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# Latino Times

A BILINGUAL PUBLICATION

## Mexico is now at a Crossroads

New American Media

President Donald Trump's policies aimed at deporting millions of undocumented people put Mexico in a complicated junction regarding Central American immigrants.

North-bound migration coming from Central America is one of the contentious points that stood out during the last meeting between Mexico and U.S. authorities. It is a cause for dispute and disagreement between Los Pinos and the White House.

The discrepancy is based on the Trump Administration's unheard of, unilateral decision to deport people

who are not Mexican citizens, mostly Central Americans, to Mexico.

The proposed agreement is for Mexico to accept that controlling Central American immigration to the north is a "shared responsibility" between them and the United States.

This scenario fits into the definition offered by Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray at the meeting, stating that Mexico is currently a "transit" country, not an exporter of migrants. This is a politically-motivated mistake.

It is true that there has been a reduction in Mexican migration due

See **CROSSROADS** Page 2



## 20 metro areas are home to six-in-ten unauthorized immigrants in U.S.

By Jeffrey S. Passel - Pew Research

Most of the United States' 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants live in just 20 major metropolitan areas, with the largest populations in New York, Los Angeles and Houston, according to new Pew Research Center estimates based on government data.

The analysis shows that the nation's unauthorized immigrant population is highly concentrated, more so than the U.S. population overall. In 2014, the 20 metro areas with most unauthorized immigrants were home to 6.8 million of them, or 61% of the estimated nationwide total. By contrast, only 36% of the total U.S. population lived in those metro areas.

But the analysis also shows that unauthorized immigrants tend to live where other immigrants live. Among lawful immigrants – including naturalized citizens

and noncitizens – 65% lived in those top metros.

By far the biggest unauthorized immigrant populations were in the New York and Los Angeles metro areas (1.2 million and 1 million, respectively). No other metro area approached a million. Among the top 20 areas, the smallest unauthorized immigrant populations included Orlando (110,000) and Austin (100,000).

Five of the 20 metros with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations are in California: Los Angeles, Riverside-San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Diego and San Jose. Three – Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth and Austin – are in Texas.

Some of these areas could be affected by the Trump administration's promise to take action against localities that do not cooperate with federal officials in

See **IMMIGRANTS** Page 2



## México en una encrucijada

New American Media

La migración procedente de América Central al norte es hoy uno de los puntos candentes que sobresalió en la reunión pasada entre las autoridades de México y Estados Unidos a política del presidente Donald Trump para deportar millones de indocumentados coloca a México en una compleja encrucijada alrededor de los inmigrantes centroamericanos.

La migración procedente de América Central al norte es uno de los puntos candentes que sobresalió en la reunión pasada entre las autoridades de México y Estados Unidos. Es un motivo de disputa, de acuerdo entre Los Pinos y la Casa Blanca.

La discrepancia se basa en la insólita decisión unilateral de la administración Trump de deportar a México personas que no son ciudadanos mexicanos, sino centroamericanos en la gran mayoría de los casos.

El acuerdo es que México acepte el control de la inmigración centroamericana hacia el norte como "una responsabilidad compartida" con Estados Unidos.

Este cuadro calza en la definición dada en la reunión por el canciller Luis Videgaray de que México hoy es un país de "tránsito" y no un exportador de migrantes. Este es un error que tiene un motivo político.

Es cierto que hay una reducción de migrantes mexicanos debido a varios factores, desde la demografía al clima económico-político en Estados Unidos, pero el gobierno de Peña Nieto quiere esconder de esta manera que persiste la pobreza y la falta de oportunidades que motivan la emigración.

Al mismo tiempo, esta afirmación de país de tránsito le permite a México ajustar más el Programa Frontera Sur que ya deportó a cientos de miles de centroamericanos. Está restricción se hace en nombre de Estados Unidos, pero el interés es propio.

Muchos inmigrantes centroamericanos están prefiriendo quedarse en México ante las crecientes dificultades que presenta hoy Estado Unidos. A falta de "sueño americano, el "sueño mexicano" parece mejor que la realidad en Centroamérica.

El desafío del gobierno de México es ser coherente. Tiene que otorgar a los indocumentados centroamericanos los mismos derechos y trato que exige para sus paisanos en Estados Unidos. Mientras que los mexicanos no deben discriminar ni maltratar a estos inmigrantes.

El Estados Unidos de Trump es una amenaza despiadada hacia los indocumentados. México está obligado a ser diferente, a no caer en la trampa de la hipocresía.

## Crossroads

continued from Front Page

to a number of factors ranging from demographics to the economic and political climate in the U.S. However, the government of Peña-Nieto is trying to use this to hide the fact that poverty and lack of opportunity are the reasons behind the outmigration.

At the same time, the “transit country” definition allows Mexico to further adjust their Frontera Sur (“South Border”) Program, which has already deported hundreds of thousands of Central Americans. The restriction is carried out in the name of the U.S., but

is acts in Mexico’s own interest.

Many Central American immigrants are choosing to stay in Mexico in light of the difficulties the U.S. represents at the moment. In the absence of the “American Dream,” a “Mexican Dream” sounds better than the reality of Central America.

The challenge for the Mexican government is to remain coherent. It must

grant Central American undocumented people the same rights and treatment it demands from the U.S. Meanwhile, Mexicans should not discriminate or mistreat these immigrants.

