



Dear Coalición de Derechos Humanos Supporter,

Thanks to your support and the hard work of all of our dedicated volunteers, we can look back on 2015 with pride. This year was an important yet challenging one, but one thing is certain—without your continued financial contributions we couldn't have successfully supported nine workers in reclaiming over \$18,000 in stolen wages, collaborated with other national and local groups in the fight to end Operation Streamline, and answered over 100 calls per month from family members looking for lost loved ones.

For the past 22 years, we at Derechos Humanos continue to do a lot with very little, and this past year was no exception. In 2015, we had only two part-time staff members at any given time, and therefore relied mostly on our dedicated volunteers to help us accomplish all of the above. Grassroots organizations like Derechos cannot always rely on grant funding to sustain its projects, pay for its staff, rent, the phone system, and other equipment because we refuse to compromise our values. Unfortunately, being principled can make it more difficult for us to secure continued funding from reliable sources. Thankfully, almost half of our annual income comes from donors like you—that is grassroots fundraising at its best!

And we don't plan on giving up the fight in 2016. However, we absolutely cannot keep fighting without your enduring support—yes, your financial support, but also your volunteer hours and willingness to read and share the timely news coming from the border region through our listserv. Please consider how far we will stretch each dollar that you are able to donate or each hour you are able to volunteer (for more information about how to volunteer—even if you don't live in Tucson, see page x).

Your gift of \$25, \$100, 500, 1,000 or \$5,000 can make all the difference. You can donate by going to our website at <http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/> and clicking on the “Donate” button. Or you can send a check in the enclosed envelope or you can sign up for monthly donations with our enclosed form. Please consider being a monthly sustainer and see your donation go a long way. (More details on becoming a sustainer on page 4

Thank you!

The Derechos Family

Highlights of the Year

Our Volunteers!



Our greatest highlight of the year is, by far, our volunteers! We are so thankful for the innumerable hours that they dedicated to the work here at Derechos. Thank you to long-term volunteers Amanda Garcés, Genevieve Schroeder, Sandra Gárnica, Rachel Frank, Jordan Weiner and Laura Von Dohlen as well as Isabel Ball, Gabrielle Shaw Frida Cota, Elizabeth Barahona, Ruici Ong, Waldina Villa, and Emily Tedards, Elise Mitchell, Prachi Goyal, and Yaneli Soriano. We could not have accomplished all of the work that we highlight below without you.

Summer Volunteers 1

Volunteer Testimony by Prachi Goyal:

As an intern at Derechos Humanos, on one of my first days, Cristen and Rachel trained me to work on the “Missing Migrant Project”. They give other interns and me a list of about 30 detention centers and asked that we call to attempt to locate people that went missing after crossing the border. This exercise quickly turned everything I was reading about at the Border Studies Program into reality. I began to see more concretely how the system turns people into numbers and how big businesses such as Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) profit from this modern form of slavery. I constantly see human rights being violated and the list of missing migrants increasing in our database. Although I wish this project didn’t exist, I’m fortunate to have learned about this reality, a reality that I’d like to take part in changing.

A Special Thank You to Long-Time Volunteer, Amanda Garcés!



We also want to extend a special thank you to long-term volunteer Amanda Garcés, who has spent countless hours providing us with her invaluable leadership, volunteering with the Wage Theft Clinic, organizing and facilitating workshops for the Promotoras, and working on the campaign to end Operation Streamline in addition to the overall organizational structure of the organization. Without Amanda we couldn’t have done all that we have done this year. We wish her the best during her maternity leave. Thank you, Amanda, from the bottom of our hearts.

15 Years Too Many!

This year we commemorated the 15th year that we have been in the fight to end migrant deaths. In June, for the 786th Thursday in a row, we stood with our community at El Tiradito Shrine for our weekly vigil where we remember and honor those killed by deadly enforcement policies and practices. On El Día de los Muertos, we walked 8 miles from the St. Johns Church to the San Xavier Mission for the 15th time, each of us carrying a cross that represented one of the 137 human beings whose remains were recovered in the Arizona desert this year. And this marks approximately the 15th year that we have been working with families who are searching for loved ones that have gone missing after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.



For a decade and a half, Derechos has been making one cross for each set of remains recovered in the Southern Arizona desert. After this year, we now have 2,098 crosses since we began in the year 2000. Most of these crosses carry the word “Unknown” on them, representing how effectively the system disappears people. Contrary to what many believe, we know the system is not broken; it is actually working exactly as intended, putting people in ‘mortal danger’ as stated in the Border Patrol Strategic Plan of 1994.

After Derechos members Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith and Isabel García began speaking out in public about the deadly consequences of militarizing the U.S./Mexico border, approximately 15



years ago, we began receiving calls from desperate family members trying to locate their missing loved ones. Fast forward 15 years later, and we receive over 100 calls per month on our Missing Migrant Hotline and continue to search for people in detention centers and hospitals, Medical Examiner’s Offices and in the desert, when possible, by collaborating with local community search and rescue groups such as No More Deaths in Arizona, Águilas del Desierto in California and the South Texas Human Rights Center in Texas. We

don't want to continue doing this work for another 15 years, but unfortunately don't see an end in sight any time soon.

