A PROGRAM EVALUATION OF EL CENTRO HUMANITARIO’S PROJECT OUTCOMES UNDER A SUSAN HARWOOD TRAINING GRANT (2010-2011)


D E P A R T M E N T  O F  P O L I T I C A L  S C I E N C E ,
U N I V E R S I T Y  O F  C O L O R A D O  D E N V E R

J A N U A R Y  1 1 ,  2 0 1 2
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In 2010, Denver’s El Centro Humanitario, a day laborer/domestic worker human rights center targeting immigrant workers, received a Susan Harwood Occupational Safety and Health Training grant from the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. This grant provided El Centro funding to provide hard-to-reach informal economy workers with effective and culturally relevant occupational health and safety training activities.

Throughout 2010 and 2011, under the terms of this Susan Harwood grant program, El Centro designed and offered a range of worker health and safety trainings to impoverished informal economy workers. Educational materials, such as written training curriculums and educational fliers for workers and employers, were also created. Over the course of this grant, 9 separate workshops were designed, and 940 day laborers and domestic workers received training, for a total of 3760 training contact hours. Over 1000 additional community members were provided with safety and health information regarding day laborers and domestic workers.

This evaluation report reviews El Centro’s project outcomes under this grant, in four separate categories: a training session evaluation (reviewing workers’ opinions of the quality of the workshops); a learning assessment (reviewing the knowledge and skills gained by workers through the workshops); a workplace impact assessment (reviewing whether workers experienced actual improvements in safety and health on the workplace); and an assessment of whether El Centro met its work-plan goals, as proposed in the original grant.

Although the El Centro Humanitario training project faced multiple challenges, the project did achieve a number of significant, positive outcomes. Some of the cross-cutting positive outcomes include:

- Increased understanding by participants about the living and working conditions faced by Denver area day laborers and domestic workers, and how those conditions impact their health;
- Increased number of activities and interventions designed by and for day laborers and domestic workers to promote safe and healthy work practices;
- Strengthening of workers’ leadership skills and capacity to advocate and negotiate for their rights as workers.
PROGRAM BACKGROUND:
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CHALLENGES FACING DAY LABORERS AND DOMESTIC WORKERS

Contingent or casual work is a vast and growing segment of the U.S. labor force, with day laborers in specific being one of the fastest growing and most visible aspects of this non-standard workforce.\(^1\) Smith defines “contingent” or “casual” workers as workers in the following situations: “workers employed part-time, including permanent part-time workers; casual or seasonal workers, day laborers, and on-call workers; independent contractors, especially misclassified and involuntary ‘independent contractors;’ and workers paid by a labor intermediary, including staffing agencies, day labor agencies, labor contractors, or contract companies.”\(^2\) As a subset of this universe of contingent workers, day laborers work and get paid on a daily (or very short-term) basis, almost always without a formal work contract, usually in hard manual labor such as construction or landscaping, and typically for very low, cash wages.

In 2006, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) reported that contingent workers made up 31.5% of the entire U.S. workforce,\(^3\) with day laborers making up about 260,000 of these contingent workers, waiting on street corners every day for short-term employment (The GAO admits that this number is likely substantially undercounted, as day laborers are very hard to track).\(^4\) In Colorado, mainstream temporary labor agencies place anywhere from 30,000-42,000 day laborers a month.\(^5\)

The reasons for the rapid growth of day labor involve complex global economic restructuring processes which have resulted in a migrating global labor force of millions of displaced workers. These workers search for new positions amid a changing world of economic informality in which workers hold jobs for briefer periods of time, are increasingly mobile in search of work, and are everywhere confronted with labor markets “where demand for part-time, low-skill and flexible work such as day labor proliferates.”\(^6\)

Due to such dynamics, America’s day labor workforce is heavily immigrant—“generally young Hispanic men with limited educational skills and significant language barriers, with some portion being undocumented.” Some studies (which have targeted street-corner hiring sites and community-based non-profit worker centers for their worker surveys) have found up to 90% of day laborers to be immigrants, and almost entirely Latino. Other studies (which have targeted homeless shelters and for-profit labor centers for their surveys) have found a much higher portion of the workforce to be non-Latino and American-born. Regardless of the precise breakdown, there is consensus that a substantial percentage of day laborers are Latino immigrants (often undocumented), more so than perhaps any other profession.

Job Profiles and Workplace Hazards Facing Day Laborers

Wherever they show up, day laborers occupy the bottom rungs of the economic job ladder, taking the most demanding and hazardous jobs, for the lowest pay. A variety of studies have found that day laborers are concentrated in very physically demanding occupations. A nationwide survey of day laborers found the top occupations to be construction (90% of all day laborers worked in this field within the preceding quarter), mover (83%), landscaper (83%), painter (80%) and roofer (66%).

Because they work in such physically demanding occupations, day laborers find themselves commonly exposed to a substantial workplace hazards (such as working from heights, lifting heavy objects, airborne contaminants on construction and demolition sites, and toxic fumes and chemicals). In a Cleveland study, Kerr and Dole found that 70% of day laborers reported working in an unsafe work environment, while Theodore found that 42% of Chicago day laborers had concerns for their personal safety at work. One study found as many as 90% of day laborers reporting their job often to be very dangerous.

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7 Government Accounting Office, op. cit., 2002, i, 10.
13 Kerr and Dole, op. cit.
14 Theodore, op. cit.
In a detailed study of the specific kinds of hazards facing day laborers, Seixas found a high percentage of day laborers to report exposure to a range of specific hazards, as seen in Table 1.¹⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lifting Heavy Objects</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airborne Chemicals/Dusts</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Chemicals</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work at Heights</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye hazards</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling Objects</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsanitary Conditions</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to such hazards, Seixas found that 40% of day laborers reported having left a job for fear of being hurt, while 37% had complained to employers about their safety concerns. However, a large number of workers with safety concerns kept these concerns to themselves. Other studies have replicated the finding that a large number of day laborers commonly choose NOT to report safety concerns to their bosses, because they believe no corrective action will be taken and/or they fear that they will be fired for speaking out.¹⁷ In Theodore’s research, 60% of workers who talked to their employers about safety concerns reported that no corrective action was taken, and 24% reported that they were fired for bringing up the issue.¹⁸ Exacerbating this situation, studies have found that day laborers are far less likely that regularized workers to receive adequate safety training or safety equipment in dealing with workplace hazards and that they rarely enjoy meaningful enforcement of their workplace health and safety rights when these rights are violated.¹⁹

Workplace Injuries Experienced by Day Laborers

The predictable consequences of high levels of exposure to hazards are that workplace injury rates for day laborers are very high. Seixas found an OSHA recordable injury rate among day laborers of between 31 and 41 injuries per 100 full time employees, which is several times higher than the national average (4.8 injuries and illnesses per 100 FTE), and even much higher than the national rate for the construction industry (6.4/100 FTE), in which most day laborers work.²⁰ Immigrant day laborers face additional challenges. Immigrant day laborers were 1.5-2 times more likely to report exposure to hazardous conditions than native-born day laborers, and also had a much higher rate of serious injury.²¹

¹⁸ Theodore, op. cit., 2002
²⁰ Seixas, op. cit.
²¹ Many of these immigrant day laborers are Latinos, a group facing uniquely troubling workplace safety statistics. For example, La Raza has documented a number of troubling trends regarding workplace fatalities for Latino. La Raza’s study shows that while non-Latino workplace fatalities dropped 16% between 1992 and 2005, Latino
Considering all day laborers Kerr and Dole’s Cleveland study found 39% of day laborers to report serious injuries at their worksite, while Valenzuela, et. al.’s national study found 20% of day laborers to report a serious workplace injury within the last year. For a more complete picture of the level of workplace injuries faced by day laborers, see Table 2.

Table 2. National Day Laborer Injuries: Within the Previous Year

| Share of day laborers that consider jobs dangerous | 73% |
| Share of day laborers that suffered a work-related injury | 20% |
| Share of day laborers that suffered an injury requiring medical attention | 19% |
| Share of injured workers that missed work due to injury* | 67% |
| Share of injured day laborers who worked while in pain** | 68% |

*Average number of missed work days per worker injury = 33  
**Average number of days worked while in pain = 20  
Source: Valenzuela, et. al. (2006), National Day Labor Survey

Workplace Hazards Experienced by Domestic Workers

Like day laborers, domestic workers are a “hidden” segment of the workforce facing significant workplace hazards as their work often involves heavy lifting as they provide care to people, work long hours without breaks, work with toxic household cleansers and sharp kitchen utensils and utilize power tools, ladders and the like. In 2005, the Coalition for Domestic Workers Rights in the San Francisco Bay Area surveyed 247 San Francisco domestic workers. Sixty three percent of the domestic workers believed their jobs were dangerous; while, just 26% received protective equipment to prevent occupational exposure or injuries, and only 14% had received occupational health training. Twenty percent of participants reported that they had suffered a workplace injury requiring medical attention. A study of New York domestic workers by Domestic Workers United similarly found workers to report a range of unsafe work tasks, including: heaving lifting (17% of workers), work with toxic cleaning supplies (16%), climbing to reach hard to reach places (12%), and slipping with a serious injury (4%).

Workers' deaths jumped 72% during the same time. The 2009 fatality rate for Latinos was 4.9 per 100,000 workers, a rate unmatched by any other group. Latinos account for 16% of all workplace deaths, though they make up only 13% of the workforce.

22 Kerr and Dole, op. cit.  
There is also good evidence of Denver domestic workers, specifically, facing these kind of workplace hazards. In 2010, El Centro Humanitario partnered with the University of Colorado Denver to conduct a survey of 350 Colorado domestic workers. The findings are in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Colorado Domestic Worker Survey (350 workers surveyed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asked to work in dangerous location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required to work long hours without a break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously Injured on the Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Live-In Workers Required to sleep in unhealthy location (unventilated basement, room without heat or windows, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of all workers reporting at least one of these health and safety challenges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social, Economic and Political Factors Exacerbate Workplace Vulnerabilities

Why do day laborers endure such workplace hazards? As Valenzuela, et. al., demonstrate, it “cannot solely be accounted for by the industry in which they are employed.”26 Rather, day laborers endure unsafe working conditions and high injury rates due to their unique socio-economic vulnerabilities (i.e., impoverished immigrants, undocumented status, low educational levels) which make them desperate for work. Relatedly, vulnerable day laborers “fear that if they speak up, complain, or otherwise challenge these conditions, they will either be fired or not paid for their work.”27 As one medical journal reports: “Day labor jobs are hazardous, with frequent exposures to chemicals and dust, use of substandard equipment, and lack of personal protective equipment and safety training. Personal factors related to social position may also be associated with injury risk and health disparities, including race/ethnicity, immigration status, language skills, income, and education levels.”28

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Act has a purpose to ensure “so far as possible to every working man and woman in the Nation safe and healthful working conditions.”29 While these federal OSHA protections are meant to protect day laborers and domestic workers as much as any other employee, the unique vulnerabilities of these informal workers expose makes it very difficult to truly extend federal OSHA protections to them. It is difficult to reach such workers

27 Ibid.
29 Smith, Ibid., p. 200.
with traditional workplace safety training, and union-related or formal governmental efforts to enforce workplace health and safety protections rarely target such workers.

