

FROM THE GROUND UP

a publication of STUDENT ACTION WITH FARMWORKERS

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SAF CELEBRATES TEN YEARS!

FOUNDING DIRECTOR CAROLYN CORRIE SPEAKS ON SAF'S ORIGINS

Interview by Connie Gates

I was an intern the first year the program was run by Duke's Center for Documentary Studies (1990). There were many incarnations of students from Duke University working with farmworkers. At that time, it was called the Center for Documentary Studies' Migrant Children's Education and Documentation Project. It was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Iris Tillman Hill was involved; Bob Coles was officially the head researcher; the staff person working on it at the Center was Lynn Wareh Fine, and the student coordinator was Luisa Tio. They got started in the fall of 1989 putting the program together and creating the spring house course and summer internships for 1990.

During the summer of 1990, we were planning to work in Migrant Education Programs, but since the summer school didn't start until July we got in touch with Tri-County Community Health Center, Farmworker Legal Services and St. Martin's Migrant Head Start Center to set up placements. I worked at Head Start and Legal Services; I had always been torn between education and law.

After the summer program, I went back to school. Sarah Carroll and I were coordinators for the second summer. While working at the office in the Center, I was filing some stuff related to the migrant project, and saw the [Department of Education] grant application. I started reading through it and realized that there was funding for someone to write a final report and resource manual to help students and administrators from other schools start similar programs with farmworkers. I became very attached to

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SAF: SOLIDARITY SINCE 1992

For ten years, Student Action with Farmworkers (SAF) has brought 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. SAF is the only non-profit organization specifically dedicated to linking young activists with organizations seeking justice for farmworkers.

SAF connects young people with the larger politically active community focused on changing the unjust agricultural system. Through training, internships, and networking opportunities with progressive farmworker organizations, SAF provides thousands of students the opportunity to become a vital part of the farmworker movement.

SAF's goals are to:

- ∞ Provide farmworkers with greater access to resources;
- ∞ Increase interaction, communication, and understanding among people of different backgrounds;
- ∞ Increase the involvement of farmworkers in leadership and decision-making roles within SAF and encourage such involvement within other organizations;
- ∞ Create internships and other projects that are mutually beneficial for students and farmworkers;
- ∞ Provide information on farmworker issues for students, faculty, organizations, and community groups;
- ∞ Provide students from farmworker families with educational and career opportunities;
- ∞ Link student groups working with farmworkers;
- ∞ Encourage student commitment to justice and social action.

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Into the Fields alumni at SAF's ten year anniversary celebration at California State University in Sacramento on November 9, 2002.

SAF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is 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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To receive SAF's weekly email Action Alerts, send an email with the word "subscribe" to <farmworkers-request@duke.edu>

From the Ground Up Editor:
Melinda Wiggins

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MEET THE SAF STAFF

SAF's Education Director **Ramiro Arceo** is originally from Colima, Mexico. He moved to the U.S. in September 1990 and worked in the fields with his parents. Ramiro was the first in his family to attend college; he went to Sacramento State University and completed his bachelor's degree from NC Central University in December of 2002. Ramiro was a SAF intern in 1996 and began working with SAF full-time in January 2000. Ramiro is a board officer of NC Lambda Youth Network and the NC Editorial Forum, and a founding member of the Asociación de Mexicanos en Carolina del Norte.

Esteban Echeverria is the 2002 SAF Apprentice. He worked with Chatham County Schools as a SAF intern during the summer of 1998. He is originally from Guerrero, Mexico but moved to Eastern North Carolina in the 1980s where he worked in the fields with his family. After Esteban graduated from Appalachian State University in 2001, he worked as a Fellow with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute placed with the National Council of La Raza. Among other things, Esteban coordinates SAF's College Days for migrant youth.

Laxmi Haynes is SAF's Sowing Seeds for Change Coordinator. Laxmi graduated from the University of NC-Chapel Hill in 2001. She has been working with SAF since participating as an Into the Fields summer intern in 2001. Laxmi is an environmental justice activist who was involved in numerous student groups at UNC. She currently represents SAF on the Agricultural Resources Center Pesticide Education Project. Laxmi coordinates SAF's national efforts linking students with farmworkers.

