



# FROM THE GROUND UP

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**SAF** Student Action  
with Farmworkers

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SAF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to bring students and farmworkers together to learn about each other's lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change.



# Field Notes

There was no one around as we drove the van down a gravel road to a hidden community of trailers far behind a tobacco field. It was around 8pm, overcast, and raining steadily. With the rain there was almost no one to be seen, other than a few workers trudging through the mud with their heads down, carrying a roll of toilet paper towards the three small outhouses that made up the bathrooms for themselves and 40 coworkers.

Like most days of outreach, we passed out gloves to protect overworked hands in the field, and bags designed to carry water during 12-hour days with few breaks. We thanked them for their work, and let them know there were people here who cared about them. But that day, we mostly just listened. One man told us how lonely he was. They had no way to leave the camp, he said, other than two hours a week to the local Walmart. He had come to the United States, but this tobacco field and the road to the Walmart were the only things he had seen. The thing he missed the most was his car. He missed feeling free; he felt trapped here. Another man told us that he wished he had a guitar. There was so little to do, he said, nothing more than work, eat, and sleep. The few minutes of spare time were used trying to speak to his family back home in Mexico.

I looked around the rainy camp, imagining the loneliness these men felt. In the middle of a foreign country without transportation, so far from their families, living in trailers cramped with men and filled with flies. One man solemnly joked that he didn't have to shower in the morning because he was so drenched with sweat when he woke up – there was no air-conditioning here. I walked towards the outhouses nearby. As I approached, I recoiled at the smell; there was no running water. Was this truly the housing being provided to humans in my state? It was getting dark, and we drove back down the long gravel road out to the main road. To anyone driving by, there was no trace of the men living in trailers back behind the fields. As we drove home, I looked out at the tobacco fields and cornfields glistening with rain, a dark blue sky full of stars overhead. This was my state and it was beautiful, but this beauty was in such stark contrast to the scene I had just witnessed at the camp. What was the beauty of North Carolina if it came along with a lack of dignity and respect for the human beings living and working in our state?

– Kate Walker, 2018 SAF intern  
Episcopal Farmworker Ministry

From the SAF Field Notes blog  
Read more student reflections at [saf-unite.tumblr.com](http://saf-unite.tumblr.com)

# 2017–2018 Program Participants

## Levante Leadership Institute Members

Alejandra Araiza  
Andrés Vazquez  
Blanca Trejo-Muñoz  
Carlos Trejo-Muñoz  
Jesús Cabrera  
Juan Araiza  
Juan Ibarra  
Karina Ibarra  
Maria Celeste Carbajal  
Nestor Tellez

## Solidaridad Interns

Aarón Sánchez Guerra,  
NC State University  
Jackeline Leyva,  
Johnston County Community College  
José Sandoval,  
UNC-Chapel Hill  
Lina Palancares,  
Duke University  
Maria Lopez Gonzalez,  
Wake Tech Community College  
Norma De Jesus,  
Duke University

## Into the Fields Interns & Fellows

### STUDENT/ SCHOOL

\*Aarón Sánchez Guerra, NC State Univ.  
Alicia Mojarra, University of Idaho  
April Salas, Valdosta State University  
Carlos Bolaines, CSU-Fresno  
Carlos Vazquez, University of Idaho  
Cayla Rodney, East Carolina University  
Doris Fernandez, CSU-Fresno  
Jacqueline Avina, CSU-Sacramento  
Jailene Rodriguez, East Carolina University  
Karina Velasquez-Galindo, Wayne C.C.  
Kate Walker, UNC-Chapel Hill  
\*Kendall Harkey, NC State University  
\*Kirsten Alfaro, University of Minnesota  
Leonor Victoria, CSU-Sacramento  
Lourdes Velasquez, UNC-Chapel Hill  
Lucy Thames, UNC-Chapel Hill  
Maggie Helms, UNC-Chapel Hill  
\*Margarita Guerrero, St. Edward's University  
Nicole Arguedas Villalobos, East Carolina Univ.  
Patricia Valle, St. Edward's University  
Rigo Santiago, NC State University  
\*Scarlett Chavez-Larios, Appalachian State  
Shelby Cline, Davidson College  
\*\*Veronica Aguilar, UNC-Chapel Hill  
Victoria Nwankudu, Wofford College

