

# Somos un Pueblo Unido Newsletter

## October 2008



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### Public Safety Danger in Roswell



Dozens of U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents and undocumented immigrants - all of them Latino- have complained to Somos un Pueblo Unido that local law enforcement officials in Roswell have asked them to prove their legal immigration status during routine traffic stops. We have also documented reports of local Sheriff officials who have questioned and detained. Also, some officers have detained people at public and private events solely on their racial profiles. In many cases, local officers will detain motorists while Border Patrol agents arrive and others take them to the local jail.

*Somos* has been documenting these abuses, and working with dozen of the community members and faith leaders to organize a campaign to stop the law enforcement abuse of authority and to inform the community about its civil rights.

One community member with whom *Somos* has been closely working is Gabriel Mendes, a Spanish-radio DJ, who has been offering civil rights information during his morning show and a safe space where radio listeners can share their experiences. He was recently profiled in the Roswell Daily Record.

"It is a sad situation, because most of these people don't know their rights, and that they don't have to give out their social security number. I feel like the law enforcement in the city (including the Roswell Police Department, the Border Patrol and the Chaves County Sheriff's Department) is participating in a form of racial profiling, and it is not fair to the Hispanic people of the city," said Mendes in the article of the Roswell Record Daily on September 23, 2008.

## **Judge Orders Otero County Sheriff Officers to Stop Raids**

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In an unprecedented decision, District Judge Martha Vasquez ordered Otero County Sheriff's deputies to stop illegal raids, racial profiling and unlawful searches and seizures in Chaparral as part of a lawsuit waged by Border Network for Human Rights and victims of law enforcement officers.

"The residents of Chaparral can feel safe knowing the sheriff can't bust into their home anymore. They can't target them on how they look or target them on the language they speak. They can't try to force them to turn their neighbors in," Briana Stone of the Paso del Norte Civil Rights Project said to ABC-7. "People should feel free to go around the town and not feel the pressure from the police, just because of how they look."

This is a significant step in ensuring that local law enforcement do not abuse their authority and stop them from enforcing immigration law.

To read more about the injunction, go to ABQ Journal  
<http://www.texascivilrightsproject.org/?p=292>

## **NM Hispanic voters support an Immigration Reform**

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New Democrat Network (NDN) recent poll shows an overwhelming support for an Immigration Reform that includes a path to legalization in key battleground states in the present presidential race. NDN poll was released on September 10, 2008.

Not surprisingly to Somos, in the New Mexico's poll, 66% of the voters support a comprehensive immigration reform package while the 73% of Hispanic voters support the same package.

The poll shows that 50% of New Mexico voters believe immigrants in the United States come to pursue the American Dream and to assimilate into the U.S. culture.

To read and download the NDN Polls, go to  
<http://www.ndn.org/hispanic/immigrationpolls.html>

## **Guatemala Consulate**

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Guatemala Consulate The Guatemala Consulate will be providing services to Guatemalans on Sunday, October 26 from 9 AM to 4 PM at Somos un Pueblo Unido. Somos address is 1205 Parkway Drive, Suite B, in Santa Fe.

For more information, call 602-200-3660.

## **Former Housekeepers Win Settlement Agreement with Hilton**

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On September 23rd, fourteen ex-housekeepers held a press conference to announce a settlement with their former employer, Santa Fe Hilton Hotel. The hotel agreed to compensate them a total of \$32,000 in back pay and post a bilingual notice explaining to current employees their rights to organize for improved working conditions.

The settlement was done after the hotel was charged with engaging in unfair labor practices by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Region 28.

"Our effort has shown that when workers get together, we can make a change," said Mirna Zaldaña during the press conference. "We were finally heard and justice was done. We are no longer invisible."

## **Growth of the Undocumented Immigrant Population Slows Down**

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According to a Pew Hispanic Center analysis "Trends in Unauthorized Immigration: Undocumented Inflow Now Trails Legal Inflow", released on October 2, 2008, there were 11.9 million unauthorized immigrants living in the United States in March 2008. The size of the unauthorized population appears to have declined since 2007, but this finding is inconclusive because of the margin of error in these estimates.

The analysis points out that the unauthorized immigrant population grew more slowly in the period from 2005 to 2008 than it did earlier in the decade. The inflows of unauthorized immigrants averaged 800,000 a year from 2000 to 2004, but fell to 500,000 a year for 2005 to 2008 with a decreasing year-to-year trend.

The report is available on the Center's website, <http://pewhispanic.org/>

## **Organization Pushes for an Immigration Reform**

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A Texas based organization, MATT.org (Mexican and Americans Thinking Together), launched a new television ad campaign intended to promote and support an Immigration Reform, and to encourage Mexicans and Americans to come together to bridge the gaps in understanding. The TV ads have been running since mid-September in Border States.

To see the Albuquerque ad, do to <http://www.matt.org/ads/> and [http://www.matt.org/english/videos/257.nbc4\\_albuquerque.html](http://www.matt.org/english/videos/257.nbc4_albuquerque.html)