

Jose Padilla, CRLA Executive Director; George Ramirez, Market President; Haydee Diaz, CRLA Development Director



**You make us proud
to be part of this community.**

Union Bank of California is honored to be the exclusive sponsor of the 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign for California Rural Legal Assistance. We are proud to support your goal in providing assistance to low-income migrant working communities of California.

In our community there are individuals who come together for a greater good. People who strive to make a difference, taking the extra step needed to create a better life for all of us. At Union Bank of California we are proud to be your neighbor. May your hard work and community spirit continue to inspire us all.

Community Banking Group

George Ramirez, Market President, 445 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071, (213) 236-6960

Diverse Markets Administration

Maria Gallo, Senior Vice President, 400 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94104, (415) 765-2607

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CRLA 40TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN



Inside 2006: Where are we Now?

- 📍 **Carlos Santana, Los Lobos and Herbie Hancock perform at 3rd annual Tequio Celebration**
- 📍 **CRLA receives \$125,000 matching grant for 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign**
- 📍 **Got Justice? California's milk and dairy industry must pay over \$1 million in owed wages to workers**

Save the Date:

Join us in celebrating 40 years of justice in the fields

- 📅 **SEPTEMBER 9, Los Angeles Tardeada at the home of Tomas Olmos and Dolores Leal**
- 📅 **OCTOBER 22, San Francisco Tardeada at the Presidio, Golden Gate Park**
- 📅 **NOVEMBER 4, San Diego Tardeada at the Museum of Natural History, Balboa Park**

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San Francisco, CA 94105-3907

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Photo by Sergio Flores

Third Annual Tequio Celebration

On March 1, 2006 just over 600 CRLA friends and supporters took to the dance floor as two of the most popular Latin rock icons, Los Lobos and Carlos Santana, jammed on stage together for the first time in five years. This delightful impromptu performance was just one celebratory aspect of CRLA's Third Annual Téquio event at the Los Angeles Beverly Hilton Hotel.

The word "téquio" refers to the indigenous community's commitment to community service. Among some indigenous groups, téquio represents a rite of passage where a person is reminded to give back to his or her native village. They are required to put aside existing obligations (employment, education) for up to a year in order to return to their roots and perform this important civic duty for the community at large.

The purpose of the Téquio event is both to honor individuals that carry on this tradition of community service and to raise money and awareness about CRLA's work with indigenous communities. In 1993, CRLA became the first legal aid project to serve the needs of the growing indigenous farmworker population by creating the Indigenous Project. Through six offices statewide, CRLA's Indigenous Project has successfully collaborated with local indigenous community councils to provide legal assistance, community outreach and educational trainings to thousands of indigenous farmworkers and their families each year. Today, CRLA's Indigenous Project employs 6 indigenous outreach staff, which is more than all the combined local, state and federal agencies in California.

This year, CRLA honored Carlos and Deborah Santana for demonstrating the spirit of téquio through their work with the Milagro Foundation. The Milagro Foundation was founded to benefit underprivileged children around the world in the areas of health, education, and the arts. Energized by the powerful words of Mr. Santana, as well as several other speakers including community worker Irma Luna, and CRLA clients, the night culminated with celebratory dancing to the music of Los Lobos, Carlos Santana, and jazz legend Herbie Hancock.

For many, this rare musical collaboration for classics like "Guajira" and "La Bamba" was the highlight of the evening.

continues on page 3

CRLA 40TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

CALIFORNIA RURAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INC.

CRLA receives \$125,000 matching grant

CRLA and Union Bank of California announced a groundbreaking partnership at the 3rd Annual Tequio Celebration, a kick-off event held in Los Angeles on March 1 for CRLA's 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign. Union Bank of California will match every donation made to CRLA during its 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign, up to \$125,000. By doubling donor contributions to CRLA, Union Bank of California helps increase the number of CRLA community workers and attorneys providing direct community education, outreach, and legal services to California's working-poor rural communities, especially farmworkers and their families.



Jose Padilla, CRLA Executive Director, accepts a \$125,000 matching grant from Union Bank of California's George Ramirez (Market President for Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura Counties) and Maria Gallo (Senior Vice President for Diverse Markets). Union Bank of California is the exclusive sponsor of CRLA's 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign.

