



Amigos en Cristo

A Ministry of the Southwest Florida Outreach Council: LCMS

January 2009, Newsletter #127

www.amigoscenter.org



No One Could Help

By Eulalia Troncoso: Immigration Specialist
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Eka, a lady from Russia, came to my Golden Gate office at Messiah Lutheran Church on November 20, 2008. She did not have an appointment but her voice on the phone sounded agitated and upset. Immediately I gave her directions to our office. She arrived the same day with two of her three children, ages 4 and 6.

A recent widow with three small children, Eka asked me for help. She had gone to all non-profit organizations she was told to go, but all had turned her away. Her case was very challenging and they did not know how to help her. They only advised her to seek an attorney.

Honestly, I did not know how to help her either. She had received a Request for Evidence Letter (RFE) on behalf of her Immigration case and her daughter. She needed to respond to Immigration by December 17, 2008.

Immigration was asking her husband to re-submit an Affidavit of support form, which is a financial affidavit required by Immigration to continue processing her case.

Unfortunately, Eka could not provide the form because her husband had committed suicide a couple of weeks earlier. He owed taxes to the government and did not want to go to jail. He had lost his job and his properties. So in an act of desperation he killed himself, leaving her and the three children on their own.

There she was at my office crying for help. She did not have the money to seek an Immigration attorney, did not have any family in the States. Her husband's family did not want to help. She was living in Saint Matthew's House for the homeless, because her house was in foreclosure.

I made many calls, I looked in the Internet, I e-mail an Immigration Liaison-person and finally I started to get some answers regarding a "self-petition" for widows. I wrote a letter to

Immigration and responded to their FRE letter. I attached evidence of the section of the law that talks about "automatic conversion" which means that hopefully Eka and her daughter would soon become lawful permanent residents.

We are waiting for an Immigration response on her case and her daughter. However, I had been praying for her kids to be safe and for her to find peace. Last time Eka came to see me, I could see a different person. A person full of hope and her tears were being replaced by an expectation of a better tomorrow.

She is so grateful to Amigos Center, she does not how to ever pay us. I said to her to praise God because he was the one who made it happen.

Payroll Cut by \$92,254

By Rev. Robert Selle
bobselle@amigoscenter.org

We expect the coming year to be a difficult one for our donors, grantors and Amigos en Cristo. We need to make cuts in our spending. Since 70% of our total budget goes for personnel costs, I made the decision to reduce our personnel expenses by a total of \$92,254.

As a result, we are terminating the position of Director of Language Services (Regina), Case Worker for Golden Gate (Isabel), Deployed Case Worker: Bonita Springs (Maria Ochoa) and Building Manager: Immokalee (Dave Grove). In addition, Pastor Lomba will have his full-time position reduced to 28 hours per week with no health benefits. All other personnel will have a reduction of their compensation effective as of January 1, 2009.

You can give online

For your convenience, you can now give your tax-deductable contribution at our web site: www.amigoscenter.org

Telephone: (239) 437-6727, Rev. Robert and Donna Selle, DCE Sarah Willig

Come to the Friends of Amigos Tour!

By Ashby Axelgard: Development Director
ashbyaxelgard@gmail.com

Hear live testimonies from people we have helped, talk to our immigration specialists, and listen to Pastor Selle speak about how the Amigos Center became established. This one hour tour takes place every 2nd Thursday of the month at 9:00 am at Hope Lutheran Church in Bonita Springs. We would be honored to have you and are so excited to share with you what God is doing through Amigos Center. Please call me at 239-560-5805 if you are interested or Sarah Willig at 239-784-8474 to let us know you are coming! If you would be interested in a different location or time, let us know and we will take the tour to you!

We Need Food!!!

We are looking for the following food items: rice, pinto beans, flour, cooking oil, sugar, evaporated milk, long duration milk, canned meats and canned vegetables. Call Donna at (239) 437-6727.

Give thanks to God for...

- The 3,600 people we helped to a better life during 2008.

Pray for...

- Eka and her three children.
- The financial support to continue our ministry in 2009 and beyond.