The “United States of Trump” is a merciless threat against undocumented people. Mexico is obligated to be different, to avoid falling in the trap of hypocrisy.

## Immigrants

continued from Front Page

identifying unauthorized immigrants. The president’s executive order promises to cut federal funds to these “sanctuary jurisdictions.” Mayors in several big cities have said they will not comply with the order.

The top 20 metropolitan areas for unauthorized immigrants have been remarkably consistent over the past decade, according to the Center’s analysis. Nineteen of the 20 top metropolitan destinations for unauthorized immigrants in 2014 ranked among the top 20 each year over the previous decade.

The Census Bureau dataset used for this analysis does not separate cities from the larger metro areas that contain them in all cases. But such a distinction is possible for 11 of the top 20 metro areas. Within those areas, the cities with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations include New York City, with an estimated 525,000 unauthorized immigrants; Los Angeles, with an estimated 375,000; and Chicago, with an estimated 140,000. Other cities with available data are Miami (55,000), Denver (55,000),

Philadelphia (50,000), Boston (35,000), San Francisco (35,000), Washington, D.C., (25,000) and Seattle (20,000).

Among the top 20 metro areas, only one city for which data were available – Phoenix – was home to a majority of the unauthorized immigrants in that metropolitan area, with about 140,000 out of a total 250,000. In the others, most of the unauthorized immigrants living in the metro area lived outside the borders of the largest city.

The Center’s analysis relies on augmented data from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, using the same residual method as its previous reports on unauthorized immigrants. Unauthorized immigrants include people who either crossed the border illegally or overstayed their visas.

Because these estimates are from a sample, they have margins of error, so some apparent differences in unauthorized immigrant populations between metros or cities may not actually be significantly different. In 150 of the 155

metro areas analyzed, individual metro areas do not differ in rank from those immediately below them. The metro areas that do differ in rank from those immediately below them are New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Washington and San Francisco.

Nationally, unauthorized immigrants made up 3.5% of the total population in 2014. The Philadelphia metro area is the only one of the top 20 metropolitan areas for unauthorized immigrants that had a lower share, the Boston metro area had a roughly equal share and the rest had a

higher share than that, including 8.7% in the Houston metro and 8% in the Las Vegas metro.

Unauthorized immigrants account for about one-in-four foreign-born U.S. residents. They make up a somewhat higher share of immigrants in the Houston (37%), Dallas (37%), Atlanta (33%), Phoenix (37%), Las Vegas (35%), Denver (37%) and Austin (34%) metro areas. They make up a somewhat lower share of all immigrants in the New York (19%), Miami (18%), San Francisco (17%) and San Jose (17%) metro areas.

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## Working Grandparents May Be Eligible for EITC

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service wants working grandparents raising grandchildren to be aware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and correctly claim it if they qualify.

The EITC is a federal income tax credit for workers who don't earn a high income (\$53,505 or less for 2016) and meet certain eligibility requirements. Because it's a refundable credit, those who qualify and claim the credit could pay less federal tax, pay no tax or even get a tax refund. The EITC could put an extra \$2 or up to \$6,269 into a taxpayer's pocket.

Grandparents and other relatives care for millions of children, but are often not aware that they could claim the children under their care for the EITC. A grandparent who is working and has a grandchild who is a qualifying child living with him or her may qualify for the EITC, even if the grandparent is 65 years of age or older. Generally, to be a qualified child for EITC purposes, the grandchild must meet the dependency requirements.

Special rules and restrictions apply if the child's parents or other family members also qualify for the EITC. Details including numerous helpful examples can be found in Publication 596, available on IRS.gov. There are also special rules, described in the publication, for individuals receiving disability benefits and members of the military.

Working grandparents are encouraged to find out, not guess, if they qualify for this very important credit. To qualify for EITC, the taxpayer must have earned income either from a job

or from self-employment and meet basic rules. Also, certain disability payments may qualify as earned income for EITC purposes. EITC eligibility also depends on family size. The IRS recommends using the EITC Assistant, on IRS.gov, to determine eligibility, estimate the amount of credit and more.

Eligible taxpayers must file a tax return, even if they do not owe any tax or are not required to file. Qualified taxpayers should consider claiming the EITC by filing electronically: through a qualified tax professional; using free community tax help sites; or doing it themselves with IRS Free File.

Many EITC filers will get their refunds later this year than in past years. That's because a new law requires the IRS to hold refunds claiming the EITC and the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until mid-February. The IRS cautions taxpayers that these refunds likely will not start arriving in bank accounts or on debit cards until the week of Feb. 27. Taxpayers claiming the EITC or ACTC should file as soon as they have all of the necessary documentation together to prepare an accurate return. In other words, file as they normally would.

The IRS and partners nationwide will hold the annual EITC Awareness Day on Friday, Jan. 27, 2017 to alert millions of workers who may be missing out on this significant tax credit and other refundable credits. One easy way to support this outreach effort is by participating on the IRS Thunderclap to help promote #EITCAwarenessDay through social media. For more information on EITC and other refundable credits, visit the EITC page on IRS.gov.

## NEW SURVEY REVEALS SJ COUNTY YOUTH STILL BOMBARDED WITH TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL ADS

STOCKTON — New research shows that in San Joaquin County youth are continuing to be the target of unhealthy advertising with 85% of stores near schools advertising tobacco and alcohol products. This finding is part of new research through the Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community campaign released today on the availability and marketing of tobacco products, alcohol, condoms and healthy and unhealthy food options in California stores that sell tobacco.

Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community is a statewide campaign formed by tobacco prevention, nutrition, alcohol abuse prevention and sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention partners collaborating to improve the health of Californians. This campaign is designed to raise awareness of how communities, and specifically youth, are negatively impacted by the saturation on unhealthy products and product marketing in the retail environment.

Today, throughout California, health advocates are holding 13 press events to release results of the scientific survey, which is the largest of its kind. It builds upon initial research released in March 2014 and provides insight into changes in the availability and marketing of the studied products during this time. Information

was collected in the summer of 2016 from more than 7,100 stores in all 58 California counties including pharmacies, supermarkets, delis, convenience and liquor stores as well as tobacco-only stores.

"This survey found that our community's youth are inundated with unhealthy messages and choices," says Maria Mendez, local countywide Smoking & Tobacco Outreach/Prevention Program (STOPP) coalition chairperson. "We need to change what information and options our kids are exposed to and work to surround them with healthy choices and messaging instead."

The survey found the following for San Joaquin County:

- Only 8% of stores advertised healthy products on their storefronts, but 82% of storefronts advertised unhealthy products. 85% of stores near schools have storefront advertising for unhealthy products—one of the highest rates in California.
- More than 40% of stores placed tobacco products or ads in kid-friendly locations, such as tobacco ads at "kid-level" (three feet or below) or tobacco products near candy or toys.
- More than 42% of stores placed alcohol ads at "kid-level" or near kid-friendly items such as candy or toys.

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# San Joaquin General Hospital Adding New Hospital Wing

French Camp, CA- San Joaquin General Hospital will be breaking ground March 10th on its new 34,000 square foot acute care wing. The new two story acute care building will be constructed to the South and connect directly to the main Hospital.

The new hospital wing's first floor will feature a fully modernized 23 bed Neonatal intensive care unit. The second floor will contain 20 upgraded medical/surgical beds and will accommodate patients in modern private

rooms. The new facility will enhance the Hospital's ability to meet infection control standards and offer a higher level of patient privacy. The new addition will also feature upgraded security, a new nurse call system with state-of-the-art communication technology.

The project is officially titled: Phase 2 Acute Care Patient Wing expansion. The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) approved the initial Phase 2 expansion architectural plans on February

9, 2016. The Sacramento firm of Otto Construction has been awarded the contract to construct the building, along with the firms of AECOM managing the construction phases with Hammel Green and Abrahamson, project architects providing construction administration and planning. A completion date for the entire project is set for July of 2018. The entire project has been budgeted for \$34,698,000 and has been approved by the San Joaquin Board of Supervisors.

The new wing will function as a modern replacement for some of the Hospital's services, which are still being provided in the original brick "tower building" constructed in 1934. The historic tower will remain on-site for some administration, record storage and other duties as determined in the future. The new acute care wing will function as another positive step for the Hospital to advance from a level III trauma center to a level II trauma center in the foreseeable future.

# Downtown Stockton Alliance Celebrates 20 Years of Progress

Since 1997, the Downtown Stockton Alliance (DSA) has been the collective voice of the property and business owners, residents and advocates who strive to make Downtown Stockton a vibrant, clean, safe, more attractive and desirable place to work, do business, and play.

Funded through investments by public and private landowners collected through an assessment district, the Property Based Business Improvement District (PBID), managed by the 501.C.6 Downtown Stockton Alliance, carries out a wide array of responsibilities and services within 129 blocks of the Downtown District. Each of the focus areas - maintenance, hospitality, economic development and marketing - are aimed at improving the urban district, encouraging investment, marketing local business, and restoring

Downtown as the "heart of the city."

"We were very excited to note in our 2016 Annual Report, that the programs our downtown stakeholders invested in through PBID are making a difference every day in Downtown. We've learned from surveys that Clean and Safe services are always at the top of their priority list and we are making some exciting changes in 2017 to continue improvements to the program," commented Cindi Fargo, DSA's CEO. The District Management Plan guides DSA's investment in Downtown with activities supported by a work plan and annual budget approved by the Board of Directors. The PBID's CEO and staff implement the Management Plan supported by volunteer and Board committees. DSA's Clean and Safe Team is busy 'round the clock to keep Downtown sparkling clean

and safe, and to address any problematic street behavior. One of the more popular hospitality programs is the historic tour of Downtown led by DSA's Resident Historian Ambassador, Manuel Laguna. The tours are free of charge.

Downtown Stockton is changing more quickly now than ever. DSA services are growing to support new investment and housing, more business traffic, and an expanding economy. DSA's efforts are driven by a greater need for housing and an 18-hour economy, coupled with creative entrepreneurs looking for space to work, and a burgeoning interest in cultural development.

To learn more about Downtown Stockton Alliance, visit their website at [www.DowntownStockton.org](http://www.DowntownStockton.org) or call 209-464-5246.



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# Tag-Team Leaders of San Joaquin Medical Society and Health Plan of San Joaquin

Last year was the 50th anniversary of Medicaid. It was also the 20th anniversary of Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ).

In 1996, Dr. Henry Zeiter, an esteemed ophthalmologist and former President of the San Joaquin Medical Society, was one of the creators of Health Plan of San Joaquin and served on the first Health Commission, HP-SJ's governing body.