SAF Program Director **Libby Manly** grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. She has been working with SAF since 1997, when she graduated from Guilford College with majors in Gender and Religious Studies. Libby coordinates SAF's Into the Fields Internship & Leadership Development Program and regional campus organizing. Libby uses popular education and theater to train college students on farmworker issues and to co-direct SAF's traveling protest theater troupe. Libby works on various fair trade, lgbt, and social justice campaigns and is a sustainer at the Durham Food Co-op.

Luis Velasco is SAF's Documentary Coordinator. Luis is the son of farmworkers in CA. He worked with Granville County Migrant Education Program as a SAF intern during the summer of 1999. He began working with SAF as a consultant on our Folklife Documentary Project in 2001 and part-time during January of 2002. Luis is also the Darkroom Coordinator for the Center for Documentary Studies.

Melinda Wiggins, Executive Director of SAF, is the granddaughter of sharecroppers who grew up in a rural farming community in the Mississippi Delta. Melinda received a Masters of Theological Studies from Duke Divinity School in 1994. Melinda is a former SAF intern and SAF Program Director. Melinda coordinates SAF's finances, fundraising, and program development. Melinda is the chair of NC Community Shares and co-chair of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Advisory Panel. She was a participant in the 1999-2001 William C. Friday Wildacres Initiative Program.



From L to R:
Laxmi Haynes,
Luis Velasco,
Esteban Echeverria,
Libby Manly,
Ramiro Arceo,
Melinda Wiggins
Photo by Dan
Patridge, 2002.

SAF TIMELINE

- | | | | |
|-------|--|------|---|
| 1970s | Inspired by Dr. Robert Coles, Duke University students documented conditions in migrant labor camps that were used in a U.S. Civil Rights Commission hearing | | --SAF received the Fund for Southern Communities' Helen's Fund Award for its work with young people in the South |
| 1980s | Duke public policy professor Bruce Payne founded the Interns in Conscience project which sent students to Florida during summer breaks to work with farmworkers | 1999 | --SAF hired Genoveva Marín as the Education Director and Lori Fernald Khamala as the year-long Apprentice
--SAF published <i>Farmworker Folklife</i> and <i>Ni de Aquí/Ni de Allá, Not from Here/Not from There</i>
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by Frontier College Labourer-Teacher Program in Toronto, Canada |
| 1990 | The Center for Documentary Studies at Duke developed an internship program focused on migrant children | 2000 | --SAF hired Ramiro Arceo as the Education Director, Laura Podolsky as the Apprentice, and Public Ally Angeline Echeverria as the Levante Coordinator
--SAF created <i>Recollections of Home/Recuerdos de mi Tierra</i> documentary publication and traveling photography exhibit
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by St. Edward's University CAMP in Austin, Texas
--SAF was awarded the Helen's Fund Award by the Fund for Southern Communities |
| 1991 | Duke and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill students published <i>Migrant Summer</i> | 2001 | --SAF hired Alison Blaine as the Apprentice and Laxmi Haynes as the Program Assistant
--SAF published <i>Cultured Ground/Tierra Aculturada</i>
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by Chemeketa Community College CAMP in Salem, Oregon
--SAF initiated an Alumni Association to connect with and support Into the Fields alumni |
| 1992 | Carolyn Corrie incorporated Student Action with Farmworkers as a nonprofit organization | 2002 | --SAF hired Esteban Echeverria as the Apprentice and promoted Laxmi Haynes to Sowing Seeds for Change Coordinator
--SAF held our first Student Activist Leadership Training
--The University of Texas Press published <i>The Human Cost of Food: Farmworkers' Lives, Labor, and Advocacy</i> , co-edited by Melinda Wiggins
--SAF Into the Fields Program has record number of participants from farmworker families—18 of 29!
--SAF was selected to be featured in a pilot digital television production featuring social justice groups
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by Sacramento State CAMP
--SAF celebrates ten years as a nonprofit organization supporting improved working and living conditions for farmworkers! |
| 1993 | SAF hired Deborah Rosenstein as Project Coordinator | | |
| 1994 | --SAF hired Vanessa Davis and Melinda Wiggins as summer assistants. At the end of the summer SAF hired Melinda as Program Director and Margaret Horn as Executive Director
--SAF Levante Theater Group performed for first time
--Interns placed in SC for first time | | |
| 1995 | --SAF hired Chris Sims as the summer assistant
--SAF interns Alejandra Okie-Holt and Michael Seguin began fundraising to endow a scholarship for migrant students at NC State University
--SAF hired Public Ally Juanita Chenault to create our first national Internship Directory | | |
| 1996 | --SAF promoted Melinda Wiggins to Executive Director, hired Alejandra Okie-Holt as Program Director and Fred Ortmann as the summer assistant
--SAF coordinated its first national Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium co-sponsored by Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania
--SAF was awarded the first Peace Prize by the NC Peace Corps Association | | |
| 1997 | --SAF hired Ben Edwards as the summer assistant and Libby Manly as Project Levante Coordinator through Public Allies
--SAF published <i>Into the Fields: Mobilizing Students to Work with Farmworkers on Campuses and in Communities</i>
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by California State University-Fresno CAMP
--SAF was honored for its dedication and commitment to the nation's migrant farmworkers by the Migrant Health Branch of the Bureau of Primary Health Care | | |
| 1998 | --SAF promoted Libby Manly to Program Director and hired Kandra Strauss as its first Apprentice
--SAF called the first national Farmworker Awareness Week
--SAF created <i>Fields without Borders/Campos sin Fronteras</i> documentary publication and traveling photography exhibit
--SAF published <i>Living the American Dream: Economic Justice for Farmworkers</i>
--SAF Sowing Seeds for Change Symposium was co-sponsored by the University of Florida at Gainesville
--SAF awarded the first SAF-NCSU Migrant Scholarship to Marc Rodríguez | | |