\* Fellow

\*\* Program Assistant

### HOST ORGANIZATION/ STATE

NC Farmworkers' Project  
Sampson Co. Migrant Education, NC  
SC Migrant Education Program  
Good Samaritan Clinic, NC  
Legal Aid NC-Farmworker Unit, NC  
SC Legal Services  
Lenoir Co. Migrant Education, NC  
SC Migrant Education Program  
Piedmont Health Services, NC  
Lenoir Co. Migrant Education, NC  
Episcopal Farmworker Ministry, NC  
Piedmont Health Services, NC  
Black River Health Center, NC  
SC Legal Services  
NC Justice Center / New Frame LLC  
Good Samaritan Clinic, NC  
SC Migrant Education Program  
Vecinos Inc. Farmworker Health, NC  
NC Farmworkers' Project  
SC Migrant Education Program  
National Farm Worker Ministry, NC  
Wake Forest School of Medicine, NC  
NC FIELD  
Student Action with Farmworkers, NC  
Western NC Workers' Center



# Impact on Alumni

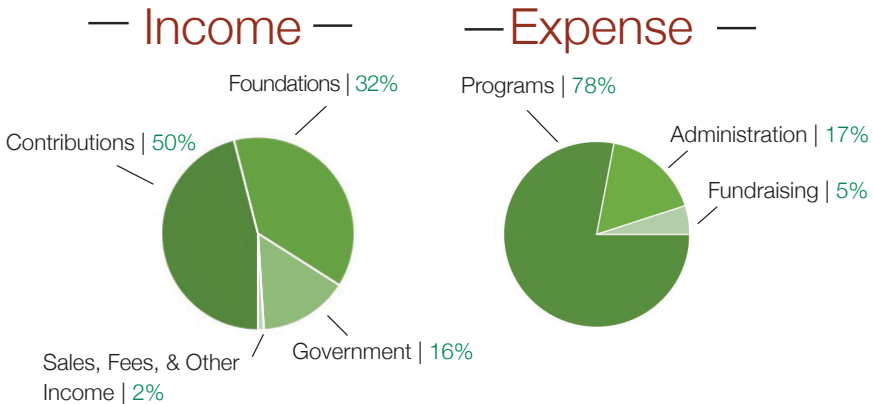
As a result of participating in a SAF program,  
alumni reported that ...



\* 2018 survey targeted alumni celebrating their 1, 5, & 10 year anniversaries

## Finance Report 2017-2018

From September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018, SAF received \$876,043 in support and revenue: 50% from contributions, 32% from foundation grants, 16% from government grants, and 2% from sales, fees, & other income. Total expenses for 2017-2018 were \$718,170. Program costs accounted for 78% of SAF's expenses, while 17% went to administrative costs, and 5% to fundraising.



# SAF: Behind the Scenes



## Staff & Board News

- Welcomed Maria Lopez Gonzalez as our new Operations Manager
- Celebrated Communications Arts Director Joanna Welborn's 10 years on SAF staff
- Increased board leadership, giving, and fundraising
- Held quarterly staff retreats and monthly Learning Thursdays where we learned about disability rights, grassroots organizing, community/self care, sexual orientation and gender identity expression, and discussed the cultural and political context we're working in



## Management & Fundraising News

- Restructured financial roles & procedures; researched new health & retirement plans for staff
- Discussed a long-term plan for our office space
- Integrated a new online platform to better evaluate our work and communicate with volunteers & program participants
- Received new funding from Oxfam America
- Raised \$24,876 from 356 individual donors thanks to alumni, board, and supporters who coordinated online fundraising campaigns
- Honored with the GSK IMPACT Award for our work addressing critical community health challenges



# Technology in the Fields

*By SAF Solidaridad intern Elizabeth Cieza*

This year we harnessed the power of technology to create new tools, resources, and means of connection to impact farmworkers and their families

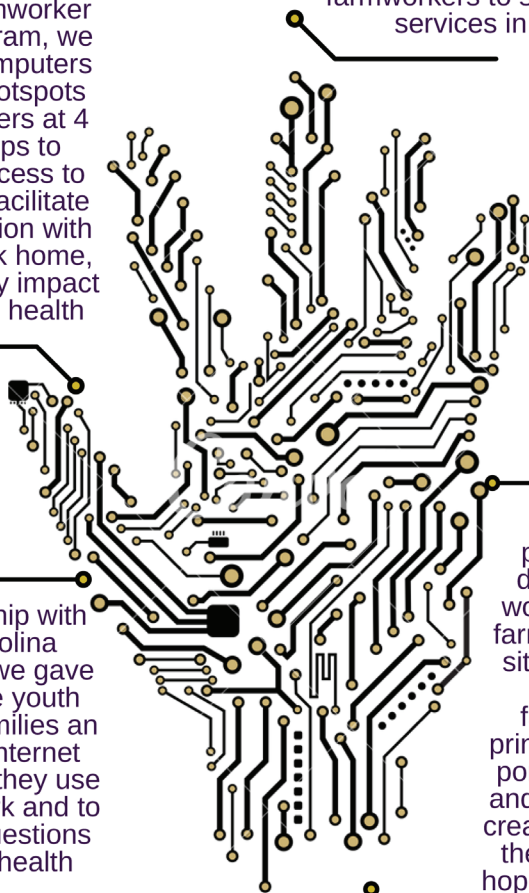
With support from the NC Farmworker Health Program, we provided computers and Wi-Fi hotspots to farmworkers at 4 labor camps to increase access to resources, facilitate communication with families back home, and positively impact their mental health

