Farmworkers’ access to healthcare is a huge challenge. Because of their poverty wages, they are often unable to afford insurance, basic health costs, or even transportation to free clinics.

Through SAF’s health fellowship program Dida, Charles and Amanda reached hundreds of farmworkers during the agricultural season, by enrolling them in their clinics, transporting them to doctors appointments, interpreting for them during doctors visits, conducting health assessments and educating them about health issues including HIV/STI prevention, pesticides and heat illness. Fellows completed documentary projects, interviewing and photographing farmworkers’ experiences. They also organized a small group of workers to get educated and take action around a health issue of their choice.

Amanda Ross
Guilford College
Good Samaratan Clinic
Morganton, NC

"The US agricultural system, and economy in general, benefits from the labor of immigrant workers. The government has a responsibility to look after the rights of workers in this country, regardless of their country of origin. I think that encompasses having a safe work environment, just compensation for a day’s work, and the right to basic services like health care and education."

Charles Webster
Appalachian State University
Appalachian Regional Health
Boone, NC

"...I spoke to a fifty-seven year old farmworker named Guillermo Macias. He has been doing farm work in the U.S for over thirty years of his life. He informed me that cucumbers were the toughest crop he had ever worked, followed closely by tobacco. He told me of the danger of 110-degree days. Of seeing new workers convulse and pass out due to heat. He told of not being paid, because of his undocumented status. Guillermo presents to me the reality of our current agricultural system. A system in which hard working people gain little to nothing, have little to no power, and suffer physically and mentally due to their work. Guillermo, fifty-seven years old, symbolizes the decades of abuse and neglect that remain unmitigated."

Darine “Dida” El-Sourady
UNC-Chapel Hill
Piedmont Health Services
Moncure, NC

“I conducted outreach to a camp with 26 workers and talked to the grower about a month later about one of the workers who had a hand injury on the job. This worker had crushed 2 of his fingers in a tractor and has not been able to work since. I spoke with the grower to see if he could take the worker to physical therapy 3 times a week and he said that he didn’t have time. I ended up taking the worker a total of 8 times to the physical therapist because the grower was uncooperative. The more I was at the camp, the more workers started talking to me about pains in their chest or their knees or molar pains that were keeping them awake at night. So I began visiting the camp more and more to take other workers to the clinic.”

Thank You Funders!
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs ◆ Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation ◆ Environmental Protection Agency ◆ North Carolina Community Aids Fund ◆ North Carolina Farmworker Health Program

Contact: Laxmi Haynes, farmworker_justice@yahoo.com or Rosalva Soto, rosalva.soto@duke.edu. WWW.SAF-UNITE.ORG