

NEWS



VIEWS

NFWM Celebrates 50th Anniversary of the Grape Strike with UFW

By Julie Taylor

On September 26th, I traveled with an NFWM delegation from Claremont to Delano, CA to celebrate with the United Farm Workers (UFW) the 50th anniversary of the first grape strike. Anniversaries remind us of our history. They convey our heritage and help to frame the legacy which we point to for inspiration, motivation and vision.



César Chávez & Chris Hartmire

and meals because they could not pay rent and had no money to buy food. Strikers and their families were threatened. Some were beaten. Children saw parents with bruises. Spouses shared worry over their loved ones. We heard from second generation family members who shared with us what it meant to them that their parents chose to make the sacrifice of participating in a strike.

These are the realities of the viciousness aimed at people who stood up for their rights. Leading the struggle were people like César Chávez, Delores Huerta and Larry Itliong who had brought together Latinos and Filipinos organizing in the San Joaquin Valley. Despite their hesitancy about each other, the groups decided to work together and the rally cry of "Huelga" or "Strike" rang loud and clear.

Some of the strikers are still with us. Some are not. During the event, we heard stories from strikers about the fear and uncertainty of what would happen, but we also heard the strong resolve they had to do the right thing, to seek justice. They told of sharing living space



Dolores Huerta at a strike in 1965



Chris Hartmire at the Anniversary Event

This anniversary helped to mark a moment in the beginning of what became a movement. The boycott would take the farm workers, advocates and the faith community around the country to do organizing, to tell the story, to raise awareness in a nation's consciousness. Tireless individuals, a number of whom were honored at the anniversary, were part of these efforts, including Rev. Chris Hartmire, the first director of NFWM, and Rev. Gene Boutilier, a former NFWM board member.

Arturo Rodriguez, current UFW President, after speaking about the impact of that first grape strike, then invited sharing from those representing current UFW campaigns, bringing the past into the present. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

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and More!

Meet NFWM's newest farm worker partner organization: Familias Unidas por la Justicia



Photo by Alexandria Jonas
Felix Garza NFWM
Past President

The Board of Directors of the National Farm Worker Ministry held their summer meeting at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington July 10th-11th. They learned first-hand from the farm workers of **Familias Unidas por la Justicia** (Families United for Justice, FUJ) about their labor dispute with Sakuma Bros. Farm in Washington, the boycott of Sakuma berries and of the company's major distributor and purchaser, Driscoll's and Häagen-Dazs strawberry ice cream, respectively.

Familias Unidas is an independent farm worker union with about 400 members, most of whom are indigenous people originally from southern Mexico. Many have worked for Sakuma Bros. for years. And for years these workers have suffered injustices such as wage theft, sub-standard housing and racial harassment.

On July 11, 2013, in the face of one more injustice, some brave workers stood up for what is right and walked out of the fields. After more than two years of broken agreements by the company, FUJ members have not backed down.



Photo by Alexandria Jonas
NFWM Board & friends at Sakuma Plant supporting FUJ

The NFWM Board meeting was held to coincide with the anniversary of the first strike and they joined Sakuma berry pickers, labor, community and student supporters for the "March for a Contract" on July 1, 2015.

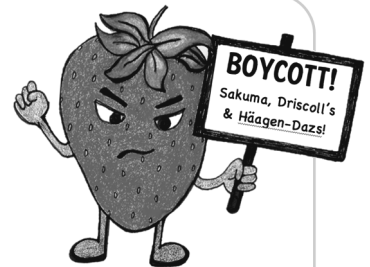
Having met with workers and heard their stories, we at NFWM are inspired by their courage and their resolve. NFWM endorsed FUJ's boycott and committed to the farm workers that we will support them until Sakuma Bros. recognizes FUJ as the representatives of the farm workers who work for them and negotiates a fair & binding contract.



"I never dreamed the National Farm Worker Ministry would support us or endorse our boycott. But, they were really enthusiastic and gave us a lot of hope. On behalf of the union, we're excited and give many thanks!"

