simply being "nickel and dimed" as almost all low-wage labor experiences because of the economic vulnerability it suffers- continue to be a core concern of the CRLA mission and advocacy. In all cases, a basic respect for worker rights and personal integrity is aggressively sought; sometimes it is successfully achieved as we report here. More basic rural services related to a lack of affordable housing or to family stability are also a part of this report as we present stories about housing element litigation in Santa Cruz and guardianship work elsewhere. But as important is the example of CRLA benefactors Dolores Leal and Tomás Olmos, who have extended their home and financial generosity because they also assume responsibility for eliminating rural injustice, even though they provide this needed support from an urban place like Los Angeles.

The politics of legal services is played out in so many forms be that at the level of Congressional or state funding or in the manner such services are regulated. More intrusively, the politics can affect programs more directly and dramatically when individual Congressional representatives will seek to interfere in the manner that legal services is provided in their districts. In that light, we report to our donors that we are now (as of July) into our nineteenth month of a Federal investigation initiated due to our aggressive defense of rural dairy workers. As a result, CRLA is defending itself in an unprecedented Federal lawsuit, *United States vs. CRLA*, where we seek to protect the privacy of 39,000 CRLA clients who have sought our aid. We defend the belief that to exist securely, the rule of law must exist equally for the wealthy as for the indigent, otherwise it is weakened for the whole.

We have also learned that to exist, justice needs hard labor, personal commitments, benefactors and vigilance. The generosity and deep commitment from staff and friends keep our rural justice endeavors directed, aggressive, secure and unyielding. We thank you for your part.

*Adelante creando luz. Forward creating light.*

Jose R. Padilla

CRLA Executive Director

Adrian Andrade

CRLA Board Chairperson



## A LONG LINE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE



Alegria De La Cruz with her grandmother and famed UFW organizer, Jessie De La Cruz

“Tell me who your grandparents are, Alegría,” César would ask her repeatedly, pointedly, as if preparing her for an exam.

“My grandparents, they’re farm workers—and organizers.”

“Your parents, who are your parents?”

“My parents are organizers.”

“What about you, Alegría? What are you going to be?”

“I don’t know,” she’d say, a typical response of any child age seven or so.

But he wouldn’t let her off that easy.

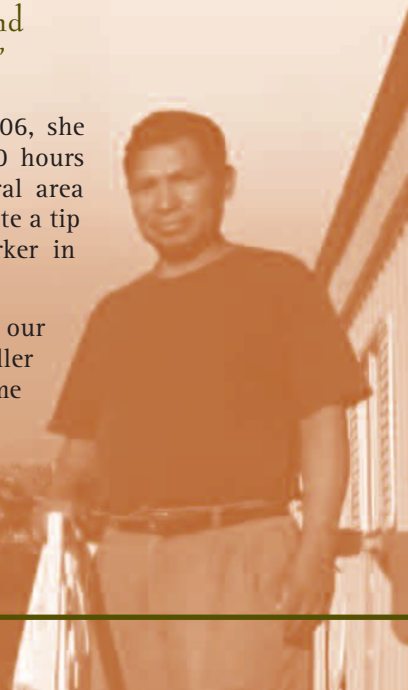
“I’ll tell you, Alegría. You’re going to be a lawyer. Because the next step to organizing is the law. We need people who understand where we come from to be lawyers, judges, and legislators.”

And so began the education—some may say it was her destiny—of Alegría De La Cruz, a neighbor to César Chávez and the granddaughter of Jessie De La Cruz, one of the first female organizers for the United Farm Workers in the early 1960s.

Years later, armed with an undergraduate degree from Yale and a law degree from Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, Alegría is now the Directing Attorney in CRLA’s

Fresno office. In November 2006, she didn’t hesitate to drive over 10 hours from Fresno to Tulelake (a rural area in Siskiyou County) to investigate a tip phoned in to a community worker in the Fresno office.

“We’re really worried about our Mexican *compañeros*,” the caller had said. “They’re here on some



kind of visa. They've never done this type of work before, and their conditions are much worse than ours."

What Alegría, other CRLA staff, and Mike Meuter, Director of Litigation, Advocacy, and Training, found at Sierra-Cascade Nursery in Tulelake confirmed the caller's concerns. Several hundred workers, "imported" under the federal guest worker program, had been promised good pay, a specified contract period, 8-hour workdays, three meals a day, and decent living quarters.

Reality fell far short of these promises: fenced-in WWII Japanese internment barracks with ice-cold bathrooms and dormitories so crowded workers' knees knocked together as they got dressed, grueling 10-hour or longer workdays, quotas so steep that workers toiled through lunch and breaks to fulfill them, meager or "water-only" meals, and a contract period cut by half. Workers told CRLA "We have nothing, not even enough money to buy soap." Plus, there was only one bank—that charged \$15 to cash each paycheck—and it was closed on weekends.

"It's a great example of CRLA's ability to serve people all over the state," says Alegría. "Attorneys and community workers from our Fresno, Salinas, Santa Rosa, Marysville, Modesto, and Stockton offices, and the CRLA Foundation pulled together to help. We had 400 workers when the case first began, but people were being fired and deported daily. Cynthia Rice in our San Francisco office and Mike and I in the tiny town of Yreka pulled an all-nighter to file the complaint and injunction."

The suit claims violations of state labor laws although the workers affected were sponsored under a federal program. The case is still in litigation, and the company is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor. In the meantime, the state has informed Sierra-Cascade that it must pay overtime, enforce breaks and lunch periods, and pay for transit and waiting time as well as back wages.

