

Worker Center Goals Discussed More volunteers sought.

By [Bonnie Hobbs](#)

Thursday, April 07, 2011



Plans are progressing for a day-laborer worker center in Centreville and, if all goes well, it could open as soon as this summer. But that's a big "if." First, a whole lot of funds need to materialize.

"We need \$152,000 to run the center, fully staffed, for a year," said Ed Duggan, treasurer of the Centreville Immigration Forum (CIF), which is spearheading efforts to open the facility. "To date, we've raised \$43,500, so we still need \$108,500."

Al Dvoskin, owner of the Centreville Square Shopping Center, agreed to provide the space for the center and pay its utility bills. CIF volunteers would participate in the day-to-day operation, under the guidance of a full-time, professional director.

Speaking during the March 23 meeting of the CIF, Duggan said the donations received so far came from "36 generous individuals, two foundations and grants, plus several churches. We have additional grant applications out for \$75,000 more in funding, which we may or may not get. But we've got an achievable goal and we're going to get there."

He said the majority of the money needed is for staff salaries. And CIF head Alice Foltz noted that the value of Dvoskin's donation is \$87,000. She also again went over some of the high points of the document detailing the center's rules and regulations and codes of conduct.

Cabell's Mill resident Stephen Vandivere asked if the center would provide guidance to the workers about their responsibilities to pay taxes, and Foltz said it would. "We'll give information to both employers and workers about what they're required to do regarding taxes," she said.

"I encourage you to volunteer for the center," Foltz told the nearly three dozen people attending the meeting, besides the laborers, themselves. "We're expecting our fund-raising to put us in a position to open this summer."

Toward that end, the CIF held a volunteer training session April 2 and plans another one on Wednesday, April 13, from 7-9:30 p.m., at Korean Central Presbyterian Church, 15451 Lee Highway in Centreville. For more information or to sign up for training, email Joyce Lynn at joycelynn9726@yahoo.com or phone 703-378-9726 `begin_of_the_skype_highlighting` 703-378-9726 `end_of_the_skype_highlighting`.

"Even if you don't want to be a volunteer at the center, it'll be helpful for you to take part in the training because you'll learn how it'll be run," said Foltz. "Bill Threlkeld of Reston Interfaith will help us since he has experience running a worker center."

Vandivere suggested a skills list be publicized so potential employers would know whether it's worth their while to go there. "There'll be lotteries for jobs according to job skills," said Foltz. "Some will be for more-specialized skills than others, and some will be for workers speaking English."

In addition to having an office inside the worker center, she also hopes to have a place inside where English and job skills may be taught and where the Jeanie



CIF head, Alice Foltz



CIF Treasurer Ed Duggan discusses worker-center funding.



Esther Holtermann translates the meeting into Spanish for the day laborers attending.



Email this Article
Print this Article

Schmidt Clinic can do health checks. "Mr. Dwoskin is looking for a space in the shopping center that'll be accessible, but not interfere with the shopping-center operation," said Foltz. "One of his main concerns is to serve the needs of his shopping-center tenants."

The CIF also plans an International Dance and Music Festival on Saturday, April 30, from 6-9:30 p.m., in the Centreville United Methodist Church gym. Any dancers wanting to participate should e-mail Claudia Escobar at info@centrevilleimmigrationforum.org.

"The inspiration for this fund-raiser came from the Guatemalan community in Centreville," said Foltz. "Many of the day laborers are from there. They've performed for us before, and we were so impressed that we wanted to see more."

Added the CIF's chief grant-writer, Terry Angelotti: "This event reflects our values as an organization because it's about bringing people together and celebrating our cultures."



©2011 [Connection Newspapers](#). All Rights Reserved. [Privacy Policy](#)
1606 King Street ♦ Alexandria, VA 22314 ♦ 703-821-5050

Site Design, Development and Hosting by [Timberlake Publishing](#)