General Accounting Office research has specified three barriers to extending the promise of the federal OSHA act to the world of day laborers (and, relatedly, domestic workers). First, there is incomplete data about workplace violations involving day laborers. Second, day laborers are reluctant to come forward with complaints to enforce their rights. Third, the nature of OSHA’s investigative procedures (which tend to target large employers and workers in regular work arrangements) substantially undermines the ability of OSHA to enforce the legal protections afforded day laborers. Unions can often play a role in advocating for the workplace safety of workers and in enforcing workplace health and safety rights, but contingent day laborers are rarely organized into unions, and immigrants as a whole are substantially less likely to be union members than American-born workers.

Related to the difficulties of traditional OSHA training/enforcement and union-advocacy efforts, other barriers to reaching day laborers and domestic workers with traditional workplace health and safety training and advocacy can be broken down into the following five factors.

*Informal Nature of Work.* Day laborers and domestic workers are often part of the informal economy, working without work contracts, typically for private homeowners on a short-term basis, and often employed episodically by a variety of employers. Such workers rarely receive adequate workplace health and safety training, partly because few training programs are designed with sensitivity to contingent and informal nature of this work sector, nor with good opportunities for day laborers and domestic workers to serve as peer-to-peer trainers.

*Work Precariousness.* Day laborers and domestic workers usually work without a contract and with a very limited understanding of their workplace rights. The precarious nature of such work means that workers are less likely to be offered adequate workplace training and less likely to take action to request such training or to protect themselves from dangerous work situations, since they are “vulnerable to layoff and possible future employment discrimination.”

*Immigrant Status/Ethnicity/Language.* Day laborers and domestic workers face a precarious social position in that many workers are recent immigrants, most are non-white, and many do not speak English well. These personal factors come together with these workers’ typical lack of understanding of their workplace rights to place them in a precarious position that undermines their ability and inclination to receive adequate training in workplace safety or worker rights. Seixas, et. al., therefore find that day laborers and domestic workers “are generally unable or unwilling to take steps to protect themselves.”

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30 Government Accounting Office, op. cit. 2002; see also Mehta, et. al., op. cit., and Smith, op. cit.
31 Mehta, et. al., op. cit.
33 Quinn MM, et. al. (2007), op cit.
34 Seixas, et. al.(2008), op. cit.
Inadequate Understanding of Worker Rights and Employer Responsibilities. Vulnerable day laborers and domestic workers have an inadequate understanding of workplace safety needs and worker rights. Employers, as well, tend to devalue the health and safety needs of their contingent/informal workers, and often neglect to focus on how to maintain a safe worksite, how to institute safe work procedures and how to educate their workers in these areas.35

Inadequate Knowledge of the needs of this particular workforce. Day laborers and domestic workers have traditionally been a “hidden” workforce, and there are few authoritative studies documenting their occupational safety challenges and needs. Neitzel and Seitzas argue for more occupational health outreach, safety training and education among day laborers since the limited research “that has been done suggests that this is a dangerous occupation, and that workers have little recourse if they are injured on the job.”36

Towards Enhanced Day Laborer and Domestic Worker Health and Safety:  
The OSHA Susan Harwood Training Grant Program

At the highest levels of government, there have been recent efforts to overcome the obstacles to providing hard-to-reach workers like day laborers and domestic workers with effective workplace safety education, protection, and advocacy. In OSHA’s 2002 response to the GAO report documenting OSHA’s inadequate efforts to protect day laborers, the agency noted that OSHA had created a Hispanic Task Force and was increasingly developing “programs for Hispanic immigrant workers and day laborers,” such as translating more workplace health and safety materials into Spanish, establishing cooperative relationships with Hispanic advocacy groups, and expanding data collection efforts regarding day laborers.37

As a specific example of such productive OSHA efforts, the agency’s Susan Harwood Training Grant program has in recent years been increasingly targeted to groups working with hard-to-reach workers like day laborers. The long-established Harwood Training grants program provides moderate-sized grants (approximately $100,000 to $200,000 a year) to private businesses, unions, universities and community-based non-profits in order to provide workplace safety and health training/education programs for both employers and workers. In 2010, the Assistant Secretary of Labor commented on the agency’s commitment to redirecting many of those Harwood grant funds “to reach out to the most vulnerable and hard to reach workers, including immigrants and non-English speakers, especially those employed in high hazard industries.”

Indeed, an examination of the 2010 Susan Harwood grantees shows the largest percentage of funds ever going to small community-based agencies working with non-union and largely immigrant “under-served workers” in precarious, high-risk, 'informal' sectors like day labor and domestic work (previous years saw more funds going to traditional unions or even business organizations). Almost all funded programs are designed to reach workers in both English and Spanish - among other languages.

El Centro Humanitario and the Susan Harwood Grant Program

In 2010, Denver’s El Centro Humanitario, a grass-roots day laborer workers’ rights center targeting immigrant workers, received one of these Susan Harwood Training grants. This grant provided El Centro funding for staff and programs to provide hard-to-reach informal economy workers with effective and culturally relevant occupational health and safety training activities. Targeted populations under this grant were immigrant day laborers and low-wage domestic

workers, groups that generally have low education levels, limited English proficiency and are deeply impoverished.

El Centro Humanitario (El Centro, hereafter) is Denver’s only 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides a gathering place for low-wage day laborers and domestic workers to seek employment, enjoy educational opportunities and develop a sense of community and self-sufficiency. El Centro was founded in 1998, as an immediate response to the discovery of a low-wage day laborer, abandoned on the street and seriously brain damaged. This worker had fallen off a roof on the job, and his employer, who picked up the day laborer on the street corner, abandoned him in the dark of night, in order to avoid responsibility for the serious injury. Growing from this immediate concern over immigrant worker safety and health, El Centro’s broader mission grew to include the rights and well-being of low income day laborers and domestic workers in Denver through education, job skills training, leadership development, united action and civic engagement.

El Centro’s members are low-wage day laborers and domestic workers, most of whom are Latino immigrants. About 1000 unique workers each year become El Centro members and register for its programs. The average annual income of these “informal economy” workers is under $10,000 a year. To serve these target populations, El Centro serves as a one stop center, providing comprehensive workforce development services, and educational and leadership development programs to help workers improve their quality of life and move to self-sufficiency. El Centro’s programs include: a daily employment program, helping about 300 workers a month find jobs, and providing construction skills and workplace safety training; ESL and computer classes; a pro bono legal clinic providing legal consultation, know-your-rights workshops, case referral and legal representation to workers; a women’s program providing peer-support discussion groups, job-training classes, workplace hazard training for domestic workers, computer instruction, micro-enterprise assistance and training, and assistance in managing a “Green Clean” worker-owned cooperative made up of ten domestic worker leaders; and a speaker’s bureau to educate the Denver community about the realities facing day laborers and domestic workers.

In 2010, upon receiving the Susan Harwood Training Grant, El Centro expanded its services with a comprehensive worker education and training program. Specifically, El Centro used its grant funding to: 1) design a range of occupational health and safety materials and workshops targeted in a culturally appropriate way to day laborers and domestic workers; 2) train worker leaders to serve as peer-educators in workplace health and safety; and 3) reach out to the community more broadly, including employers of day laborers and domestic workers, with educational activities concerning the safety and health needs of these informal workers.

The specific work plan funded by this grant established several goals, in terms of activities to be funded and numbers of workers and community members to be reached with El Centro’s safety and health training programs. Those goals are outlined in the charts below.
# Work Plan Quarterly Projections

## Quarter 1 (October-December 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Team Meetings</td>
<td>3 (Plus 1 Quarterly Evaluation Meeting, discussed in evaluation section below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Surveyed or Interviewed</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Design Committee Meetings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Fully Designed</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Classes Conducted</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Quarter 2 (January-March 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Team Meetings</td>
<td>2 (Plus 1 Quarterly Evaluation Meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Videos Produced</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Design Committee Meetings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Fully Designed</td>
<td>14 (10 workshops for workers—5 topics X 2 tracks [domestic+ day laborer track] PLUS 1 class for employers of each worker group PLUS 2 two-part train-the-trainer workshop).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Classes Conducted</td>
<td>4 (Four 3 hour Train-the-Trainer workshops offered, in two tracks: day labor/domestic work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained</td>
<td>8 (4 day laborer leaders and 4 domestic worker leaders trained to facilitate future workshops with El Centro Staff, as peer-to-peer teachers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Quarter 3 (April – June 2011)

<table>
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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Team Meetings</td>
<td>2 (Plus 1 Quarterly Evaluation Meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Videos Produced</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Academy Weekend Retreats</td>
<td>2 (10 workers attend each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained</td>
<td>15 (2 classes; 5-10 employers each class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Classes Conducted</td>
<td>17 (15 for workers, 2 for employers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained</td>
<td>300 (15 classes X 20 workers each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Businesses, Groups or Agencies Receiving Technical Assistance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours</td>
<td>1530 (15 classes X 20 workers per class X 4 hours per class = 1200 hours) + (15 retreat hours X 10 workers X 2 retreats = 300 hours) + (30 hours of employer training) = 1530 hours</td>
</tr>
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### Quarter 4 (July-September 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Numbers and Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Team Meetings</td>
<td>2 (Plus 1 Quarterly Evaluation Meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Workplace Safety Events organized</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Videos Produced</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained</td>
<td>30 (4 classes; 5-10 employers each class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Classes Conducted</td>
<td>19 (15 for workers, 4 for employers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Businesses, Groups or Agencies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Technical Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours</td>
<td>1710 (15 classes X 20 workers per class X 4 hours per class = 1200 hours) + (3 community events attended by 50 people each for 2 hours = 150 hours) + (60 hours of employer training) = 1410 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grant Year End Totals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Numbers and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers Surveyed/Interviewed</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Design Committee Meetings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Designed</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Offered</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos Produced</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained</td>
<td>608--not including retreat or community events; 716 including retreat and community events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours</td>
<td>3336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Workplace Safety Events</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats Offered</td>
<td>2 Workers Attending: 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Committee Meetings</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses/Agencies Receiving Tech Asst</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Materials to Produce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 one-page Educational Fliers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Employer Educational Pamphlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum for 5 workshops in 2 tracks</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Materials for 3 worker-designed community events</td>
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El Centro’s Susan Harwood grant work plan included four kinds of program evaluations, to be conducted by Dr. Tony Robinson, a Political Science Professor at the University of Colorado, Denver. As taken from the original grant application, these evaluations were described as follows:

**Evaluation 1: Training Session Reaction Assessment.** Evaluation forms will be designed allowing workers to report their satisfaction level regarding the quality of the workshop and the teaching. After every workshop, any course instructor will meet with the Safety Coordinator to discuss evaluations and possible workshop improvement. If the Safety Coordinator is the program instructor, he or she will meet with El Centro’s Executive Director.

