

Hispanic Affairs Project



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Hispanic Affairs Project Celebrates First Year Anniversary of its Legal Assistance Program

Montrose April 15, 2016: This month the Hispanic Affairs Project of Western Colorado celebrates the first anniversary of its legal assistance program. The Bureau of Immigrant Appeals authorized program offers affordable legal assistance to immigrant families in Western Colorado. HAP provides help to individuals and families through two BIA accredited legal representatives, Nicole Ruiz and Marketa Zubkova. Ruiz and Zubkova's certification and training through the department of Justice allows them to act as legal consultants. As such they can give legal advice and prepare applications for citizenship and work permits, tasks that only BIA accredited lawyers and certified representatives are legally permitted to do. The assistance provided by the Hispanic Affairs Project makes it possible for immigrants to progress toward legal citizenship without the obstacle of overwhelming legal fees and costs.

The affordable assistance provided by HAP is also a safe alternative to notarios, or notaries who fraudulently claim authorization to fill out applications and provide legal help at great risk to the applicant. One recipient of the legal aid provided by HAP stated, "Thanks to the Hispanic Affairs Project I learned how important it is to find legal help from the correct source. My immigration applications are my future." Over the last year HAP has been able to provide legal aid to over 1300 people through monthly information sessions in Montrose and Grand Junction and one-on-one consultations.

As a locally run non-profit organization HAP depends largely upon small grants, individual donors and fundraising community events to run the Legal Assistance Program. Celebrating one year as a BIA certified organization is an accomplishment not only for the Hispanic Affairs Project, but for the community as a whole.

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