ConéctateCarolina.org, an app we developed with Code the Dream, allows farmworkers to search for services in NC

We partnered with Duke Story+ to research the more than 350 documentary projects in our archives & edit selected work into a series of short videos about farmworkers and SAF

In partnership with East Carolina University, we gave 10 Levante youth and their families an iPad with internet access that they use for homework and to research questions related to health

We held participatory documentary workshops with farmworkers at 3 sites in NC and SC, where farmworkers printed photos on portable printers and used them to create zines about their memories, hopes and dreams



# Stories from the fields

It's been 29 days, 5 days a week, and 5 weeks worth of challenges, laughter, tears, Mexican cuisine, and anger. I asked Cayla, my intern partner, "Do you really think people live here?" as we walked down the long road in the pouring rain, stepping in lumps of mud.

A few words that make me think of a farmworker? Someone with dreams, fortaleza, strength, courage, optimism.

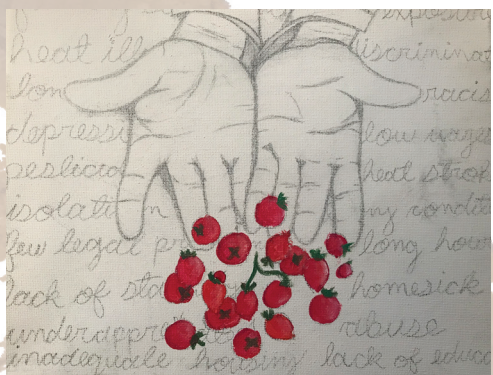
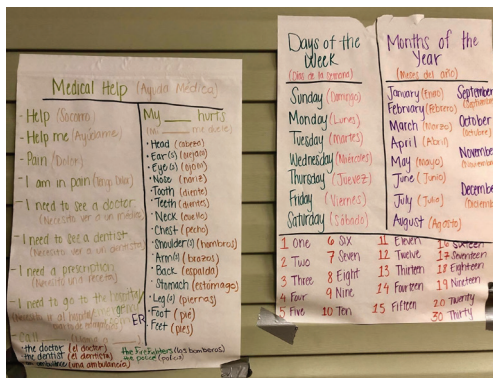
Hola bebé,  
It doesn't look a lot like  
in the movies or T.V.  
Just a bunch of fields and trees,  
Cars every now and then  
I eat the same food, see the same  
ugly people  
I took a bus all the way here for a  
more boring México, is what I told  
Jorge  
But I'll be home soon, ya sólo  
me falta un mes.

Sinceramente,  
Tu gran amor

They are the faces of strangers that  
have become my most unlikely friends.  
They are the giggles at my American  
accent when I speak in Spanish, the  
smell of peppers in the kitchen and  
the tears over their families left behind.  
They are the hands that feed us.







## ISSUES

During our participatory theater & documentary workshops, workers discussed the following challenges:

- the need for more work ("we haven't worked for a month"), better jobs, education, legal services, English classes, and information on unions
- the need for internet access, a bed, a better mattress, air conditioning
- to be treated with dignity rather than discrimination
- issues of long hours and low pay, workplace discrimination, language barriers, alcoholism
- substandard, overcrowded housing with no privacy; living in a hotel with no kitchen to cook in; tension among workers living together in close quarters
- fears of forgetting their families back home; long periods of living away from their families

## IMPACT

After our theater & documentary workshops, workers reported learning about:

- issues other farmworkers face in their camps and communities
- their rights as farmworkers
- documentary and theater for social change
- information on resources available to them

And reported feeling:

- 93% feel more pride in being a farmworker
- 88% feel more connected to other farmworkers
- 75% feel more empowered to share their personal stories

# Into the Fields

*"My participation in SAF was an extremely eye-opening experience. I was able to discover through my own eyes the injustices that hard working, resilient farmworkers face every day. My career goals have definitely shifted since finishing this internship and I pledge to keep fighting for farmworkers' rights."*