The state had offered counties the opportunity to take on the role of smoothing out what had been painful gaps in the Medi-Cal program and claims reimbursement system. Up until that point, when the state ran out of money before the end of their fiscal year, practices were forced to endure what could be months of IOUs, making the business of medicine fraught with worries over keeping financially afloat and paying staff.

Henry Zeiter, as one of the HPSJ founders, had the insight that the county could take over this fiduciary role and institute a locally-run, streamlined, consistent payment system. This means that rather than the bad-old days of waiting three-to-four months to get reimbursed for care, providers can be paid, much more quickly.

Importantly, Henry had an additional passion: To continue to promote the care of underserved residents who were increasingly being brought into the Medi-Cal program by California and the federal government. The viable path to access to quality care would need to run through Medi-Cal.

### Passing the Torch

While Dr. Henry Zeiter balanced his practice, family and community health engagement, son Dr. John Zeiter returned to Stockton as a board-certified



Dr. Henry Zeiter



Dr. John Zeiter

ophthalmologist and was taking up a lead role in managing the thriving Zeiter Clinic. This meant he could fill-in for his father at the practice, while publishing extensively, growing in his field of ophthalmological surgery and eventually becoming a clinical professor of ophthalmology at University of California, Davis Eye Center. Also, he was raising his own young family.

Now, 20 years on, John Zeiter – as he has gained prominence in his specialty, after his children had grown up and after his load lightened, slightly – could find the time and bandwidth to serve as San Joaquin Medical Society (SJMS) president (2016-2017). At the end of his SJMS term, he was ready to join the HPSJ Health Commission.

When Henry Zeiter was on the Commission there were 300 members at the launch of HPSJ. As John Zeiter settles into his own Commission tenure, membership has grown to over 346,000.

Though the scale has grown dramatically, the vision the father helped create and the son now continues remains the same: To continuously improve the health of our community.



## Hahn Tractor Co. Inc. Celebrates 75 Years

(Stockton, CA) Hahn Tractor Company, Inc. is celebrating its 75th Anniversary of being in business it was announced by Roger Hahn, Co-Owner of Hahn Tractor Co. Inc. The family owned and operated company (founded by Stanley Hahn) is a manufacturer of large-scale farm equipment. The company is hosting a barbecue on Friday, February 24 at 11am at its facility to celebrate the anniversary and announce its plans for the future.

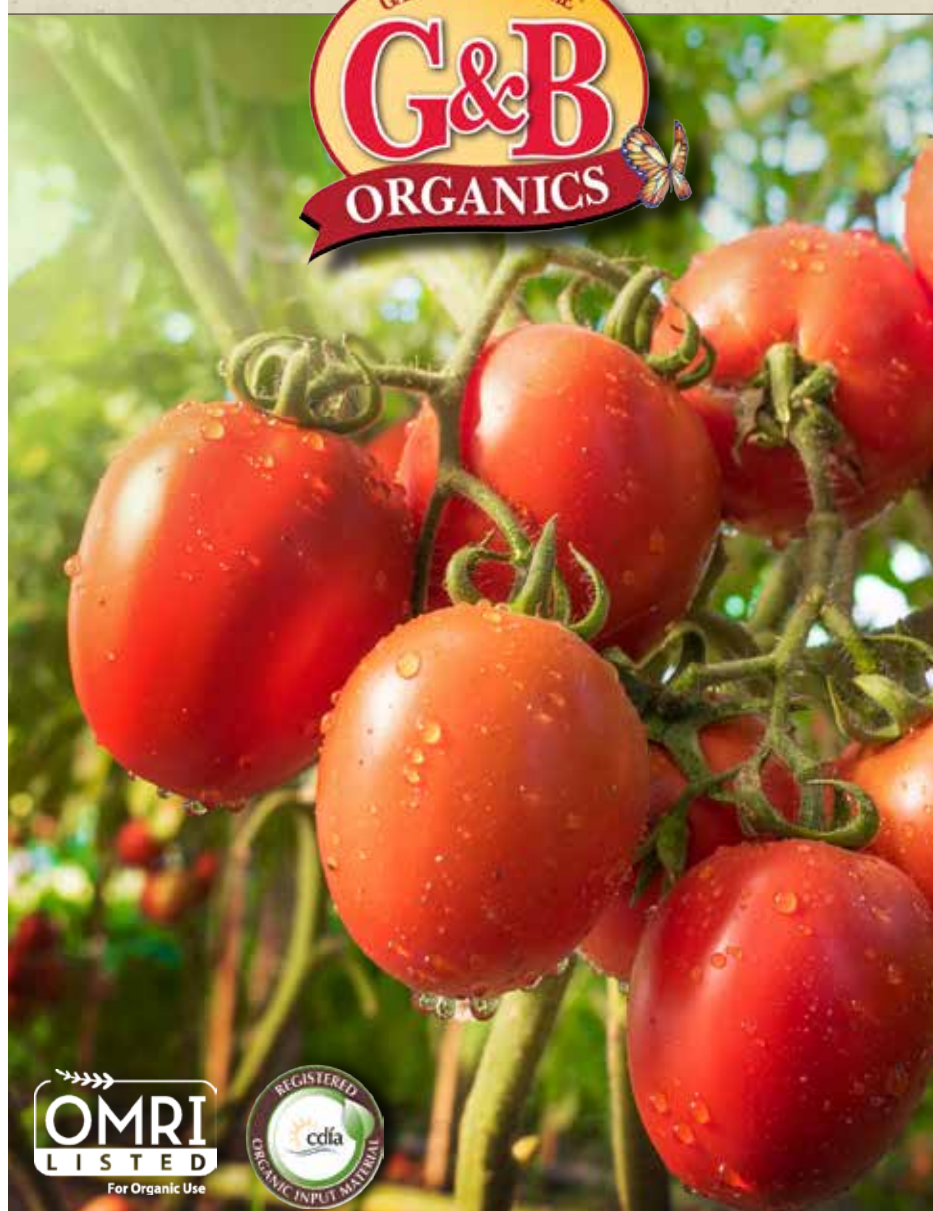
“We are thrilled to still be in business for 75 years and counting,” stated Hahn. “We are committed to providing quality service and equipment to our local farming community. The recent death of our father Cliff has brought many questions and speculations about the future of Hahn Tractor and we hope to address those questions with our customers and supporters.” Cliff Hahn (son of Stanley) was the President of Hahn Tractor for many years and his unexpected death in November last year has left many in the local community wondering whether Hahn Tractor would continue. “My family has experienced a tremendous

