

Orange County Interfaith Committee To Aid Farm Workers



MARCH 2018

JOIN US ON SUNDAY, APRIL 22nd FOR OUR UNITED FARMWORKERS FUNDRAISER WITH SPEAKER SONIA RODRIGUEZ

We are thrilled to welcome Sonia Rodriguez to Orange County on Sunday April 22nd. Sonia C. Rodriguez serves as Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Parent Institute for Quality Education and is also Executive Director of their Kern County Regional Office. She will be updating us on what is happening to farmworkers in California.

Before assuming her current responsibilities, Sonia served as Executive Vice President for Education of the Cesar Chavez Foundation, President and CEO of Education Associates of America, and President and CEO of the LAAMP/LEARN Regional Education Reform Alliance in Los Angeles. She joined the Office of California Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin as Chief Advisor and Policy Coordinator and later served as Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructional Leadership. In the administration of former Texas Governor Ann Richards, Sonia served as Secretary of Education for the Office of the Governor. She was appointed Vice Chair of President Bill Clinton's White House Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and also served as Chief Liaison at the National Center on Education and the Economy in New York and as a consultant to the National Alliance for Restructuring Education.

Ms. Rodriguez lives in Keene, California, adjacent to the Cesar Chavez National Monument, with her husband, Arturo S. Rodriguez, President of the United Farm Workers. Together, they have dedicated their careers to improving the lives of the most underserved and underrepresented families in the country.



**SUNDAY,
APRIL 22nd, 2018
TEAMSTERS LOCAL 952
140 S Marks Way
Orange, CA 92868
5PM Silent Auction/
Social Hour
6PM Dinner
7PM Program**

Pre-paid reservations by April 16th please:

Make your check out to **UFW**

\$25 per person (\$10 students)
and \$30 at the door

Send to:

Pam Presnall
8502 E. Chapman Avenue, #153
Orange, CA 92869

Contributions to the silent auction are welcome. Please contact
Tina Laine at tinal6@sbcglobal.net to donate

Contact Pam at pampresnall@aol.com for more information



Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers

Past Chair:
Suzanne Darweesh

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Church Liaison:
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Newsletter:
Pam Presnall

Labor Liaison:
Marti Schrank

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ents, Sara Halverson-Cano,
Bill Steiner, Henry Weil



Farmworker Web Pages:

www.ufw.org (UFW)
www.floc.com (FLOC)
www.pcun.org (PCUN)
www.ciw-online.org (CIW)
www.nfwm.org (NFWM)

On February 7, the Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers voted unanimously to endorse the statement below adopted by the National Farm Worker Ministry Board in January

Women deserve better than violence and harassment.

The National Farm Worker Ministry embraces the *Harvest without Violence* efforts of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. Even as new awareness of the sexual harassment of women is surfacing in media workplaces, the political arena and employment settings around the country, farm worker women have lived under the reality and threat of this violence for decades. We are outraged by the abuse, assault, intimidation, harassment and rape experienced by farm worker women.

In migrant labor camps we have listened to the stories of farm worker women about being violated by their coworkers and threatened with deportation if they do not provide sexual favors for their supervisors. In other settings we have met women dressing like male workers so as not to attract attention and heard women share painful stories of abuse and violence. These are some of the reasons we support the Coalition of Immokalee's Fair Food Program. This "worker-driven social responsibility" model of organizing provides farm worker to farm worker training that includes a protocol for addressing sexual harassment and violence.

The National Farm Worker Ministry joins the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in standing with farm workers to eliminate violence by supporting the *Harvest without Violence* focus of the Fair Food Program. We call on all our member organizations, supporting organizations and people of conscience to join us in endorsing *Harvest without Violence*, to raise awareness of this terrible problem and to work to promote the Fair Food Program.

The National Farm Worker Ministry is a faith-based organization committed to justice for and the empowerment of farm workers since 1971. 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.

A Brief Summary of News from the National Farm Worker Ministry

At its last board meeting in Florida, the Farm Worker Association of Florida reported on a history of systemic racism and poverty experienced by African-American farm workers in Apopka. A hundred farm workers were laid off and replaced by H2A guest workers, a federal program. The H2A worker program, which evolved from the old bracero program, does not protect workers under the law in terms of worker rights, compensation, working conditions, and the right to change places of employment.

Our committee has long supported the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, (CIW), dating to the effort to get Taco Bell, (with headquarters in OC), to sign the Fair Food agreement which would pay a penny a pound more to tomato pickers and ensure better working conditions. The CIW, based in Florida, reported that they have educated 4500 workers, training them to report abuses, and implementing the Fair Food Program. Women are being trained to identify gender-based violence. More than \$25 million has been distributed to farm workers and 1500 complaints resolved through the Fair Food Program including 35 cases of sexual violence. Eleven bosses or contractors have been dismissed; one employer has begun paying restitution in a case of human slavery. Growers are much more aware of the need to eradicate abuse. The Fair Food Program has continued to expand along the east coast; the latest corporation to sign has been Ben and Jerry's in Vermont. It has also reached the garment industry in Bangladesh. Wendy's and Publix are remaining holdouts. From March 11-16, fasters protested in front of Wendy's headquarters in cold NYC.

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee resolved 718 grievances averaging \$400 restitution in cases of wage theft.

The United Farm Workers doubled wages for 400 workers at Gourmet Berries in Kern County, CA. Struggles at Gerawan Farms continue as 100 workers who testified against the company were pushed out and replaced by H2A workers from Florida.

Families United for Justice in Washington state reported membership of 900 including 492 at Sakuma Farms whose berries are sold through Driscoll Berries.

This report thanks to Julie Taylor, Exec. Director of NFWM.