– Leonor Victoria, 2018 SAF intern



*Twenty-five Into the Fields interns and fellows supported 5963 farmworkers by working full-time with migrant education programs, legal aid offices, rural health clinics, community-based organizations, and farmworker unions.*

## What We Did:

- Conducted focus groups with 36 farmworkers to learn about their experiences with computers and Wi-Fi hotspots placed in their camps
- Provided health education on pesticides, researched garden projects, created ESL lesson plans, and transported workers to doctor appointments
- Performed the play "Las promesas se las lleva el viento / Promises Are Gone with the Wind" and led workshops about H-2A visa workers' rights
- Conducted participatory documentary workshops with farmworkers about the objects, photos, and memories they carry with them
- Lobbied the NC General Assembly for in-state tuition for undocumented students
- Joined workers with the Farm Labor Organizing Committee to protest RJ Reynolds' treatment of tobacco workers



# From the Ground Up

*"I am happy to say that SAF gave me the knowledge, skills, and hope needed to continue fighting for the rights of farmworkers. My parents are farmworkers, I used to work in the fields, and now I am a college student ready to graduate."*

– Jesús García, 2016 SAF alumni



*From the Ground Up* amped up our support for farmworker-led campaigns this year. We organized actions, coordinated screenings, and developed new partnerships & outreach tools to engage more people in the movement.

## What We Did:

- Took action with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Wendy's boycott, Farm Labor Organizing Committee's VUSE e-cigarette boycott, Raising Wages NC's work for increased wages, and Adelante's tuition equity campaign with undocumented youth
- Coordinated National Farmworker Awareness Week with 37 partners & screenings of the film "Dolores" about United Farm Workers cofounder/activist Dolores Huerta
- Engaged alumni in SAF's work through a popular education training, an alumni speaker team, a peer group of alumni in eastern NC, and national alumni calls focused on issues including DACA and immigration
- Conducted over 37 presentations to 1171 people
- Strengthened partnerships with El Colectivo & the Southeast Immigrant Rights Network to work towards justice for immigrants and their families

# Levante Leadership Institute

*"It has been a great experience because it has helped me realize what other people go through, and all of the mistreatment that happens behind the food that we buy in stores that we often take for granted."*

– Blanca Trejo Munoz,  
2017-18 Levante member



*Ten students from farmworker families in eastern NC participated in racial justice, gender & sexual harassment, and farmworker history workshops, created personal documentary work, learned about higher education, & developed leadership skills.*

## What We Did:

- Presented a poster about a community-based participatory research project on child labor at a national research conference in DC
- Received iPads with internet access for the school year, along with training on how to access health information
- Conducted interviews with their parents about family photographs and created documentary projects to reflect on their families' immigration stories
- Visited East Carolina University for a tour and media literacy training
- Exhibited artwork and personal narratives from *I Wouldn't Want to Be Anyone Else*, a two-year collaborative project with Literacy Through Photography
- Assisted with DACA renewal clinics and an Undocugraduation event to lobby for tuition equity for all NC students



# Solidaridad Internship

*"For me, it was really important to balance out my academic experiences with the understanding that different types of learning occur outside a classroom setting. I didn't want to go to school in North Carolina for four years and not understand what was happening around me."*

– Lina Palancares, 2017-18 Solidaridad intern



*Six Solidaridad interns learned about the farmworker justice movement; gained nonprofit leadership skills assisting with our programs, communications, and advocacy & organizing campaigns; and increased our capacity to fulfill our mission.*

## What We Did:

- Performed in *José Learns About Pesticides*, a pesticide safety video for children
- Created flyers, memes, factsheets, and infographics for SAF communications and conducted legislative research about farmworkers
- Tabled and presented at campus & community events including Día de los Muertos and National Farmworker Awareness Week
- Created signs in support of farmworker rights and participated in the annual Historic Thousands on Jones Street march with allies from intersectional movements
- Participated with Levante students in a chicken coop build for a farmworker family in eastern NC and presented to Levante youth about going to college, healthy relationships, and teen dating
- Marched with the CIW Fair Food Campaign and United We Dream's DACA rally

# Thank you to all those who make our work possible!

In our continuing efforts to go green and to use this publication to communicate the impact we've made this year, our full list of donors can be found on our website instead of in the annual report: [saf-unite.org/content/our-donors](http://saf-unite.org/content/our-donors).

Each year we will highlight one special group of donors who has made an important contribution to our work that year. This year we acknowledge our alumni donors that gave \$100+!