**Evaluation 2: A Learning Assessment** will be conducted to measure the skills, knowledge and attitude changes workers experience due to the trainings. This assessment will include pre- and post-tests of workers passing through the training and comparing responses on a range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes towards safety in the workplace.

**Evaluation 3: A Training Impact Assessment** will measure the impact of training on workers’ ability and inclination to participate in safety and health activities in the workplace (through surveys and a focus group offered 3-6 months after training sessions). This assessment will query workers about whether the knowledge gained in the training programs impacted their approach to workplace safety. Measures of impact will include: workers’ ability to identify unsafe working conditions and maintain a safe working environment; number of times worker spoke with co-workers or supervisor about safety concerns; strategies adopted by workers to avoid workplace hazards; number of times workers felt they avoided an accident due to their training; and number of complaints filed.

**Evaluation 4: Quarterly Program Activity Progress Report.** Throughout the program, monitoring will collect such data as: number of planning meetings held, number and type of training sessions offered, number of trainees, trainee contact hours, materials produced, etc. Professor Robinson will compile this information to determine: 1) whether benchmarks are being met; 2) what the data teaches in terms of improvements that can be made; and 3) unanticipated programs and how they were addressed or should be addressed. The quarterly evaluation will be reported to OSHA, and will guide El Centro’s quarterly “Executive Team” evaluation meetings. These evaluation sessions will discuss: planned versus actual accomplishments, lessons learned, unanticipated problems, and strategies for improvement.

At the end of the Susan Harwood grant period, each of these evaluations was conducted by Dr. Tony Robinson (this report’s author). The remainder of this evaluation report presents the findings for each of these four types of evaluations.
EL CENTRO WORKER TRAINING PROJECT: EVALUATION DATA

As presented in the original grant proposal, a range of data was to be collected under this grant, in order to facilitate a final project evaluation. An important part of that data was on-going pre- and post-training surveys of workers, so as to test the worker’s pre- and post-responses on a range of skills, knowledge and attitudes towards safety in the workplace. Surveys were also proposed that would gather worker feedback on the quality of the workshops themselves (were the workshops well-organized, were they taught in a culturally and pedagogically relevant style, were the teachers effective, etc.). Finally, surveys were proposed that would examine the workplace impact of the trainings: did workers utilize their new knowledge and skills in the workplace and, if so, how?

Early in this grant project, several meetings between El Centro staff and Dr. Robinson (author of this report) did in fact occur to design all of those survey forms. The surveys were approved by OSHA, and they were administered to several hundred workers over the course of this grant. Graduate student research assistants from the University of Colorado Denver and from Denver University facilitated the administration of the surveys.

The data from hundreds of these raw surveys were meant to be delivered to Dr. Robinson in the fall of 2011, so that he could input the data into spreadsheets, conduct cross-tabs analysis, and produce charts and graphs of the data, providing quantitative analysis of how effective the workshops were in improving the skills, knowledge, attitudes and actions of workers towards workplace safety and health. In meetings between El Centro staff and Dr. Robinson, throughout the late spring and summer of 2011, the raw surveys were reviewed, a strategy for data-input was designed, and a timeline for final delivery of data in the early fall was developed.

However, in the late summer of 2011, El Centro experienced a personnel change which affected this data delivery. At that time, the El Centro Safety Coordinator was terminated in quick fashion. This Safety Coordinator was responsible for maintaining the raw surveys and had been collecting them for delivery to the program evaluator. The Safety Coordinator felt her termination was not handled well, and as a response, she refused to deliver the raw survey data that she had in her possession to El Centro Humanitario. Consequently, El Centro could not deliver the survey data to the evaluator. Though continued efforts were made to deliver this data, in the end the data was never recovered nor delivered. As a result, a substantial data source on which this evaluation was to be built was not available, so this evaluation report could not report on the overall quantitative data regarding knowledge gained by workers, etc.

Relatedly, the Safety Coordinator’s raw data records regarding total number of workshops held, total workers attending, etc. was never provided to the program evaluator. In regular meetings between the program evaluator and El Centro staff, preliminary records were reviewed and discussed, so it is clear that the records were being kept and that continual progress towards project goals was being made throughout the grant period—but in the end, the final raw data regarding worker attendance at workshops, etc., was never delivered. What was delivered was a self-assessment of El Centro’s progress by the Safety Coordinator (see Appendix), which
included aggregate numbers regarding workers reached with trainings, etc. Some quantitative data was available for this evaluation report, therefore—but it was not comprehensive.

The difficulties associated with these challenges also partially explain the delayed delivery of this program evaluation. It was unclear until late in December exactly what data would be available and what data would not be available, and it was unclear what kind of final program evaluation would be desirable or useful, considering the circumstances. Meetings between this evaluator and the former Safety Coordinator—which were previously the key way in which program evaluation was moving forward—ended abruptly when the Safety Coordinator’s position was terminated. A subsequent period of unsettled transition followed, where it was very unclear how this program evaluation would go forward and what the next steps would be. These issues were clarified throughout the late fall and in mid-December discussions between El Centro staff and the program evaluator, and the evaluation report was produced subsequently.

To produce this evaluation report, the sources of data relied upon were:

- Approximately twenty in-depth interviews with workers who had passed through at least one training workshop (most of these workers had completed multiple workshops). Student research assistants (one hired by Dr. Robinson and one a regular El Centro intern), supervised by Dr. Robinson and by the El Centro Safety Coordinator, played a lead role in interviewing workers about their reaction to training sessions, their knowledge gained, their changes in workplace behaviors and actions, etc. The data from these interviews was then passed on to Dr. Robinson.

- A self-assessment report by the former Safety Coordinator (Crystal Ferreira) on the positive outcomes and impacts, and the challenges, of the El Centro safety and health program was provided to Dr. Robinson. The reports included quotes regarding worker reactions to the program and hard data regarding number of workshops held, etc. For a copy of the self-assessment report, see Appendix A.

- Field notes and data gathered through regular meetings between this program evaluator and El Centro staff, throughout the grant period

- A sit-down interview between this program evaluator and the Safety Coordinator reflecting on lessons learned, conducted in the early summer of 2011.
EVALUATION ONE: TRAINING SESSION REACTIONS

As described in the grant narrative, evaluation forms were to be designed to allow workers to report their satisfaction level regarding the quality of the workshop and the teaching. After every workshop, any course instructor was to meet with the Safety Coordinator to discuss evaluations and possible workshop improvement. If the Safety Coordinator was the program instructor, he or she was to meet with El Centro’s Executive Director.

In fact, these evaluation forms were designed through collaborative meetings between El Centro staff the program evaluator, OSHA approved the forms, and they were administered to all workers completing an El Centro training. However, the data from these surveys was never delivered to the evaluator (see preceding section on “Project Evaluation Data”). However, interviews with workers and the Safety Coordinator’s report on Positive Outcomes and Impacts (Appendix A), resulted in a significant number of worker statements regarding their assessment of the workshops and the teachers. Unanimously, these assessments were positive. Workers expressed great satisfaction in the way the workshops were organized, the culturally and educationally relevant ways in which they were organized, and in the quality of the instructors. Workers especially appreciated how the workshops were built around interactive activities (games and hands-on work with tools), and appreciated the fact that workshops were organized in a way that did not assume workers had good reading or writing skills.

In the section below, workers’ statements relating to the quality of the workshops or the teachers are provided. These statements are representative of all statements made by workers during the interviews, as there were literally no negative comments regarding the quality of the workshops or the teachers.

- “The trainings were beneficial in the aspect that other day laborers gave a lot of experiences, what they see, what happens on the streets, and this helps because many times we think we’re the only ones suffering out there.”

- “I liked the games best. The classes were so fun! And I liked that the games taught us more about one’s health...if one sees a problem at work, it’s important to say something. For me this way new...I didn’t know before that one has to speak up about it.”

- “The interactions, the group lessons, and the games were the best part. These weren’t boring classes. We moved around and talked a lot.”

- “The trainings are very good. I don’t feel embarrassed that I cannot write well.”

- “I liked Crystal’s [the Safety Coordinator] presentation. With her presence, and in spite of who she is [someone from another culture], Crystal has helped a lot of people.”

- “They motivated me. I don’t know to read or write very well. I don’t know. I didn’t need to be able to read to participate in the training.”
“Look, yes, I know how to read. Once in a while I miss a letter of a word, for example the words ‘como’ and ‘come.’ I read well; it’s in the writing where I get stuck. For the OSHA trainings it isn’t necessary to be able to read and write. The trainings are really good.”

“We evaluated ourselves and that helped me feel that my role was important. Crystal [the Safety Coordinator] even asked us our opinions.”

“The trainings were well taught because they were clear, participatory and practical.”

“I don’t think the trainers forgot anything. Everything was perfect.”

“The trainers were very good and sensitive.”

Lessons Learned.

El Centro’s workshops and the instructors were well-received by workers. Among the twenty plus interviews conducted for this evaluation, and in the Safety Coordinator’s self-assessment report, there are no negative comments from workers regarding these issues. Two of the most frequently cited aspects of the trainings, in terms of why workers appreciated the way were organized were:

- **The trainings were organized with sensitivity to the workers’ backgrounds.** Workers felt comfortable taking classes at El Centro (a community location most of them already used regularly and felt comfortable with), and felt the classes were geared to their particular abilities and skills. Several workers commented that they were happy the classes did not assume nor require reading or writing skills. Workers seemed to have a nervousness about the concept of “classroom” learning, thinking that it would naturally entail reading and writing. The fact that these classes were organized differently, and did not require reading or writing skills, make them accessible and useful to the particular population targeted by this grant.

- **Workers appreciated the interactive activities and games.** Early on in the unfolding of this grant, the Safety Coordinator learned that workers tended to check out very quickly from training sessions if they were not engaging and interactive. Therefore, she designed a series of games that workers could play to teach them workplace safety and health concepts. For example, in one game, workers were on teams. If a worker on one team correctly answered a particular safety and health question, he was allowed a basketball shot to earn points for his team. Workers enjoyed the friendly competition and the game, even as they were learning details, and energetically encouraged each other. Both the Safety Coordinator and the workers themselves reported that these engaging games were critical to the success of the classes. As one worker said in an interview, “I like the games the best. The classes were so much fun! And I liked that the games taught us more about one’s health.”
In terms of improving the effectiveness of the training sessions, two suggestions stand out from the review of the worker interviews and the Safety Coordinators Self-Assessment.

- **Workshop effectiveness was improved by orienting them to workers’ own priorities—income for their family, rather than worker safety and health, per se.** Throughout the implementation of these grant activities, a constant challenge faced by El Centro staff was that impoverished day laborers and domestic workers are far more concerned with obtaining jobs and income than they are with protecting their own safety and health on the job. Since this target population is informal and irregular workers, who rarely find adequate work on a weekly basis, and who already live a life filled with danger and insecurity, it is very challenging to reach this population with a message that workplace safety and health are vital concerns. Workers were especially unlikely to take seriously any claims that they should be willing to sacrifice a job or challenge an employer over such concerns.

