



www.amigoscenter.org

Helping immigrants to an abundant life in Southwest Florida and into eternity.
 Amigos en Cristo, Inc. d/b/a Amigos Center 239-437-6727

Christmas Project

This Christmas we will be focusing our efforts in Immokalee where 90% of the population lives below poverty. We will be providing a Christmas family photograph and a bag of food for families in the community. We feel that this fills a niche since many families are separated from loved ones back in their home country. This free Christmas photo will be packaged so the family can send it back home to their wife, kids, parents, etc in their home country in addition to keeping one for themselves. We feel that this fills a niche since many families are separated from loved ones back in their home country. This free Christmas photo will be packaged so the family can send it back home to their wife, kids, parents, etc in their home country in addition to keeping one for themselves.

If you and your family would like to partner with us, we will be collecting food and funds to put towards this Christmas endeavor. Whatever capacity you feel you can help with will be greatly appreciated. Please e-mail ashby@amigoscenter.org for more information and for a list of suggested food items.



FL-GA Middle School Retreat Weekend Sarah Willig, DCE

What an amazing weekend we had in Leesburg, FL. The theme was "Disaster Relief" focusing on the fact that no matter what disasters we will face in life, we can cling to Jesus who is our hope and strength. God also will work through us to be disaster relief to others as we show His love to them.

We had 14 middle school participants, 3 high school leaders, and 3 adult chaperones attend along with 800 other participants! The kids enjoyed the music from Andrew Witt, Biblical wisdom from Mark Schaffer, personalized mini-sessions based on their interests, as well as free time to fellowship, play, and enjoy each others' company. All of the kids asked if we could stay longer, and when we said we couldn't, they asked if we were going to come back next year. They all had a great time and we are so thankful for your support and prayers.

Special thanks to St. Michael Lutheran and Zion Lutheran who sponsored a few of our youth, to the FL-GA District who sponsored 10 of our youth, as well as Faith Scheller who helped pay for our food, and Centro Internacional de Alabanza in Naples who let us use their 15 passenger van to get all the kids there!

Our vision is to have a thriving youth group in Immokalee and this retreat was a launch for this project. Our goal is to have monthly middle school events in coordination with the circuit wide events with the area churches. In this way we can build a foundation of youth and leadership and grow to serve the high school youth.



Future Pharmacist- Christina Leddin, Immigration Specialist

After a long and arduous battle, last week Amigos Center received a joyous call from a young Haitian man who had just left his immigration interview in Tampa and had finally been approved for his legal permanent resident "green" card!

The client had entered the U.S. in April 2002 and needed to renew his visa in '05 until he was able to apply for a green card through his mother's petition. The mother had petitioned for him in March '98 and he needed to wait approximately nine years to apply for the green card under that case. Unfortunately in 2004, his mother died. When a petitioner dies, the beneficiary, our client, needs to request humanitarian reinstatement (the most difficult case to win) with immigration to continue the case.

Our client had been in legal status in the U.S. for over 5 years when we requested the humanitarian reinstatement. He had been a translator at his high school, a tutor for young children, he was now in college, he had moved up the ranks with his job at Publix, his legal permanent resident sister would be the substitute sponsor on his case, he was actively involved with church, and he was from the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Immigration had every reason to approve the case. His only fault was that his mother had passed before he was able to get the green card.

In January 2009 immigration sent a letter stating that his most current V Visa extension would only be granted until October 1, 2009 and we had still not heard word about his status. Congressman Connie Mack's Office, who had been assisting on this case, put in an urgent request on the status of the pending case. In March 2009, through the congressional office, we got the devastating news that the humanitarian reinstatement case had been denied. Neither the client nor Amigos Center ever received the letter. Our client, desperate to file for his green card before his V Visa extension ran out, went to immigration in Tampa in July 2009. Tampa told our client to file for the green card ASAP. In August we filed for the green card.

Last week, when our client went to his interview, they approved his humanitarian reinstatement case and his green card. Our client is so full of joy that he has been given the right to live and work permanently in the U.S. and will now be eligible to file for U.S. citizenship in five years. He will also be able to fully pursue his dream of becoming a pharmacist since he will now qualify for in-state tuition and federal financial aid.

MythBusters

Many myths tend to cloud the way we look at our immigrant brothers and sisters. This block will be dedicated each month to replacing some common myths with facts. For more mythbusters, please visit [LIRS Immigration Reform Facts](#)

Myth #1: Immigrating to the U.S. for work or family is easy

Fact: Only 5,000 visas are available for low-skilled workers each year yet our economy relies on millions of undocumented laborers. Families wait years for reunification. Lawful permanent residents face waits of more than five years for their spouses to get visas and join them. Siblings of permanent residents wait 10-22 years for visas.

Needs Nook

Amigos' December needs nook item will be contributions towards the Christmas program See article to the right for more details. Food suggestions for the Christmas bags include: Oil, rice, maseca, beans, canned tomatoes, \$10 gift cards to Winn-Dixie or Wal-mart, etc. Please e-mail ashby@amigoscenter.org for a complete list of items.

Ways to Serve

Amigos Center needs you! Join the "Amigos Fleet" where we need trucks and SUVs to help deliver food and clothing donations to Immokalee when your schedule permits. We also have some turkeys that we

will need help delivering the Saturday and Monday before Thanksgiving.

Don't have a truck? Consider joining the "Amigos Ambassadors".
You will be a communication liaison of updates and outreach opportunities between Amigos Center and your sphere of influence (church, neighborhood, work)

Call Ashby at 239-560-5805 to join our team! Visit www.amigoscenter.org for more service opportunities.

Tech Savvy Amigos

To all of our tech savvy friends! If you sell something on Ebay, consider donating a percentage to Amigos Center through [MissionFish](#) at ebay.com!

Trying to save money but also want to help Amigos Center? Common Kindness is for you! Go to [CommonKindness](#) to download and use coupons to your favorite stores! Some of the proceeds will benefit Amigos Center if chosen as your charity on the site. Save AND give!

Thank you for taking the time to read our updates! Please feel free to e-mail ashby@amigoscenter.org for more pictures from the middle school retreat or for more testimonials like the story featured this month from clients who have been helped. Last year, 3,395 individuals were served through Amigos en Cristo and we were able to do that thanks to supporters like yourselves. Thank you for partnering with us to reach out with the love of Christ right to those struggling here in our community.

Sincerely,

The Staff of Amigos en Cristo