

SAF

STUDENT ACTION WITH FARMWORKERS

Inside this Issue:

- Stories from the Summer.....1
- 2006 ITF Intern Journals...2-5
- Levante Theater Report.....5
- Upcoming Events & Announcements.....6
- SAF Supporters.....6



This summer helped me to understand that I can make a difference in someone's life. It has also taught me that if I want my people to speak up for themselves, I need to start speaking up more.

-Nancy Preciado, 2006 Intern

Check out these photos of the 2006 ITF Interns!

Stories from the Summer: Focus on Intern Writings

by Lupe Huitron, Internship Coordinator of Student Action with Farmworkers

Who are farmworkers? They are our neighbors and friends. In some cases, they are our brothers and sisters, our mothers and fathers. Who are we? We are the children of farmworkers, the neighbors and friends who choose to stand beside them in a unified call for justice and equality.

I was born a poor farmworkers daughter- farm work has been and continues to be a part of my life. When I came to North Carolina one year ago, I wanted to change the world, give my knowledge and experience to workers. I never imagined that I would receive so much in return. Visiting with farmworkers gave me the opportunity to know their fears, concerns, and struggles. Many come here with dreams of a better future and with the belief that if they work hard enough, nothing bad will happen to them. Yet the reality is that many will never reach their dreams- because our society does not value them enough to give them the means to do so.

So I ask myself: *Why do this work?*

Since 1992, SAF has given students like me an opportunity to work alongside one of the most marginalized populations in our country through the Into the Fields summer internship and leadership development program. This past summer, twenty-five college students from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds worked collectively to support farmworkers as they addressed health and safety concerns, wage & hour issues and discrimination in the work place.

The following writings chronicle the experiences of ten young people as they encountered and interacted with farmworkers in North and South Carolina. These journal entries give us a unique insight into the lives of farmworkers and advocates alike, portraying first hand accounts of privilege, oppression, and poor living and working conditions. They also narrate stories of dignity, humility, personal growth and learning. I hope that the passion, sorrow and camaraderie the interns express through these writings will educate and inspire you.

When we think of an advocate, many conjure up the idea of a brave, heroic leader who saves those in need. Ironically, it is not always we as advocates who lead the way, but rather those we serve who educate and inspire us. They are the ultimate instructors: teaching us sacrifice, hard work and dedication. I believe that this is why I do this work, not for what I can give to farmworkers but for what I may be privileged to receive.