As El Centro workshops were designed and rolled out, this particular challenge became quickly evident. The Safety Coordinator and other trainers found a useful response, however. A preliminary activity was conducted with day laborers, in which they were asked to rank, in order of importance to them, the topics of: Love, Money, Family, Education, and Health & Safety. The resulting priorities of day laborers were as follows:

1. Family
2. Money
3. Love
4. Education
5. Health & Safety

When it became evident that health and safety concerns were the lowest priority of day laborers, the Safety Coordinator developed a new strategy to open up the training sessions. Training sessions subsequently began with discussion of how workplace injury and illness impacted a worker’s ability to make money to support their families, which incorporated the top two priorities of day laborers directly. Immediately, interest among day laborers and domestic workers increased, as compared to how workers responded to a strategy of highlighting the importance of protecting one’s safety and health in general. As stated by the co-facilitator after the activity, “the workers realized that health and safety is of need for day laborers and domestic workers, they just had to realize that health & safety is essential because of their value of family and money.”

Similar to the day laborer participants, El Centro staff found that “if you ask what the major issues facing day laborers, they say getting a job. They never mention health and safety issues. But if we ask a question specifically about health and safety, the people talk about it as a major issue affecting their lives, their ability to work and ability to provide for themselves and for their families. I think this type of education is needed to help day laborers understand health and safety issues and how it impacts their lives.”
As a response to these realities, El Centro’s safety and health training always highlighted the importance of working safely in terms of protecting a worker’s ability to earn income. Given that day laborers tend to do some of the most high risks jobs, usually with little or no protection or compensation from employers if injured on the job, workplace illness or injury can leave them with no way to support their families. Therefore, the motto “Work safely, your family depends on you!” was implemented, which reflected workers’ own priorities concerning what was truly important to them.

- **Day Laborers and Domestic Workers Desire Training that Can Enhance their Job Skills and Employability.** Though workers appreciated the safety and health training they received in these classes, numerous workers commented that they would be much more excited about classes if classes included more hands-on training with how to use tools and perhaps even included strategies to become certified in certain fields (such as highway construction crews). Because domestic workers and day laborers are so concerned with obtaining work and income, it would be very beneficial for workplace safety and health training program to be built around practical job skills development to the extent possible.

Here are several workers’ quotes regarding this issue.

- “I would like more opportunities for classes to learn more or keep learning more about working. Like how to cut a 2X4, or a 4X4. How to use different tools. It’s important to be exposed to different things and learn what is being talked about and how to use the tools.

- “I would like it if OSHA could find a place for the trainings where we can all do all of the different techniques—not just hear about them. We need to practice using tools, not just talk about them. Things like post-digging, construction, nail gun use, compressors, preparing paint, etc.”

- “In the future, I hope that the trainings include more information about how to garden—for example how to build or use a green house. I want to have vegetables and herbs during the Colorado winters. I want to learn more about the catering business—for example, how to serve food, the temperature of the food, the presentation, etc.”

- “We need to make the trainings more practical—including practice opportunities—because employers don’t want us to have heard how to do something, they want us to know how to do things.”

- “I would like the classes to be certified for road construction crews—how to hold the stop signs, yield signs, etc.”
As described in the grant narrative, evaluation forms were to be designed to allow a measurement of the skills, knowledge and attitude changes workers experienced due to the trainings. Surveys were proposed to include pre- and post-tests of workers passing through the training, allowing an evaluation of changes in worker skills, knowledge, and attitudes towards safety in the workplace. In fact, these evaluation forms were designed through collaborative meetings between El Centro staff and the program evaluator, OSHA approved the forms, and they were administered to all workers completing an El Centro training. However, the data from these surveys was never delivered to the evaluator (see preceding section on “Project Evaluation Data”). However, interviews with workers and the Safety Coordinators report on Positive Outcomes and Impacts (see Appendix), resulted in a significant number of statements regarding the learning outcomes of this project.

A review of worker interviews shows that workers overwhelmingly found these training sessions useful in enhancing their knowledge, skills and attitudes in terms of protecting their own safety and health on the workplace. Three worker quotes, in particular, express the overall sentiment of workers.

- “El Centro’s classes make us open our eyes to know what we didn’t know before; we learn a lot about the tools, the protective equipment, everything that we didn’t know related to the jobs before. The employer comes and wants to pay the same amount that he always pays, but if we don’t ask if we are going to be provided with gloves or glasses, whatever happens will happen, and the employer doesn’t care. The employer only wants us to finish the job without caring about the type of work or the danger. But we don’t know what type of work we’re going to do or what we need to bring, we only know that there is a job. But these classes tell us that employers need to tell us what the dangers are.

“We need to know that if the employer doesn’t give us a hard hat, and if you don’t take one, you won’t have one. What we want to know is how we raise awareness with those employers, how do we let them know what their responsibilities are, how do we negotiate with the people who are going to contact us, how we use the tools. We shouldn’t work without caring about the danger that is in each job. Too often, they don’t offer us a break, or water... they dock our pay if we only stop for a few minutes. When we face these problems, we need to know, to whom do we talk to, who will give us protection?”

- “Many of the employers abuse us...There are jobs which are really labor intensive, but we don’t realize how badly we could harm ourselves and they don’t give us the equipment we need. The training here is how to use the equipment, whether it be for construction or very dangerous work. Often employers don’t give us the right equipment, so these trainings are what we need to know and what we need to take to the work site. If we don’t bring our own goggles or glasses, we won’t have them. The employer doesn’t care if you have an accident or whether you talk about your safety, or whether you need
whatever tool or equipment, like the face mask, or about protection from toxic chemicals. They don’t give us the right equipment. What they are teaching us at the trainings is to know what type of equipment we need to have and to bring to the worksite, and how to negotiate with employers.”

- “The employers take advantage of our situation and know our situation, because if not, they wouldn’t hire us. They take advantage that we don’t speak English well or that we don’t have rights. For that reason, these courses about learning our rights, are so important. These classes help me to know who I can talk to about my work problems—can I talk to the police? Who would I report my employer to? If we’re working under poor conditions and a police officer drives by, can we ask him?

It’s good that they are giving us these classes because we don’t know what to do when they don’t pay us or there are dangerous jobs. Until we know our rights the people who exploit us will keep exploiting us; that’s why these trainings are so important. This training gives us weapons to use in the face of exploitation or dangerous work, if we didn’t learn this, we would continue being abused.”

Other worker interviews replicate these broad assessments of the worth of the training, and also provide insight on the various kinds of knowledge and skills workers felt they gained, in different categories, from the El Centro trainings. In the following section, workers’ comments in a variety of categories are summarized.

**Overall Impact of the Training Sessions**

- “The OSHA trainings have been very useful and we’ve learned a lot. Since taking the trainings, I’ve learned a lot, especially about what I need to do to protect myself. For painting, for example, I need to bring and wear my own glasses.”

- “Overall, I liked learning about how to be safe in the worksite. A lot of people work without paying attention to different things and that is how accidents happen. These trainings will help us avoid accidents.”

- “I think it will help me a lot, because I now have a better understanding of the conditions men like me face.”

- “It helped me in my own work. Never before would I notice the dangerous jobs that we do.”

- “What motivates me is the idea of being able to learn from the course, and as a result, being able to share my knowledge with others.”

- “These classes teach the basics, and people need to know how to protect themselves better so that they don’t just work crazily.”

- “Of course you have to earn money, but at the same time your health is very important. In the class, you can learn new skills and how to protect yourself.”
Proper Use of Tools

- “Sometimes we use equipment without really knowing what the equipment does, what it is, and what dangers it entails. This got my attention. For example, we now know the names of the equipment and what it does, instead of using equipment for different, unintended purposes.”

- “It’s good to keep learning in this way, because in Mexico we didn’t do this kind of work—we didn’t have the tools, resources, etc., that we can use here for safety. That is what surprised me—how there are so many tools and we don’t use them because our Mexican bosses want us to use the ‘old’ tools instead, like traditional, manual labor.”

- “Sometimes a boss will teach us how to do a task, but there are many that don’t. We need to know how tools work ahead of time, so the trainings are good.”

- “What has helped me are the OSHA trainings, in terms of learning about tools. I have learned what to bring, what we need to do, and now I know that to use and how.”

- “I learned a lot from the gardening workshop, like how to turn tools and rakes downwards so not to be dangerous. I have worked in carpentry before, not gardening, so I’ve now been exposed to new situations.”

- “I learned the right use of tools, how to be safely dressed, depending on the job. Nothing was super surprising, but it was a good review of tools, like pneumatic tools, air pressure tools. I learned safety equipment and practices.”

- “I learned to use facemasks more—especially for demolition work. You need to take your own. Don’t assume that the boss will give you any equipment. I have to bring all my own stuff.”

- “We learned how to use the equipment and the tools safely. We learned ‘safety first,’ always ‘safety first.’

Working with Paints/Chemicals

- “I learned a lot about working with paints that I didn’t know, like how you should wear the right shoes and a hard hat, and have safety glasses.”

- “We learned a lot about chemicals, paints, and our rights to the proper equipment and gear to protect ourselves around this stuff.”

- “I learned a lot from the training, especially about how to handle chemicals.”

- “I learned that chemicals do not only affect you, but your family and kids.”

- “We learned now chemicals can harm your lungs and we learned about accidents.”

- “We should really use gloves more around certain types of chemicals.”
• “I learned so much about how the working conditions we experience lead us to have bad health. Like damaging our lungs because we are exposed to really horrible conditions and chemicals when we go to clean houses.”

• “I began to notice that some of the women had burned hands, allergies, red eyes--and I saw that in myself as well.”

Self-Responsibility

• “We learned that we have to be responsible to each other and hold each other accountable. This isn’t a pre-school. We want to work, but we have to be responsible to using safety equipment and working safely.”

• “A person has to be responsible, and not just rely on the boss to protect you. A person has to recognize that jobs are dangerous and not all bosses care about safety, so you have to protect yourself.”

• “In the trainings, one important tip is that for are safety we need to take our own gloves. I need to take everything with me that I need and if I don’t have it, I ask for it.”

• “I have learned not to go to work with a boss that doesn’t have the right equipment, and to be willing to stand up for myself and for my rights. That’s the purpose of El Centro Humanitario; to help us with that. Sometimes out of fear or shyness, you accept what you shouldn’t accept. Employers know this and use it against us, but we can stand up for ourselves.”

• “There aren’t bosses who are going to teach you or show you how to do a job safely. If we get a job, we have to know how to do a job beforehand.”

• “You have to be aware for yourself and for others. We have to protect ourselves.”

Workplace Rights

• “I learned that I have to demand my rights under OSHA standards. There is an obligation for the boss to provide safety equipment.”

• “I have a better understanding of my rights. We know what our rights are and what safety is.”

• “I understand that I have the right to demand the appropriate tools to do the job. Instead of working us like burros, we need to demand proper tools and safety.”

• “I feel more comfortable talking about my safety rights.”

• “I understand my rights under OSHA. My rights to have gloves and what is necessary to work safely. I have also learned to negotiate and work like a professional, not just a laborer.”
• “I feel comfortable talking about my rights.”

