

FROM THE GROUND UP

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SUMMER 2004

Focus on Farmworker Awareness Week

SAF

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About Farmworker Awareness Week

Farmworker Awareness Week (FAW) is a nation-wide week of action for students and community members to raise awareness about farmworker issues within their local communities. Students across the country participate by planning events such as teach-ins, rallies, marches, and film screenings. Through these events, students inform individuals on their campuses and local communities about the injustices farmworkers face and provide information about ways to support farmworkers in their struggle for justice. FAW is scheduled each year during the week of Cesar Chavez's birthday, March 31st, to honor his legacy as a leader of the farmworker movement.

This spring's Farmworker Awareness Week was a huge success. **More than 500 students and community members around the country spread the word about farmworker issues and learned about farmworkers in their communities.** Individual reports from participating groups around the US can be found below.

Take part in next year's action by organizing farmworker activities in your area. Or commit to raising awareness about farmworkers throughout the year! Farmworker Awareness Week information and organizing materials can be found online year-round at <http://www.saf-unite.org>. Contact SAF's National Student Organizer, Laxmi Haynes, at (919) 660-3660 for more information.



Duke student Lyndsey Beutin addresses the crowd at a Farmworker Awareness Week Teach-in at Duke University in April. *Photo by: Laxmi Haynes*

FAW 2004 Campus and Community Reports

Cornell University, NY

Members of the Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition helped organize the first *NE Regional Students for a Global Conscience Conference* and incorporated farmworker issues into the weekend agenda. SAF was invited to present 2 workshops on farmworker issues. The Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition also planned events for their own Farmworker Advocacy Week, April 26-30th. Please refer to the "Cornell's Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition..." article on p. 2 for more information.

California State University-Long Beach

Members of the United Migrant Student Association and College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) coordinated events including a Cesar Chavez March and evening program with SAF Internship Coordinator Nadeen Bir. Over one hundred people participated in this action.

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Check out SAF's new Internship Directory
Get updates on farmworker boycotts and
SAF events

www.saf-unite.org

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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Action Alerts

Send an email with the word "subscribe" to <farmworkers-request@duke.edu> to receive SAF's weekly Action Alerts about legislation affecting farmworkers, organizing campaigns, campus events, and job opportunities.

For more information or to submit articles, contact:

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Cornell's Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition Celebrates First Ever Farmworker Advocacy Week

By Pilar McKay and Justin Finch

During the week of April 26 to 29, 2004, students at Cornell University participated in their first ever Farmworker Advocacy Week. The week of action was a result of student activist Alex Chan's project for the service learning course entitled "Farmworkers," and was planned by members of the Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition of Cornell (FWAC).

Students attended four events, including documentary screenings and panel discussions. "Cesar Chavez Day at Cornell" was the week's first event in which students commemorated the achievements of the United Farm Workers' co-founder. The film, "The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Struggle" was shown to introduce students to the activist's life and triumphs.

Events on the second day included "Current U.S. Immigration Debate: Introduction to Opposing Views," a panel discussion featuring Professor of the Political Economy of Mexico Maria Cook, Professor of Human Resource Economics and Public Policy Vernon Briggs, and Director of Labor Education Research Kate Bronfenbrenner. The debate centered on the permeability of American borders, legalizing undocumented immigrants, and the pros and cons of organizing undocumented immigrants into unions.

On Thursday, five farmworkers told Cornell students about the state's working and living conditions. The event, "Working in our Backyards," educated students about the workers who toil in our fields and their desire for the deserved respect and the pay to reflect their hard work.

The last event was a screening of the 1960 documentary "Harvest of Shame" narrated by Edward R. Murrow. This landmark film closed the week with a glimpse into the not-so-distant past.

The purpose of the week was to introduce students to the basics of farmworker issues. And as we celebrate our second year as a campus organization, we hope this week's success will be the start of many more.

The 70 member Farmworkers Advocacy Coalition of Cornell (FWAC) was formed to bring attention to the thousands of farmworkers in our immediate community as well as throughout the nation and world. We focus on educating the Cornell and Ithaca community about the historic and present conditions of farmworkers. FWAC actively works with several organizations to highlight the plight of farmworkers and to promote improvement in their situation. FWAC President Pilar McKay can be reached at pem23@cornell.edu.

Excerpts from FAW Speech at CSU-LB

By Nadeen Bir, March 30, 2004

"...SAF and I do this work to make students and the community think about where their food comes from and to realize that there is a hidden population of people who picked that produce. We want to help expose the reality of what is going on in the fields and bring a voice to the farmworker community. We work with students because we believe that students have so much power in bringing about positive social change. Cesar Chavez said 'Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and be free.

