

TAKING STOCK

Southwest Center for **Economic Integrity**

Winter 2004 Newsletter
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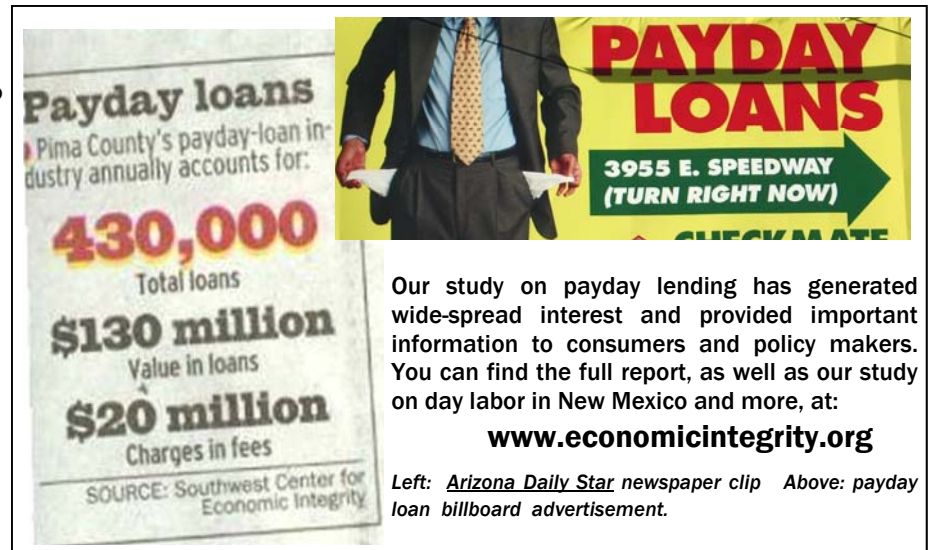
Building Regional Economic Integrity

ARIZONA

The Center has begun work to stem the tide of payday lending in the state. We will be using our 2003 report to educate state legislators on the issue during the 2005 session. We are also directly taking on two companies violating the state's day labor protection statutes.

PHOENIX - The Center has identified two day labor companies apparently breaking Arizona law by charging their workers check-cashing fees or taking other deductions that bring workers' wages below the federal minimum wage. We are collaborating with the Attorney General's office and colleague advocacy groups to end their illegal practices.

TUCSON - A circle of women in South Tucson will lead the Center's effort to develop alternatives to expensive payday lending. The group hopes to partner with an area credit union. The Center has also begun outreach to area day laborers interested in documenting their lives through photography (see related "Highlight" on page 3).



Payday loans
Pima County's payday-loan industry annually accounts for:
430,000
Total loans
\$130 million
Value in loans
\$20 million
Charges in fees
SOURCE: Southwest Center for Economic Integrity

PAYDAY LOANS
3955 E. SPEEDWAY
(TURN RIGHT NOW)

Our study on payday lending has generated wide-spread interest and provided important information to consumers and policy makers. You can find the full report, as well as our study on day labor in New Mexico and more, at:
www.economicintegrity.org

Left: *Arizona Daily Star* newspaper clip Above: payday loan billboard advertisement.

NEW MEXICO

The Center has partnered with key groups to pursue better protections for the state's day laborers, many of whom are homeless despite their ongoing quest to find stable, decent employment through for-profit brokering companies.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

- ◆ SCEI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, so your gifts are tax deductible. We are sustained by contributions. We also need volunteers and in-kind support.
- ◆ For more information on any of our projects please contact us toll-free at 877-SW Watch (877-799-2824)

ALBUQUERQUE - The Center hosted a visit by St. Martin's Center, based in Albuquerque, to Tucson to discuss non-profit brokering services that support day laborers and help them transition into permanent employment. Such services are now fully operational in Tucson (Primavera Works) and Phoenix (CASS). St. Martin's hopes to expand their placement services over the coming year.

SANTE FE - The Center has partnered with the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness to complete a survey of the state's day laborers and to pursue state legislative protections.