~Ramon Torres, President, Familias Unidas por la Justicia (pictured in the center above with NFWM board & staff)

GET INVOLVED!



Here's what YOU can do:

BOYCOTT Sakuma berries, Driscoll's, & Häagen-Dazs strawberry ice cream until Sakuma Bros. recognizes FUJ and negotiates a fair & legally binding contract.

USE NFWM's STORE MANAGER LETTER

SIGN NFWM's POSTCARDS to Sakuma Bros., Driscoll's, & Häagen-Dazs and send one to FUJ so the farm workers know that they have your support.

SEND A LETTER FROM YOUR FAITH GROUP to Sakuma Bros. (Use NFWM's template letter)

SPREAD THE WORD

START a BOYCOTT COMMITTEE - in your city. Find out how at www.boycottsakumaberries.com

All of the action resources mentioned above, and more, can be downloaded at nfwm.org, under the Farm Workers drop-down tab. You can also contact the NFWM's national office.

The next NFWM board meeting will be held in January 2016 in Chevy Chase, Maryland

REYNOLDS TOBACCO: Now is the time to sign!

Reynolds American and the tobacco industry are making profits in the multi-millions of dollars. They have the ingenuity to create vapor cigarettes and the political power to continue increasing profits 50 years after the first US Surgeon General report on tobacco's dangers. So how is it that Reynolds and the big tobacco companies can't find a way to sign an agreement with farm workers to end the human rights abuses in the tobacco supply chain?

Two years ago the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to use the Dunlop Commission process as the mechanism to resolve problems affecting farm workers. This is the same Dunlop Commission utilized following the Campbell Soup and the Mt. Olive Pickle labor disputes and it has resulted in improved working and living conditions for many farm workers. It is a tested process that works.

After eight years of fighting to get Big Tobacco to do the right thing, we have one message to Reynolds American. **NOW IS THE TIME TO SIGN!**

This fall, we need you to help farm workers send that message to Reynolds American. We'll be launching a major letter-writing campaign in the next several weeks, so be on the look out for details about how you can participate. Be watching for our e-news, check our website at www.nfwm.org or contact the office: [919-807-8707](tel:919-807-8707) or nfwm@nfwm.org for details.



Photo by Alexandria Jonas

YOU DO NOT STAND ALONE! A message to FLOC Members from NFWM



FLOC Members in Washington DC (courtesy of FLOC)

On August 28, Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, NFWM's board representative for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) marched alongside members of the FLOC from the AFL-CIO headquarters to Reynolds American Inc. headquarters in Washington D.C to deliver a petition with 20,000 signatures of farm worker supporters.

The petition, initiated by the International Labor Rights Forum, to Thomas C. Wagner, Chairman of the Board of Reynolds American Inc. calls on Reynolds American to end human rights violations by signing an agreement that guarantees the farm workers in their supply chain the right to negotiate improved wages and work conditions. Rev. Dr. Stanley Rea spoke at the rally and passed along this powerful blessing to the members of FLOC.

Sharon's Blessing to Farm Workers: "As one born deep in the hollars and mountain hills of western North Carolina, who still has family there, who went to college there, who has worked and served in churches near Hickory and Fayetteville and Winston Salem, I personally am sad, and angry, and fired up about the injustices in tobacco fields of my home state!

....I want you to know that **YOU DO NOT STAND ALONE**, and that it is not me alone as a faith leader who stands with you either. Rather, I am here with a Church of the Brethren leader. But it's not only us, either! For **WE** are members in the **NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY!**"

...As you dare to confront the world's power of Reynolds Tobacco please know that walking with you are people of faith, from multiple denominations, who join as the National Farm Worker Ministry, to support your steps for justice! We have walked with farm workers in the past. We will walk with you **TODAY**. And we will continue to step, and step, and step again until the justice our God so desires is experienced by farm workers!



Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea speaking to FLOC

Did you know?

...that two thirds of NFWM's budget comes from individuals & church organizations? Your contribution helps NFWM make a positive impact for farm workers!



CIW Keeping the Heat on Wendy's

Wendy's still refuses to sign onto the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Fair Food Agreement. On September 28th, YAYA held a rousing action with the Student/Farmworker Alliance and more than 30 people at an Orlando Wendy's as part of the CIW's **Schooling Wendy's National Week of Action** (pictured above). They were "Schooling Wendy's" on the many ways Wendy's has failed to make the grade: dignified wages and working conditions, the prevention of violence and forced labor and respect for workers' voices.

Florida UMC Conference in Solidarity with the CIW

NFWM applauds the strong stand the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church has taken in support of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. At their June 2015 annual conference, delegates representing 670 churches passed the "Resolution in Support of the Human Rights of Florida Farmworkers." The resolution calls on Publix Supermarkets to uphold farmworkers' human rights by joining the Fair Food Program. The conference followed up by sending a letter urging Publix to enter into a dialogue with the CIW and offering to convene such a dialogue. Although Publix has yet to respond, we have confidence in the resolve of the Florida conference and Methodists around Florida to impact the company to do the right thing.



PCUN CELEBRATES 30 YEARS!

NFWM is proud to have been a sponsor of PCUN's 30th Anniversary celebration. Thank you to Gabriela Ríos, YAYA member, for representing NFWM at the September 17th event. It was standing room only, as folks ate, talked, & danced. Long time leader in the Oregon Farm Worker Ministry (now Farm Worker Ministry - Northwest) and former NFWM Board member, Rev. Ed Brandt was among those recognized. Paul Chavez was the keynote speaker.



Farm Worker Ministry Northwest Attends UFW's Darigold Rally

Representatives of the Farm Worker Ministry Northwest and YAYA stood in solidarity with the UFW and Darigold workers on September 2nd at a rally at Darigold headquarters in Seattle. Darigold is a farmer's cooperative made up of more than 500 dairies. Farm workers attempted to deliver a coffin holding petitions with 38,000 signatures calling on Darigold to meet with UFW representatives and workers to address ongoing issues of worker safety, wage theft, and gender and racial discrimination at member dairies. The petition-filled coffin symbolized dairy workers like Randy Vasquez, who drowned in a manure pond at a Darigold member dairy. Darigold refused to meet with farm workers and their supporters. Indira Trejo, of the UFW asked, **"Is it too much to ask for a simple dialogue to save farm worker's lives?"**



John Nichols of FWM-NW & Gabi Rios of YAYA

Many Thanks to Patricia Plantamura, part-time Pinellas Support Committee Organizer from Feb. 2014 until this August. Patricia continues her work on the City Council of Seminole City. Thanks also to Taylor Pfaff and Carson Putnam, Duke Divinity Ministerial Interns in 2014 & 2015, for the time they spent with NFWM. We appreciate each of their hard work and commitment to the farm workers! ¡Mil gracias!

...continued from page 1 "50th Anniversary of the Grape Strike"

and Paul Chávez shared memories about their fathers, who became friends in the farm worker movement, and spoke about the need to continue the struggle.



Arturo Rodriguez, Dolores Huerta & Paul Chávez

NFWM was a "Black Eagle" sponsor of the event. It was a privilege to be part of the NFWM delegation who attended: Gene, Chris, "Pudge" Hartmire, Suzanne Darweesh, NFWM board member and co-chair of the Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farmworkers (OCIC) and Barbara Johnson, member of OCIC. Former NFWM director, Virginia Nesmith and former California organizer Lucy Boutte assisted as volunteers for this event. It felt like a reunion to many and a reminder that NFWM continues to work as a conduit for the faith community to be involved with these and other campaigns led by our farm worker partners.

