

Migrant farmworkers are the poorest of America's working poor.

The people who harvest the fruits and vegetables for our daily sustenance survive under unimaginably difficult conditions. They earn the least amount of money working the hardest jobs with the worst living conditions of any group in this country. They follow the harvest, living in dilapidated housing, or sometimes in their cars, tents, or in the fields. Their children attend several schools each year and are frequently taken out of school to work in the fields, so the family will make enough money to survive. There are no luxuries, only a struggle to maintain the basic necessities of life.

Migrant farmworkers are exposed daily to a variety of indignities. They must confront employers who pay below-minimum wages, who deduct Social Security payments -- but then don't send them on to the government, or who charge workers so much for housing that the workers are in debt to the company. These employers trust that the workers don't understand the system well enough to report them.

The infant mortality rate for migrant workers is 25% higher than the national average. Other statistics for farmworkers are worse than those in many third-world countries. And the conditions that migrant workers face do not seem to improve, due in no small part to the incredibly low wages they earn. In this period of continuing economic distress for low income workers, farmworker families are suffering more than ever.

You Can Make A Difference For Migrant Families

The Migrant Legal Action Program (MLAP), in its 46th year, works nationwide to help these hard-working men, women, and children. We strongly advocate on their behalf, provide legal technical assistance and support to an extensive network of local farmworker groups and service providers, conduct legal training, and track legislation in Congress for how it will help or hurt migrant workers.

Because migrant farmworkers are a relatively small, hidden, and politically powerless population, advocacy for them and their families is critically needed.

In 1996, due to Congressional action, along with all the other national support centers, MLAP lost its Legal Services Corporation funding, a large part of our annual income. Though we have diversified our funding since then, our budget is still very limited. In spite of the challenges, we are working hard to maintain at least the same level of charitable contributions as in prior years, in the face of a sharp increase in demand for our services.

Your support is crucial at this time for us to carry out our work.

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MIGRANT LEGAL ACTION PROGRAM

A Better Future for
Farmworkers and
their Families

We are their voice



We provide a voice for farmworkers in these difficult times

These are very difficult times for migrant farmworkers and their families. Fear abounds in the community. For those who are immigrants, enforcement is increasing and threatening to break up families. Many are reluctant to go to the grocery store, let alone enroll their children in school. Farmworkers are facing vicious remarks and hostile actions, in spite of the contributions farmworkers make to the local and national economy.

People are seeing cuts in government services and the possibility of draconian reductions to domestic programs. Stress-related illnesses are being reported at record levels in community and migrant health clinics. Children are showing signs of anxiety at school.

Proposals to bring in more foreign agricultural guestworkers could deprive U.S.-based workers of jobs that are the only source

of income for many families. Children and youth who are protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program face the end of that protection in a few short months. And there are proposals on Capitol Hill to end family sponsored immigration which currently brings into the U.S. family members of citizens and Legal Permanent Residents.

MLAP provides a voice for those who are too fearful to speak for themselves. We advocate on Capitol Hill, before administrative agencies, and we train local advocates to provide guidance to the community and to speak up at the local level.

Grassroots advocates are contacting MLAP in record numbers and our networks are growing. Our work in the past year has focused greatly on engagement with and support of these grassroots service providers, shoring up their understanding

of the legal rights of the community in the fields of immigration, education, health services, anti-hunger, and civil rights.

We have been training local advocates regarding the significantly changed immigration policies of the new administration. These advocates are passing that information on directly to farmworkers. We were especially active during the short period of DACA renewals this fall. We have been focusing as well on access to education at the K-12 and post-secondary levels and continuing access to public benefit programs for eligible family members. We have been actively working on keeping children in school in districts where they have begun, illegally, to exclude them.

We know that every case we take, every bit of advocacy we pursue, provides a voice for those who toil in the fields and who bring the bounty of our country to our tables.



In recognition of the countless invitations you receive requesting your attendance at an event or dinner, we cordially invite you to commemorate the holiday season with our twenty-seventh annual Migrant Legal Action Program Uneventful Evening

We do not ask you to leave your home to listen to long speeches in a hotel ballroom. Instead, we ask you to turn your thoughts to the men, women, and children who themselves do not enjoy the comfort of a warm home and a healthy, secure environment, but who reap the harvest that fills your holiday tables. We ask you to remember the poorest of the working poor — migrant farmworkers... and their families.

27th Annual Uneventful Evening Honorary Committee

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