"My favorite part of this case was the way it came to us," says Alegría. "Through word of mouth, people we've had contact with, workers here showing concern for their counterparts from Mexico, knowing that their compañeros didn't have the experience in the fields, knowing that they needed some help to access legal services that they wouldn't otherwise have known about at all. It exemplifies the power of CRLA's outreach."



"I really think that CRLA is the kind of organization that gives you the freedom to be more than a typical lawyer sitting behind a desk somewhere. We have the freedom and the power to be active members of our communities. It's a broader idea of who and what a lawyer is and does. CRLA's values more fully reflect the kind of lawyer I strive to be."

And now that Alegría has a two-month-old son, she thinks about how the past and present will be reflected in her child's future.

"My parents met on a campaign for the UFW. They were both organizers and raised four kids in the movement. By the time I was old enough to walk and talk, I was doing outreach in front of supermarkets, collecting signatures on petitions. We moved 15 times in the first 10 years of my life while working on different campaigns."

Instead of finding this a source of resentment, it fuels Alegría's determination.

"I want to do for my son very much what my parents did for me," she says. "To give him the fullest life and educational experience I had as a child, to see the world and to develop an idea of what justice is and means, how to create it for yourself and for your community and the people around you. I hope that the power of his experiences growing up as my kid and being around this kind of work and people that do this kind of work will allow him to truly make his own decisions and to continue this life, this struggle."

"César really believed in the power of law to change the power dynamics in this country for workers and farm workers. I'd tell new lawyers to give CRLA a good hard look. No matter where you come from, the workers of rural California have nurtured who we are by feeding us and filling our tables with food. Whether you're from a farm worker family or whether you've enjoyed fruits and vegetables growing up that have made you strong, there's a nurturing that the farm workers of California have done for all of us. To serve them is such a privilege."

*As this Annual Report goes to press, CRLA received a settlement for this case totaling \$350,000 plus injunctive relief for significant improvements for future workers. Congratulations to Alegría and all of the other hard working staff who aided in this case and let us celebrate this victory for farm workers statewide!*





## TRAGIC LIVES TURN HOPEFUL



“It was the worrying and the waiting,” says Philomena Madrigal.

“I was always afraid that they were going to be taken away from me because I wasn’t their mother.”

It’s a fear that often plagues those who step in to protect children from neglectful or abusive parents. In this case, the girls’ father had seriously abused their mother who, in turn, started using drugs. Both parents had repeatedly been in and out of jail for domestic violence, parole violations, or drug use. At first, the girls were placed in the care of their great-grandmother who was later killed in a car crash. Then the girls, ages eight and ten, were taken in by Philomena, their maternal grandmother. But their worries didn’t end.

“Even though I’d had them (without legal guardianship) for four years, the girls would always worry about being taken away,” says Philomena. “And I would tell them that my home would always be their home, that if they ever needed anything

they would have my phone number and a key. They could come here at any time because this was their home.”

Although their mother consented to the guardianship, Dan Reith, the CRLA volunteer attorney in charge of the case, had to track down the father and the father’s parents to serve them notice of the guardianship hearing. Initially, they talked about contesting the guardianship, but no one showed at the hearing. Philomena and the girls were relieved and overjoyed.

“The kids really benefit from resolution,” says Dan. “They’re often anxious about the uncertainty of what’s happening. In so many cases they’re emotionally tied to the person who’s been taking care of



them, and they're very resistant to being with their actual parents. This work gives them the chance to be kids again."

Many of the kids Dan serves have been traumatized in some way. Some come from extremely abusive or dangerous households where child protective services has been forced to step in. And then Dan helps family members secure custody.

"We see more than fifty cases a year, many with multiple children involved," says Dan. "In the cases we take on, the children are already with the person who's seeking guardianship, and all but one have been resolved favorably. A lot of things that happen to these kids and their families isn't so great, so it feels good for them to go into court as winners."

How did Dan, an emeritus attorney with the California State Bar, become involved with CRLA?

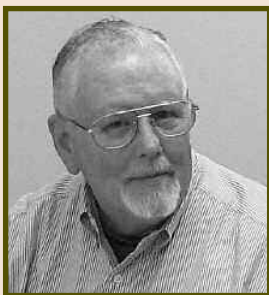
"My wife didn't like me hanging around the house," he chuckles, a note of self-deprecation in his voice.

And after 36 years as an attorney whose practice included family law, Dan missed serving clients after retirement. So he called up the local CRLA office and asked if he could help. Now in his fourth year of volunteer work, Dan is responsible for the guardianship cases that come through the Monterey office. All clients are low income, and most are referred from the Kinship Center in Monterey County, a nonprofit that provides adoption, foster and relative care services to children in California.

"I'm in court on anywhere from three to eight cases a month," he says. "It feels good to keep a hand in without all the hours and responsibilities of running an office, and I enjoy the work. People who are taking care of other people's kids, who are taking on such a big responsibility willingly, deserve the legal support."

"If Dan wasn't at CRLA, we wouldn't be able to handle these guardianship cases because we don't have the staff," says Teri Scarlett, Directing Attorney for CRLA's Monterey, Gilroy, and Salinas offices. "We're thrilled to have him!"