• “If one sees a problem at work, it’s important to say something. For me, this was new…I didn’t know beforehand how one could speak up about it.”

• “I react differently when there’s hazards in my job now. I say that first and foremost is my health, and I feel I have more of a right to talk to an employer about that.”

• “I liked the rights education part of the training the best, because everyone who comes to this place comes for cheap labor. They don’t want to pay well, because many employers are exploiters—they know we won’t say anything. The people who want this kind of worker are exploiters, abusers.”

Negotiating with Employers

• “The employers don’t care if we can do the job or not…we need to change the attitudes of the employers.”

• “The training taught us to discuss the salary, the amount of hours, and the type of work and its conditions before agreeing to go to the worksite and do the job. For example, if an employer wants us to lay 200 rolls of sod without a forklift, then they are working us like an animal for low pay, without safety. The employer shouldn’t be able to made extra money by not paying for the proper equipment, like a forklift.”

• “I believe that the negotiating with employers part motivated me.”

• “One useful tip is that in this type of work, we need a way to talk about our ideas and about how you’ll do your work, with your employer. Before you start, talk with the employer about the type of work you’ll be doing and learn if they’ve got the appropriate tools and if you can do the job well. Also, talk about whether you will be paid enough and the circumstances of the job—how dangerous it is, what chemicals are involved, or whether there is asbestos involved in demolition work, or lead paint in old houses.”

• “Too often, we don’t cover the bases when we take jobs from employers. We need to talk about arrangements—salary, work conditions—ahead of time.”

• “We focused on working smarter. We talked about how to work intelligently and demand my rights if I’m without the equipment that I could or should use. We learned to negotiate with employers.”

• “Participating in the activities helped us find out how to negotiate with employers to defend ourselves. Crystal [The Safety Coordinator] taught us how not to be afraid or embarrassed to speak with people and the right way to talk to people so they listen.”

• “Trainings taught us to ask the employer for the proper protective equipment. We need to stand up for our need for adequate equipment, so that we don’t hurt ourselves.”
“Even though there are regulations and laws protecting us, we have to speak up with the boss to demand those rights. We need to make sure that we always use the right safety equipment, and we need to talk with the employer before doing a job, to learn what it entails.”

“I learned to ask information about the job—the conditions, where it is located, all types of circumstances—and to demand my rights. The employer needs to know that we aren’t cargo animals, and that people need work, but not under unsafe conditions.”

Lessons Learned

In the interviews conducted for this evaluation, workers were unanimous in their appreciation for the knowledge and skills they learned in these training sessions. In a variety of categories, such as working with chemicals or using personal protective equipment, workers felt that they learned new lessons. In fact, a preliminary review of preliminary survey data revealed that 88% of workers said they had never received any kind of workplace health and safety training before. Workers also noted that they couldn’t rely on employers to provide them proper instruction in safety techniques. Through El Centro trainings, however, workers felt they increased their knowledge of various tools and developed new strategies for working safely.

Beyond the specific knowledge gained in terms of how to work safely and how to use the proper protective equipment, some of the biggest benefits of these training sessions where in worker’s enhanced understanding of their workplace rights, of how to negotiate with employers to protect their rights, and of how to take responsibility for protecting their own safety. A majority of interview respondents commented that they felt more confident in understanding and talking about their rights. A majority also stated that they learned new strategies for negotiating with employers and had an increased commitment to standing up for their own health and safety rights and needs in the workplace. One of the most substantial transformations resulting from these trainings, therefore, was workers moving into an attitudinal perspective that they were responsible for their own health and safety, and that they had the right to expect and demand a healthy and safe workplace.

The intention of El Centro’s Harwood Training grant was to connect hard-to-reach day laborers and domestic workers with vital workplace health and safety training. The responses in these interviews demonstrate that these workers were indeed reached with a training program that enhanced their health and safety skills and knowledge, even while transforming their attitudes towards their own health and safety.
As described in the grant narrative, the training impact assessment was meant to measure the impact of El Centro training on workers’ ability and inclination to participate in safety and health activities in the workplace. While “Evaluation two” measured whether workers felt they had learned new skills and knowledge, and whether they experienced attitudinal changes due to the trainings, this third evaluation is meant to measure whether the trainings resulted in measurable changes in workplace health and safety itself. That is, did workers find ways to work more safety on the job? Did they take actions to protect themselves from unhealthy and unsafe situations? Did they talk to their peers about ways to work more safely? Did they talk to their employers?

To gather data for this part of the evaluation, worker surveys were administered several weeks after workers had passed through trainings. The surveys queried workers about whether the knowledge gained in the training programs impacted their approach to workplace safety. Measures of impact included such things as: worker’s ability to identify unsafe working conditions and maintain a safe working environment; number of times worker spoke with coworkers or supervisors about safety concerns; strategies adopted by workers to avoid workplace hazards; and the number of times workers felt they avoided an accident or other unsafe situation due to their training. These surveys were administered to workers, but unfortunately, the data from these surveys was never delivered to the evaluator (see preceding section on “Project Evaluation Data”). However, interviews with workers and the Safety Coordinator’s report on Positive Outcomes and Impacts (see Appendix), resulted in a significant number of statements regarding the actual impact of these trainings on workplace health and safety. Those statements are reviewed below.

A review of worker interviews reveals that most workers who responded to questions about workplace safety felt that their training had positively impacted their approach to the workplace. Some of the questions asked in the survey are replicated below, with typical worker responses following:

Question: “Since taking the class, have you used what you learned?”

Answers: “I used the protective equipment we were shown. I used equipment while using tools like the mower and the shovel. Last week Saturday I worked in a residential landscaping project putting in a sprinkler system, but the sprinkler was too high, so we lowered it to the right level. I learned that in the class.”

“I have learned not to go to work with someone who doesn’t have the right protective equipment and I’m more willing to stand up for myself.”

“I have learned that a person has to be responsible for their own safety and not just rely on the boss. Not all bosses care about safety and many jobs are dangerous.”
“I learned how to demand OSHA safety standards.”

“Yes. The information from the trainings is important to me because I am a cancer survivor. I want to live without chemicals in my environment—in my food, where I’m working, etc. For that reason, the information from the trainings applies to my life. Also, I now use a mask, gloves and practice ergonomic lifting for heavy things. I also use a small stepping stool. My arthritis has improved therefore.”

Question: “Since taking the training, have you used personal protective equipment (PPE) in an appropriate situation?”

Answers: “Yes, always, I use safety belts.”

“Yes, all the time. Especially safety glasses.”

“Yes, exactly. I use facemasks, especially for demolition work. I carry my own. I don’t assume the boss will give me one, so I take my own.”

“Yes, I carry these gloves with me every day in case I get work. The obligation is on the boss to provide gloves, but many of them don’t, so I have to be responsible for myself.”

“Yes, I do. Mostly my employer says that we should be safe and he provides the equipment we need to be safe, but sometimes we have to take our own things, like a hard-hat, masks, or heavy boots.”

Question: “Did your training help you to talk about your employers about safety equipment or hazards on the job?”

Answers: “Yes, I have tried to always ask employers about conditions on the job—salary, job conditions, whether I need equipment.”

“I went to a roofing job to clean the gutters. It was a steep roof and I asked for a rope or something to use as a harness. The employer was able to find a small rope that I could use to tie my foot to be a little more secure. It wasn’t as good as a harness, but it was something.”

“Yes, and my employer actually liked it when I asked about using gloves...”

“I was roofing last week, and I asked the boss for a mask. The boss asked ‘who said you needed a mask?’ I said ‘OSHA.’ After that the boss complied, but he didn’t say too much.”
“I used to be afraid to say anything at my work, because I was afraid to losing my job. Now I’m not so afraid. I told my employer that I am interested in health and safety. I gave her a basket with green cleaning products that I made in class and the flyer on how to keep me safe. She allows me to use those cleaners at work now. In fact, I even told my children that they can talk without being afraid. We have a right to speak, to say what we don’t like. In this way, the class has helped, and helped my family as well.”

“My job is cleaning a house for a woman that has a bed and breakfast. I’ve been working for her for four months. Before the trainings, I often used a product called Lysol, but I had lots of health problems. During the training, I learned many things about the benefits of natural and organic products. For example, now I use vinegar to clean all the things in the bathroom and the kitchen. It doesn’t cost much and it works really well, especially with the ants. After my training, I explained to my boss that I shouldn’t use Lysol because I have had many problems with the chemicals in the cleaning products. I couldn’t breathe, I lost my voice, I had many throat problems. My boss agreed with me, because she cares about the health of her guests. We no longer use this product, but use natural cleaners.”

“Once I did. I didn’t want to use harsh cleaning materials, and I tried to talk to my boss about different materials. ‘I know I can work without risking my health,’ I said. After this conversation, I didn’t return to that job. But ‘the people’s health’ is the most important thing to me.”

“Yes, frequently. I work with a moving company, and the bosses have always listened to my ideas or concerns.”

“Yes, I talked to my boss about a safer way to move a piano.”

Question: “Since taking the class, have you used PPE in an appropriate situation?”

Answers: “Yes. I use ear protection when using a lawn mower.”

“I have become more careful to use gloves, my belt, and whatever else I should use.”

“Yes, I always carry and use my gloves now.”

“Yes, and I talk to other workers about it as well. I was telling other day laborers the other day how to ask for gloves in English. I learned that in class. It’s important to know the words in English so employers understand us. Before I wouldn’t ask for gloves because I was embarrassed that I didn’t know the words in English.”
“Yes, I take gloves and a facemask with me to all my jobs, in case the employer doesn’t have them.”

Question: “Since taking the class, have you refused to perform a task that was too dangerous?”

Answers: “Yes. I refused to do a job on an A-Frame house, because there were no safety harnesses.”

“I didn’t turn down a roofing job and I was in an accident, before the training. I wish I had turned it down. I like heights, but they didn’t give us a harness. Lately, we take the harness/ropes with us to work more safety, especially in older houses with steep rooftops.”

“Two months ago, I did an insulation job working in the attic. This was before the training, and I didn’t ask for any face mask or anything, and it wasn’t good for my health. It was so dusty and I coughed so much. After these trainings, I think I would ask for a face-mask or not do the job.”

A more comprehensive look at worker responses to questions about workplace impacts is provided in the chart below. Twenty interviews were conducted with workers about the specific ways in which their El Centro trainings might have impacted changes in the workplace. The responses of workers to those interview questions is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Since Taking These Trainings…”</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you used what you have learned?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you asked an employer for personal protective equipment (PPE)?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you used PPE in an appropriate situation?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you used ergonomic practices, like lifting safely?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you tried to talk to your boss about a safer way to perform a task?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you talked to your co-workers about a hazardous situation at work?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you tried to find out more about job hazards on your own?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Since Taking These Trainings…”</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you refused to perform a task that was too dangerous?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you noticed a change in your health?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel comfortable understanding and talking about your rights?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lessons Learned.*

For the most part, workers reported that there were direct and measurable workplace improvements based on their El Centro trainings. In response to almost every question, substantially more workers than not reported that they had experienced changes in workplace health and safety, through such behaviors as asking for PPE from employers, talking to co-workers about ways to improve workplace safety, or feeling more comfortable talking about their workplace rights.

