



Centreville Labor Resource Center

YEAR 2, VOLUME 7

July 2013

Next board meeting of the Centreville Immigration Forum: Tuesday August 27th

Monthly Statistics: July at a glance

Total Jobs	68
Total workers out on jobs	98
Median rate for July jobs	\$15.00 per hour
Percentage of total jobs going out at Median rate	45 %

New Initiative: Box Training

This summer, under the leadership of intern Victoria Jameson, the CLRC has begun a new initiative, the Green Box Project, to train workers in the construction of garden beds. So far the Green Box Project has trained 13 workers in evening and afternoon sessions in the assembly of



Workers practicing box assembly

garden beds. The “Green” boxes are raised garden beds, which are typically filled with soil and used for growing flowers and/or vegetables. Raised garden beds allow for more weed control and prevent runoff of

nutritious soil. They are also more convenient for people with mobility issues who may not be able to complete gardening tasks with a conventional garden bed.

Once workers are trained, they will be able to make and install the boxes and be paid for their labor, thus creating more jobs at the CLRC. Raised garden beds allow more weed control and prevent runoff of nutritious soil. They are also more convenient for people with mobility issues who may not be able to complete gardening tasks with a conventional garden bed.

Research shows that raised beds have a higher yield per square foot than conventional gardens. The boxes are “green” in the sense that they are food-safe and environmentally friendly. The CLRC uses untreated cedar boards, which are resistant to water and rot and contain no chemicals that can seep into gardens or into your food! These will be high quality, unique products that benefit our community. CLRC hopes to officially launch the program in late August

after holding a workers’ committee meeting to determine pricing and job distribution.



Children play at 4th of July picnic

July 4th Celebration

The CLRC hosted its second 4th of July picnic at Bull Run Park to celebrate our nation’s independence. Thanks to the collective efforts of the workers and volunteers, all were able to enjoy a feast of steak, tortillas, rice and more. One of the workers even made a marinade from scratch for the meat that was served.

Despite the heat, there were many rounds of volley ball, badminton, and even a water balloon fight for the

kids. For many, this was the first time celebrating Independence Day in the United States and we are glad to have introduced an American tradition to newcomers.



Volleyball game at the 4th of July picnic

Roberto Fernández– Director

Molly Maddra– Coordinator

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St. Anne's Episcopal Church

The CLRC received the energized visit of the "Mission Possible" youth group from St. Anne's Episcopal Church this July. About 12 middle school aged students spent a week visiting and volunteering at different organizations in the area.

While at the CLRC, the students learned about our mission and met our workers who shared stories of what working as a day laborer is like. Workers encouraged the group to the best students and community members possible and to always serve others. After a short Q&A, the students helped put together a garden "green" box. The students learned skills in sanding, building and teamwork from our workers who led the project.

Reverend Laura Cochran who contacted the CLRC to set up the visit stated that the "kids thoroughly enjoyed their time with the workers and they have reflected about how meaningful their experience at the CLRC was for gaining a great understanding of what it means to be a neighbor and to serve others."

The CLRC workers and staff certainly enjoyed the visit and got an injection of positivity and energy from the St. Anne's youth group visit and we hope to see them again real soon! Thanks to Mr. Tim Barwick for the amazing photos and for allowing us to use them in our newsletter.

PSALM at St. Mary's

CLRC staff, volunteers and workers were invited to attend the July PSALM (Parish Social Action Lay Ministers) luncheon for the Arlington Diocese. CLRC staff and volunteers gave a short presentation on the day labor community in Centreville and the work of the CLRC to provide a safe, organized work center free of exploitation. Of the 6 workers that formed part of the delegation, 3 shared their stories of life in the US working in casual labor and the challenges they face culturally and economically.

After, there was time for questions and answers and the workers were able to socialize with other attendees. These opportunities allow the CLRC to increase its reach in the community and afford workers opportunities to develop the leadership skills needed to be strong and effective communicators in many diverse settings. Thank you to St. Mary's Catholic Church for hosting this event.



Youth from St. Anne's assemble boxes with workers



Finished box!





¿Por qué inter-cambio de idiomas? (Why do a language exchange?)

- By intern Nathan Watts

This summer at CLRC we have been piloting a Language Exchange program. What's that, you ask? Our language exchange program offers space where English speakers can learn Spanish from native speakers—consider it a reverse ESL program. Through the first four Mondays in July that we have had classes, there have been three evident benefits: relationship building, education and empowerment.

Relationship building is one of the most common experiences at the center—it happens between our staff and the workers, our workers and employers, and our valued volunteers. One hope of the Language Exchange is to extend this unique opportunity for friendship to the larger English speaking community of Fairfax County.

While learning a new language is the more immediate achievement, building relationships with community members brings new realities to our nations 'immigration situation', offering opportunities to share concerns and hopes, and in two languages!

Speaking as a person who has persevered through the public school method of foreign language learning, having the opportunity to learn another language outside the parameters of a 'traditional' classroom experience is an experience not to be missed. One practical reason is due to the practice with and exposure

to native Spanish speakers other than just the instructor. In a more traditional setting, speaking practice can often involve repeating phrases heard over a cd and only practiced by looping the track. This is not only a poor substitute for the pace of the language spoken in Latino/a countries, it is often boring and cumbersome. To have the opportunity to learn pronunciation and in real life situations from humans and friends can aid you in daily life and any potential vacations.

This last piece—empowerment-- is perhaps the most crucial. Our language exchange allows workers to access leadership roles which are often denied them during their adjustment to realities in the US. Many of the people coming to CLRC had jobs not based solely in physical labor in their countries of origin- many were fishermen, some nurses, some teachers, some business owners—valued and important members of their communities. The CLRC language exchange offers space for a returned sense of normalcy in an exhaustingly stressful time for many who seek our hiring services.

We achieve this by allowing our members to craft curriculum revolving around cultural norms and customs of their countries of origin. In this way, we exchange much more than different languages. Classes can often shift between history and civic lessons, favorite holidays and ways to celebrate, and favorite experiences while living abroad.

The early classes of our language exchange have experienced some success. But sustained growth and enlargement is largely dependent on people like YOU who support CLRC in a myriad of ways—time, energy, spreading the word. We hope that this language exchange is something that we can carry into our future, a future based on the shared efforts of the workers and supporters like you.

TESTIMONIAL FROM A VERY HAPPY EMPLOYER

“I hired two workers for some yard work, and both were fantastic and fast. I was expecting the job to take about 5 hours and they finished it in less than 3. I recommended the CLRC to my friends and will certainly hire again”

HOW TO HIRE A WORKER FROM THE CLRC

If you have work you'd like some help on and would like to hire a worker, follow these simple steps:

1. Call us 703.543.6272 or visit us on the web at www.centrevilleLRC.org and click on the “How to Hire” link.
2. Tell us what kind of work you need, how many workers you need and when you need them for.
3. We will match your needs to our registered workers skills and set up the job.
4. Negotiate the price for work.
5. Provide us with feedback after the job to ensure we're doing great work, that you are satisfied and that our workers are fairly paid.

It's that easy!!! The CLRC serves businesses and homeowners who need help with just about any home remodel or maintenance project.



Deck painting

Deck painting completed

