

*House Farm Workers! Inaugural Newsletter
November 2015*



House Farm Workers!

Working to support and promote the provision of safe, decent, and affordable housing for all Ventura County farm workers since 2004.



Volunteer and Join a *HFW!* City Committee

House Farm Workers! has established committees that cover the unincorporated county, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo and Moorpark. These volunteer-driven committees are the heart of the organization and have played a critical role in advocating on behalf of the farm worker community for the past 10 years. The city groups mobilize public

support, engage public officials, and collaborate with other grassroots organizations to ensure affordable housing for farm workers.

Interested? Contact our program coordinator at housefarmworkers@verizon.net.

Check out our website: [Learn More!](#)

***HFW!* 2015 Highlights**



From Harvest to Home

On March 20, 2015, *House Farm Workers!* hosted "From Harvest to Home", the 10th Anniversary Farm Worker Housing Summit. The 150 attendees heard informative presentations about the issue from experts in agriculture, health, housing and government relations. At the event, *House Farm Workers!* debuted its new documentary "From Harvest to Home", a documentary produced by Ojai filmmakers Dulanie Ellis and Raymond Singer. The Summit concluded with an inspiring breakout session and town hall meeting, where attendees committed to building 2,375 Ventura County farm worker homes in the next 10 years.



In July, our annual fundraising dinner, "From Field to Fork" brought together a record crowd for an inspiring evening of delicious food seasoned with purpose. For the first time, *HFW!* awarded a college scholarship to an outstanding CSUCI student from a farm worker family: Ayari Palencia.



House Farm Workers! has launched a new initiative to engage the younger generation of farm worker housing advocates. In support of this exciting program, we are grateful to have received grants from Driscoll's and the Social Justice Fund of Ventura County. Interested in participating? Contact us at housefarmworkers@verizon.net.

Recent Events

Here's a closer look at our education and advocacy activities during the past three months.



On October 7, *HFW!* attended the annual Housing Opportunities Made Easier (HOME) conference in Camarillo, which provided an opportunity to engage with affordable housing leaders and advocates.



HFW! attended the CSUCI Fair for Public Good in October and engaged with CSUCI student organizations. *HFW!* also met with MEChA de Channel Islands student organization and shared opportunities for getting involved in farm worker housing advocacy.



On October 11, Barbara Macri-Ortiz and *House Farm Workers!* were honored with the Kennedy Spirit Award by the Democratic Club of Ventura County at its Annual Kennedy Legacy Dinner.

Farm Worker Corner

Maria Iglesias, resident of Rodney Fernandez Gardens in Santa Paula, beams with gratitude for her clean, spacious apartment where she has lived for two years. Her husband, Joel Iglesias, 42, a proprietor of a small grocery store in Mexico, brought his wife and two children from Mexico 8 years ago to join his mother and sister in Santa Paula. Joel works at a spice-packing house in Oxnard at minimum wage. Like other Ventura County agricultural workers, Joel found it difficult to find affordable housing in Ventura County.

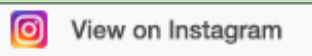
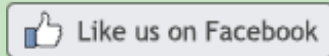


Maria and her family previously shared a one-bedroom apartment with leaky roof, rats and spiders. Maria stood in line, sometimes in the rain, to use the single washer and dryer for 30 families. Joel, Jr., 13, developed an allergy to the musty carpeting. Jorge Ivan, 11, lives with a heart condition that limits his activity. A cloud of depression and anxiety settled around Maria.

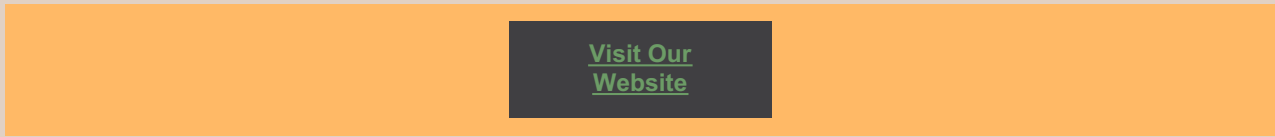
Today, Maria takes pride in the 3-bedroom apartment her family was fortunate to apply and be accepted for. Her sons each have their own private place to study and a safe common area to play. Isbell School recognized Joel, Jr. for academic improvement and his allergy has resolved. Maria's depression has lifted. "I feel like I live in paradise," Maria says. "I have lots of room, live with my family and have friends here."

- By Donna Hamer, *HFW!* Volunteer

Connect With Us:



Donations to *House Farm Workers!* are always welcome and are tax deductible. To donate, click on the PayPal donate button below:



House Farm Workers! | 805-921-0430 | housefarmworkers@verizon.net | www.housefarmworkers.org