Although the general thrust of worker responses was that the trainings had made a measurable difference in workplace safety, there are two important caveats. First, many workers did not have answers to all questions. Most typically, this was because the respondent hadn’t even worked since taking the training. Day laborers and informal domestic workers only receive work irregularly, and so several respondents to the surveys had not worked at any job, even several weeks after the training. This fact points to the difficulty of expecting workplace health and safety training to make a long-term difference for a population that only works irregularly and which is commonly desperate for a job and income. This evaluation cannot propose any kind of solution to this dilemma, but it can be expected to be a continuing challenge to similar safety and health education programs in the future: how can they be made relevant and how can their lessons endure amid a population that works so irregularly?

A second caveat relates to the first. Though workers feel that these trainings were overall very useful, and though workers feel better able to understand their rights and to talk to each other about their workplace safety and health rights, in the end, day laborers and domestic workers remain a very vulnerable workforce, and they are generally unwilling to discuss these issues or challenge their employers over workplace safety issues.

In the chart above, two questions stand out for not reporting impressive numbers in terms of the impact of this training program in improving workplace health and safety. In response to the question about whether workers had refused to perform a task they felt was too dangerous (since the training), an equal number of workers said they had refused a dangerous job as those that said they had not. And in response to the question about whether workers had talked to their employers about an unsafe situation, more than twice as many workers said they hadn’t talked to their employer as said they had (10 to 4).
The reason for this pattern surely relates to these workers’ exceptional workplace vulnerabilities and their desperate need for work. Because these workers are so in need for jobs, and because they have so few opportunities, they are very vulnerable to enduring unsafe and unhealthy workplace conditions. Educational programs like El Centro’s can help, but in the end, these interview responses suggest that we should not put too much faith in the ability of vulnerable workers to actually stand up for their own rights to a safe environment, not matter how well educated they may be. Some relevant worker quotes regarding this troubling dynamic are below.

- “You can only ask questions or demand something of your boss if you work for a company. Otherwise, it’s too risky.”

- “Right now, I’m working through a temp service, so basically they have a guy who’s been working there for twenty years, and he trains you by cussing at you. He showed me the wrong way to move shingles to a room from a conveyor belt on the roof, and that’s how I smashed a chunk out of my finger. But I didn’t snitch on him because I needed the job. So that’s how I got my finger like this. So the answer to the question is ‘no,’ I have talked to my employers about fixing safety hazards on the job.”

- “I was going to talk to my boss, but the way he is, I just kept my mouth shut instead.”

- “You can’t talk to some of the employers. Some bosses don’t take questions; they just expect you to know what to do.”

- “We can’t demand anything from our boss, because it’s only 4-6 hours a day. It’s not a 40 hour a week job.”

- “I still find myself doing dangerous jobs. I can’t turn down work now, even if I wanted to, because there’s not enough work.”

Workers’ statements like this suggest that unless workers feel more safe in the workplace, and feel that their rights to workplace health and safety will truly be protected by laws and adequate enforcement, it is unrealistic to expect workers to speak up with their employers and demand their rights and interests be protected. These worker comments reflect the findings of national research on this subject. As reported earlier in this evaluation, previous research on this subject has found that a large number of day laborers commonly choose NOT to report safety concerns to their bosses, because they believe no corrective action will be taken and/or they fear that they will be fired for speaking out.\(^{38}\) In Theodore’s research for example, 60% of workers who talked to their employers about safety concerns reported that no corrective action was taken, and 24% reported that they were fired for bringing up the issue.\(^{39}\) For these reasons, educational programs like this may achieve their goals better if substantial employer education is also included, and to the extent that workers feel there are realistic and effective sanctions for employers who punish workers for speaking up.


\(^{39}\) Theodore, op. cit., 2002
As described in the grant narrative, this fourth component of the evaluation is to focus on whether benchmarks were met, in terms of number of planning meetings held, number and type of training sessions offered, number of trainees, trainee contact hours, materials produced, etc. This evaluation was proposed as an on-going, formative evaluation, which would include quarterly meetings between El Centro staff and the program evaluator to review program progress data, and to discuss successes, planned versus actual accomplishments, lessons learned, unanticipated problems, and strategies for improvement.

Program Innovations During the Grant Period

Regular meetings did occur between El Centro staff and the program evaluator to review data regarding number of training sessions held, workers reached, etc., and to discuss problems, successes and strategies for improvement. During those on-going meetings, several improvements to grant programs were identified and implemented during the year. Three of the most important challenges faced and improvements that were adopted are described below.

- Workers were often unmotivated to attend workplace health and safety training. This lack of motivation was largely due to the fact that these informal workers were desperate for a job and income above all else, and they initially were skeptical that a training program in workplace health and safety would enhance their job aspects or be relevant to their situation, since they typically felt forced to accept any job under any circumstances.

To address this challenge, several strategies were adopted. First, El Centro trainers developed a new strategy for framing their workshops to workers. In addition to highlighting the need for workers to work safely and avoid injury in order to protect their own bodies, trainers began highlighting the ways in which safe work habit tended to improve a worker’s earning capacity (since they became injured less, and because they could be seen as more professional “experts” by their employers). Highlighting the way that healthy and safe work habits were good for one’s income resonated with workers in ways that simply focusing on the bodily benefits of health and safety did not (for more details on this point, see the preceding “Evaluation One” section).

Second, El Centro increased the amount of practical, hands-on instruction in proper tool use, construction techniques, etc. Tools and other relevant supplies were purchased so that workers could get out of the traditional class-room and enjoy hands-on practice with various tools, as well as practice skills such as roofing or masonry, while they were waiting for jobs. Workers were very interested in building their job skills in this way, and were much more receptive to health and safety training when presented in this way.

Third, El Centro staff worked diligently to provide desirable refreshments were available at all the training sessions, and even worked with UC Denver to organize a “movie night” where workers completing training sessions could enjoy a big screen movie for free.
These kinds of strategies helped build interest and commitment among workers to attending trainings.

- **Workers sometimes found lengthy classroom workshops difficult to sit through.** When presented in more traditional class-room format, with instructor-centered training, many workers found it difficult to sit through a several hour work-shop. These informal workers often do not have substantial experience in sitting through such classes, and such classroom models can tend to demotivate any kind of student, in general.

As a response to this challenge, the Safety Coordinator worked to design an educational curriculum that utilized frequent small group activities and classroom educational games. For example, games were designed that pitted one group of workers against another, testing their knowledge and skills relating to workplace health and safety. Workers greatly appreciated these games, which came to be the highlight of the workshops and which maintained worker engagement throughout the training sessions.

- **It was unrealistic to recruit workers from outlying day laborer areas (such as Aurora—a Denver-neighboring city with many street-corner day laborers) to travel to Denver to take classes, or even to come to an unfamiliar Aurora location to take classes.** Although El Centro staff had an existing and strong relationship with the Denver day laborer/domestic worker community, making it practical and successful to offer training workshops to these workers at El Centro itself—the goals of this grant were to also reach workers from across the region, and especially from Aurora (where the second greatest concentration of day laborers wait for work). However, El Centro does not have an office in Aurora, and has less well-developed relationships with day laborers there, so it was very difficult to recruit workers off of Aurora street corners to travel to an unfamiliar location for workplace health and safety trainings.

As a response to this challenge, El Centro trainers developed a street-training curriculum. Instead of encouraging Aurora workers always to come indoors for trainings, trainers began take small tables and refreshments to the streets of Aurora and connect to workers on the street. Short classes were offered right there in the streets, which immediately attracted many workers to the unusual activity. Following this initial kind of contact, which built credibility among the workers, it became easier to recruit Aurora workers to come indoors with trainings for future sessions.

**Program Activity Report**

In the work plan presented in the grant narrative, El Centro established several goals in terms of work activities. Though only incomplete records were turned over to the program evaluator regarding attendance levels, numbers of workshop held, etc. (see earlier section, titled “Project Evaluation Data,” for details), the data that was reviewable allowed for the creation of the chart below, comparing El Centro’s original goals to the actual work accomplished under this grant.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Activities</th>
<th>Grant-Proposed Work Targets</th>
<th>Actual Achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers Surveyed/Interviewed: 400</td>
<td>Unclear. Hundreds of surveys were conducted, but survey data was never turned over to evaluator. See “Project Evaluation Data” in earlier section of this report. Twenty workers did full sit-down interviews for this evaluation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Design Committee Meetings: 18</td>
<td>At least 20 workshop design meetings were conducted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Designed: 14</td>
<td>9 workshops were designed. Training curriculum was designed for 7 vocation-specific trainings (e.g., gardening, house-cleaning, construction work), and for 2 workshop trainings of day laborer and domestic worker trainer-leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops Offered: 40</td>
<td>Data reviewed shows that through the end of July 2010, 22 workshops were offered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Trained: 608--not including retreat or community events; 716 including retreat and community events</td>
<td>940 workers were trained (547 day laborers/domestic workers; 373 other community members; 20 domestic workers trained as safety leaders).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Training Contact Hours: 3336</td>
<td>Training Contact Hours: 3760 (940 trainees X average of 4 hours each)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Trained: 45</td>
<td>Zero. No employer workshops were designed or offered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Workplace Safety Events: 2</td>
<td>El Centro workers and trainers attended two different large community events to distribute health and safety information. 1161 community members received this information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats Offered: 2</td>
<td>No retreats were offered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Attending: 20</td>
<td>More than twenty formal “executive” meetings occurred between the Safety Coordinator and the training team, which often also involved the El Centro Executive Director and the program evaluator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Committee Meetings: 13</td>
<td>No businesses or agencies received tech. training/assistance from El Centro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses/Agencies Receiving Tech Assistance: 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Materials To Produce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 One-Page Educational Fliers</td>
<td>Three educational fliers were produced: a hazardous chemicals commonly used in cleaning flier; a “make your own green-cleaning kit” handout; and a flier covering “Your Five Main Rights Under OSHA.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Employer Educational Pamphlets</td>
<td>2 Employer Educational Fliers were produced and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum for 5 Workshops in 2 tracks (Day laborer and Domestic Worker) (10 workshop curriculums, altogether)</td>
<td>Training curriculum was developed for 7 safety trainings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten 5-10 minute worker safety videos</td>
<td>No Videos were produced. When this grant was funded, it was funded for less than proposed. One of the activities that was eliminated from the reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for 3 worker-designed community events</td>
<td>Health and Safety Materials were designed and distributed at two community events, but these community events were not El Centro organized community educational events. They were already established community events, at which El Centro conducted public outreach and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Materials</td>
<td>Unclear. No record of advertising materials (such as radio script or newspaper copy) was submitted to the evaluator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Work-Plan Achievements: Conclusion

As the data in this chart shows, El Centro Humanitario achieved many of their original work goals, but not all. Overall, more workers were trained, with more trainee contact hours, than was originally proposed, but on the other hand El Centro was not able to design any employer workshops, nor able to mobilize workers to design their own health and safety community event (for example). Also, although the original grant proposed to produce a series of short educational videos, none of these videos were produced.