For your free copy of SAF's ten year anniversary booklet chronicling its history, please contact Melinda at 919-660-3616.

Founding Director, continued from page 1

the idea of expanding this project. I felt I had put all this effort in creating this manual - explaining step-by-step how to set up an internship program for college students, how to do a class, all of that - and I really wanted people to use it.

Through my involvement with South East Initiative (SEI), a network of young people working on campuses and in nonprofits dedicated to volunteerism and activism, I realized that although there were literacy and spring break programs on other issues, there weren't any linking students with farmworkers on a national level. It was the same with long-term summer internships. I felt there was a need to get more college students aware of farmworker issues and involved in more significant ways.

In the final report to the Department of Education, I wrote my vision for creating Student Action with Farmworkers. Because I was part of SEI, I had this whole southeastern plan. We were going to have interns in 10 southern states. We were going to have 100 interns within 5 years—really thinking big.

But I was committed to going to South America. I was there from November of 1991 until April of 1992 and when I came back, I debated about what I wanted to do with my life. SAF sounded like a great idea, but we didn't have any funding. Could I really do this thing by myself? Fortunately, in May I found out that I received a Lynhurst Foundation Young Career prize — \$25,000 to do whatever you want!

Initially I thought we would stay part of Duke's Center for Documentary Studies. I started talking with the Duke development office about raising money to get this program going. I had considered incorporating as a separate nonprofit before, but thought it would be a lot of effort. When Duke turned down my first grant request, I thought it would serve us best to separate from the University. So we created a board and incorporated. The initial board members were two students from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Kathy Callahan and Kim Lawson, Professor Ted Parrish from NC Central University, Darnell Arnoult from the Center for

Documentary Studies, farmworker organization representatives Susan Brock, Pam DiStefano and Dave Thomas, farmworker and advocate Sharon Brown, and me. Our first grant was from the Cannon Foundation.

One of the really great things about SAF was that we were dedicated to getting different perspectives through students from different backgrounds and different schools. When it had been just Duke students, people tended to come from certain socioeconomic backgrounds and they had always expected to go to college. When we had people from some of the State schools and community colleges, they had really worked hard to get to college; they might even have been the first person in their family to go to school. That first summer when Benerisa, who came from a farmworker family, participated, the dynamic of us (the college students) and them (farmworkers) started to change. Now more than half the interns are from farmworker families, so now it's really 'us' - meaning both students and farmworkers.



Into the Fields alumni Maria Ruelas and Marivel Gomez with SAF Program Director Libby Manly at SAF's ten year anniversary celebration in Sacramento. Photo by Laxmi Haynes, 2002.



Folklorico Latino de Woodland performs at the Sacramento celebration. Photo by Laxmi Haynes, 2002.

SAF

STUDENT ACTION WITH FARMWORKERS

Start planning now for...