So many spoke to share memories and stories that captured the hope and determination of that time 50 years ago. It was inspiring and provided a window into the deep resolve strikers, marchers and boycotters had. The organizing and training continued throughout the years, so that today, we are part of the legacy left by those early leaders. Animated and true to her own passion for the work, Dolores Huerta offered her familiar encouragement and commitment, from then until now, reminding us "Si Se Puede!" YES WE CAN! NFWM carries that belief today, "Yes, we can and we will!"

Coming Up!

The Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farmworkers will host it's 50th annual Fall Fundraiser on Sunday, October 18. They'll honor Rev. Chris Hartmire. At the event, he'll be interviewed by Labor Activist and Community Organizer Fred Ross, Jr.

The Pinellas Support Committee will hold their annual Soup Supper to benefit farm workers and NFWM on Saturday, November 14.

Thanks to all the hard work of everyone in these groups. If you're in the local area, come on out and attend these great events! Contact NFWM for more details.

NFWM Supporting Organizations

NFWM depends on support from congregations and organizations. One way to do so is to become a Supporting Organization of NFWM.

That's a faith community with an active interest in supporting and advancing the work and resources of NFWM and commits to doing so by:

- Being advocates for farm workers and their causes consistent with the mission and priorities of NFWM
- Disseminating information about NFWM and promoting farm worker support efforts to members within your group in a timely manner
- Providing a yearly monetary donation (at a level determined by your group)

Will your congregation or organization consider becoming an NFWM Supporting Organization?

E-mail jtaylor@nfwm.org to find out how

Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice (IAIJ)



IAIJ demonstration at Ocala Publix

IAIJ, chaired by Richard MacMaster, is a network of local synagogues, mosques, churches, fellowships, student groups, community organizations and political and academic leaders. They joined together in July 2010 to study about, educate the community and work towards a just solution for our local and national immigration crisis **AND they are a Supporting Organization of the National Farm Worker Ministry.**

On Saturday, September 19, Sam Trickey NFWM Board & IAIJ member helped organize an event at the University of Florida called, "Immigration: Action Through Collaboration." YAYA Coordinator, Nico Gumbs was a panelist at one of the three sessions. Earlier this year IAIJ collected 43 signatures of North Florida clergy on a letter to Publix urging them to sign CIW's Fair Food Agreement.

Kudos to the IAIJ for your partnership with NFWM and your support of Farm Workers!

New Faith-Based Resources!

Several new resources were created this year by Duke Divinity Intern, Taylor Pfaff. Should you like to integrate these resources into your congregation, personal devotional life, or ministry context, please download and do so! These faith-based educational & worship resources have been added to our website under the "Resource Center" tab.

YAYAs in Action

The National Farm Worker Ministry has an amazing Youth & Young Adult Network (YAYA)!

Here's how young people have been supporting campaigns for farm worker justice



Central Florida Earth Day 2015

By Rosie Stump



YAYAs at Earth Day

where our produce comes from to ensure that the voices of farm workers did not get lost amongst conversations surrounding humane food.

On Saturday, April 25th YAYA members tabled at the 10th annual Central Florida Earth Day (2015) at Lake Eola. Over 1,000 community members attended this all vegan event intended to increase access to healthy and sustainable food decisions. YAYA shared information about

YAYAs attend CIW's 2015 Encuentro:

By Ileana Roque González

On September 10th, three YAYAs headed to Immokalee, FL to be part of the Student/Farmworker Alliance's 11th Encuentro. At this assembly, more than 80 students, young people, and other stakeholders gathered in solidarity with the Coalition of Immokalee Worker's fight for fair food.

The four day gathering was comprised of learning about SFA and the CIW, and how they partner together. The weekend was packed with skill-building workshops, strategy sessions, solidarity discussions, actions at Wendy's & Publix, and even a talent share. The last day



Photo by YAYA

YAYA supporting CIW!

was spent reflecting on the weekend and contemplating what kind of commitments each one of us would be engaging through the year. All in all, the weekend offered a grand opportunity to build relationships and connections and to expand SFA's work with the CIW.