Two important factors contributed to the inability to meet some of El Centro’s originally proposed goals. First, when this grant was funded, it was funded for less than was proposed by El Centro. In reorganizing the work plan, it was necessary to drop funding for a professional videographer to help with video production; consequently, the videos were never produced under this reduced-funding grant. Second, it took longer than expected for El Centro to develop expertise in organizing these trainings, and to develop OSHA-approved curriculum and educational hand-outs for all phases of this grant. The original estimates of how many
workshops could be designed by El Centro, approved by OSHA, and offered to workers during this grant period were simply overly optimistic and could not be fulfilled.

Nevertheless, in the end, although a slightly narrower range of workshops was developed than proposed, and although a few proposed community events were not organized under this grant, the number of workers reached exceeded goals, and El Centro did develop a wide-ranging and successful series of trainings.
El Centro Humanitario’s health and safety training project, funded by OSHA’s Susan Harwood Training Grant program, was a general success. Though complete analysis of quantitative data from worker surveys regarding the program proved impossible (see “Project Evaluation Data” section), consideration of twenty worker interviews, a review the program assessment report of the Safety Coordinator, and reflection on the multiple review meetings between the program evaluator and El Centro staff, all demonstrate that El Centro Humanitario designed a wide range of workshop trainings and educational materials that were well-received by workers and that had a significant impact on workers’ skills, knowledge and attitudes regarding health and safety in the workplace.

Informal day laborers and domestic workers (especially impoverished immigrant workers targeted by El Centro) are a very hard-to-reach population in terms of delivering effective safety and health training. Such workers are unlikely to receive training in traditional ways or through regularized worksites, they commonly feel their health and safety comes secondary to an immediate need for income, they are vulnerable to predatory or careless employers, and they face cultural-linguistic-educational barriers that make successful educational programs a challenge. Through this program, El Centro successfully overcame those challenges, and delivered nearly 4000 hours of training to 940 day laborers and domestic workers. Feedback from those trainees suggests that this training significantly increased the knowledge base of workers concerning workplace health and safety, helped those workers develop new skills to protect themselves on the workplace, and helped workers develop an attitude of proactive engagement to protect their own health and safety.

In the end, this evaluation comes to the same conclusions drawn by the El Centro Safety Coordinator in her own program report on the positive outcomes and impacts of this training program. The comments in that report deserve to be quoted at length here, as an accurate summary of the conclusions of this evaluation report.

The overall aim of El Centro Humanitario’s health and safety project was to improve working conditions for day laborers through strategies that reflect the knowledge, needs, and participation of day laborers. Throughout the grant period, El Centro Humanitario successfully involved day laborers and domestic workers in the planning, creation and implementation of a range of interventions. Collectively, these interventions improved day laborer conditions at multiple levels- at an individual level through awareness raising and leadership development of individual day laborers and domestic workers, at an organizational level by capacity building of staff working with immigrant workers and creating opportunities to plan and collaborate together, and at a community level by reaching out to employers and the broader community in order to provide education on the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of safety and health hazards faced by day laborers and domestic workers. Although the El Centro Humanitario project faced multiple challenges, the project did result in a
significant number of positive outcomes. Some of the cross-cutting positive outcomes include:

- Increased understanding by participants about the living and working conditions faced by Denver area day laborers and domestic workers, and how those conditions impact their health;

- Increased number of activities and interventions designed by and for day laborers and domestic workers to protect health and promote safe work practices;

- Strengthening of workers’ leadership skills and capacity to advocate and negotiate for their rights as workers.
In late summer of 2011, El Centro’s Safety Coordinator, who was largely responsible for managing the activities under this grant program, completed a self-assessment of the achievements and outcomes under the Susan Harwood Training Grant. That report is included in this appendix.
EL CENTRO HUMANITARIO

PARA LOS TRABAJADORES

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Crystal Ferreira - Safety Coordinator

POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Working for the Health and Safety of the Day Laborer Community

Trabajando por la Salud y Seguridad de los Jornaleros y Trabajadoras Domesticas
Overview of Positive Outcomes and Impacts

The overall aim of El Centro Humanitario’s health and safety project was to improve working conditions for day laborers through strategies that reflect the knowledge, needs, and participation of day laborers. Throughout the grant period, El Centro Humanitario successfully involved day laborers and domestic workers in the planning, creation and implementation of a range of interventions. Collectively, these interventions improved day laborer conditions at multiple levels - at an individual level through awareness raising and leadership development of individual day laborers and domestic workers, at an organizational level by capacity building of staff working with immigrant workers and creating opportunities to plan and collaborate together, and at a community level by reaching out to employers and the broader community in order to provide education on the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of safety and health hazards faced by day laborers and domestic workers. Although the El Centro Humanitario project faced multiple challenges, the project did result in a significant number of positive outcomes. Some of the cross-cutting positive outcomes include:

- Increased understanding by participants about the living and working conditions faced by Denver area day laborers and domestic workers, and how those conditions impact their health
- Increased number of activities and interventions designed by and for day laborers and domestic workers to protect health and promote safe work practices
- Strengthening of workers’ leadership skills and capacity to advocate and negotiate for their rights as workers

Awareness of adverse working conditions faced by day laborers

The increased awareness of adverse working conditions faced by day laborers was realized by both employers and community participants as well as by day laborers themselves. Through the process of working together to discuss current conditions and possible solutions, the day laborers and domestic workers themselves experienced increased awareness about the frequency with which exposure to hazards (such as chemicals on the skin) occur. For example, workers involved in the project stated:

- "I learned so much about how the working conditions we experience lead us to have bad health. Like damaging our lungs because we are exposed to really horrible conditions and chemicals when we go and clean houses.
- "I think it will help me a lot, because I now have a better understanding of the conditions men like me face.

A safety training participant emphasized the importance of sharing experiences in the trainings to understand that others are also facing similar problems and they are not alone, “It was beneficial in the aspect that other day laborers gave a lot of experiences, what they see, what happens on the streets, and this helps because many times we think we’re the only ones suffering out there.”
Through a preliminary activity conducted in which day laborers were asked to rank, in order of importance to them, the topics of: Love, Money, Family, Education, and Health & Safety, the Safety Coordinator realized that the priorities of day laborers are ranked in the following order:

1. Family
2. Money
3. Love
4. Education
5. Health & Safety

Although health and safety concerns were the lowest priority of day laborers, once the Safety Coordinator began discussing how injury and illness impacted their ability to make money to support their families, which incorporated their top two priorities, interest among day laborers and domestic workers increased substantially. As stated by the co-facilitator after the activity, “the workers realized that health and safety is of need for day laborers and domestic workers, they just had to realize that health & safety is essential because of their value of family and money.”

Similar to the day laborer participants, the staff found that “if you ask what the major issues facing day laborers, they say getting a job. They never mention health and safety issues, but if we ask a question specifically about health and safety, the people talk about it as a major issue affecting their lives, their ability to work and ability to provide for themselves and for their families. I think this type of education is needed to help day laborers understand health and safety issues and how it impacts their lives.”

These experiences emphasized to the Safety Coordinator that when prompted, laborers are able to recognize health and safety issues and express interest in protecting themselves on the job. The challenge therefore lay in how to help workers prioritize safety by translating knowledge to action. Given that day laborers tend to do some of the most high risks jobs, usually with little or no protection or compensation from employers if injured on the job, leaving them with no way to support their families, the motto “Work safely, your family depends on you!” was implemented.

Evaluations conducted of the health and safety trainings suggest that the project did help build worker confidence to engage differently with employers and better protect themselves on the job, which, in part, is due to the consistent reinforcement of health and safety as a priority.

**Impact on Day Laborers**

In less than 3 months, 547 day laborers and domestic workers were trained by El Centro Humanitario. Of those trained, 20 workers were trained as safety worker-leaders. In a preliminary evaluation, vulnerable day laborers and domestic workers
POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Day laborers and domestic workers who participated in the 4 hr. safety trainings expressed appreciation for the health and safety skills taught. Participants stated:

- Of course you have to earn money, but at the same time your health is very important. In the class you can learn new skills and how to protect yourself.
- Participating in the activities helped us find out how to negotiate with employers to defend ourselves. Crystal (Safety Coordinator) taught us how to not be afraid or embarrassed to speak with people and the right way to talk to people so they listen.
- I react differently when there’s hazards in my job... I say that first and foremost is my health, and I feel I have more of a right to say something.
- I liked the games best. The classes were so fun! And I liked that the games taught us more about one’s health... if one sees a problem at work, it’s important to say something. For me this was new... I didn’t know before that one has to speak up about it.
- I was telling the other day laborers on the corner how to ask for gloves in English. I learned that in class. It’s important to know the words in English so employers understand us. Before I wouldn’t ask for gloves because I was embarrassed that I didn’t know the words in English.

Impact on El Centro Humanitario Staff

El Centro Humanitario staff reported having an increased awareness, knowledge, and regular practice of thinking about and talking about health and safety as a result of the project. These perspectives are exemplified by the comments below.

- I feel it was successful because we talk about health and safety all the time. I know I didn’t think about it and wouldn’t have paid attention to it on my own. I believe that now there is a culture around health and safety in the day laborer employment program that didn’t exist prior to this project.
- As staff members, we respect the Safety Coordinator’s advocacy and continual reminders of how we can include health and safety into our activities. We appreciate her consistently insisting that we include it. She was very creative and persistent. She would approach us saying, this is important, how can I incorporate this into your actions. That was very effective.
- We have an entrenched practice of thinking about health and safety in our organization now.

As described in the quote above, one of the lessons learned by staff was the need to be “creative and persistent” in the ways that health and safety was framed, to be better
incorporated into existing efforts. As noted by the Safety Coordinator, one of the major impacts of this project is that we are “learning the language and issues of the workers and then learning how to adjust our framework and their framework to include health and safety. For example, we have learned not to use words like occupational health and safety, but rather workers’ rights. We are constantly trying to adjust our framework so we can better reach these workers.” At the same time, staff reported having a better understanding of how to work with day laborers and domestic workers “as partners and not as an enforcement agency” to promote health and safety of vulnerable workers.

For example, El Centro Humanitario staff observed that some employers do want to help protect their workers but they just aren’t aware of the dangers faced or prevention methods that could be used. Recognizing that the day laborers could provide their employers with information, the Safety Coordinator developed flyers to be sent out with day laborers and domestic workers on jobs to be given to their employers. The flyers provided information on easy, inexpensive ways to prevent job hazards. Two flyers were developed— one for day laborers and one for domestic workers.

Throughout the grant period, El Centro Humanitario staff built their capacity to provide education, resources and technical assistance to day laborers and domestic workers with an interest in occupational safety and health and workers’ rights. As a result of having developed numerous trainings and educational materials, the Safety Coordinator improved her understanding of popular education techniques and how to engage low-literacy/non-literacy and non-English speakers in educational activities. The Safety Coordinator also developed a heightened awareness about how El Centro Humanitario can promote occupational safety and health through technical support to non-profit organizations with an interest in health and safety and as a resource to allies advocating for workers’ rights.