outpouring of love & support from the local community and all our farming customers.”

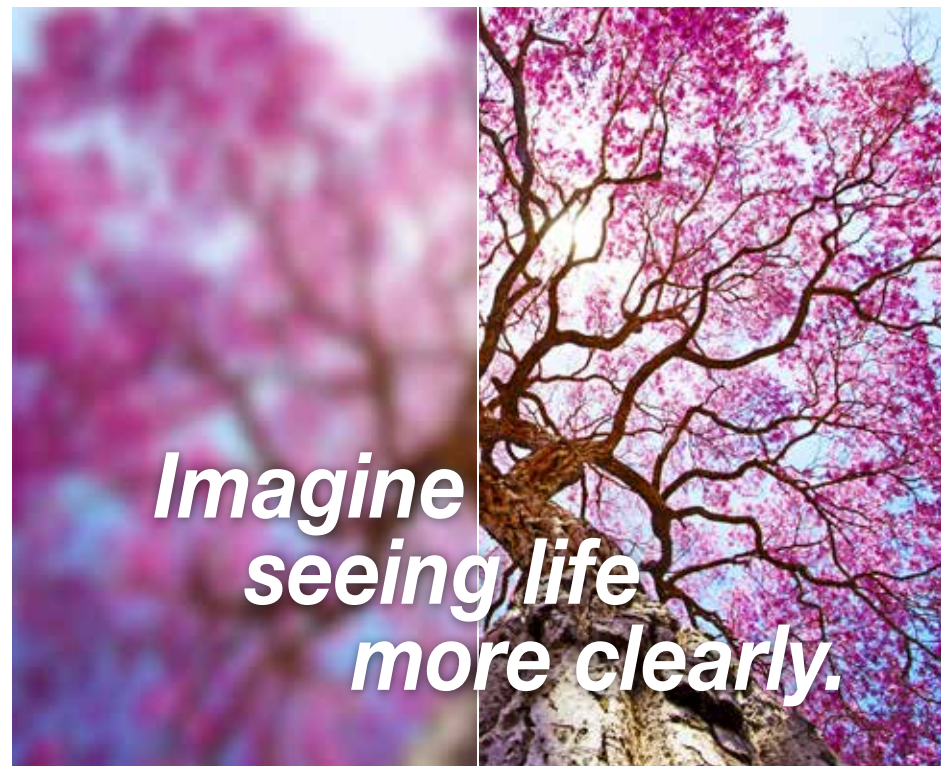
The beginning of Hahn Tractor Co. occurred with Stanley Hahn, who was a draftsman and manufacturer of large-scale farm equipment. He successfully designed and fabricated the first mechanical rice harvester in the San Joaquin Valley. Soon thereafter, his manufacturing and fabrication operation was joined by the first Oliver tractor dealership in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. Stanley's manufacturing remained the cornerstone of their operation but with the addition of a dealership came Cliff's tractor repair, sales and parts divisions and eventually a rental fleet. Stanley and Cliff worked together until Stanley's death in 2008 at age 99 while Cliff was with the company for 43 years until his passing in November.

“Much has changed in agriculture since we first started back in 1943. But quality parts and service will always be the standard for local farmers. That's what we hope to continue as we move into our next 75 years,” said Hahn.

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**Monica Nino**  
San Joaquin County Administrator



**MODERATOR:**

**Sophia Garcia**  
State Director of Government Affairs at Advance America



**Joelle Gomez**

CEO, Children's Home of Stockton  
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**Lisa Vela**

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**Senate President Pro Tem Kevin De Leon (D) S-24**

APAPA Headquarters, Sacramento, CA – Senator Kevin De Leon (D) S-24 is now a member of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus (APILC). Assemblymember Rob Bonta, Chair of APILC asked Senator De Leon to be a member of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus once information was circulated on De Leon’s Chinese heritage. De Leon’s family heralds from Guatemala and recently found out that his father’s birth certificate stated he was Chinese. The members of the California APILC welcomed him with open arms and are excited to work with their new member. This will make De Leon the first Californian of Asian ethnicity

to be the leader of the California Senate. This was confirmed through Anthony Reyes, Director of Communications for Senator De Leon, who stated, “he is now a member of the APILC and has Chinese background.” This is a great time for our nation and the state of California as we move forward to include and empower all ethnicities to take part in our great democracy.