One day, I heard a presentation on my campus about farmworker issues in the US. To my surprise, I learned that people were still actually working in the fields, and I learned that farm work is the second most dangerous occupation in the US. The most shocking thing I learned was that modern day slavery conditions exist for farmworkers...The reality hit me and it hit me hard...I was affected, and it changed my life...I realized that I hadn't been questioning things enough, that there were injustices happening in my own backyard. And as I reflected on it, I kept coming back to the same question: I kept thinking about 3 words...

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Campus Reports continued

Duke University, NC

On April 1, over 50 students and professors attended a panel discussion on Duke's Chapel Quad sponsored by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), Duke Students Against Sweatshops (DSAS) and SAF. Panelists addressed the ongoing boycott of Mount Olive Pickle Co., which has been the subject of intense discussion at Duke for the last several years. Members of DSAS and Duke faculty members worked with SAF, NC Legal Aid, the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) and FLOC to inform students about the farmworker justice movement, labor rights, boycotts, and student activism.

Guilford College, NC

A group of four students, a dean and a faculty member persuaded campus dining services to pull Six L's tomatoes from the cafeteria's salad bar. The cafeteria agreed to honor the Taco Bell boycott by not accepting any Six L's products in the weekly shipments of vegetables they receive. A Peace and Conflict Studies Committee at the school plans to follow up with the cafeteria, and a group is forming to explore other issues of ethical procurement in the college's purchasing practices. According to one student, "The action was a complete success and a lot easier than we ever imagined it could be!"

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Aylwin Lo, former Frontier College Labourer-Teacher posted SAF's Farmworker Awareness Week flyer and some of her own research outside her office cubicle to inform her coworkers about farmworker issues.

St. Edwards University, TX

On March 28, 200 people from several community and student organizations from St. Edward's and University of Texas-Austin marched on Cesar Chavez St. from east Austin to the AFL-CIO offices. Local political figures and community leaders spoke about Cesar Chavez and the importance of his message today. On March 30th, the Hispanic Student Association, CAMP and ENLACE showed two documentary films to 60 people on the lives of two St. Edward's migrant students and spoke about the current boycotts on Mt. Olive and Taco Bell.

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

On March 29, SAF, CHisPA, and SURGE sponsored a screening of a film about the Coalition of Immokalee Worker's (CIW) 2003 Taco Bell Truth Tour and hunger strike. The following day SURGE sponsored a "NAFTA at Ten Years" panel. On the 31st, CHisPA, SURGE, SAF, and FLOC sponsored a Farmworker Awareness Panel. Speakers included SAF National Student Organizer Laxmi Haynes, former SAF intern and UNC-CH student Laura Johnson, and FLOC National Boycott Organizer Nick Wood.



UT Pan Am students and local community members march in memory of Cesar Chavez in 2003.

University of Texas- Pan American

The Association of Migrant Students organized and attended several events during FAW, including a Cesar Chavez march organized by the UFW. Events also included guest speaker and elementary school principal Mrs. Carolina Desiga, who talked about education and her migrant background, a screening of the video "New Harvest, Old Shame", and guest speaker Ms. Hortencia Armendariz, UFW representative, who spoke about the AgJOBS bill.

Warren Wilson College, NC

On Cesar Chavez's birthday, a geography professor and a group of students distributed a birthday cake and information about farmworkers in North Carolina, farmworker-called boycotts, workers' rights, and Cesar Chavez. That evening students held a presentation about the labor movement in the US (including farmworkers) as part of events for National Student Labor Week of Action, which is co-sponsored by SAF.

West Hills College, CA

SAF alumnus Salvador Alvarez conducted a presentation to 30 lettuce pickers about the importance of unions and how they are allies to workers. He spoke specifically about the UFW and distributed SAF information and publications.

Help Florida tomato pickers: Take action against Taco Bell!

News Alert:

June 16th- 51 UCLA students end 8 day hunger strike to get Taco Bell off of their campus. They joined students from Notre Dame, Portland State, Central Michigan University, University of Florida, Grand Valley State, and Eckerd College who all took part in hunger strikes against Taco Bell this spring.

June 19th- CIW rejects an unsolicited \$100,000 check from Yum! Brands, saying the public relations effort "totally avoids the core issue of socially responsible purchasing policies."

The CIW wants Taco Bell to:

Convene a meaningful, three-part dialogue to discuss solutions to the problems farmworkers face in Florida's fields, contribute to an immediate increase in farmworker wages through a raise in the per pound rate Taco Bell pays for tomatoes from its Florida suppliers, and join with CIW and tomato industry representatives in drafting strict wage and working condition standards.