Often overwhelmed by the sheer number of clients who walk in the door, CRLA can serve far greater numbers when attorneys like Dan offer pro bono services in specialty areas such



Dan Reith, CRLA volunteer attorney

*"The kids really benefit from resolution," says Dan. "They're often anxious about the uncertainty of what's happening. In so many cases they're emotionally tied to the person who's been taking care of them, and they're very resistant to being with their actual parents. This work gives them the chance to be kids again."*

as family, employment, discrimination, or housing law.

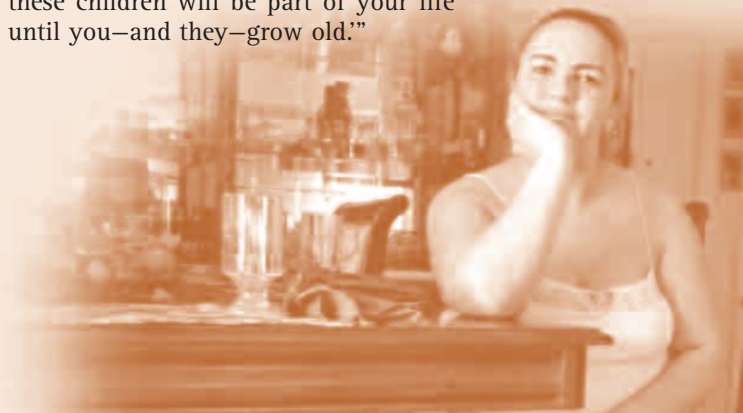
"Every office could benefit from volunteer attorneys, especially retired attorneys," says Teri. "They're so fantastic. They come in and already know what they're doing, and they're more likely to stay with CRLA for a longer period of time."

Dan's office is filled with thank-you notes and school pictures of the kids he's helped, all expressing their appreciation. But it's not just his clients who recognize that he's a special individual. In 2006, Dan received the Monterey County Bar Association's Chief Justice Gibson award for community service—largely for his service at CRLA. Not surprisingly, Dan fails to mention the award when talking about his work, because his focus remains on the kids and future guardians who come to CRLA's office.

"So many children are being raised by their relatives or other people," Teri says. "Guardians do the most important job in the world, raising a

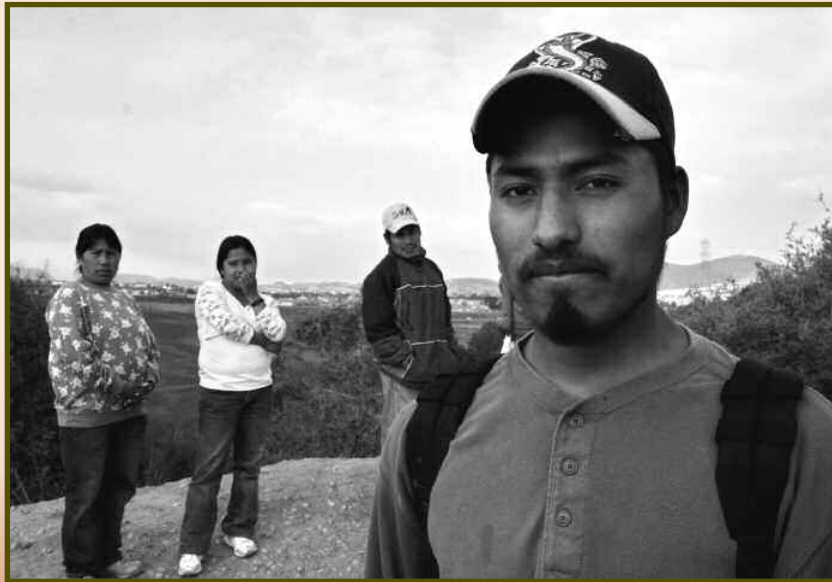
child who has stability, a home to go to, making sure they're enrolled in school and doing all the things they need to do to lead productive lives. In these cases, the effect of Dan's work lasts a lifetime."

"My girls now have hope for the future," says Philomena. "A year ago they were struggling, failing, and seeing a psychiatrist and a counselor. This year, things are settled and they're doing well. They're taking a break from counseling, and one has decided that she wants to be a teacher, the other one wants to be a nurse. Dan was great. He told me, 'I'm going to help you through this so that these children will be part of your life until you—and they—grow old.'"





## ONE QUESTION MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE



“Like a lot of CRLA clients, most H2A workers (guest workers granted temporary visas to work for a specific employer) don’t want to rock the boat by asking questions or approaching CRLA for information,” says Carlos Maldonado, a Community Worker in CRLA’s Oceanside office. “They’re afraid they’ll be blacklisted by their employers who won’t give them a job next year.”





But permanent resident Juan Ramirez wasn't afraid to ask questions. After working two seasons for a large tomato grower, he came in to CRLA's Oceanside office for help on an unrelated matter and asked a seemingly innocent question:

*Is it legal for banks to charge farm workers a fee to cash their paychecks?*

The answer:

*According to California Labor Code, it is not legal to charge a fee if the paycheck being cashed is drawn on the same bank.*

CRLA then began asking questions, and Juan's story unfolded. Juan and his co-workers had been cashing their checks for free at a bank branch in a local grocery store, but toward the end of the 2006 harvest, Juan's employer suddenly told the workers that they would have to pay a \$5 check cashing fee if they didn't have an account there.

"\$5 is about 50 pesos," Carlos explains. "It's a half day's pay for agricultural workers in Mexico. Fifty pesos can buy about five kilos of flour, so it's a lot of money for poor people."

