



# Centro de Abogacía de la Comunidad

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## Center for Community Advocacy

NEWSLETTER  
FALL  
2019

# CCA rallies community support around groundbreaking East Salinas program

Behind the scenes every day more than 1,000 local nonprofits work tirelessly to fulfill their missions. But they can't do it without financial support from the community.

Last year alone Monterey County Gives raised more than \$4.7 million in six weeks, thanks to nearly 5,000 donors.

This year the Center for Community Advocacy's "big idea" for the wildly successful MCG campaign involves supporting **Youth for Change (Y4C)**, a group that identifies, recruits, trains and engages future leaders within East Salinas communities.



CCA believes that youth leaders need an infrastructure to develop leadership capacity and to develop common agendas where leaders can take collective action to improve communities. The fundraising efforts will support a wide range of Y4C program activities that have earned special recognition from the Salinas City Council.

Local youth benefit from the Y4C program by: developing skills that make them active participants in their community; using what they learn to help improve the quality of lives for their families and peers; developing community-based youth agendas for collective action; and receiving higher education and career guidance.

The group was born when CCA began organizing adult residents in the Acosta Plaza neighborhood, launching several resident-led activities such as the construction of a basketball court and park area. During the project, area youth began attending, accompanying

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## DIA DE LOS MUERTOS Tardeada & Ben Heller Awards Banquet

Just one fundraising event a year, and for 2019 it should be particularly wonderful! The Center for Community Advocacy's 24th annual "Dia de Los Muertos" tardeada (afternoon party) will take place **Sunday, October 27 th at 4:30 pm** to honor this year's recipient of CCA's Ben Heller Award and Volunteer Hero Award Recipient.

As always, the Center for Community Advocacy has much to celebrate. We have completed yet another year of training farm workers in leadership roles that enable them to negotiate with their landlords for improvements in their housing units. Those same skills have empowered these farm worker leaders to become purveyors of preventive health information at their housing sites and teach farm worker how they can help themselves. Talk about a challenge, but we are ready for it!



SPONSORSHIPS/TICKETS

[cca-viva.org/events](http://cca-viva.org/events)

# Meet the CCA Team

## Daniel Gonzalez

In November 2018 Daniel Gonzalez joined the Center for Community Advocacy as Executive Director providing leadership for all aspects of the organization and its mission dedicated to healthy living conditions and a healthier community in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys.

As an experienced bilingual, bicultural nonprofit leader, Daniel has demonstrated a deep commitment to the community and a passion for addressing social issues, especially for vulnerable populations of different origin and background. Before joining the CCA team, Daniel spent five years in leadership roles with YWCA Monterey County, including Director of Legal Services and Deputy Executive Director to close the gaps in services for underrepresented and underserved populations in the county. Earlier, he worked as an interpreter/translator with a local high school district where he provided service to the non-English speaking community.

## Sabino F. Lopez

Sabino is CCA's Interim Deputy Director. He is a former farmworker with extensive background of community involvement.

From 1966 – 1983, worked as a field worker and irrigator in California's Salinas Valley for D'Arrigo Bros. Co., Merrill Farms, Fresh Pick Co., and Sun Harvest Co. While at Sun Harvest, Sabino served as a crew leader and later, as a field representative to approximately 2,000 workers on behalf of the United Farm Workers of America.

From 1984 – 1987, Sabino worked for the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) in Salinas as a community worker and later, for the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF).

From 1987 – 1990, Sabino worked as a field representative for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 102 in San Diego, California. Sabino was born in Ameca, State of Jalisco, Mexico. Sabino has been with

CCA since the organization opened its doors in 1990.

## Armando Asencio

Armando has been a CCA staff member for almost 20 years and is currently the Community Coordinator & Health Promoter for CCA.

Before becoming a staff member in 1997, Armando served as a volunteer for CCA, including stints on the VIVA governing body and on the CCA Board of Directors. He also served as the president of the Del Monte Street Comité, one of the first committees that CCA helped to establish in 1992.

Before joining CCA, Armando worked in conference services at Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove. He was working at Asilomar when he first volunteered at CCA, which had helped him in a dispute with his landlord.

## Norma Ahedo Juarez

Norma is CCA's Promoters Program Coordinator, primarily responsible for coordinating CCA's Strong Families Program.

She started as a community volunteer and in 2009 became a part-time staffer at CCA and is now a full-time CCA employee.

Norma, who also studied nursing, is a CCA-trained neighborhood leader who served as a volunteer promotora comunitaria for her neighborhood, specializing in the Strong Families Program.