YAYA Supports FLOC, Travels to NC

By Mercedes Sanchez

On Tuesday, May 6th, six YAYAs traveled to NC to support FLOC's annual march on Reynolds and attend Reynolds' shareholder meeting. Afterward, the YAYAs met with FLOC staff and President Velasquez to debrief the event. We asked, "How can one corporation be so indifferent about the way these workers are treated in their supply chain?"

With all their revenue it seems counter-intuitive to go against the grain and not sign an agreement with FLOC." The group headed out to a farm to talk with some workers about their experience with the union and Reynolds. It was all very eye-opening.



Photo by Alexandria Jonas

YAYA NC delegation with FLOC President Velasquez & VP Flores

Call for Tools!

While working at Fellsmere Community Garden, YAYAs noticed a shortage of gardening tools. So we're reaching out to you for help. **Can you donate tools like shovels, rakes, gardening hoes? Or funds to buy tools?**

Help NFWM-YAYA give back to the Fellsmere, FL community as much as they've helped us over the years. Contact us at yaya@nfwm.org. Thank you for your support of NFWM-YAYA and farm workers!

YAYA Chili Cook-Off a Success!

By Brian Luft

On April 16th, Orlando YAYA, our supporters, and some new faces, met at the CWA Union Hall in Orlando for a YAYA organized chili cook-off. YAYA brought community members together to give thanks to farm workers, raise awareness about the issues they face and fundraise to continue the work we do in solidarity with farm workers. ***Each chili was different, but they all shared one thing in common; the ingredients used to make them had all been produced by the labor of farm workers.*** With this knowledge in mind we not only enjoyed the delicious food, but also appreciated where it came from and how it came to be. The event was a success and a lot of fun!

Visit nfwm-yaya.org for more news
& sign up for YAYA e-newsletter

Words from Julie Taylor NFWM Executive Director



Julie Taylor

It did not occur to me when I attended my first National Farm Worker Ministry Board meeting in December 2000 at La Paz, California that I would ever serve in any other capacity than board member for this organization. Now, almost 15 years after that meeting, I am excited to be settling in as the new executive director.

When I first visited La Paz, I came with lots of background information but really knew little about the struggles of farm workers in America. After 13 years on the board I still have a lot to learn but I am recognizing that the seed of commitment to justice for farm workers was planted at that very first meeting. I was embraced and fell in love with the other members of the board. I was inspired to hear from Arturo Rodriguez, United Farm Workers President as he talked about César Chávez and the beginnings of both NFWM & the UFW. Paul Chávez came by to share about his work on the radio and his memories of his father. Sam Trickey became the new president of the board and his acceptance speech was humble and heart-warming. The staff were helpful and I found myself in the car with Chris Harmire, NFWM's founding director and Bob and Olgha Sandman to travel to Delano to meet with farm workers. It was intentional the newest board member was accompanied by these long time advocates. I'll never forget it.

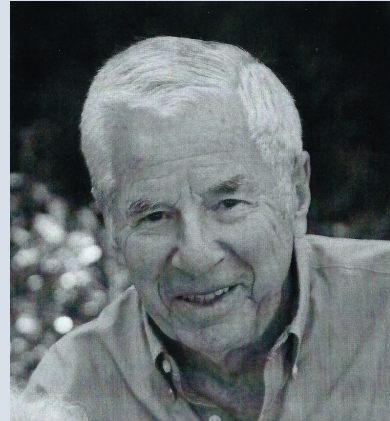
Today, the National Farm Worker Ministry is hard at work continuing the legacy of those who have gone before us to advocate for farm worker justice. Our board, staff, supporters and funders all play an important role in understanding that this organization brings together people of faith and the farm workers who feed our country. It is as simple as that. What was begun as Migrant Ministry continues today so that God's world will be filled with justice – love in its truest form.