And it was affecting a lot of poor people. During peak season, the tomato grower employs about 500 low-wage workers, many with guest worker status and most with no bank accounts. Over a nine-month growing season, workers cashing their weekly paychecks could have lost as much as \$200 each in fees.

"This is yet another example of how poor people get nickel and dimed," says Dorothy Johnson, Directing Attorney in CRLA's Oceanside office. "Middle class employees either have direct deposit or they deposit their checks in their checking accounts. We'd never stand for having to pay to cash our paychecks. But for low-wage workers, it's a different story."



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*Carlos explains. "It's a half day's pay for agricultural workers in Mexico.*

*Fifty pesos can buy about five kilos of flour, so it's a lot of money for poor people."*

After talking with Juan, Dorothy sent a letter to the grower, informing the company that it was violating the law. In the letter, CRLA also insisted that the grower notify its employees in writing that they could once again cash their paychecks at the bank for free. And to make sure the word got out, Carlos and another community worker, Mario Herrera, distributed outreach flyers to inform workers about their rights. A few days after CRLA's letter was delivered, the company rescinded the check-cashing policy and officially informed its workers that the fee had been eliminated. However, none of the workers collected refunds because the bank couldn't identify which workers had been charged.

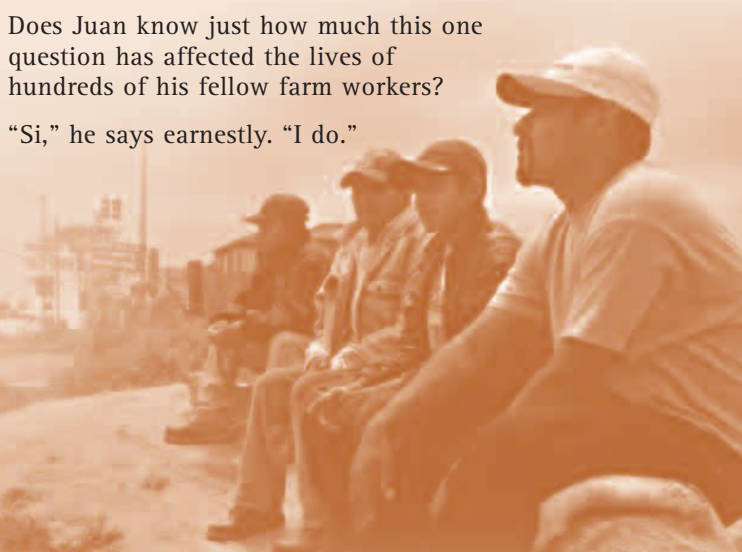
"I think this is a statewide problem," says Mike Meuter, Director of Litigation, Advocacy, and Training for CRLA. "And I think it's an example of employers and local bank branches being ignorant of

the California labor laws that make this practice illegal."

"It's important for workers to find out what's going on," insists Juan. "Ask questions, get the facts, know what your rights are."

Does Juan know just how much this one question has affected the lives of hundreds of his fellow farm workers?

"Si," he says earnestly. "I do."





## ZONING OUT THE DISADVANTAGED

“It was a stroke of luck that we found affordable housing in Santa Cruz,” says Ernestina Saldana. “But it was a mobile home, and it wasn’t accessible. I have polio, and I use a wheelchair for mobility. It has progressed to the point where I need to use an electric wheelchair when I go places.”

So Ernestina depended on her friends and husband to build a ramp for their new home. Once inside, she transferred to a manual wheelchair that fit through doorways. Even then she could enter only one of her home’s two bathrooms. Once inside the bathroom, she had to lie on top of the sink to transfer to the toilet and then to the bathtub. In the kitchen, her husband built accessible cabinets, but nothing could be done about the too-high stove where she repeatedly burned her arms.

“At least we had a place to live,” she says. “Before that, we were living in a temporary shelter in Watsonville.”

Ernestina and her family considered themselves “lucky” until the children got older and expenses grew, effectively pushing them out of their afford-



Gretchen Regenhardt, Directing Attorney, CRLA’s Santa Cruz and Watsonville offices

able home. Forced to move to Merced, Ernestina and her family are not only sad and lonely for their relatives and friends but also angry.

“My husband was born and raised in Santa Cruz, and I lived there for 15 years,” she says. “We tried so hard, but we were barely making it. We had to move. The children were uprooted. My son was so angry he dropped out of school. My girls have struggled to adapt. This move affects our children’s futures.”

What caused the housing shortage? In large part, it was the county’s land use practices.

“It’s called a housing element,” explains Gretchen Regenhardt, Directing Attorney in CRLA’s Santa Cruz and Watsonville offices. “It’s one chapter of any jurisdiction’s general plan, and it’s supposed to be updated to reflect population growth and housing needs—especially affordable and accessible



housing—for the county and is reviewed by the state’s Housing and Community Development agency every five years.”

The devil is in the details, or at least it is when it comes to land use and housing code. Suffice to say that Santa Cruz hadn’t passed a certified housing element in 20 years, essentially failing to plan for the housing needs of thousands of low income individuals and families, especially farm workers and hotel and restaurant workers from the city’s tourist industry.

“Although the county was required to produce 5,000 units of affordable housing, it produced only 227 units in the past 10 years,” Gretchen says. “And in 1994, the county acknowledged that there wasn’t enough land to develop for affordable housing, so they said that they’d meet the growing shortage by placing 15,000 granny units on people’s properties.” A ludicrous “plan” that never came to fruition.

