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NJDOL Awards \$1.1M Through First CARE Grant to Boost Access to Worker Benefits and Protections

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) has awarded \$1.1 million through its inaugural Cultivating Access, Rights, and Equity (CARE) grant program to 13 grantees, including four collaboratives, totaling 28 organizations. The CARE grant was created to facilitate equitable outreach, education, and access to New Jersey’s many generous benefits and protections for eligible workers, including Temporary Disability Insurance, Family Leave Insurance, and Earned Sick Leave.

Awardees include community organizations, worker centers, domestic violence agencies, service providers, and faith-based groups who have demonstrated trusted relationships with their communities across the state, as well as culturally specific outreach and education methods and the capacity for linking underserved residents with government benefits and protections.

“We are proud to partner with these distinguished organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to equity in their communities,” said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. “With the help of their established rapport with specific communities, we look forward to reaching every New Jersey worker to ensure they are aware of all the benefits and protections available to them.”

Grantees will engage in initiatives such as social media and text campaigns, sharing information at community events, providing one-on-one counseling to workers, and conducting trainings, events and presentations. These efforts will focus primarily on populations less likely to access their benefits and protections, such as: women, youth, immigrant, and low-income workers; employees such as laundry, warehouse, food service, domestic, and nail salon workers; individuals with disabilities; victims/survivors of domestic violence; parents; and caregivers. One of the grant program’s goals is to help eliminate disparities in access to paid leave related to race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

“Latinos are the fastest-growing segment of New Jersey’s population, contributing an estimated \$46 billion in purchasing power to the state economy; however, they face a multitude of challenges in the workplace,” said Ileana J. Montes, deputy director and general counsel to the Immigration & American Citizenship Organization (IACO). “We commend the NJDOL for the CARE grant as educating the Latino community about their work rights is at the forefront of the solutions, and it goes hand in hand with our mission of educating, empowering, and uplifting immigrant working families, thereby facilitating their integration and inclusion into the American society.”

Said Beatriz Patino-Sherard, economic justice coordinator of the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NJCEDV): “A lack of economic security is the number one reason survivors of domestic violence stay in abusive relationships, which is exacerbated for those in marginalized communities. This partnership with the New Jersey Department of Labor will help the NJCEDV and our programs to ensure that survivors across the state are aware of and able to access their right to paid leave from work without losing their job or income – a critical resource within a survivor’s safety plan.”

The complete list of inaugural CARE grantees is below:

<u>FY 2022 Cultivating Access, Rights, and Equity (CARE) Grant</u>			
Collaboratives:			
Lead Organization	Partner Organizations	Counties to be Served	<u>Grant Amount</u>
Farm Worker Support Committee (CATA)	Allies in Caring, Revive South Jersey	Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem	\$55,000
Lakewood Resource and Referral Center	Solutions to End Poverty Soon	Ocean	\$75,000

NJ Citizen Action Education Fund	Laundry Workers Center, National Domestic Workers Alliance (NJ Chapter), NJ Breastfeeding Coalition, New Labor, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Wind of the Spirit	Statewide, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Union, Warren	\$240,000
NJ Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NJCEDV)	Community Affairs and Resource Center, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Warren County, Exhale Women's Fellowship, Inc., Harambe Social Services, Inc., Spirit of Excellence – Leadership Guidance, Inc., Wafa House	Statewide, Burlington, Camden, Monmouth, Passaic, Union, Warren	\$110,000

Single Organizations:

Organization	Counties to be Served	<u>Grant Amount</u>
Greater Bergen Community Action, Inc.	Bergen, Hudson, Passaic	\$75,000
The Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey	Camden, Gloucester	\$50,000
HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc.	Hudson, Somerset, Union	\$75,000
Immigration & American Citizenship Organization	Bergen, Essex, Morris, Passaic	\$75,000
Jefferson Park Ministries, Inc.	Union	\$75,000
Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund	Mercer	\$50,000
Make the Road New Jersey	Essex, Middlesex, Passaic, Union	\$70,000
Salvation and Social Justice	Statewide	\$75,000
VietLead	Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester	\$75,000
TOTAL:		\$1,100,000

The CARE grant meets stipulations of the New Jersey Temporary Disability Benefits Law (P.L.1948, c.110 [C.43:21- 49]), which mandates the NJDOL to enter into contracts with community-based organizations to disseminate information about employees' rights regarding Temporary Disability and Family Leave Insurance, as well as the New Jersey Earned Sick Leave Law (N.J.S.A. 34:11D-1), requiring the NJDOL to develop and implement a multi-lingual outreach program.

For more information on worker benefits and protections, please visit myworkrights.nj.gov. To learn more about the CARE program and other NJDOL grant opportunities, see nj.gov/labor/grants.

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