Listen Up! NFWM Radio Interview

NFWM's Associate Director Susan Alan was the featured guest on KSVR's ***We Do The Work***, a weekly radio program in Skagit County, WA. In the interview, Susan talks about NFWM's history and work. The story features NFWM's support of Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ), as well as NFWM's other campaigns. Listen to the interview online at www.skagitdemocrats.org. Under the "extra" tab, click on Labor Interviews 2015 and scroll to NFWM.

Frank Forbath

Farm Worker Activist. ¡Presente!



We at the National Farm Worker Ministry are sad to announce that Frank Forbath, a wonderful man and committed farm worker activist from Orange County California, passed from this life on September 2, 2015 at the age of 90. We send our condolences to Frank's wife Jean and their seven children, five children-in-law, and 15 grandchildren.

Frank and Jean Forbath began their farm worker activism on the picket lines for the first UFW grape and lettuce boycotts. For decades they were active with the Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farmworkers (OCIC) and Frank served as Treasurer. In 2014, the Orange County Human Relations Commission recognized Frank and Jean as "civil rights heroes" by honoring them with a "Legacy Award" for their work on many social justice issues.

Suzanne Darweesh, Co-chair of OCIC says, *"We of the Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers will miss Frank enormously...He and Jean were always ready to help, whether to host farm workers or staff, tend bar at a dinner-fundraiser, or advocate for farm workers at a write-in or demonstration. He was generous with his time, talents, and resources; he gave his heart to farm workers for the long haul. Farewell and Godspeed, Presente!"*

We thank the family for designating NFWM as the recipient of memorial gifts. Julie Taylor, NFWM Executive Director and other NFWM board members and friends were able to attend Frank's memorial service on September 25th at Sts. Simon and Jude Catholic Church, Huntington Beach, CA.

For more information about Farm Worker Organizations and their Campaigns, visit:

www.boycottsakumaberries.com

www.ciw-online.org

www.equitablefood.net

www.floc.com

www.floridafarmworkers.org

www.nfwm.org

www.nfwm-yaya.org

www.pcun.org

www.ufw.org

Farm workers give to
us every day.

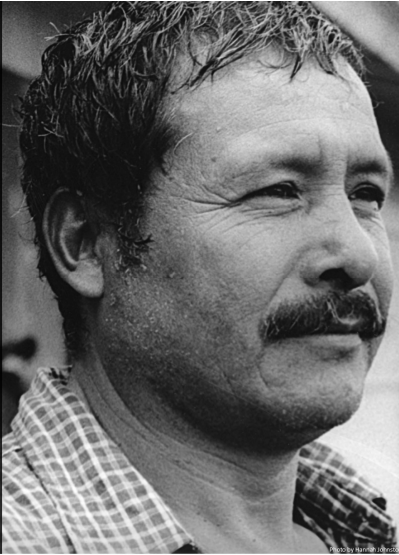
YOU can

GIVE ...back

GIVE ...thanks

GIVE ...monthly.

Become a Harvester
For Justice today!



Sustaining donors - those that give monthly or quarterly - are very important to NFWM. These generous folks are more than just kind, they're also practical: **They know that giving monthly allows NFWM to spend less time fundraising and more time working with farm workers. And in the end, that's what it's all about.**

**Earn NFWM
an extra
\$100.
Become a
Sustainer!**

Thanks to the generosity of the Fund for Democratic Communities, NFWM will receive \$100 for every new NFWM sustaining donor who signs up to make a monthly or quarterly recurring contribution of \$10 or more.

You can choose to auto-draft your bank account (use a voided check in the remittance envelope provided) or set up recurring giving via credit card at www.nfwm.org. Want more details? Contact Alexandria Jonas: ajonas@nfwm.org or 919-807-8707.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) is a faith-based organization committed to justice for and empowerment of farm workers. NFWM educates, equips and mobilizes member organizations and other faith communities, groups and individuals to support farm worker led efforts to improve their living and working conditions.

JOIN US !

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