FARMWORKER AWARENESS WEEK

March 31-April 6,
2003
Nationwide



***Join in Solidarity with Farmworker
Advocates across the Nation!***

***Raise Awareness about
Farmworker Issues:***

- *On Your Campus*
- *In Your Community*

Contact SAF for materials, information and support!

farmworker_justice@yahoo.com • www.saf-unite.org • 919-660-3660 (p) • 919- 681-7600 (f)
1317 W. Pettigrew Street, Durham, NC 27705

Let us know what you're planning so we can publicize it over our listserv!

SAF is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization located in Durham, NC whose mission is to link students and farmworkers to learn about each other's lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change.

Find us at www.saf-unite.org

On Campus

hold a teach-in • write an article for your school's newspaper • speak in classes or at club meetings • hang posters and flyers on campus • organize a screening of videos *Harvest of Shame* or *H2 Worker* • organize a rally, march or protest • pressure school administrators to discontinue selling boycotted goods in cafeterias and in campus stores • organize a delegation of students to go to a labor camp and meet with farmworkers • support local farmworker agencies by volunteering or donating money • organize a panel of farmworkers to share their experiences

In the Community

give a presentation to a religious group or community organization • organize a teach-in • organize a march or rally • encourage churches to take up a collection for farmworker justice groups • write a letter about farmworkers to the editor of a local paper • organize a street theatre performance about farmworkers • encourage businesses to display information about farmworkers • organize a day of fasting and donate money that would have been spent on food to a local farmworker agency

Student Action with Farmworkers'

April 25-27, 2003
Durham, NC

Activist Leadership Training

Be one of 25 students to participate in SAF's **Activist Leadership Training** for community-campus partnerships throughout the country. At the two-day training you will receive an overview of farmworker demographics and agricultural issues, an update on farmworker campaigns and legislation, information on environmental issues affecting farmworkers, and networking opportunities.

You will discuss how to:

- **Initiate & sustain** the farmworker movement on your campus
- **Develop relationships** that respond to needs identified by farmworkers
- **Organize your campus** around farmworker issues
- **Recruit a diverse group** of students and faculty to maintain the movement
- **Encourage faculty** to incorporate farmworker issues into academic classes
- **Raise farmworker awareness** on your campus

For more information on participating:

Laxmi Haynes
farmworker_justice@yahoo.com
919-660-3660
www.saf-unite.org



SAF: Solidarity Since 1992, continued from page 1

Sowing Seeds for Change links students with farmworkers nationally. Through our annual SSC Symposium, SAF has brought nearly 800 student and community activists together to network and share ideas for how to support farmworkers. Through our annual Farmworker Awareness Week, Internship Directory, and training, SAF provides young people with materials, resources, and ongoing support to create student-labor alliances working toward farmworker justice.

Through the *From the Ground Up* program, SAF raises awareness of injustices in the agricultural industry. Through actions, presentations, publications and email alerts, SAF informs and mobilizes students and community members around current legislation, consumer boycotts, and other justice efforts. Our most recent publication published by the University of Texas Press, *The Human Cost of Food: Farmworkers' Lives, Labor, and Advocacy*, focuses on farmworkers in the southeastern U.S. and informs students and community members about how to become involved in the farmworker movement.

Project Levante develops the leadership of middle and high school migrant farmworker youth. SAF coordinates leadership retreats, tours of regional colleges and universities, youth empowerment, art, and college preparation workshops with migrant students in rural North Carolina. Through Project Levante, SAF has coordinated "College Days" for over 1,000 migrant youth, provided over 100 college student mentors for migrant youth, and developed 17 peer support clubs with migrant students in the North Carolina public schools.

SAF's *Into the Fields Summer Internship and Leadership Development Program* provides opportunities for 30 bilingual (Spanish/English) college students to support farmworkers as they address health and safety concerns, educational barriers, unfair immigration policies, and discrimination in the workplace. Since SAF's inception in 1992, over 300 interns have participated in the program; each year at least one-half of these interns are from farmworker families.

In addition to their field work, interns complete documentary projects or participate in the Levante Theater Group. Interns document farmworkers' cultural traditions through direct interviews, photographs, and creative writing. SAF utilizes interns' projects in publications and exhibits to raise awareness of immigrant and farmworker issues. The theater group uses drama to initiate dialogue among farmworkers about racism, language barriers and immigration issues. Performances have been held at labor camps, health fairs, festivals, and schools for over 4,000 individuals.