You Can Help Sustain Our Efforts

By Holly Lachowicz, Board Treasurer

We on the Board of Directors have committed ourselves to sustaining the vital work of the Southwest Center for Economic Integrity. In part, this means raising the funds needed to continue our successful research, advocacy, and community development efforts.

A healthy funding base is essential to the success of the Center. Fortunately, several members of the Tucson community already know about the Center’s mission and effectiveness and have shown their support by making contributions. Last fiscal year, we raised approximately \$10,000 from individual donations. Our work has begun to receive national recognition and we have enjoyed success in securing investment funds from private foundations – most notably through multi-year awards from the Wallace Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. However, for continued success, we must acquire an even more active base of individual donors.

During this fiscal year (July 2004-June 2005) we’ve set the goal of raising **\$32,000 in unrestricted individual donations:**

FY 2004-2005 GOAL:	\$32,000	Received To Date:	\$6,230
2 @ \$5,000 =	\$10,000		0
10 @ \$1,000 =	10,000		\$2,500
10 @ \$500 =	5,000		\$1,650
10 @ \$250 =	2,500		\$ 900
20 @ \$100 =	2,000		\$ 700
30 @ \$ 50 =	1,500		\$ 200
40 @ \$20-30 =	1,000		\$ 280

We’ve made a good start, but you would help us considerably if you would include the Center in your year’s end giving plans. Your gift will be greatly appreciated and is completely tax deductible. Please give generously so that we can continue our work in leveling the economic playing field for all members of our Southwest community. Thank you.

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS JULY–NOVEMBER 2004:
 Briggs and Pat Ackert, Kathy Altman and Ivy Schwartz, Paula Arnquist, Salomon Baldenegro and Cecilia Cruz, Anne and William Brenner, Maritza Broce, Jan Crebbs, Becky and Jim Duncan, Susan Gilbert and Jerry Harris, Paul and Dolores Gohdes, Valerie Gomes and Lou Barsky, Burt and Mitzi Jones, Lowell and Teresa Cowan Jones, Jen Katcher and Curtis Bradley, Holly Lachowicz Harriet Larkin, Pam and Rep. Phil Lopes, Sharon and Larry Malcolmson, Toni Massaro, Jon Miles, Nancy Myers, Leslie Nixon, Miguel Ortega, Doug Page and C.J. Hawkins Page, Lisette Sacks, Randie Vietti, Tom Volgy, Pat Volle, Casey and Punch Woods, Charles and Elizabeth Zukoski.
 Special thanks too to all who attended the Borderlands Theater production of the play *Nickel and Dimed* by Joan Holden, based on the book by Barbara Ehrenreich. The event raised over \$5,000 for the Southwest Center for Economic Integrity and the Primavera Foundation and sparked constructive community dialogue. Key to the success of the event: Beyond Bread, UFCW Local 99, Melissa Harris, Harriet Larkin, Sharon and Larry Malcolmson. Thanks!

HELPING DAY LABORERS:
“Primavera Works helps you succeed. They build you up, not like other companies that treat you bad and pay you worse,” says Ted, the day laborer pictured. The Center works with partners like Primavera to insure that day laborers in the Southwest receive fair pay and better working conditions. To request workers through Primavera Works in Tucson call 520-882-9668. In the Phoenix area call our partner CASS at 602-252-8405. And in Albuquerque call St. Martin’s at 505-242-4399.



Photo courtesy of National Network of Sector Partners

Nickel and Dimed in the Southwest

The Southwest Center for Economic Integrity has launched “*Nickel and Dimed in the Southwest*,” a writing project focusing on the voices, dreams, and struggles of people trying to make ends meet on low wage work. Our goal is to amplify the voices of people whose work and lives often go unheard and unseen. We will publish an anthology in 2005. Authors of selected pieces receive an honorarium of \$100. Here are some excerpts from entries to date...