In Florida, tomato workers must pick and haul two tons of tomatoes to make \$50 dollars a day.

Taco Bell's sales totaled nearly \$5.2 billion in 2001.

Call to Action:

Kick Taco Bell off your campus. If there is a Taco Bell on your campus, contact the Student Farmworker Alliance for details on organizing a campaign to **Boot the Bell** (sfw_alliance@hotmail.com) or visit their website at www.sfalliance.org

If there is not a Taco Bell on your campus, pass out flyers or organize regular demonstrations in front of a Taco Bell in your community. You can download flyers from SAF's website: www.saf-unite.org

Organize a "call-in" to Taco Bell head-quarters (1-800-TACO BELL) to demand dialogue, or start a letter writing campaign. See www.ciw-online.org for a sample letter.

Spread the word: write an editorial for your school and community newspaper about the boycott.

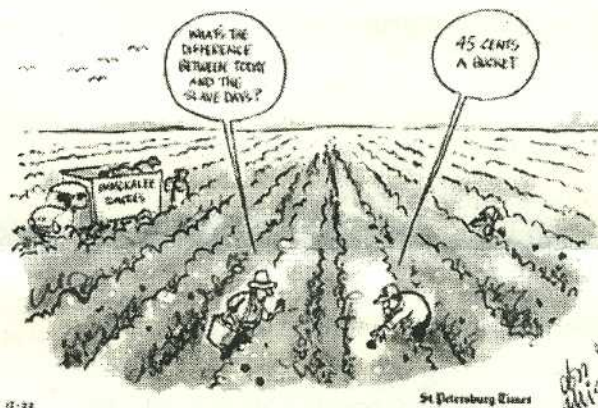
Send an email to Yum! Brands CEO and Taco Bell through the Oxfam America website: <http://ga0.org/campaign/ciw>

Sample Flyer from Farmworker Awareness Week 2004. This and other samples are available at our website: www.saf-unite.org



SAF interns protest outside of a Taco Bell restaurant this June. Photo by: Laxmi Haynes

Who Picks your Food? Who are Farmworkers?



- There are 2-3 million farmworkers in the U.S.
- 85% of the produce we consume is hand-picked by farmworkers
- Farm work is the second most dangerous occupation in the U.S.
- About 93% of farmworkers are **People of Color**
- Of every \$1 you spend on food, 71 cents goes to corporate food processors, 23 cents goes to farmers, and **only 6 cents goes to farmworkers**
- **Over 3/5 of farmworkers are poor**, 75% earn less than \$10,000 annually
- Farmworkers support a **multi-billion dollar industry** but do **not earn a livable wage**
- Increasing farmworkers' wages by 50% would cost you **less than \$5 per year** for fresh fruits and vegetables.

NATIONAL FARMWORKER AWARENESS WEEK
MARCH 29-APRIL 4, 2004
WWW.SAF-UNITE.ORG

Into the Fields Update

ITF Class of 2004

| Name/University | Organization |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Central North Carolina | |
| Elida Molina (Univ. of South Florida) | Rockingham County Migrant Education |
| Margaret Rife (UNC-CH) | Rockingham County Migrant Education |
| Amanda Marshall (USC-Columbia) | NC Rural Communities Assistance Project |
| Gabriela Rodriguez (CSU Fresno) | El Vinculo Hispano/Hispanic Liaison |
| Jessica Ramirez (CSU Sacramento) | Legal Aid of NC |
| Esmeralda Santos (CSU Fresno) | Immigrants Legal Assistance Project |
| Lyndsey Beutin (Duke) | Wake County Health & Human Services |
| Jose Gomez (Barry University) | Wake County Health & Human Services |
| Marya Millard (Guilford) | National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) |
| Natalie Lamela (Duke) | Agricultural Resources Center (ARC) |
| Serene Myers (UNC-CH) | Rural Advancement Foundation Int. (RAFI) |
| Joseph Lee (Duke) | Piedmont Health |
| Joel Gongora (U of Idaho) | Piedmont Health |
| Eastern North Carolina | |
| Luis Garcia (CSU Bakersfield) | Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (EFM) |
| Ann Warshaw (UNC-CH) | Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (EFM) |
| Francisco Heredia (Arizona State) | Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) |
| Alberto Pasillas (St. Edwards) | Tri-County Community Health Center |
| Maria de Jesus Negrete (CSU MB) | United Food & Commercial Workers |
| Jonathon Valencia (CSU Long Beach) | United Food & Commercial Workers |
| Miguel Blancas (Central Washington) | Greene County Health Care |
| Michael Hachey (UNC-CH) | Greene County Health Care |
| Alejandra Perez (CSU Sacramento) | Casa y Campo, WFU School of Medicine |
| Remedios Martinez (CSU Bakersfield) | Casa y Campo, WFU School of Medicine |
| Morgan Jones (Furman) | Carolina Family Health |
| Carla Martinez (Metropolitan State) | Carolina Family Health |
| Western North Carolina | |
| Maria Christina Gomez (Barry) | Telamon Corporation |
| South Carolina | |
| Elaine Cray (College of Charleston) | SC Migrant Health Program |
| Steven Lownes (USC-Columbia) | SC Migrant Health Program |