**Impact on the Community**

In the last 2 months, 373 community members, many of whom were homeless with a history of working temporarily in labor intensive jobs, attended safety trainings conducted by El Centro Humanitario’s Safety Coordinator and staff members. In addition to the 373 people trained, 1161 community members were given safety information and flyers during community outreach events and over 1,500 informational safety flyers were distributed by mail past and potential employers, both businesses and individuals.
The developed training curriculum is also actively being shared with organizations serving and organizing day laborers and domestic workers around the country, and is in the process of being cohesively packaged for more pro-active distribution. The training curriculum developed by the Safety Coordinator was mindful of the adage—doing is understanding—and building on the experience of participatory research, the curriculum provides structure and support to community organizations serving day laborers and domestic workers. The curriculum provides opportunities during training that result in equitable dialogues, relevant interventions to reduce occupational hazards, improve the social and structural context of the day laborers’ work, and increase the capacities of all parties involved in the process.

The training curriculum is designed to target non-literacy, non-English speaking participants with engaging hands-on learning activities and group games. Each curriculum devotes entire sections to learning the personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves & hard hat) in English and how to negotiate with one’s employer for better working conditions. Negotiations are difficult, but critical for day laborers. Learning to negotiate requires laborers to be assertive in standing up for their needs while still considering the interest of their employer. Handling the conflict between cooperation and competition requires practice, which is achieved through the use of the participatory training method. This training method encourages teamwork and group problem solving and emphasizes learning through doing without relying on reading. Participants have the opportunity to analyze health and safety problems in a group and develop solutions to aid each other in negotiation role-plays. The training method allows for valuable exchanges between workers and trainers about their lives and work. The training process is designed to be cyclic—community dialogues lead to community actions, which if successful, produce both individual and social changes and further community dialogues and actions. Students had this to say about the trainings:

• “Yo creo que me motiva la negociación con los patrones. Es que yo limpio apartamentos, y sabes trabajo y trabajo. Y entonces me daba un dolor en la espalda.” (I believe that the negotiating with employers part motivated me. It’s that I clean apartments and, you know, I work and work. And then I have backpain.)

• “Me empecé a fijar en que algunas mujeres tenían las manos quemada, con alergias, ojos rojos y lo vi en mí también.” (I began to notice that some of the women had burned hands, allergies, red eyes and I saw that in myself as well.)

• “Creo que me motiva la idea de poder conocer el curso, y así poder compartir el conocimiento con otras.” (what motivates me is the idea of being able to learn from the course, and as a result being able to share my knowledge with others.)

• “Las clases son muy buenas. No me sentía avergonzado de que yo no puedo escribir bien.” (The trainings are very good. I don’t feel embarrassed that I cannot write well.)

• “Después de escuchar una presentación que hizo Cristal sobre los productos verdes. Pensé y dije ‘me imagino que el cambio ese va a tardar un montón.’ Pero ella con su presencia, y a pesar de que es [de otra cultura],..."
Cristal ayuda mucho a la gente.” (After listening to a presentation that Crystal (Safety Coordinator) gave about green products I thought and said ‘I imagine that this change is going to take a long time.’ But with her presence, and in spite of who she is [someone from another culture], Crystal (Safety Coordinator) has helped a lot of people.)

• “Ellas me motivaron, yo no sé leer y escribir muy bien, no sé. No necesito leer para participar en estas clases.” (They motivated me, I don’t know how to read or write very well, I don’t know. I didn’t need to be able to read to participate in the trainings.)

• “Mire, si se leer, no más que a veces como que le falta un letra a la palabra, por ejemplo las palabras: “como y come”. Yo leo bien, es en la escritura donde me trabo. Las clases de OSHA con Cristal no necesite leer y la escritura. Las clases son muy buenas.” (Look, yes I know how to read, once in awhile I miss a letter of a word, for example the words ‘como’ and ‘come.’ I read well, it’s in the writing where I get stuck. For the OSHA trainings it isn’t necessary to be able to read and write. The trainings are really good.)

Leadership Skills Development Among Workers
20 workers were trained as safety worker-leaders. The safety worker-leaders met multiple times to breakdown, and discuss the content of 1 of the 7 vocation specific curricula, as well as the broader social factors that drive unsafe working conditions for day laborers, popular education and teaching methods, workplace hazard identification and prevention and safety advocacy skills development. The safety worker-leaders indicated that the skills developed through the method of focusing on each training individually increased their knowledge and capacity, which in turn enabled them to be more effective worker leaders and safety resources to their peers.

Ongoing project evaluations, meeting notes and conversations with day laborers, domestic workers and staff all indicate that the El Centro Humanitario project helped increase the leadership skills and collective capacity of day laborers and domestic workers to advocate for improved working conditions. One worker-leader cited the leadership development meetings as “an example of trainings that were well taught because they were clear, participatory, and practical.” Comments expressed that workers felt valued in the process. As one student reported, “We evaluated ourselves and that helped me feel that my role was important. Crystal (Safety Coordinator) even asked us our opinions.”

Both the Safety Coordinator and the staff held a commitment to ensuring that the day laborers’ voice was heard in decision-making processes. All seven curricula for the trainings emerged from day laborers’ stated priorities. Every aspect of the trainings involved day laborers in planning, implementation, and dissemination of information. Twenty day laborers and domestic workers were trained as health and safety worker-leaders. Many of the worker-leaders reported an increased sense of camaraderie, self esteem and courage to advocate for themselves. As noted by one participant, “I used to be afraid to say anything at my work, because I was afraid of losing my job. Now I’m not so afraid. I told my employer that I have the right to be safe and healthy. I gave her a basket with green cleaning
products that I made in class and the flyer on how to keep me safe. She allows me to use those cleaners at work now. In fact, I even told my children that they can talk without being afraid. We have a right to speak, to say what we don’t like. In this way the class has helped, and has helped my family as well.”

Throughout the entire project, day laborers and domestic workers were engaged in learning about their rights, proposing ideas, learning new skills, receiving training as leaders, and connecting with other workers and others in the community. These activities also raised awareness of health and safety issues and improved day laborers’ knowledge about how to protect oneself on the job. As noted by the Safety Coordinator, “Within our community-based organization there are two levels of capacity building. One level is the capacity building of the worker-leaders—increasing their knowledge of the training topics and increasing their skill and confidence in leadership, teaching and learning. The second level is capacity building of the training participants who gain a stronger connection with each other, gain confidence in their jobs, and learn how to protect their health on the job.” An initial assessment of student participants revealed positive experiences with the material presented and offered opportunities for curriculum replication. Subsequent course evaluations suggested that students experienced:

- Increased awareness of their occupational safety and health rights on the job
- Increased awareness of ways to protect themselves on the job from occupational hazards
- Increased confidence in talking to their employers about health and safety issues

Students reported learning the following Health and Safety information in the class:

- “Usar guantes para ciertos químicos” (“To use gloves for certain types of chemicals”)
- “la manera de llevar cosas y no dañar la espalda” (“how to carry things without hurting your back”)
- “los químicos no solamente afecta a uno sino a la familia y a los niños” (“that chemicals do not only affect you, but your family and kids”)
- “Como los químicos hace daño a los pulmones, y los accidentes” (“How chemicals can harm your lungs, and about accidents”)
- “Me ayudó en mi propio trabajo. Nunca antes me fijaba en el trabajo peligroso que hacemos.” (It helped me in my own work. Never before would I notice the dangerous jobs that we do.)
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<tr>
<th>Products, Outcomes and Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Products</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Training curriculum for 7 vocation specific safety trainings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 2 Flyers for employers on common hazards and cheap, inexpensive solutions to keep workers safe (1 for DL, 1 for DW employers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hazardous Chemicals Commonly Used In Cleaning - Handout (Spanish/English)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make Your Own Green Cleaning Kit - Handout (Spanish/English)</td>
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<td>• 5 Main Rights Under OSHA flyer</td>
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<td>• Green Cleaning Kit for employers of DW (Each kit contains: Instructions to make 8 chemical free cleansers, All Purpose Spray Cleaner (made in class), Soft Scrub Cleanser (made in class), Window Cleaner (made in class), Extra labels for the cleaning products, A flyer on how to keep domestic workers safe &amp; a list of hazardous chemicals often found in cleaning products and their effect on health)</td>
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<td>• Laminated Key-ring for 6 topics with English/Spanish PPE phrases, Tools &amp; Appropriate PPE, and 5 main rights under OSHA, for distribution to students as a safety reference</td>
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<td>• Water bottles with a “Work safely, your family depends on you!” sticker (Laminated key ring will be attached to the metal water bottle with a carabiner)</td>
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### Positive Outcomes

- Domestic worker/Day Laborer-specific training curriculum developed that is linguistically, educationally, and culturally appropriate.
- Trainings continue with an average of over 30 attendees per class.
- 547 DLs/DWs trained in 4 hr. health & safety trainings.
- 373 community members trained in health and safety.
- 20 DLs/domestic workers trained as safety leaders.
- 1161 Community members received health and safety information.
- Informational safety flyers were distributed by mail to over 1,500 past and potential employers, both businesses and individuals.
- Increased awareness among participants about rights, health and safety, negotiating with their employer & how protect self on the job.
- Increased leadership, self-confidence, and capacity building among members/students.
- Improved health and well-being from implementing changes in ergonomics, products used, and negotiating with employers.
- UMDNJ School of Public Health used trainers’ guide and materials to train day laborers.
- Training curriculum shared with organizations serving and organizing domestic workers/day laborers around the country. The curriculum is being cohesively packaged for more pro-active distribution.
- Developed flyers for employers on common hazards and easy, inexpensive solutions to protect Domestic Workers/Day Laborers which is now regularly distributed to employers.
- Trainers learned to work together as a team, recognize strengths and weaknesses of each other.
- Worker Leaders given opportunity to develop skills in planning and managing safety training preparation.
- A number of the students in the trainings returned and participated in multiple classes.
- Identified strategies to further address DL/DW Health and Safety issues.
- Health and safety team became well-trusted resources to the initially skeptical day laborer community.

### Challenges

- Workers' top priority is jobs, can build DW/DL leadership capacity, but they need to work/generate income, limiting ability to participate, or lead without regular salary.
- Varying levels of worker-leader/staff literacy, writing skills, professional training/background, experience as instructor/educator.
- Staff initially lacked experience organizing trainings, and planning efforts were not as efficient as possible. As noted by one day laborer, “we lost months just to meetings”.
- Recruitment of day laborer participants required constant outreach (2-3 times per week for each class).
- Attitudes of day laborers about health and safety were dismissive (i.e. I’m young and won’t get hurt / I’m old and am going to die anyway / I don’t have any rights).
- Skepticism among workers regarding the usefulness of safety training.
- Day laborers were unfamiliar with the concepts of traditional education and working in small groups.