APAPA congratulates and welcomes Senator De Leon to the API community. APAPA looks forward to working with Senator De Leon to empower Asian Pacific Islander Americans through education, leadership and active participation in civic and public affairs.

**Abuelos se convierten en padres... Otra vez**



By Francisco Castro - NAM  
 LOS ANGELES--Cuando se preparaba para jubilarse, María Isabel García se volvió madre, otra vez. Después de criar a sus cuatro hijos, tuvo que empezar a criar tres más, uno de los cuales era sólo un bebé. Una de sus hijas se involucró en un ciclo de drogas, relaciones abusivas y todo tipo de problemas que la dejaron incapacitada para cuidar a sus pequeños hijos. García, oriunda de Jalisco, México, salía al quite. Al principio, durante

períodos cortos donde cuidaba de ellos mientras enderezaba su vida y recuperaba temporalmente la custodia de sus hijos. Pero hace cuatro años, una trabajadora social la llamó de nuevo y le dijo, sin mucho preámbulo, “tienes que venir a buscar a los niños o van a ir a un hogar de crianza”. Ella no vaciló. Unas horas más tarde, tres niños, en ese entonces de 8, 4 y cuatro meses de edad se presentaron en su puerta.

Ver **ABUELOS** Pág 9

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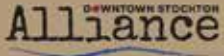
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# Abuelos

continúa en pág. 7

La trabajadora social no aprobó su casa inicialmente. García no tenía lo que un bebé necesitaba. “¿Cómo iba a tener una cuna, si no tenía ningún bebé?”, relata García sobre uno de los problemas que planteó la trabajadora social.

Aún así, los tomó y se las arregló lo mejor que pudo.

“Fue difícil”, admite de ese período en su vida. Ella todavía trabajaba y tuvo que adaptarse a ser una nueva mamá.

“La niña se ponía a llorar y llorar y no sabía qué hacer”, relata.

Cuatro años más tarde, estos son sus hijos. Los adoptó dos años más tarde. Su madre está completamente fuera de su vida. A los 60 años, García es madre soltera. Su única ayuda viene de su propia madre, que con 92 años trata de ayudarlo en lo que puede.

“Mi mamá me ayuda mucho, no podría hacerlo sin ella”, dice García.

A “Mamá Chole”, como los niños llaman a su bisabuela, ya se le olvidan las cosas de vez en cuando y no oye del todo bien, pero lava y dobla la ropa de los pequeños, hace pequeñas tareas y cuida de los tres chicos (tanto como los niños cuidan de ella) cuando García tiene que ir al médico o tiene que ir a hacer sola.

García no se arrepiente. Incluso después de gastar en ellos gran parte del dinero de jubilación que recibió. Ella dice que no obtuvo mucha ayuda del gobierno para los niños hasta casi un año después de que llegaron a quedarse con ella permanentemente.

“Los hijos no traen un manual donde ver qué hacer; con los nietos uno vio las faltas que tuvo y las quiere remediar con ellos”, dice García.

“Mucha energía ya no la tengo, pero tengo más paciencia”, añade.

Sur Los Ángeles, epicentro de los abuelos como padres

García comparte su historia con los abuelos latinos en la misma situación que ella reunidos en Community Coalition. El

grupo se reúne dos veces al mes en la organización con sede en el sur de Los Ángeles, epicentro de este problema en la ciudad.

“El sesenta por ciento de los niños que están con sus abuelos en la ciudad de Los Ángeles están en Sur Centro”, dice Aaron González, un organizador comunitario con la organización que ayuda a estos nuevos padres, muchos de los cuales conoce durante sus visitas regulares a la Corte.

En todo el país, aproximadamente 2.9 millones de niños viven con parientes sin que estén presentes los padres, según el censo de Estados Unidos.

El estudio “Grandfacts” de AARP indica que en California, 287,996 niños viven en hogares donde los abuelos son responsables de ellos (27,250 en el condado de Los Ángeles). De esos abuelos, 31% son blancos, 10% son afroamericanos, 9% son asiáticos, 2% son indios americanos y nativos de Alaska y 47% son latinos.

Y en el caso de los abuelos, dice González – muchos de los cuales sólo hablan español y algunos de ellos son indocumentados – viven en una situación precaria.

Ellos no saben cómo navegar los enredos legales de su nuevo estatus, tal vez temen tratar con las autoridades debido a su estatus migratorio y/o no saben cómo acceder a los pocos recursos disponibles para ellos.

#### Recursos

“Para ellos, todo es nuevo”, señala González. “Muchos de estos abuelos están jubilados y son de bajos ingresos y no saben cómo van a pagar por estos niños”.

Mientras que los padres de crianza temporal pueden obtener \$625 dólares al mes por cuidar a un niño de 0-3 años de edad, y más de \$825 al mes por un adolescente, dice González, los “guardianes cuidadores” sólo reciben alrededor de \$300 dólares al mes del Welfare— a menudo la única ayuda que pueden obtener. Si adoptan a los niños, casi no pueden recibir ninguna ayuda finan-

ciera en absoluto.

De acuerdo con AARP “Grandfacts”, el 15% de los abuelos que crían a nietos como sus propios hijos viven en la pobreza.