We know that, as long as racism and dehumanization prevail, we will continue to receive calls in which groups of people are lost in the desert and whose only option is to rely on the same entity that is responsible for 1. causing them to go lost in the first place and 2. apprehending and deporting them. One recent call that came into our Missing Migrant Hotline is a perfect example of how being forced to depend on the Border Patrol for rescue can literally cost someone their life. When one of our volunteers received a call about a group of migrants lost

and in bad medical condition in the desert, she and the family of one of the lost migrants immediately began to call the authorities, asking them to employ their available resources. Instead of receiving the help they sought out, however, they were faced with immediate and deadly indifference. All authorities refused our requests for a search, and we were told by one Border Patrol agent that “We aren’t going to take a helicopter out for just a few subjects.” A few subjects? Or a few human beings? We believe that the only solution to such deadly racism is a dismantling of the entire system that allows for it to exist in the first place.

One very small step in that direction is a collaborative project with No More Deaths that we began in June in which we document moments like the above when a potential rescue is denied by authorities such as the police, Sheriffs departments, and the Border Patrol. We document when 9-11 illegally transfers people in distress’s phone calls, or our phone calls, to the Border Patrol. We are also documenting each time the Border Patrol scatters a group, resulting in individuals being lost and alone. We know from the many stories that we have heard that the Border Patrol will apprehend the majority of the group, knowingly leaving one or more person behind to often die of dehydration or become lost for several days. Lastly, we are documenting how common it is for people to become lost in the detention center maze after having been apprehended and then transferred to private prisons. Many people are denied phone calls, forcing family members to wait in agony to find out what happened to their loved one.

El Plan Frontera Sur

In July, interns Ruici Ong and Elizabeth Barahona invited Miguel Ángel, Director of Voces Mesoamericanas and Todd Miller, author of Border Patrol Nation to speak at a forum about El Plan Frontera Sur (The Southern Border Program). July marked the first full year since the U.S. began funding the program, which has been directly linked to the increase in violence against Central American refugees crossing through Mexico.

Hearing testimonies from the Southern border by Miguel and Todd gave us even more reason to demand accountability from our government for migrant deaths not only in the U.S., but also in Mexico. Both of them recounted how the U.S.-Mexico border has for several years now been extended all the way to the Mexico-Guatemala border, mirroring the deadly Border Patrol Strategic Plan of 1994 by adding more checkpoints, adding and training more government officials, and spending tens of millions of dollars on surveillance equipment. Effectively, the U.S. government has outsourced and funded a plan that knowingly kills people, forcing Central American migrants into dangerous routes as another form of prevention through deterrence. The deterrent in this context is, conveniently, organized crime, gang violence, and raids by abusive government officials. The opportunity to learn from others who have seen along the Guatemala-Mexico border what we have witnessed over the last 20 years along the U.S. Mexico border gives us even more reason to keep fighting. We can’t stand by while the U.S. and Mexican governments kill people and get away with it.

The Wage Theft Clinic—This whole section needs improvement—could be longer (285 words)



The Wage Theft Clinic at Derechos had a successful year—we worked with several groups of local workers to recover over \$18,000 in stolen wages. In July, we successfully supported nine workers in their fight to recover over \$10,000 in unpaid wages. When local companies hired nine workers to perform janitorial services and refused to pay them the wages they earned, they came to our Wage Theft Clinic, took our Know Your Rights Workshop, and worked with us to fight for the wages they were promised and deserved. After writing letters and calling the entities that owed them, we joined the workers in a protest in front of one of the places of business. It is not acceptable hard-earned wages be withheld from hard working members of our community.

Unfortunately, however, even though we had a successful year, we regretingally had to close the clinic due to lack of funds. We have hopes that some day we will re-open it in the future in order to address the high rate of wage theft in our communities Unfortunately, however, even though we had a successful year, we regretingally had to close the clinic due to lack of funds. We have hopes that some day we will re-open it in the future in order to address the high rate of wage theft in our communities Unfortunately, however, even though we had a successful year, we regretingally had to close the clinic due to lack of funds. We have hopes that some day we will...

Las Promotoras (150 words)—I really was just rambling to try to see how much I could fit

Las promotoras de Derechos Humanos are an integral part of the work that we do. Whether or not they were making flowers for the Día de los Muertos pilgrimage as in the picture below or planning a fundraiser part for Isabel García when she retired as the Director of Public Defender's Office and she became the director Studies Department at the work that they do is community. The several thousands of and have been an of Derechos's survival.



