

A Puente Story from our
Community outreach Worker, George Aranda

"The importance of Puente's work came home to me when I accompanied our director, Wendy Taylor, to visit a man who had recently lost his wife and was left with three small children to care for. Although I had spoken to the man on the phone and sent him food for his children, it wasn't until I personally met him that I truly understood the role that Puente has to serve in the community. While the widowed man struggled to hold back tears, he shared with us his feelings about the death of his wife. He told of the pain he felt each time he walked by his wife's closet where only days before he had seen her wearing them. I could feel the knot grow in my own throat. I could sense the depth of this man's agony.



George Aranda, Outreach Worker

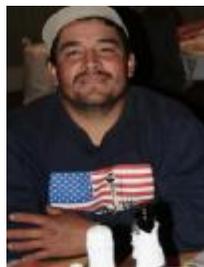
Even in the midst of his pain, the man could still express his deep appreciation for our visit and concern. He insisted that our help was too much: "You shouldn't go through such trouble for me!" That was when I understood the power of what Puente has to offer. Not only do we build bridges of understanding between the people in our community, we also can help one another to have faith and hope for the future. I was honored to be able to offer such meaningful assistance. It seemed so little under the circumstances, but it was huge for the widower and his children. For me, it truly was one of the most rewarding things that I had ever been a part of."

2006 statistics

BUILDING BRIDGES, NOT BORDERS The partnership between residents of the towns of Pescadero, San Gregorio, La Honda and Loma Mar, the region's farmers and ranchers, and agricultural and floricultural workers from Mexico has been strengthened for more than a decade by the work of Puente de la Costa Sur. Puente works to promote fair and humane immigration policies while at the same time we strive to meet the basic needs for food, shelter, and safety for nearly 150 workers and their families each year.

BUILDING COMMUNITY At the hub of Puente life is La Sala ("the living room"), offered twice each week to program participants as a place to build community and find support. Staff and volunteers provide a comfortable setting to visit with others and offer referrals to medical, dental, and social services, as well as help with translating legal and other documents.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY Over 25 tons of food were distributed to men and children through Puente's monthly partnership with the Second Harvest Food Bank. In addition, Puente staff distribute rice and beans, canned goods, and fresh produce to workers living at the area's farms and ranches.



PROVIDING FOR BASIC NEEDS Many men come to Puente for the first time with only the clothes on their back. Puente provides sleeping gear and clothing, welcome bags with phone cards and food coupons, and, where needed, bicycles for transportation and assistance with the rising cost of utilities. Puente staff assists program participants with finding work and scheduling medical, dental, and legal appointments. Staff and volunteers also enroll

program participants in the county medical program in an effort to provide affordable medical care. In 2006, Puente volunteers contributed 135 bikes, 36 blankets, 7 sleeping bags, 16 sweatshirts, and 17 jackets for distribution to Puente participants.

SERVING OTHERS Volunteer service is at the heart of Puente programs and services. In 2006, 133 volunteers gave 1,544 hours of service by fixing bicycles, distributing food, organizing holiday celebrations and special outings, teaching basic literacy, visiting with program participants at La Sala, and leading tours and presentations.

PROVIDING SUPPORT TO FARMERS AND RANCHERS Puente provides support to program participants as well as farmers and ranchers to resolve minor work-related problems. Puente often works with ranchers and farmers to find workers. Through its tours and presentations, Puente provides much needed visibility to innovative farming and ranching practices on the south coast.

SHARING PUENTE'S VISION AND MISSION During 15 presentations around the Bay Area in 2006, 1,468 people learned of Puente's work and how they could help serve our constituents. Touring farms and ranches on the south coast, 210 people witnessed Puente's work first hand.

