

Special Edition: THE 1994 ITF INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1994 ITF SUMMER PROGRAM

With sleeping bags in hand and excited smiles on their faces, the fifty-two 1994 Into the Fields (ITF) interns arrived for an intensive orientation at the Franklinton Center in Enfield, NC on May 28th.

Ranging in age from 18 to 52, hailing from schools in California, Texas, Idaho, Oregon, Colorado and North and South Carolina, and representing urban and rural Latino, African American, Asian American and white communities, the 1994 intern group surpassed SAF's diversity goals immediately. The students' motivations for applying to the program were equally varied; some wanted to see what farmworkers' lives were like in another part of the country (many of the students from farmworker families themselves mentioned this) and others simply wanted to avoid their usual summer jobs as retail cashiers and test out community service work.

Highlights of the orientation included a tour of a local black-owned small family

(See "ITF Highlights", page 4)



SAF interns, farmworkers and other supporters gathered outside the NC Department of Motor Vehicles in Raleigh on July 12th to protest the ongoing discrimination faced by farmworkers, immigrants and people of color at DMV offices statewide. The protest was organized by the NC Farmworkers' Project (NCFP), one of SAF's sponsoring organizations. Protest coordinators pictured (from L to R) are: NCFP Organizer Antonia Ventura, NCFP Director and SAF board member Victoria Martinez, and SAF intern Oglá Rojas.

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The SAF Mission:

To bring students and farmworkers together to learn about each other's lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change.

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Melinda Wiggins, Program Director
Debbie Rosenstein, ITF Project Coordinator (until 9/30)

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FROM THE GROUND UP

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Editor: Carolyn Corrie

As many of you may already know, I am leaving my position as Executive Director as of September 2, 1994. It was a difficult decision for me, but I feel that my goal of establishing an organization to help meet the needs of college students, farmworkers and community agencies has been achieved. I believe that my efforts over the past two years have helped SAF develop a firm base from which to expand and improve programs for the future. We celebrated our "official" second anniversary from the date we incorporated as a non-profit on August 20, 1992. It was a great feeling on August 20, 1994, to be able to sit down and read through evaluations from 52 interns who had worked at 29 organizations in North and South Carolina. It was also great to hear an intern introduce SAF at a conference this summer as "a group of college students from all over the U.S. working to improve conditions for farmworkers." Too often I describe us as a "non-profit" or a "Durham-based organization". It's important for me to remember that it's not the logo or the office or the letterhead that makes us who we are, but the *people*: farmworkers and interns in SAF t-shirts protesting discrimination outside the DMV office, interns acting in a play for audiences of migrant children and parents, interns and farmworkers learning to be pesticide safety trainers, sponsors helping interns improve their teaching techniques.

Where will SAF be two years from now? I am looking forward to seeing the many ways SAF will benefit from the infusion of energy and creativity from our new staff members. Margaret Horn, the new Executive Director, is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and UNC-Chapel Hill, and has prior experience directing the Appalachian Student Health Coalition in Tennessee. Melinda Wiggins, the new Program Director, will provide important continuity for the organization, since she participated in the SAF 1993 internship program and worked as the Special Projects Coordinator for SAF this summer. She attended Millsaps College as an undergraduate and Duke Divinity School. Melinda will replace Debbie Rosenstein, who unfortunately will also be leaving SAF at the end of September to move to Asheville, NC. A third new staff member is Juanita Chenault, a Public Ally placed at SAF for the year to coordinate the Intern Referral Service and Project LEVANTE. More about these folks in the next issue!

Once again, thank you all for your support over the past two and a half years. I have learned a great deal and have been enriched by meeting so many committed and interesting people who are involved with farmworkers, non-profits, and campus-based community service. Thank you for being a part of SAF.



