

JUNTA FOR PROGRESSIVE ACTION

JUNTA CELEBRATES NEW CITIZENS

This past December, two JUNTA clients became citizens of the United States: a dream come true that both had worried would never happen. Emma Carrasco and Maria Manso both had passed the civics part of the citizenship test, but failed the interview because they didn't know enough English. New tutor Mary Lesser solved that problem, working with the women tirelessly several times a week to prepare them, even at their houses and over the phone. When both women got the news that they had passed, they were overjoyed, and incredibly grateful to Mary. Maria was sworn in December 10th, and Emma December 29th. Congratulations to both.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS JUNTA'S COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

In October, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven awarded JUNTA a 3-year grant to build our capacity and improve financial sustainability. The grant will support our development efforts and our goals to diversify funding over the next three years.

In addition, JUNTA was awarded a matching grant from the Foundation to support our immediate needs and emergency services to New Haven residents. The grant matched every donation to the organization up to \$8650. In line with our end of year appeal, the grant helped JUNTA raise over \$20,000. With so many families facing difficult times, support from the community is critical to ensuring that we have services available to meet their increasing needs. The Foundation recognized our commitment to individuals and families. Thanks to the Community Foundation and all of you who contributed to the match. Please continue to support JUNTA as we diligently assist children and families throughout New Haven.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Happy New Year! First of all, I would like to wish everyone greatness this coming year. Many have heard this is a year of change and change is here. In order for change to occur, one must be willing to change. The type of change that I'm referring to is a change for a better tomorrow despite the hurdles one encounters. Let's change. Let's give back to the community; Let's help others, and let our voice be heard.

Our clients are participating in change. Hundreds of adults attend evening GED and ESL classes to further their education. Many others are participating in our Worker Center training sessions and computer classes. Youth and children are involved in storytelling, creating art and working towards achieving better grades in school. Examples of change at its best.

JUNTA is also part of this change. There are a record number of residents seeking assistance due to this economic crisis and JUNTA is committed to serve. JUNTA will be here for our community. I'm proud to say that our staff is committed to helping and serving others. Please continue to support us and our mission as we support all those in need. Help us make a difference in the lives of others.

Please stop by when you're in the neighborhood.

Sandra Trevino

*Support JUNTA today. You can donate online at www.juntainc.org or send a gift to:
JUNTA for Progressive Action, 169 Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513.
For volunteer opportunities, call us at 203.787.0191.*

JUNTA

WORKER CENTER EFFORTS YIELD POSITIVE RESULTS FOR WORKERS

WINTER 2009

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NEWSLETTER

JUNTA's Worker Center has experienced exciting growth since its inception in March 2008. A committed steering committee of workers has formed to guide the Center and over \$25,000 have been recovered in unpaid wages for local workers. In a recent victory, the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut ruled in favor of 15 homemakers and companions who filed suit in May 2008 against their former employer, New Haven-based By Your Side Homemaker and Companion Services, LLC, for failing to pay in full for work performed. The women alleged that their employer repeatedly failed to pay them in a timely manner, paid them with checks that did not have sufficient funds, or refused to pay them at all. The court has awarded a total of \$16,155.32 to the group, which includes liquidated damages in the amount of double the wages lost for each plaintiff.

Many of the women involved in the case worked for weeks without pay in order to continue serving their homebound clients, but all were ultimately forced to leave the company after its owners repeatedly ignored their demands for payment. The homemakers and companions were able to organize themselves with the assistance of the Worker Center. The Center offered a place where they could share their stories, build strength as a group, and connect with Yale Law School students who provided legal representation in the case. JUNTA is very proud of these women who refused to accept their employer's abuse and is hopeful that this victory will encourage more workers to assert their rights.



Recent graduates of JUNTA's Worker Center Facilitator Training.

PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS THREATEN THE FUTURE OF JUNTA

JUNTA for Progressive Action will launch an intensive grassroots campaign "SAVE JUNTA! UNITED WE CAN DO IT" to pressure legislators to vote against Governor Jodi Rell's proposed cuts to the Social Services budget; a budget that recommends a 100% cut of JUNTA's funding, starting July 1, 2009. The campaign will encourage JUNTA's clients, friends, allies and the general community to contact their state representatives, and will collaborate with other community organizations and the City of New Haven in order to fight for continued funding.

Call your Legislator today and tell them vote NO to Department of Social Services cuts.

Senator Toni Harp at 860.240.0393

Representative Juan Candelaria at 860.240.8585

Senator Martin Looney at 860.240.8600

Representative Toni Walker at 860.240.8585

JUNTA currently serves over 4,700 individuals each year through its wide range of programs including Adult Education, Economic Development, Cultural Awareness, Legal Advocacy, Family Management, Worker/Immigrant Rights, and Youth Services. Its Adult English as a Second Language classes alone serve over 500 students per year and The Neighborhood Place, a children's program run in partnership with the Yale Child Study Center, is the only therapeutic afterschool program in New Haven.

JUNTA's on

facebook 

Check out JUNTA's Facebook page. Go to www.Facebook.com today and become a friend of JUNTA! Look for events and news updates.