

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM RECIPIENT, DOLORES HUERTA, HEADLINES POVERTY CONFERENCE

“Where Are the Jobs?” Addresses Innovative Employment Programs, Workforce Policy to Improve Opportunities for the Poor, and Volunteerism as Path to Employment and Nonprofit Sustainability

(Pacoima, CA) – MEND—Meet Each Need with Dignity, the largest multi-service, poverty relief agency in Los Angeles’ San Fernando Valley, will host its 5th annual MENDing Poverty Conference.

Where Are the Jobs?

June 13, 2012, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The MEND Center

10641 North San Fernando Road

Pacoima, CA 91331

Media Representatives provided registration at no cost.

The conference was created to provide agency executives, poverty experts, media and fundraisers from across Los Angeles with a gathering place to discuss important issues facing non-profits working to improve low-income communities. Past themes include how ‘Not-For-Profits can Do More with Less,’ ‘Getting People Out of Poverty,’ and ‘Finding Solutions: Action and Advocacy in Hard Times.’

Jocelyn Guihama, Executive Director of the UCLA Center for Civil Society and conference Co-Chair, notes that, over the past ten years, the poverty rate (families of four with incomes under \$22,000) has risen from 14.6% to 17.6% in L.A. County. Income inequality increased as well—incomes for the top 1% of California’s taxpayers increased by 50.2%. In contrast, the average income of taxpayers in the bottom four-fifths of the distribution *lost* purchasing power.

“Our most recent UCLA study shows that the nonprofits serving predominantly poor residents are undergoing fiscal stress and volatility. An appropriate response to the growing burdens on the poor and the institutions that serve them requires collaboration and planning across all sectors—for profit, government, nonprofit and academic,” said Guihama. “The 2012 MENDING Poverty Conference brings us all together to discuss solutions to the challenges our region faces.”

Delivering this year’s opening keynote is Alicia Villarreal, Regional representative, United States Department of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis. Ms. Villarreal serves as Secretary Solis’ liaison, working with labor, business, community and faith based groups as well as state and local elected officials. Ms Villarreal has served as founding president of the Mexican American Bar Foundation as well as a federal criminal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Central District of California (Los Angeles), as Deputy Chief of the Public Corruption and Government Fraud Section.

Dolores Huerta, a recipient of this year’s Presidential Medal of Freedom, will deliver the luncheon keynote. A long-time labor leader and civil rights activist, Ms. Huerta is probably most well known as co-founder along with Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers. She is a founding board member of the Feminist Majority Foundation and among her many awards, she’s received the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award from President Clinton and was named as one of the most important women of the 20th Century by Ladies Home Journal. According to Jim Garrison, Conference Co-Chair and CEO of Pacific Federal, “Dolores Huerta continues working to develop community leaders among the working poor, immigrants, women and youth, through the foundation that bears her name. Her passion and dedication are reflected in her inspirational presentations to community activists like those who will be attending the MENDING Poverty Conference.”

Christine Cooper, PhD, Vice-President , Economics and Policy Analysis Group, Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, will be providing her expertise in trends in the LA employment market. Dr. Cooper, who earned her PhD in Economics from the University of Southern California, is influential in researching and analyzing data relevant to the L.A. County Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

“This year’s theme ‘Where are the Jobs?’ is particularly timely as many nonprofit agencies such as MEND provide job training to welfare recipients and other low-income people with limited work experience, said Marianne Haver Hill, MEND President and CEO. “We need to know how to better tailor our training programs to prepare our trainees to be ready for the competitive job market, and to have leads on where to send them to apply for positions in fields where there is potential for continued job growth and opportunity.”

Three action workshops will be held during the conference from 10:30 to noon:

- **Doing More with Less: Workforce Policy and Current Economic realities.** Moderator: Christine Cooper, PhD, Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation. Panelists: Fernando Guerra, Loyola Marymount University; Esther Kim, REDF
- **Getting More: Innovative Employment Programs in Southern California.** Moderator: Mark Loranger, Chrysalis. Panelists: Marcus Castain, Generation Water; Lennie Ciufo, Los Angeles Valley College; Larry Frank, City of Los Angeles.
- **Nonprofit Financial Management: Volunteerism: Paths to Employment and Nonprofit Sustainability.** Moderator: Tom Backer, Valley Nonprofit Resources. Panelists: Ann Burroughs, Taproot Foundation; Nancy Olson, Volunteer Los Angeles.

To download the full brochure and registration for the MENDIng Poverty Conference, please visit: http://www.mendpoverty.org/MENDIng_Poverty.html or contact Maggie Torres at 818-686-7350. For media inquiries, including requests for interviews or a press pass to attend the conference, please contact Dariel Miller at dariel@mendpoverty.org or 818-686-7335.

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About MEND

MEND-- Meet Each Need with Dignity, which serves as many as 30,000 poverty-level clients each month while remarkably keeping operating costs to less than 6%, is the largest, most efficient and most comprehensive poverty-relief organization in the San Fernando Valley. MEND takes a holistic approach to relieve the effects of poverty by providing basic human needs while giving their clients the tools, education, training, support and opportunities that foster self-reliance.

MEND was born as a volunteer-powered organization four decades ago in a garage in suburban LA, and today benefits from the assistance of more than 3000 volunteers (and only 25 paid staffers) to implement its vast array of programs that provide food; clothing; medical, dental and vision care; job training; classes for adults in English as a second language, literacy, computers, office skills, sewing and parenting; math, reading and science tutoring for kids; showers and other services for the homeless; and a Christmas Basket Program for 1400 pre-screened families in need.