But the county wasn’t against all development, just of a certain type. Since 1994, low-density land use zoning permitted developers to build McMansions at will while opening up a mere eight acres to build multi-family housing. Clearly, this failure to plan caused serious overcrowding for people with low incomes, large families, or disabilities.

“One of our other plaintiffs was living in a container you’d store rakes and shovels in,” says Gretchen. “There’s just no affordable housing in Santa Cruz County. Our clients are living in horse trailers and garages, three to four families in one house, 20 people using one bathroom, and the situation keeps getting worse.”

So in 2004, CRLA filed suit against the county for failing to pass a housing element in a timely manner. This initiated a flurry of activity by the county, which hastily adopted a housing element without the approval of the planning commission—bypassing a legal requirement. CRLA had to challenge this failure as well, and the litigation dragged on for two years.



Finally, under court order, the county adopted a new housing element that rezoned about 30 acres to be “developed by right” for multi-family housing. This has opened the door for organizations such as the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition and South County Housing to build low income and very low income housing.

“In this kind of case, the whole point is just to create the opportunity to build more affordable and accessible housing,” Gretchen explains. “It’s a really esoteric area of the law, and we’re lucky to have experts from the California Affordable Housing Project to help us. The impact of this is far greater than fighting another eviction or another 500 evictions. And in 2008, Santa Cruz will have yet another opportunity to come up with more sites to meet the growing need.”

“My main goal in doing this lawsuit was to call attention to the issue,” says Ernestina. “There are a lot of people in the same situation as we are. But my personal goal is to be able to enjoy a home where we can live and still afford to eat. Where I can roll in and cook for my family. Where I can roll in and take a shower. And someday, to do this back in Santa Cruz.”

If Gretchen has any say in the matter, CRLA will be there to help Ernestina achieve her goal.

“We’re not going to stop doing what we do. The county lit a fire under us to continue to do as high quality work as we can and get the best results for our clients—no matter what.”





## SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN FARM WORKERS ENDING THE SILENCE

“He grabbed me and told me not to fight. He said that it was time to repay him for having hired me,” recalls Beatriz, a greenhouse worker.

“I was shocked, frightened, almost paralyzed.”

And then he raped her.

“He told me to go clean myself up. I was trembling.

I couldn’t believe what had just happened.”

“I didn’t complain to management right away. I was too shocked. I just wanted everything to be OK, and I needed my job. For the first time, I had a job that paid more than minimum wage, and I needed every penny to take care of my family.”

Instead, she tried to handle it by ignoring or reacting angrily to her supervisor’s continued attention.

“But in private, I cried,” she said. “I didn’t want my daughters to learn what had happened.”

Beatriz’s nightmare had not ended with the rape or when the supervisor hired another woman for Beatriz to train. But the nature of the harassment changed. The supervisor switched Beatriz’s schedule to give more desirable hours to the new hire who then began to harass Beatriz as well.

So she mustered her courage and went to the general manager against the foreman’s strict orders. Although initially supportive, the general manager

finally told Beatriz (after a month’s delay and a reminder visit from Beatriz) that he believed there had been no sexual harassment. He merely promised to tell her supervisor not to drive her anywhere and not to ask for massages.

“I was stunned,” says Beatriz. “How could it not be sexual harassment? I called in sick for two days to try to recover. When I returned, I was told that I was being fired because I had a bad attitude and because I had missed two days of work.”

Beatriz, a struggling single mother with three daughters between the ages of eight and fourteen, could only turn to her friends for support—until she spoke with Jesus Lopez, a longtime Community Worker in CRLA’s Salinas office.

“Jesus has been with CRLA about 15 years, and he’s built a very strong reputation in the farm



worker community here,” says Michael Marsh, the Project Director for the Agricultural Worker Project at CRLA. “People trust him.”

“The number of sexual harassment cases we’re informed of and pursue says a lot about the work that this office has done over the years,” Michael adds. “You don’t have this kind of rapport with the community overnight. I see my work as a small extension of the work that’s been done by a string of wonderful female attorneys who made it a priority in the Salinas valley to reach out to women who were facing sexual harassment. Educating farm workers and doing community outreach has really paid off. People know we’ll listen.”

CRLA’s community workers have played a key role in this outreach effort, speaking regularly on Radio Campesina and Radio Bilingüe. In June, CRLA and Radio Bilingüe began extensive community outreach—including broadcasting a live community meeting on the topic—in response to a rash of recent reports of sexual harassment in Southern Fresno and Northern Tulare Counties.

For women farm workers, Beatriz’s story is legion.

“You’ve got the makings of a perfect storm for sexual harassment in the farm worker community,” says Michael. He ticks the ingredients off one by one. “You’ve got monolingual women who may not know their rights, who have families to raise, who may not be in the country legally or have family who are not here legally. You’ve got additional cultural issues with foremen who are immigrants themselves.”

“Plus two other factors. The hugeness of the environment provides the opportunity for harassment to occur without witnesses. And growers don’t want to weaken the foreman’s authority, so they don’t investigate. It’s not only wrong under the law, it’s morally wrong!”

Michael’s vehement speech is underscored by evidence gathered from EEOC interviews in California. In one notable instance, a farm worker described an existing horror as the *field de calzón* or “field of panties,” the name given to a company’s field by farm workers because so many women were raped there by their supervisors.