I get a job at Wal-Mart. Five-fifty an hour. The shifts I work change every week. It is hard to make plans, develop a routine. At night, after we've worked our 8 hour shift, they lock us in while they count the money. My un-boyfriend waits outside in his dusty green pick-up. It is 10pm. I have worked on my feet all day, scanning items as fast as I can. In the slow times, Wal-Mart uses a list of items per minute scanned by each cashier. The un-speedy cashiers on the bottom of the list are laid off. So much for customer service and the blue vests with the yellow smiley face that say “How may I help?”

C.J. MacLeod, Albuquerque, NM

People forget their loved ones, their own names, even how to eat. But the one thing they always react to is touch. I made sure no matter how frantically busy I was, I would always tuck my patients in for the night with a little kiss on the forehead. They went to sleep with smiles.

One afternoon I used my break time to sit with an elderly woman who was the terror of our wing. Her call button was constantly dismissed and she seemed to be crying all the time. I held her hand and listened to her talk about her horror of dying alone. I told her that from my experience working with people near death, they were never alone when the time came.

Anonymous, Phoenix, AZ

Excerpt from “Indian Dog”
*We inhale our pork n' beans blessings
 Sardine escargot
 Spam finger food crackers
 Straight from automobile heaven.
 Tomorrow is pay day.*

Aztatl, Albuquerque, NM

I've been told that in certain therapy groups, the patient is encouraged to scream out their frustrations and primal rages, sometimes directed at a surrogate inanimate object, such as a doll, or at a therapist in a mask representing some traumatic figure from the patient's past. Now if you've decided that the uniform I'm wearing, emblazoned with the same corporate logo you've seen at the same restaurants across the country, somehow qualifies me as one of these surrogate rage targets, then go for it. But pay me the going rate. I don't know what the doll makes an hour, but the therapist probably does pretty well.

Anonymous. Tucson, AZ

NOTE: All information is provided as is. We make no guaranties as to accuracy, content, currency, quality, or fitness for a particular purpose, of any of the information presented herein. Although we make every attempt to ensure that the information provided is accurate, we do not assume any legal liability or responsibility for any incorrect, misleading, outdated, or missing information.

More Highlights

> Center staff member **Amanda Sapir** has been elected Co-chair of the University of Arizona's **Task Force on Labor and Human Rights**. A focus of the group is to encourage the University to contract with fair-trade vendors.

> Staff member **Cecilia Campillo** was recently featured in several TV. interviews addressing **predatory mortgage lending**. Cecilia spoke out in conjunction with AZ Attorney General Terry Goddard's press conference on the issue. She and her husband **Abe** almost lost their home due to a predatory loan in 2003, and they have been vocal community activists against predatory lending ever since.

> Feb 10–March 10 2005 the Center will co-sponsor a local installation of the **Unseen America** national photography exhibition featuring images of low-wage workers' lives. The Bread and Roses cultural project coordinates the exhibit, which will now include photos from SW day laborers.

Want Flowers and Pastries delivered to your home once a month??? Purchase your

Bread and Roses Raffle

tickets today to benefit the Southwest Center for Economic Integrity! Call us at 882-2165.

(Tucson area only)

Drawing 2/10/05

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
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Permit No. 123

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Who's moving into **your**
neighborhood?...

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The Southwest Center for Economic Integrity engages in research, education and advocacy to protect marginalized people and hold corporations and industries accountable to their communities.

Please offer your support !

I'd like to contribute the following:

- _____ One-time Contribution of \$ _____
- _____ Monthly Pledge of \$ _____ per month (billed the 15th of each month)
- _____ Quarterly Pledge of \$ _____ per quarter (billed the 15th of the first mo./qrtr.)
- _____ I want to Volunteer. Get in touch to tell me more about opportunities to be involved.
- _____ Come speak to my congregation, civic organization or group of family and friends.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Monthly/Quarterly Amount: \$ _____ Annual Total \$ _____

Payment via: Check Credit Card... Circle One: Visa Mastercard

No. _____ Exp. Date _____/_____/_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NOTE: SCEI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.