Parte del problema, señala “Grandfacts” es que “estos abuelos... A menudo están aislados, carecen de información sobre la gama de servicios de apoyo, recursos, programas, beneficios, leyes y políticas disponibles para ayudarles a cumplir con éxito su papel de guardián”.

Esto obliga a muchos abuelos a tomar de sus ahorros, ya que ponen las necesidades de los niños en primer lugar.

Ser padre no sólo es un compromiso financiero para estos abuelos, sino también emocional y físico.

González sabe de abuelos que faltan a citas médicas, dejan de asistir a funciones sociales e incluso se separan de sus cónyuges o parejas por cuidar a los niños.

“A veces se descuidan ellos físicamente para cuidar a los niños”, dice González.

Esto puede hacer que se sientan indefensos y deprimidos.

Según el estudio “Características de la salud de los abuelos cuidadores solos y padres solteros: un perfil comparativo usando la encuesta de vigilancia del factor de riesgo de comportamiento”, presentado en la conferencia anual de la Sociedad Gerontológica de América en Nueva Orleans en noviembre, “tomar un papel de padre a largo plazo tiene un costo físico y emocional en los abuelos, especialmente al realizar sus responsabilidades sin la ayuda de un cónyuge o de otra persona significativa”.

En comparación con los padres solteros, los abuelos tienen una mayor prevalencia de problemas de salud física

(por ejemplo, la artritis). Ambos grupos de padres tienen una alta prevalencia de la depresión durante toda la vida.

Una mayor proporción de abuelos fueron activamente y no hicieron ejercicio físico recreativo en el último mes, indicó el estudio realizado por Deborah M. Whitley, de la Escuela de Trabajo Social del Colegio Andrew Young de Estudios Políticos de la Universidad Estatal de Georgia y sus colegas Esme Fuller-Thomson y Sarah Brennenstuhl.

Beneficios para los niños

Pero la recompensa, en términos de bienestar para los niños, es notable.

De acuerdo con el análisis Children’s Thrive de Generations United publicado en julio de 2016, en comparación con los niños bajo cuidado de personas que no son sus familiares, los niños que están bajo el cuidado de sus familiares experimentan: mayor estabilidad, menos probabilidad de volver a ingresar al sistema de casas de crianza después de regresar con sus padres biológicos, mayor seguridad, mejores resultados de comportamiento y de salud mental, menos probabilidades de intentar huir y más probabilidades de reportar que “siempre se sintieron amados”.

Y el amor entre García y sus tres nuevos hijos es palpable.

Después que termina la reunión entre todos estos abuelos latinos en Community Coalition, Pablo, de 8 años, y Soledad, de 4 años, se encuentran con su “mamá” en la puerta y la abrazan y la besan. Ella les sonríe cariñosamente.

Ella sabe que están a salvo.

“Se siente uno a gusto que los niños no van a parar a un lugar, ¿quién sabe dónde?”, dice.



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## Lawmakers Urge Low-Income Households to Take Advantage of CA Earned Income Tax Credit

CALIFORNIA – Tax preparers from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program filed the returns of at least 70 low- and middle-income families and individuals for free on Saturday, February 18 at San Bernardino Valley College. The filing drive was hosted by CalEITC4Me, a statewide campaign which has partnered with VITA to spread awareness about California's earned income tax credit (EITC).

Festivities included music, food, face-painting and paperwork at the "Tacos and Taxes" event.

"Our working families need a boost," House Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA) of the state's 31st district told attendees at Saturday's event. "They need help, and programs like this are so important to make sure they have an opportunity to succeed and advance their families."

Last year, the new California EITC distributed nearly \$200 million to some 377,000 low-income households, according to the chair of the California State Board of Equalization, Fiona Ma. Claimants who submitted their tax returns were credited an average of more than \$500, but some taxpayers stand to gain almost \$2,700 if they file this year, depending on the size of their families and incomes. Currently, a family of three would have to bring in less than \$14,000 a year to qualify for the California EITC.

Ma is currently sponsoring a proposal authored by California Assemblywoman Anna Caballero (D-Salinas) that would make it easier to qualify for the credit. Assembly Bill 225 would increase the

threshold of eligibility to \$21,840, which is equivalent to single year's earnings at minimum wage.

The state credit has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of working people since lawmakers approved the program in June 2015, according to Ma and others engaged in efforts to encourage more taxpayers to take advantage of the tax credit.

The money often goes toward a family's necessities like food, shelter, transportation, or clothing for their children, according to Joe Sanberg, the founder of The Golden State Opportunity Foundation, which is the nonprofit behind the CalEITC4Me campaign.

"I know ... people are using their California earned income tax credit to create a better life for their families and better, safer homes for their kids," said Sanberg during Saturday's filing drive.

A number of those who qualify for the California EITC work part-time while attending universities or community colleges, and will likely use their tax refunds to help fund their educations, according to San Bernardino Valley College board member Frank Reyes. He says the state credit, along with the federal EITC and special tax incentives for college students, can go a long way in paying for expenses like textbooks, tuition, and parking.

Last year, some 67 percent of those who qualified for the California EITC actually filed their taxes, which was an extraordinary result for a brand new program, according to Sandberg. However, the remaining 33 percent of unfiled re-

turns equates to thousands of households that missed out on significant financial assistance.