Anna Ochoa O'Leary when of the Mexican American the University of Arizona, invaluable in the promotoras have raised dollars over the last year incredibly important part We love them and the

community loves them. This summer, several of them took a workshop prepared by Amanda Garcés in which they learned about the current political context. These amazing women then take this knowledge and share it with the community, constantly empowering and educating others, creating a more united Tucson.



Operation Streamline (This can be a lot longer)

Since Operation Streamline began, hundreds of thousands of human beings have received sentences of incarceration and a permanent criminal record for the “crime” of crossing the border to seek safety and economic justice for themselves and their families.

In April 2015, Derechos Humanos decided to stand up with Grassroots Leadership to fight for an end to Operation Streamline and the criminalization of all migrants by hosting a border-wide summit of activists from all along the southern border. On September 19, representatives of Derechos Humanos, the End Streamline Coalition, the American Friends Service Committee, and numerous other organizations followed up with a regional strategy session.

December 16, 2015 marks the tenth year since Operation Streamline was instituted in Del Rio, Texas, which was then expanded to Yuma in 2006 and to Tucson in 2008 and since to all Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico sectors of the US-Mexico border. This date also happens to coincide with Human Rights Week, so from December 10 to 16, be on the lookout for information about a week of action. Join us in the fight to end this system of injustice that wreaks havoc on our communities!



Derechos members Isabel García and Amanda Garcés participated in a panel titled xx at NetRoots Nation in Phoenix this summer. Isabel was one of the plenary speakers and spoke about Operation Streamline—her talk can be found on YouTube at...



Stop G4S Campaign

Derechos Humanos joined a coalition of immigrants’ rights, Palestine solidarity, faith-based groups, and human rights organizations seeking the cancellation of the G4S contract with the City of Tucson. G4S is a

transnational corporation with a long record of profiteering from and violating the rights of Palestinians, workers, and incarcerated children. Due to G4S's purchase of the US corporation formerly known as Wackenhut, G4S now operates for Border Patrol the buses on which immigrants are deported from the United States.

G4S has received a series of contracts for providing security to the City of Tucson, the most recent of which was renewed this past October. The Stop G4S campaign has been corresponding with City officials and meeting with members of the Tucson City Council to ask the City of Tucson to halt the renewal of its contract with G4S. Transnational corporations that violate human rights should not receive City of Tucson taxpayer dollars.

La Tumba de los Asesinados



This year, local Tucson artist and Derechos member, Pancho Medina, built an altar for the office, which he called La Tumba de los Asesinados in memory of the dozens of murders by Border Patrol agents over the last twenty years. Every day this altar reminds us to keep fighting against a system that allows Border Patrol agents to thoughtlessly murder human beings with total impunity. A system in which law enforcement agents can be caught on video killing someone, as we recently saw in the case of Anastacio Hernández, and not face any charges, shoot someone x times in the back as in the case of Carlos La Madrid or fire a gun through the U.S. Mexico border wall from xx feet above in the case of 16 year old José Antonio Elena Rodriguez. Thank you, Pancho for giving us a place in which we can reflect on...

Welcome to the Derechos Team, Dévora González!

After volunteering her time with us for over a year, we were finally able to officially bring Dévora onto the Derechos Missing Migrant Hotline Team as a part-time staff member. Dévora moved here from Los Ángeles to complete a Masters Degree in Latin American Studies two years ago and decided to stay. And we are so lucky to have her! She brings with her a fierce passion for helping families, who like her own, have had to endure the agony of not hearing from a loved one and thinking the worst. She also just welcomed her baby boy, into this world only four months ago. She is an amazing mother than inspires us all. Thank you, Dévora, for all that you do for the Missing Migrant Project and Derechos. You are an invaluable part of the work that we do!



Volunteer with Us!

We could not do this work without volunteers and interns. If you would like to volunteer there are a variety of opportunities to become involved:

- Join the Detention Center Call Team for the Missing Migrant Project
- Join the Missing Migrant Project Case Facilitation Team
- Help us with social media, website, graphic design, event planning and fundraising.
- Conduct surveys for the abuse documentation project that we are working on with No More Deaths

If you would like to join any of these opportunities, please contact volunteer@derechoshumanosaz.net, and we will e-mail you the application and more

Sign up by going to our website, <http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/>. Click on the Donate Here button. Scroll down to the second option which is: **convenient recurring monthly donation**. Pick the amount you can afford from the drop-down menu. Click the Donate button in the text line and fill out your credit card information. Once a month your card will be automatically charged.

Please Consider Making a Tax-Deductible Donation Today!

Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000 or \$5,000 can make all the difference. You can donate by going through our website at <http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/> and clicking on the "Donate" button. Or you can send a check in the enclosed envelope sign up for monthly donations with our enclosed form. Please consider being a monthly sustainer, and see your donation go a long way.

We have a lot of work to do! A Community United is a Strong Community!



Coalición de Derechos Humanos – PO Box 1286, Tucson AZ, 85702 – 520-770-1373
coalicion@derechoshumanosaz.net – www.derechoshumanosaz.net