## Thank you to our alumni donors:

Alex Harris	Jessica Ruiz	Michael Ivey Taylor
Alice Kathleen Wheet	Joanna & Matt Welborn	Nadeen Bir & Josh Zaslow
Alicia Mojarra	John Moses	Pablo Buenrostro
Alison Blaine	Joseph Lee	Patience H. Perry & L. Baker Perry
Andrea Robinson Kells	Julie C. Wilson	Patricia Valle
Angeline Echeverria	Kate Walker	Pedro Zamora Albor
Ann Webb	Katie Cox	Rachel McGill
Anna Jensen	Keith Kocher	Rachel Rios
April Salas	Kendall Harkey	Rachel Wright Junio
Carlos Vazquez	Kirsten Alfaro	Ramon & Nayeli Zepeda
Charles Webster	Lisa Hazirjian & Michelle Kaiser	Raúl Granados Gámez
Chris Johnson	Lisa Levine	Sarah E. Carroll
Christina Vazquez	Lisa Splawinski	Scarlett Chavez-Larios
Daniel Tubb	Lori Fernald Khamala	Seema & Amol Jain
Dr. Karen Dixon	Lynne Walter	Shelby Cline
Emily Williams & Irving Purata Sanchez	Maggie Helms	Steven Petrow
Emma Lawlor	Margarita Guerrero	Tony Macias
Esteban Echeverria	Melinda Bogardus	Tricia Kakalec
Fred & Palmar Ortmann	Melinda Wiggins & Dave DeVito	Veronica Aguilar
Genevieve Grabman		Victor Canales Gamino

## Thank you to our funders from Sept 2017 - Aug 2018:

Action NC INC	Oxfam America
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs	NC Conference of the United Methodist Church
BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation	NC Farmworker Health Program
Bright Funds Foundation	NC Oral Health Collaborative
Duke Community Care Fund	Sisters of Charity Foundation of SC
Duke Endowment	Triangle Community Foundation's
Duke University Chapel	Anonymous Fund
Food and Nutrition Resources Foundation	Giving Together Fund
Ford Scott Community College	Noel Family Fund
Environmental Protection Agency	Paul Green Foundation Endowment Fund
Foundation for Health, Leadership & Innovation	Wake Forest University School of Medicine
Fund for Democratic Communities	Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing	<i>Special thanks to our Documentary Advisory Group &amp; the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University for their ongoing support.</i>
GSK IMPACT Award	
Hispanics in Philanthropy	
Lyric Foundation	
Oak Foundation	

*We want to recognize all our partners and funders; please contact us if you were inadvertently omitted or if your name should appear in a different way.*



## Thank you to the following faith groups, businesses & partner organizations:

Adelante Education Coalition  
ALA-Guil Council of Church  
Women United  
AM Fiestas  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Black River Health Center  
Bon Appétit at Duke Fuqua  
School of Business  
Bon Appétit Management Co.  
Bull City Burger & Brewery  
Cary Academy  
CATA (Comite de Apoya a  
Trabajadores Agrícolas)  
Center for Documentary Studies  
Church of Reconciliation  
Cocoa Cinnamon  
Durham Co-op Market  
El Centro Hispano  
El Chapin  
El Colectivo  
El Cuscatleco  
El Rodeo Mexican Restaurant  
Episcopal Diocese of NC  
Episcopal Farmworker Ministry  
Farmworker Advocacy Network

Farmworker Association of Florida  
Farmworker Unit - Legal Aid of NC  
Food Forward  
Friendship Friends Meeting  
Fullsteam Brewery  
Good Samaritan Clinic  
Hispanos Unidos de Guilford  
Immaculate Conception Catholic  
Parish  
J&A Transport LLC  
Joe Van Gogh  
Kinston Community Health Center  
La Bonita  
LatinxEd  
Lenoir County Public Schools MEP  
Locopops  
Maple Spring Gardens  
Mighty Tendril Farm  
National Farm Worker Ministry  
National HEP/Camp Association  
NC Farmworkers' Project  
NC FIELD  
NC Justice Center  
New Frame LLC  
One World Market

Palace International  
Peregrine Farm  
Perry-winkle Farm  
Piedmont Health Services  
Piedmont Wholesale Flowers  
Pullen Memorial Baptist Church  
Raising Wages NC  
Sampson County MEP  
Scrap Exchange  
Southeast Immigrant Rights  
Network  
SC Department of Migrant  
Education Program (MEP)  
SC Legal Services  
St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
Tienda y Carnicería La Superior  
UNC APPLES  
UNC-TV  
United Church of Chapel Hill  
Vecinos Inc.  
Vimala's Curryblossom Café  
Wake Forest University School  
of Medicine  
Western NC Workers' Center

## Show up for SAF in 2019!

Mobilize. Take Action. Give Back. Stay Informed.  
[saf-unite.org](http://saf-unite.org)





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