PLANNING FOR CHANGE AT PUENTE After a decade of service to more than 500 workers, founder and executive director Wendy Taylor announced her plans for retirement. The Puente board of directors sprang into action to insure that the organization would continue to be strong and vibrant. In December, they appointed long-time activist and south coast resident Kerry Lobel to serve as interim executive director. (Continued on Page Two)

2006 Annual Report

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Photo by Ellen McCarty

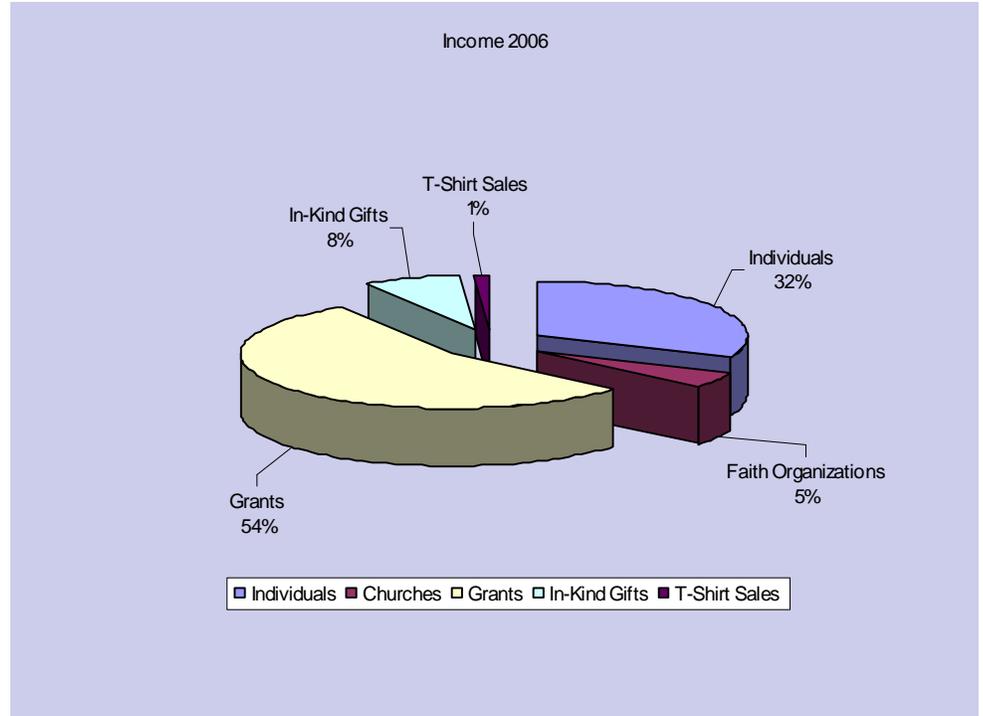
2006 Board Members

Charles Nile, Chair
Elizabeth Chapman, Vice Chair
Ray Nelson, Treasurer
Nancy Raulston, Secretary
Fran Barnsley
James Brigham
Gabriel Echeverría
Gabriel Gutierrez
Kathy Rehm
Reverend Ted Schapp
Wendy Wardwell

2006 Staff

Rev. Wendy J. Taylor, Executive Director
Darla J. Donovan, Fund Developer & Office Manager
George Aranda, Community Outreach Worker

financials



supporters

List of Church/Faith Organizations

United Church of Christ – Alameda
United Church of Christ – Arlington
United Church of Christ -- Belmont
United Church of Christ– Benicia
United Church of Christ – Flat Head Valley
United Church of Christ – Pioneer
United Church of Christ – San Lorenzo
Bethany Presbyterian Church
Broadmoor Presbyterian Church
Congregational Church of Belmont
Congregational Church of San Mateo
Pacific School of Religion
Pescadero Community Church
St. Andrews Church Deacon Fund
Trinity Presbyterian Church
Women’s Fellowship, Palo Alto First Congregational Church

Grants

Atkinson Foundation
Blue Oak Foundation
First Congregational Church of Berkeley
Philanthropic Ventures Foundation
Rotary Club of Half Moon Bay
San Francisco Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation (aka Peninsula Community Foundation)
UCC Northern California Nevada Conference

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PLANNING FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Three of Pescadero’s service organizations— Puente de la Costa Sur, North Street Community Resource Center, and South Coast Children’s Services—met between may and December to address community communication, shared values, networking, and collaboration. From those meetings, Puente and North Street decided to pursue further conversations with the goal of better integrating services.