

The oldest Latino
non-profit
organization in
New Haven

JUNTA for Progressive Action



Newsletter - Spring 2005

The Director's Spring Letter

Dear Friends:

Each new year poses additional challenges for JUNTA, and 2005 is no different.

We wrestle with the constant challenge of balancing our limited resources with the ever increasing needs of the community that we serve. We face competing programmatic priorities. We struggle with daily crises that present themselves, literally, at our door: when you are a community based organization, it is not an option to simply turn people away.

Yet what makes it possible for JUNTA to do its work – and do it well, is the hard work and dedication of its staff. Our community is blessed to have such bright, driven and engaged individuals committed to doing transformative work in such a vibrant but challenging environment. It is a privilege for me to be working with such talent.

At year's end, we had served over 4,000 individuals in nine different program areas. This is no small feat, considering that we are a small staff of ten. Our work covered many different strategies, including advocacy,

public policy, direct assistance and community organizing. At the individual, local and national levels, our advocacy efforts produced many positive results, and it is our intention to build on these efforts.

Our mandate for 2005 is to continue to fine tune our programs while remaining effective. We hope that you will assist us with these efforts.

Kica Matos
Executive Director

JUNTA has been funded by the SBC Excelsior program 2005.

The gift will expand and improve JUNTA's Community Computer Lab and further technology efficiency efforts at our offices.

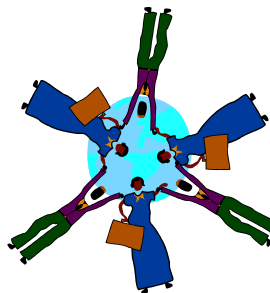
Thank you SBC!

Volunteer Income-Tax Assistance (VITA) at JUNTA!

In 2004, JUNTA launched an Economic Development program aimed at promoting neighborhood and commercial revitalization, creating avenues for community economic empowerment, and advocating for the economic advancement of individuals, families and small businesses in the community. From its inception, a component of this program has been assisting local Latino immigrants and community residents by providing income tax declaration assistance during tax season, including helping families take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit.

This year, JUNTA became one of two Volunteer Income Tax

Assistance "Super Sites" in New Haven, offering free bilingual



income-tax preparation assistance to community residents. The program, which takes place at JUNTA's headquarters, runs on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5PM to 9PM and Saturdays from 10AM to 2PM through April 15th. The program is

staffed by Michael Montaña, JUNTA's Program Coordinator for Economic Development and volunteers trained by the IRS.

JUNTA has also taken an additional step by expanding and broadening the scope of the Tax Preparation Program. Last November, in collaboration with Quinnipiac Law School's Tax Clinic, JUNTA held its first free bilingual workshop on tax payer obligations and the tax paying system. The workshop, which was filled to capacity, received an enthusiastic community response and as a result, plans are underway to host additional workshops this year.

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SUPPORT US!

JUNTA relies on private foundations, businesses, corporations and the generosity of its donors and friends to carry out its mission. We encourage you to support JUNTA's worthy programs by making a tax-deductible donation.

Your help is deeply appreciated!

Fair Haven Dialogues

In response to a recent wave of violent incidents directed against the immigrant community in Fair Haven, JUNTA, in collaboration with Unidad Latina en Acción and the New Haven Police Department hosted a community dialogue between community residents and law enforcement officers. The aim of the dialogue was to bring law enforcement officers and community members



together to discuss strategies to address this problem and to find ways to improve relations between law enforcement officers and the immigrant community. The event took place on December of 2004 at St.

Rosa de Lima church in Fair Haven and was very well attended: the church's community room filled up with over one hundred community members who engaged in an honest, positive and wide ranging dialogue with Chief of Police Francisco Ortiz,

high ranking law enforcement officers and officers from the local sub-station. Among the main topics discussed were

neighborhood safety, violence against immigrants, addressing the reluctance of some community members to report crime and racial profiling. Additional dialogues are being planned for 2005.

Workplace Justice Project (WJP)

Earlier this year, JUNTA expanded its Immigrant Rights Project by launching The Workplace Justice Initiative (WJI), a collaboration between Yale Law School's Community Lawyering Clinic ("CLC") and JUNTA.

The purpose of the WJI is to provide a forum in which to examine and address injustices in the workplace, and to provide the tools to empower workers to effectively defend themselves from employer abuse. JUNTA

collaborates with workers to assist in the determination of the most effective strategies to remedy injustices taking part in the workplace, with the CLC providing the necessary legal and technical assistance.

The actual course of action is determined by the workers themselves, and most often involves combating issues such as illegal firings, pay withholdings, unsafe workplace conditions and inadequate compensation.

House Party 05

In early March, JUNTA threw a very successful house party at the home of our Executive Director.

Many thanks to the merchants and supporters who generously contributed to the party's live auction, including Creative Body Therapies, Daniel Diaz and Arte, Inc., Long Wharf Theatre, Pilot

Pen Tennis, Schubert Theatre, Willoughby's Coffee & Tea and the Yale Center for British Art. Special acknowledgements to Kristen Barber, Dr. Artemis Morris, Mia Comulada and Henry Fernandez.

Thank you to all our guests for coming. We hope to see you next time!

MEET OUR STAFF

We are pleased to introduce to you Ana de Santiago, who is the latest addition to JUNTA's family.

Ana is originally from Mexico City, Mexico. She moved to the United States at an early age and settled in California with her family. In the fall of 2000, Ana moved to New Haven to attend Yale University, where she graduated with a double major in Latin American Studies and Ethnicity, Race, and Migration. During her time at Yale, she became involved with the local community, getting to know the Fair Haven neighborhood while volunteering at the Fair Haven Community Health Center.

Ana joined JUNTA in the fall of 2004, assuming the position of Program Coordinator for Education and Community Outreach. She oversees the organization's educational, internship programs and community relations programs. In short time, she has had a significant impact – both in JUNTA and Fair Haven.

On her free time, she likes to cook, do yoga or go hiking, attend music shows, and relax reading a good book.

You can reach Ana DeSantiago by writing to: ana.desantiago@juntainc.org or calling 203.787.0191

JUNTA is a non-profit 501 (C) 3 tax-exempt organization.

Your contribution is tax deductible.