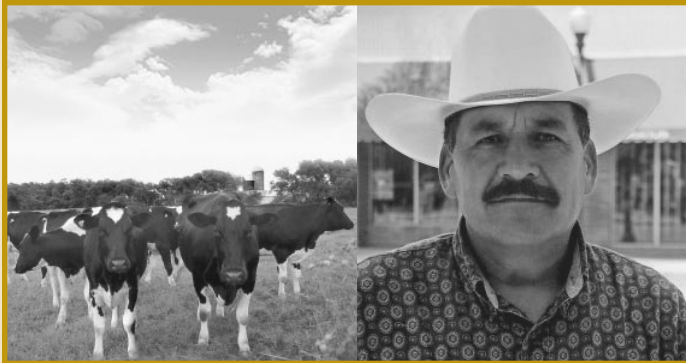
Photo by Sergio Flores

This groundbreaking partnership continues Union Bank of California's legacy of supporting CRLA. Fifteen years ago, before any major corporation realized the economic power of Latinos, George Ramirez, then a Union Bank of California Branch President, recognized the value in helping farmworkers in his community. "In the early 90s, CRLA turned to George because farmworkers were being robbed shortly after cashing their paychecks. They didn't have driver's licenses to open bank accounts, so they carried a week's worth of wages with them," explains Jose Padilla, CRLA Executive Director. CRLA asked George if he could arrange to permit farmworkers to use an alternative form of identification. George agreed to open bank accounts for individuals with matricula consular cards, an identification card the Mexican consulate commonly issued to farmworkers. The strategy was a huge success. In fact, Union Bank of California, by establishing bank accounts for individuals with matricula consular cards, was one of the first institutions to make banking accessible to immigrant workers. This pioneering strategy is now practiced throughout the banking industry.

continues on page 3

CRLA Attorneys Win Major Victories for Dairy Workers

Got Justice? How California's milk and cheese producers cheat workers out of their wages.



While the California Milk Advisory Board blankets our TV screens and magazine pages with milk-mustached celebrities and happy cows, California's dairy workers are anything but happy. During the past 18 months, CRLA has recovered more than \$1 million dollars in unpaid wages, overtime pay, and penalties from dairies for workers who were forced to labor 7 days a week, 12-14 hours a day, for less than \$4.35 an hour (a violation of California's minimum wage of \$6.75 an hour).

Augustine Rodriguez Ortiz was one such worker. When Mr. Ortiz missed a day of work at a Central Valley dairy to be with his wife as she gave birth, the dairy owner fired him. Like many workers, Mr. Ortiz was required to live on the dairy and provide round-the-clock care for the cows. Along with firing Mr. Ortiz, the dairy owner evicted the family from their modest home and forbade them from returning to retrieve their belongings, a violation of California law. Suddenly homeless with a newborn son, a 2-year old daughter, and his wife who had given birth, Mr. Ortiz contacted CRLA.

Did you know?

The rate of injury on dairy farms is higher than in all other types of agriculture and all private industry, according to a 2003 report in the *Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health*. Over the last five years, 3 California dairy workers, Enrique Araiza, Jose Alatorre and Sergio Ortiz, were killed on the job when they were overcome by the methane gas produced by cow manure. The workers lives could have been saved if their employers had provided them with protective gear and safety trainings similar to what is required by law in other industries such as construction and meat packing.

Mr. Ortiz, like many other farm workers, was lured to dairy work by the promise of year-round employment and a \$1500 a month salary. He had no idea he would be forced to work day and night shifts without breaks, day after day; all for wages far below the minimum required by California law. Mr. Ortiz worked 12 to 14 hours a day, seven days a week, for an average of \$4.35 an hour, \$2.40 cents an hour below the mandatory minimum wage.

Mr. Ortiz's case is just one example of practices by California dairies to cheat workers out of the minimum wage, overtime pay, and rest and meal breaks. Last year, a Tulare County dairy paid \$385,000 to settle a lawsuit CRLA, Inc. and the CRLA Foundation brought forth on behalf of dairy workers who were denied the minimum wage, overtime, and rest breaks. In February of this year, CRLA attorneys settled two other cases with Central Valley dairies on behalf of workers who were cheated out of over \$464,000 in wages. Mr. Ortiz sadly passed away during the lawsuit, but CRLA recovered nearly a year's worth of wages for his wife and children. Yet many more workers continue to contact CRLA with reports of being victimized.

"This is a problem with dairies throughout the state," said Blanca Bañuelos, a CRLA attorney who has represented dairy workers in several cases. "CRLA receives many complaints from dairy workers, that they work overtime but do not receive overtime payment, that they cannot take rest breaks, and that the dairies don't give them wage statements tracking their hours, wages, or taxes withheld."

"Dairies are California's second largest industry with over \$35.1 billion dollars of economic activity each year. They spend \$37 million dollars each year promoting their "Real California Cheese" and "got milk?" campaigns, yet their workers are among the lowest paid and most abused in the state," explains Jose Padilla, CRLA's executive director. "We hope that these lawsuits convince dairies that they must comply with the law and pay their workers the minimum wage and overtime."