Every year, billions of dollars in federal refunds go unclaimed nationwide, according to Jerrie Muir, a tax consultant representing the Internal Revenue Service at Saturday's event. He told New America Media that leftover money just sits with the treasury department and never returns to taxpayers because hundreds of thousands of Americans choose not to file.

Many low-income workers who are exempted from having to submit their taxes say it might not be worth it to go through the hassle of processing their tax information or paying someone else to do it for them. Some people have reported paying as much as \$600, according to volunteer tax preparer Enid Hernandez.

However, VITA provides IRS-certified services at absolutely no cost to households that bring in less than \$50,000 of income annually. The program accepts both walk-ins and appointments at offices throughout the country, which are open Monday through Saturday. In addition, VITA and CalEITC4Me are planning a number of outreach events and filing drives like "Tacos and Taxes" in the weeks leading up to the April 18 filing deadline.

"There are so many options, why not come and check them out?" says Hernandez.

Ma cautions people to be on the lookout for unscrupulous individuals who may try to cheat them out of their EITC. She says con artists may say they

offer free tax assistance to low-income families before charging them part or all of their refund in made-up fees.

Ma and others involved in the CalEITC4Me campaign hope to ensure that the money gets to households struggling on a day-to-day basis to cover the cost of living.

"None of us should have to experience financial stress at all times, but 25 percent of California lives in this constant state of economic anxiety," Sanberg said. "We have to remember that there is something deeper here than the numbers that describe the problems. It's individual families and human beings."

More information regarding the California EITC can be found at CalEITC4Me.org. Individuals who would like to schedule an appointment or learn more about tax preparation services can also contact VITA.

Taxpayers who received assistance from VITA on Saturday were keen on maintaining their privacy, which Hernandez said was typical of her clients. However, many refund recipients described themselves as part-time and seasonal workers or retirees, and shared lists of fixed expenses like rent, car payments and food budgets that would consume most of their returns.

They also said volunteers were courteous and knowledgeable, and described their experiences as painless. The process took no more than an hour for most people, many of whom said they were excited and even surprised by the amount of money being refunded to them.



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# World Meeting of Popular Movements – Community Change Starts With Us!

**OPINION  
EDITORIAL**

By Diana Cisneros

I am part of a community that is currently stricken by fear. Political tensions have changed the reality that many individuals face in Kern County and transformed their realities into terrorizing nightmares.

As I traveled to Modesto to attend the first World Meeting of Popular Movements to be held in the United States, an annual gathering of global social justice leaders and grass-roots community representatives who advocate for workers' rights, housing, and environmental justice, I had plenty of time to reflect on the issues in my own Bakersfield community and prepare myself to fight for my people.

My personal 'pelea' centers on the advocacy for affordable healthcare and an urgent need for immigration reform. My neighbors and my familia serve as protagonists of their own narrative, but the story they tell isn't one that entertains; it elicits a cry for help. During a time where social injustices predominate and oppress vulnerable populations, it has been difficult for me not to feel hopeless and numb. I have found myself incredulous of what is going on in our country and often feel unable to think, unable to act – herein fell my spiritual needs. The invitation to attend WMPM as a youth participant came at the right time and I was ex-

cited for the opportunity to learn and grow as a leader.

Never in my life, did I imagine that I would sit side by side with brothers and sisters from all over the world: Haiti, Uganda, Michigan, Texas, Hawaii, Arizona, North Dakota, and various regions in California. Nor could I have imagined that I would immediately identify with the pain and suffering of others, and I'd embrace others while we cried.

We collectively shared our stories, pain, and fight. The leaders presented on their enduring struggles for the issues they have committed to, which protect human dignity, and called for continued advocacy

As I listened to what the leaders had to share, I felt some embarrassment.

I am passionate about the issues I care about, but how am I actively working to fight back and challenge current conditions? I'm not. Although this realization made me uncomfortable, it challenged me and caused me to step-back and ask myself 'what more should I be doing?'

Since attending WMPM, I decided that from here on I'd actively work to disrupt oppression and dehumanization to protect families and communities. I will work towards making my community a safe place for everyone, by asking local clergy to open their doors as sanctuary for

those unjustly targeted. I will work to ensure political power reflects our communities, by holding officials accountable and encourage community members to be civically engaged. And I will continue to tell to the stories of my community.

As a youth participant who was provided the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to attend this conference, it is my responsibility to bring back the experience and gained knowledge to share with my community.

I am no longer numb; I am awakened mentally/emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

I wasn't aware of the physical handicap I had been experiencing that resulted from my fear. As a person of faith, I learned that I had only been praying on my knees, not on my feet.

I am now empowered and have the confidence to answer the cries of not only my community, but global cries as well. We all must work together, now more than ever, and stay loud for the vulnerable communities being unjustly targeted.

My hope for the future is that collectively, we are able to recognize that our individual struggles are not isolated incidents and that we are all in this fight together. Humanity absolutely has the capacity to build bridges over differences, empathize, and unite. It starts with us!



*Diana Cisneros, a graduate student at University of Southern California and a youth reporter for South Kern Sol youth media was invited to attend World Meeting of Popular Movements in Modesto, Ca., the first to be held on U.S. soil, and in her own California backyard. WMPM, an initiative of Pope Francis to promote global dialogue with faith-based and community leaders, does not traditionally include youth representatives but this year it was opened up to include select youth from the state.*

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