Michael Marsh, Project Director,  
Agricultural Worker Project at CRLA

In 1995 when the EEOC began to focus their efforts on sexual harassment and meet with farm workers and their advocates to gather information, they were told that hundreds, if not thousands of women had to have sex with supervisors to get or keep jobs and/or put up with a constant barrage of grabbing, touching, and propositions for sex by supervisors.

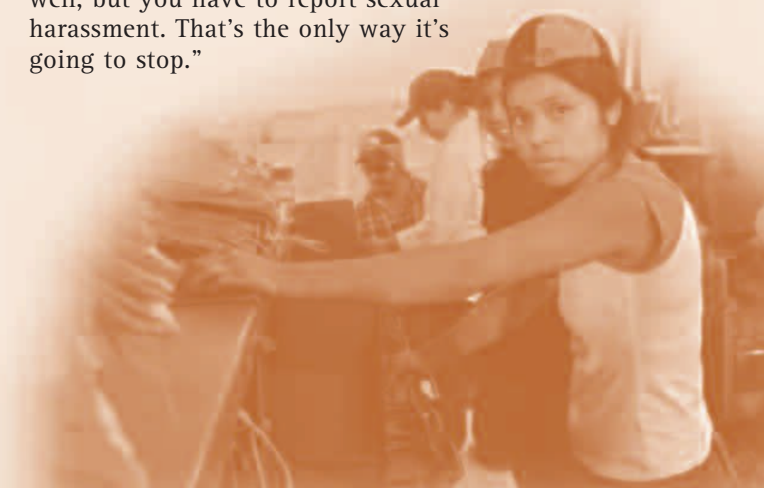
But Michael is quick to point out that CRLA and others are working to remedy the situation.

“For the first time in history,” says Michael, “a national conference [Transforming Hope into Power: The First National Conference to End Sexual Harassment Against Farmworker Women, June 4-5, 2007] was held in Atlanta, Georgia—birthplace of civil rights—to give voice to the workers.”

Out of the conference came a sexual harassment best practices manual, with chapters written by CRLA attorneys, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and others. CRLA staff, including Michael, Community Workers Jesus Lopez and Monica Chavez, and Mike Meuter, Director of Litigation, Advocacy, and Training also presented workshops at the conference.

“It was a chance for people from different backgrounds—immigrant activists, advocates against sexual and domestic violence, employment lawyers and EEOC representatives—to sit in a room together and share resources, to really do something historic,” says Michael, his words spilling forth with a sense of urgency. “I look at what we did and what we’re now doing as a huge first step toward ending the sexual harassment of women farm workers.”

“It’s hard,” says Beatriz. “I still don’t sleep very well, but you have to report sexual harassment. That’s the only way it’s going to stop.”





## CRLA'S WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORTERS



CRLA supporters, Dolores Leal and Tomás Olmos

“What I find most inspiring, is the fact that CRLA staff don’t sit back in an office and wait for clients to come to them,” says Tomás Olmos, a partner at Allred, Maroko & Goldberg in Los Angeles and a long-time supporter of CRLA. “They’re in the fields in the most desolate areas, helping the most oppressed, the most intimidated, the people living in intolerable conditions. They go to extremes to help individuals and inform them of their rights.

They’re out in the field where very few people are willing to go. It’s not an easy job, and it’s truly inspiring.”

“And CRLA lawyers are extremely talented individuals,” adds Dolores Leal, a partner at the same firm. “They’re very marketable individuals who could easily be earning a six-figure salary straight out of school, and yet they choose CRLA. They’re willing to do this work despite the fact that their peers are earning lots more money.”

These are some of the factors that have fueled Tomás’ and Dolores’ support for CRLA over the years. That and their personal histories.

“I come from a family of farm workers,” says Tomás. “So it was always my goal and purpose in going to law school to provide representation for farm workers. Growing up and seeing the hardships and the life they have and how they’re treated, I came to understand their struggles.”





Tomás' history with CRLA "goes way back." When he graduated from law school in 1972, he chose to work in CRLA's Delano office because that was the center of the struggle between the union and farm workers at the time. After four years, he left CRLA and moved to Los Angeles. But Tomás maintained his support for the organization, serving on the board and as board chair in the 1980s.

"I don't go way back," says Dolores, laughing. "I worked at the EEOC while I was going to school. When I saw what the attorneys there were doing, I wanted to do that—perhaps do it better. So I've been involved in public interest law since 1987."

"And I became involved with CRLA through Tomás. We've been together for 17 years, and although there weren't any farm workers in my immediate family, I had an aunt who lived with us for awhile who worked in the fields. I heard about her struggles day in and day out, so when I learned about CRLA, I wholeheartedly agreed that it was a very worthy organization."

Five years ago, when José Padilla approached Tomás and Dolores about broadening CRLA's support in the Los Angeles area, the couple offered up their home for a fundraiser. Now a yearly event, it's known as the Los Angeles Tardeada.

"It started as a little garden party," says Tomás. "We invited all of the CRLA alumni, those who'd worked as attorneys or law clerks, and we had food, drinks, and music. It was a very intimate event."

The event mushroomed. Last year the couple hosted over 200 people—a large number of legal professionals, corporate sponsors, entertainers, and artists—all united by their belief in CRLA's work.