## Joel Hernandez-Laguna

Joel's organizing work started as a neighborhood leader at Acosta Plaza in East Salinas, a mostly farmworker community and a place where CCA had mounted a major project, and where he had lived for 17 years.

He began his volunteer efforts with the Building Healthy Families initiative of The California Endowment and KHDC radio station.

Joel's work as a volunteer neighborhood leader impressed CCA so much that they hired him in 2012 to work as a farmworker trainer. He recently became CCA's lead organizer.

Joel continues his work at Acosta Plaza and, additionally, is involved in civic engagement between CCA leaders and stakeholders, farm worker and youth outreach in the community and in the Youth For Change program.

Joel serves on CHISPA's nominating committee and is graduate of Leadership Salinas Valley.

Joel said he chose to work at CCA because he sees it as a "leadership university," a place where one can learn, educate others and make an impact in their community.

## Laura Antuna-Magaña

Laura Antuna-Magana has been the officer manager at CCA for 10 years.

Laura handles accounts payable, receivables, human resources and technology.

Laura has a passion for people and it shows. She has become the backbone of the office and is willing to help everyone.

Prior to CCA, she worked at Integrated Device Technology, then sold Cadillacs in Watsonville. She also worked as a landscaper.

Laura is on the main comité for Freedom Mobile Home Park, where 25 families have been on a rent strike for 13 years. CCA has helped the families and now she is on the committee to better her community. Laura is also actively involved with her city.

### Special Project Organizer

Position Available

[cca-viva.org/join-our-team](http://cca-viva.org/join-our-team)

[cca-viva.org/staff](http://cca-viva.org/staff)

# Program Spotlight

## STRONG FAMILIES PROGRAM

CCA's **Strong Families Program** strives to reduce violence and other forms of abusive behavior by teaching strategies that strengthen family relationships. CCA trains neighborhood leaders to help their peers incorporate certain strategies into their familial relationships. The leaders undergo a five week, five topic curriculum taught by trainers who, themselves, helped to develop the curriculum. The curriculum includes the following topics: Family Values, Family Communication, Stress Management, Parenting Styles/Positive Parenting and Understanding Our Youth, an instruction that helps parents understand the challenges that youth face ranging from peer pressure to gang awareness.



## HEALTH

CCA trains neighborhood leaders to act as promotores comunitarios, or health promoters. After being trained, the promotores deliver, to their peers, preventative health information/interventions in the following areas: chronic diseases, behavioral health and youth violence prevention. Promotores are trained by health service providers



## HOUSING

We help farmworkers organize housing-site committees for the purpose of improving substandard conditions in the housing units that they occupy. CCA also helps farmworkers to mobilize members from the various housing committees to advocate for the construction of new, quality, affordable housing for farmworkers and other low-income working families.



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their parents to meetings and work activities. The group grew when the youth invited other friends to join the effort. Soon, the CCA was working with a core group of youth who testified at City Council hearings to secure funds for the project, conducted their own fundraising activities to support the project, surveyed their neighbors to increase resident support for the project and provided labor for the



project. As the project neared completion, the leaders formed a group and named themselves Youth for Change, developing an agenda that nourished their civic participation.

A big component of the program involves education and career guidance. Youth and their parents participate in sessions where they learn about requirements, resources and important information needed to move forward toward a higher education. The goal of the program is for participants to secure an educational path to college. At the end of the program they visit a campus of their choice to learn about the intricacies and costs of college life.



## WHAT CAN CCA DO



CCA provides education, orientation and legal support to farmworkers and other low-income working families who want to establish neighborhood committees that work to improve housing and health conditions.

CCA trains these committees to negotiate with landlords to resolve issues such as unsafe housing conditions, housing discrimination and security deposits. CCA also trains these committees to provide preventative health information and interventions in their neighborhoods.

CCA-trained committees also receive instruction that teaches farmworkers how to establish alliances with local public officials and local civic leaders. These alliances help farmworkers achieve local policies that help their efforts to improve farmworker health and housing conditions.

If you think you would like to establish a neighborhood committee to help you resolve your housing or health issues, contact CCA for assistance. We will make every effort to assist you or refer you to the appropriate individual or agency.



## OUR MISSION

The Center for Community Advocacy trains farmworkers to form and lead neighborhood-based tenant and health committees or comités that, themselves, advocate for improved housing and health conditions for farmworkers and other low-income families in Monterey County and Santa Cruz County.