



Trusted Friends,

More than ever before in the history of Amigos Center has the need been so great. In the middle of a recession, a freeze that has killed crops which provide livelihood for our clients, and now the earthquake in Haiti, we are overwhelmed with people needing help. We normally see around 40 people a day at the center in Immokalee and this morning before 10am, we served 77 people which will no doubt climb well over 120 as the day goes on which is the average for the last two weeks.

Florida has not seen such a devastating freeze since 1989 and they say this one is worse. People who are already struggling to make ends meet now no longer have a way to do that. We have tripled our orders through Harry Chapin Food Bank in the last two weeks and can still barely keep the food on the shelves to meet the demand. Worried faces cross our threshold everyday and now with the earthquake in Haiti, sorrow has joined the worry. Nearly every Haitian we speak to has lost at least one family member or friend.

Rather than continue on with the crisis that we are seeing, we want to focus on the positive and share the opportunities. Please read below and leave this e-mail feeling inspired to help your community.

God bless you,
The Amigos Center Staff
www.amigoscenter.org

Earthquake

We have heard the horror stories and been haunted by the pictures of the people who were affected by this devastating earthquake. This rings especially close to home for Amigos Center as have served thousands of Haitians over the years. We are in a unique position to help the Haitians in our country with T.P.S. paper assistance (Temporary Protected Status). With our immigration specialists Lala and Christina's phones ringing off the hook, we expect to see a huge inflow of people starting February 1st for help getting the government approved TPS. This will indirectly benefit people in Haiti as papers will help the Haitians with better jobs and better opportunities to earn money and receive education which they in turn will use to help their own country. The majority of the clients we see already send a large percentage of their money home to their families and this will only increase with the recent tragedy and new opportunity. This is a unique way to serve that virtually no other non-profit can offer. In addition, we are looking into providing a Creole speaking counselor at our center in Immokalee to help the people who are grieving.



Now, more than ever, we need our staff and volunteers to help us meet the rising needs we are seeing.



Frozen Fields

The devastating freeze on January 11 has hurt now only growers but the pickers and packers. Farms and packing houses that typically employ 20-25,000 workers are not able to run resulting in an estimated 23.7 million dollars in lost wages.

Again, we are in a unique situation to help those who are truly hurting for the most basic of needs. The Amigos Center in Bonita Springs and Immokalee is within walking distance to some of the most poverty stricken areas and in Immokalee we are located right in front of where the buses would normally pick up fieldworkers if they were still running. As a result, we are seeing record numbers of people coming through the doors needing assistance to feed and clothe their families. We are so thankful to those who have donated to us and continue to do so. We ask that you pray with us and continue to support us during this time of immense need. Volunteers are welcome to help us hand out the food bags and sort clothing and donations can be given online at www.amigoscenter.org or by mail to Amigos Center, 25999 Old 41 Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34135.