How can you help ensure the workers who provide our milk and cheese are paid the minimum wage? Contribute directly to the CRLA Dairy Fund (just write "dairy fund" in the memo line of the check). Or, if you are an attorney who would like to donate your pro bono services to CRLA's dairy work please call or email: Haydee Diaz at 415-777-2794 extension 338 or hdiaz@crla.org

Third Annual Tequio Celebration

continued from page 1

For CRLA staff, the highlight was the sense of community that the night itself generated as people discussed ways to give back to their community. Through this event and the awareness that it spawns, we hope to increase the number of indigenous farmworkers and their families that we serve.

Looking back on the past 40 years of CRLA's existence, we are reminded of the groups and individuals that fostered our growth as an organization, and we thank you for demonstrating the true meaning of tequio. We are especially grateful for the generous support of Frank Perez of Moreno & Perez, LLC and Matt McNicholas of McNicholas & McNicholas, LLP for making this event possible.

CRLA's role in the Immigration Debate

CRLA is part of a national effort to pass legislation that will provide farm workers and other Latino immigrants with the opportunity to become U.S. residents. When such legislation passes, CRLA will have the important role of being the leading legal support center in California helping hundreds of thousands of farmworkers and other Latino immigrants apply for and obtain legal status.

40th Anniversary Retrospective: Moving forward toward sustained social change

As we celebrate our 40th Anniversary of serving California's rural working poor, we recognize the very basic responsibility of bringing equal justice and legal access for those most in economic need. We believe that farm workers, dairy workers, hotel maids, restaurant workers and day laborers and their families have a right to decent living and working conditions, as well as access to health care and educational opportunity.

We are proud of the CRLA history that reflects significant successes in correcting social and human injustices against low-income Latino and other working-poor communities. A few examples of our work:

- ☉ In the 1970s, CRLA challenged the IQ testing of non-English speaking children and prevented hundreds of school districts throughout the state from assigning thousands of Latino children to classes for the mentally disabled.
- ☉ In the mid-1970s, CRLA's advocacy eliminated the use of the short-handled hoe that permanently disabled thousands of Latino farm workers.
- ☉ In 1981, CRLA enacted the most comprehensive Migrant educational law in the country to help migrant school children.
- ☉ In 1990, CRLA forced \$20 million restoration from cuts in funding for family planning and health care for poor Californians.
- ☉ In 2000, CRLA in conjunction with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, on behalf of Latino trailer park residents filed administrative complaints that resulted in a HUD enforcement agreement with Riverside County for \$21 million dollars.
- ☉ In 2002, CRLA brought the first sexual harassment case on behalf of a Latina farm worker that resulted in a \$1.8 million

CRLA Receives Matching Grant

continued from page 1

"With the help of our donors, Union Bank's matching grant will make a big difference in our ability to bring justice to farmworkers who have been sprayed by pesticides or children who are denied access to health care," explains Jose Padilla.

How can you help CRLA match 100% of Union Bank's \$125,000 grant? Donate to CRLA. Every dollar donated to CRLA's 40th Anniversary Justice Campaign will be doubled. Turn your \$50 contribution into \$100, \$250 into \$500, \$1000 into \$2000. Each dollar you give directly supports CRLA's work with farmworkers and other low-wage workers in the fields, and their families.



CONGRATULATIONS CRLA! Look how far we have come...CRLA attorneys and community workers pose outside the El Centro office circa 1970.

- dollar settlement; CRLA efforts have led for sexual harassment in the agricultural industry to be a top priority area within the EEOC.
- ☉ In 2002, CRLA saw the completion of the Casas San Miguel Housing Development. Thirty-two homes were built after the Tall Trees Trailer Park, home to a majority of Oaxacan immigrants, was found to be built on a Superfund toxic dump site. Ultimately, 58 families received new homes.
- ☉ In 2004, CRLA advocated successfully to end the State Department of Education's practice of refusing to allocate federal No Child Left Behind money to bi-lingual classrooms, resulting in multi-million of dollars for Latino children's education.

For justice to exist, it needs cultivation, nurturing and vigilance. We look forward to your continued support in the next 40 years as we continue to create new progressive laws, eliminate old oppressive ones, and develop a stronger relationship with Californians in the most economic need— as their defender, their teacher, their student...making the word of law their own.

DONATE NOW TO CRLA'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN AND UNION BANK WILL DOUBLE YOUR DONATION*

Your individual gift to CRLA is needed. When you contribute to CRLA, you take an active role in ensuring that California's poorest communities have access to justice.

Your donation will directly support CRLA's work to:

- ☉ Ensure access to safe and decent housing for working-poor families
- ☉ Fight sexual harassment in the agricultural industry
- ☉ Advocate for immigrant civil rights
- ☉ Enforce the right of all children in California to a quality education
- ☉ Guarantee workers receive their wages for an honest day's work
- ☉ Promote health access and health care for low-income children and their parents

(*UP TO \$125,000)



please send your donation in the attached envelope