2002 Into the Fields interns break the piñata with others who attended SAF's ten year anniversary celebration in Durham, North Carolina on August 9, 2002. Photo by Chris Sims.

ALUMNI LISTSERVE

If you are a former Into the Fields intern who is not on SAF's alumni email listserve, please forward your email address to Laxmi Haynes at farmworker_justice@yahoo.com.

MISSING ALUMNI

Let us know how to get in touch with any of the following SAF alumni:

Heavin Bortz
 Peggy Bouldon
 Michelle Collins
 Nikki Finney
 Cheryl French
 Drew Harton
 Laura Hodgson
 Esmeralda Huizar
 Lupe Jaime
 Ann Lockhart
 Elva Leon
 Baede Minasse
 Dayna Moore
 Laura Neish
 Kate Rhodes
 Brady Rochford
 Marc Antonio Rodriguez
 Ricardo Rodriguez
 Alma Rojas
 Michael Seguin
 Eleni Tolma

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED WITH SAF

Into the Fields Summer Internship & Leadership Development Program

Support farmworkers in rural NC & SC by interning with a rural health clinic, union, legal aid, adult education, or migrant education program. Work full time for ten weeks, June 1 - August 10, 2003. Benefits: Airfare, furnished housing, \$1200 per diem, and \$1500 scholarship. To download application, go to www.saf-unite.org. Deadline: February 10, 2003.

Donate Frequent Flier Miles

Help SAF fly students from farmworker families to the Carolinas to participate in the Into the Fields Program. If you have 25,000 miles on a major airline or a travel voucher that you would like to donate to SAF, please contact Libby at levante@duke.edu or 919-660-3674.

Spring College Days

Are you a migrant student in middle or high school in NC who is interested in attending college? If so, please contact Esteban at 919-660-3652 to learn about SAF's College Days.

February 7 NC Central University
February 21 Fayetteville Tech
March 21 James Sprunt Community College
April 18 Pitt Community College

Farmworker Awareness Week March 31 - April 6, 2003

Join in solidarity with farmworker advocates across the country to raise awareness about farmworker issues on your campus and in your community. Contact Laxmi at farmworker_justice@yahoo.com, 919-660-3660 to request a FAW information packet.

SAF Student Activist Leadership Training April 25-27, 2003

Be one of 25 students to participate in this two day training in NC. Learn about farmworker demographics and agricultural issues, farmworker campaigns and legislation, and networking opportunities. Discuss how to initiate and sustain the farmworker movement on your campus and develop relationships that respond to issues identified by farmworkers. For more information, contact Laxmi at farmworker_justice@yahoo.com, 919-660-3660.

Host a House Party

Educate your friends and colleagues about farmworker issues! Help SAF to spread the word about SAF's mission and gain new supporters. Hosting a small fundraiser in your home is an easy way to support SAF. Contact Melinda at mwiggins@duke.edu or 919-660-3616.

Workplace Giving

Do you work for a corporation or non-profit that has a NC Community Shares workplace giving campaign? If so please designate SAF as your donor recipient. If not, please contact Melinda at 919-660-3616 or mwiggins@duke.edu to talk about how to set up a campaign in your workplace.

A Member of:



THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING SAF DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS

Adele M. Thomas Trust
Best Buy Children's Foundation
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Duke Center for Documentary Studies
Durham Merchants Association Charitable Foundation
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Emma Trust of the Triangle Community Foundation
Funding Exchange
Fund for Southern Communities
Greensboro Justice Fund
Harvest of Hope Foundation
Julia Elsee Trust
Kate B. Reynolds Foundation
Kathleen Price Bryan Family Fund
Lyric Foundation
Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
Melvin R. Lane Charitable Trust
National Community Service Trust
National Migrant Health Program
NC Arts Council
NC Community Shares
NC Humanities Council
NC Migrant Education Program
Presbyterian Hunger Program
Presbyterian Women Creative Ministries Offering
Public Allies
SC Humanities Commission
Sisters of Charity Foundation
Southern Partners Fund
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

ATTENTION ALUMNI

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has awarded SAF a challenge grant to match donations from Into the Fields alumni during our tenth year. If you have not made a contribution in honor of our anniversary, please do so by the spring of 2003.

SAF

STUDENT ACTION WITH FARMWORKERS
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