"But it's still an intimate gathering," Tomás is quick to emphasize. "Unlike the typical fundraiser where you sit down and eat rubber chicken, people have the opportunity to talk to each other in our garden, listen to music, eat great food, and enjoy refreshments. There's a silent



*"I come from a family of farm workers," says Tomás. "So it was always my goal and purpose in going to law school to provide representation for farm workers. Growing up and seeing the hardships and the life they have and how they're treated, I came to understand their struggles."*

auction with art donated by distinguished Latino artists. And we've also been able to honor prominent individuals who've lent their names and support to CRLA."

The list of past honorees includes a diverse group of individuals: Dolores Huerta, Culture Clash, Antonio Villaraigosa, Angelica Huston, Ed Begley Jr., and Simón Silva. One of this year's honorees is Congressman Xavier Becerra.

Dolores and Tomás underwrite the event, and corporate sponsors supply additional donations for wine tasting and a tequila bar, so all of the proceeds go directly to CRLA. Last year's event raised about \$72,000.

In addition to this substantial annual contribution to CRLA, Tomás and Dolores go the extra mile by providing free training within their specialties for CRLA staff.

"People would be amazed at what CRLA is doing with the limited funds they have," says Tomás. "They're at the cutting edge on issues of health care, environment, housing, education, employment, harassment. Once you see how effective CRLA is, it's easy to jump on the bandwagon and lend your financial, moral, and any other kind of support that CRLA needs."

*CRLA would like to thank Tomás and Dolores for their many years of impassioned support!*



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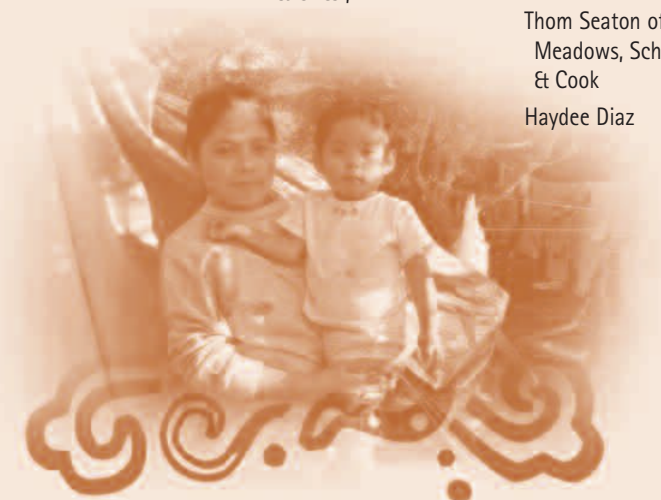
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\$39,500 towards Economic Development and Parent Education Training

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\$17,215 towards Stockton Attorney

**National Health Law Project**

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Schedule of support, revenue, expenses, and changes in net assets for legal services corporation funds  
For the year ended December 31, 2006

	LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION											Total Temporarily Restricted	Unrestricted	TOTAL	
	Basic	Migrant	Total	TIG	Property & Equipment	JOLTA	Equal Access	AAA Modesto	HUD FHIP	HUD RCAC	Other Grants			2006	2005
<b>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>															
Grant revenue	\$4,327,720	\$2,373,025	\$6,700,745	-	-	\$995,311	\$766,188	\$215,078	\$220,000	\$83,091	\$1,542,935	\$10,523,348	\$84,500	\$10,607,848	\$10,194,005
Attorneys fees and costs recovery	72,402	11,218	83,620	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	83,620	13,581	97,201	71,603
Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	100	744,823	744,923	788,532
Other Program Revenue	62,175	54,287	116,462	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	275	116,737	30,236	146,973	116,864
<b>Total revenue and support</b>	<b>4,462,297</b>	<b>2,438,530</b>	<b>6,900,827</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>995,311</b>	<b>766,188</b>	<b>215,178</b>	<b>220,000</b>	<b>83,091</b>	<b>1,543,210</b>	<b>10,723,805</b>	<b>873,140</b>	<b>11,596,945</b>	<b>11,171,004</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>															
Salaries and wages	2,525,875	1,333,242	3,859,114	-	-	432,306	580,035	184,630	148,349	34,771	857,855	6,097,060	118,507	6,215,567	5,930,325
Employee benefits	513,699	216,926	730,625	-	-	94,968	112,861	562	30,578	11,645	146,909	1,128,148	25,668	1,153,816	1,175,905
Payroll taxes	251,709	136,388	388,097	-	-	43,956	57,848	16,230	15,360	3,363	87,253	612,107	11,515	623,622	640,517
<b>Total personnel costs</b>	<b>3,291,280</b>	<b>1,686,556</b>	<b>4,977,836</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>571,230</b>	<b>750,744</b>	<b>201,422</b>	<b>194,287</b>	<b>49,779</b>	<b>1,092,017</b>	<b>7,837,315</b>	<b>155,690</b>	<b>7,993,055</b>	<b>7,746,747</b>
Space and occupancy	415,943	273,230	689,173	-	-	62,487	526	10,483	-	-	35,532	798,201	79,879	878,080	827,086
Contract Services	69,796	28,476	333,412	-	-	211,855	-	-	11,633	-	263,292	585,052	122,347	707,399	683,719
Travel and training	193,416	139,996	231,553	-	-	43,504	16,753	3,287	21,916	1,500	55,507	475,879	144,304	620,183	452,154
Telephone	88,757	67,184	207,979	-	-	18,996	4,630	3,369	-	27	18,076	201,039	5,123	206,162	248,350
Supplies and materials	143,254	88,299	155,941	-	-	25,692	473	2,539	-	272	34,510	295,039	118,846	413,885	368,746
Library	149,634	58,345	122,961	-	-	18,039	35	891	-	-	10,292	237,236	439	237,675	264,571
Depreciation Expense	-	-	98,272	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61,602	50,058	111,660	80,659
Equipment Rent and Related	81,400	41,561	78,718	-	-	11,596	180	1,476	-	-	6,433	142,646	4,655	147,301	134,853
Litigation Expenses	18,108	21,460	78,718	-	61,602	27,043	584	305	-	410	4,333	72,243	5,620	77,863	93,288
Insurance	47,348	31,370	\$43,916	-	-	7,822	-	1,094	-	-	-	87,634	-	87,634	96,321
Audit	25,758	17,172	\$42,930	-	-	3,720	-	-	-	-	-	46,650	-	46,650	44,150
Memberships	4,951	4,297	\$39,568	-	-	28,005	2,073	1,659	-	416	1,590	42,991	915	43,906	40,546
Other expenses	27,632	16,284	\$9,248	-	-	-	45	-	-	-	140	44,101	6,276	50,377	56,987
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>4,557,277</b>	<b>2,474,230</b>	<b>7,031,507</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>61,602</b>	<b>1,029,989</b>	<b>776,043</b>	<b>226,525</b>	<b>227,836</b>	<b>52,404</b>	<b>1,521,722</b>	<b>10,927,628</b>	<b>694,152</b>	<b>11,621,780</b>	<b>11,138,177</b>
Excess/(Deficit) of Support and Revenue Over/(Under) Expenses	(94,980)	(35,700)	(130,680)	-	(61,602)	(34,679)	(9,855)	(11,347)	(7,836)	30,687	21,488	(203,823)	178,988	(24,835)	32,827
Inter-fund transfers	(7,754)	(12,950)	(20,704)	-	20,704	-	-	11,347	-	-	(11,347)	-	-	-	-
<b>Change in net assets after inter-fund transfers</b>	<b>(102,734)</b>	<b>(48,650)</b>	<b>(151,384)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(40,898)</b>	<b>(34,678)</b>	<b>(9,855)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(7,836)</b>	<b>30,687</b>	<b>10,141</b>	<b>(203,823)</b>	<b>178,988</b>	<b>(24,835)</b>	<b>32,827</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>															
Beginning of year	143,112	110,354	253,466	181	182,863	28,408	(7,729)	-	(2,799)	-	(7,546)	446,844	806,467	1,253,311	1,220,484
End of year	\$40,378	\$61,704	\$102,082	\$181	\$141,965	\$6,270	(\$17,584)	-	(\$10,635)	\$30,687	\$2,595	\$243,021	\$985,455	1,228,476	\$1,253,311