The Into the Fields Program

The Into the Fields (ITF) Internship and Leadership Development Program creates opportunities for 30 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 370 Into the Fields alumni have spent their summers working with over 70,000 farmworkers and their families to improve farm labor conditions.

Each year at least one-half of these interns are from farmworker families.

-continued from page 2

The American Dream. I had to ask myself: Are we really ALL living the American Dream?

Farmworkers are organizing for justice and need students and other diverse groups of people supporting their efforts and advocating on their behalf... The farmworker movement affects everyone...

You students must get involved, you have to get the religious community involved, you have to get your college campus involved, you have to go beyond just your group of people...and most importantly, you have to get farmworkers involved, you have to talk to the community and find out what their needs are and give them the power to decide how they want things done.

This movement needs migrant students to make these changes happen. I believe you are the future Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huertas of the movement. I encourage you to remember where you came from and who your community is, learn your lessons, thank those that help you get where you are.

Cesar Chavez said, 'We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community...our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.'

2004 Levante Theater Interns pose with "Big Papa." From left: Joel Gongora, Alberto Pasillas, Morgan Jones, Esmeralda Santos, Luis García (inside puppet), Jonathan Valencia, Francisco Heredia, and Jose Gomez. The Levante interns will be performing the play *Gigantes en los Campos* at migrant labor camps this summer. *Photo by: Nadeen Bir*



**Thanks to the following organizations
for their support of SAF:**

Center for Documentary Studies
Church Women United in N.C.
Duke Chapel Fund
La Maraka
Hispanics in Philanthropy
Lyric Foundation
Migrant Health Program/BPHCA
National HEP/CAMP Association
NC Community Shares
NC Community Health Center Assc.
NC Migrant Education Program
New Garden Friends School
Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist Church
Open Philanthropy Foundation
Presbyterian Hunger Foundation
Pullen Memorial Baptist Church
Racial Justice Collaborative
Sisters of Charity Foundation
Southern Partners Fund
Sprint Systems of Photography
Triangle Community Foundation
Wake Forest School of Medicine/NIEHS
Whole Foods of Durham
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

Upcoming Events

July 16 SAF-Peace LEAP Joint Fundraiser and Dessert Party,
Center for Documentary Studies, Durham, NC
Aug 3-6 ITF Final Retreat, Salter Path, NC
Sept 11-12 La Fiesta Del Pueblo, NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, NC
see www.elpueblo.org for details.
Sept 17 College Day NC Central University, Durham, NC
Oct 7 College Day at Guilford College, Greensboro, NC
Oct 21-23 East Coast Migrant Stream Forum, St. Petersburg, FL
Nov 15-18 AFOP Conference, San Francisco, CA
Nov 19 College Day Appalachian State University Boone
Dec 10-12 Southern Human Rights Organizers' Conf. Memphis, TN

Announcements:

**SAF now has an Online Internship Directory! Check it out at
www.saf-unite.org**

SAF Receives SC Sisters of Charity Award.

This April, SAF was awarded a Promising Practices Award by the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina for our work addressing health needs of SC farmworkers.

SAF Receives NC Justice and Community Development Center Award

In October, SAF received a Defenders of Justice Award for "innovative bridge building and organizing work, in its effort to improve conditions for farmworkers."

**Thank-you SAF
Supporters:**

Alan and Yvonne Palmer
Alice Ratliff & Michael Calhoun
Alicia Doran
Amy Eagles
Angelo & Rosalie DeVito
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Rose Mary & Antonio Marin
Sabrina Simon
Sheila Payne & Paul Ortiz
Stephenie Drerup
Suchi Ayala
Susan & Thomas Carson
Susan Kauffman
William David Austin
Zoe Kelly
& many more anonymous
individuals!

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