### LSC Fund Balance Limit Calculation

2006 LSC Grants	6,700,745
10% of 2006 LSC Grants	670,075
12/31/06 LSC Fund Balances	244,228
Amount in excess of 10% limit	(425,847)

Plant Funds	492,270	474,010
Non-Plant Funds	736,206	779,301
Board Reserve	600,000	500,000
Non-Reserve, Non-Plant	136,206	279,301

## CALIFORNIA RURAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INC.

Statements of Financial Position  
December 31, 2006 and 2005

ASSETS	2006	2005	LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	2006	2005
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$975,015	\$1,876,233	Accounts payable	\$154,108	\$136,353
Accounts receivable	209,175	514,821	Accrued expenses	101,674	28,185
Pledges receivable	111,607	5,000	Accrued payroll	126,536	119,587
Prepaid expenses	232,929	280,168	Accrued vacation	311,053	317,644
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>1,528,726</b>	<b>2,676,222</b>	Deferred income	173,100	1,372,786
<b>NONCURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>866,471</b>	<b>1,974,555</b>
Pledges receivable	45,000	45,000	<b>NONCURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Less: pledges receivable NPV discount	(9,461)	(9,461)	Current trust deposits	217,619	492,879
<b>Net pledges receivable</b>	<b>35,539</b>	<b>35,539</b>	Current arbitration funds	25,000	25,000
Restricted Cash	25,000	25,000	Long-term debt	781,160	807,669
Deposits	35,141	38,564	<b>Total noncurrent liabilities</b>	<b>1,023,779</b>	<b>1,325,548</b>
Other assets	3,271	3,531	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,890,250</b>	<b>3,300,103</b>
Client trust funds	217,619	492,879	<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Total noncurrent assets</b>	<b>316,570</b>	<b>595,513</b>	Unrestricted	985,455	806,467
<b>PROPERTY &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>			Temporarily restricted	243,021	446,844
Land	309,240	309,240	<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>1,228,476</b>	<b>1,253,311</b>
Buildings	1,202,399	1,202,399	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; ASSETS</b>	<b>3,118,726</b>	<b>4,553,414</b>
Building improvements	579,145	483,109			
Leasehold improvements	67,081	81,475			
Office machines	435,252	571,696			
Furniture & fixtures	136,301	146,353			
Law library	391,111	391,111			
<b>Total property &amp; equipment</b>	<b>3,120,529</b>	<b>3,185,383</b>			
Less: accumulated depreciation	(1,847,099)	(1,903,704)			
<b>Net property &amp; equipment</b>	<b>1,273,430</b>	<b>1,281,679</b>			
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,118,726</b>	<b>\$4,553,414</b>			

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Photo by David Bacon

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