

# LAW & SOCIAL POLICY

## ★ LEGACY AWARD ★

PRESENTED BY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FUNDERS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. Named Inaugural Recipient of Law & Social Policy Legacy Award Presented By Economic Opportunity Funders**

*\$10,000 awarded to transnational organization working to improve migrant workers' conditions in U.S.*

WASHINGTON — Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. (CDM) will receive the Economic Opportunity Funders' first-ever Law & Social Policy Legacy Award, which recognizes an organization defending and advocating for low-wage workers' rights.

CDM was selected based on its strong record of achieving justice for thousands of migrant workers who work in U.S. industries with histories of exploitation. Its advocacy, worker organizing, and legal work have advanced migrant workers' rights both systemically and individually, reforming the H-2 visa system and earning workers millions in settlements for unpaid wages.

"We are incredibly honored to be the inaugural recipient of the Law & Social Policy Award," said Rachel Micah-Jones, the founder and executive director of CDM. "This award and the recognition that comes with it will help us continue to draw attention to the plight of migrant workers and the importance of improving their work conditions in the U.S."

CDM was one of eight strong nominations for the \$10,000 award, which was established to increase awareness within the philanthropic community of organizations working to advance law and social policy for low-wage workers' rights. Nominees were evaluated on three criteria: significance, collaborative approach, and systemic impact.

CDM achieves each of these goals; its work has significantly improved low-wage workers' lives, involves collaboration with leaders in the migrant worker community, and has systemically transformed the migrant visa system.

"The selection committee was inspired by CDM's long track record of working with the migrant community to achieve justice for vulnerable low-wage workers," said Cema Siegel, co-director of EOF. "Their innovative and impactful transnational model is exactly the type of work we hope to uplift with this award."

Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers travel from Mexico every year to perform high-risk, low-wage labor in the U.S., often in rural farms and factories where abuse is rampant. CDM fights alongside

workers for their rights through “know your rights” trainings, direct legal representation, the Migrant Women’s Project to combat abuse and discrimination against women, and Contratados.org, a crowd-sourced website used by over one million migrant workers to expose exploitative employers.

Strategically located in both the U.S. and Mexico, CDM is the first transnational migrant workers’ rights organization in the country. Founded in 2005, CDM has worked with migrant workers for more than 15 years to remove the border as a barrier to justice and protect the rights of migrant workers as they move between their home communities and their workplaces in the United States.

Millions of dollars in unpaid wages and other compensation have been rightfully placed in the hands of thousands of migrant workers and their families through CDM’s legal efforts. Through its Migrant Defense Committee, a group of over 100 migrant worker leaders and advocates, CDM builds and sustains worker leadership that helps connect clients to the organization and inform organizational efforts, tactics, and strategies. CDM and the Committee have supported thousands of workers in Mexico and the United States in taking proactive approaches to ending workplace abuses, leading to systemic victories in reforming the H-2 visa system.

CDM’s victories alongside the workers it represents benefit all migrant workers. The organization’s work has set valuable legal precedents key to protecting workers’ rights in future litigation, legislation, and rulemaking, led to investigations of entire industries, and earned \$36.3 million for workers in settlements.

The \$10,000 [Law & Social Policy Award](#) will be given by EOF with support from the Public Welfare Foundation annually until 2030 as a part of its legacy investment in advancing workers’ rights.

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*Established in 1992, [Economic Opportunity Funders](#) (formerly known as GIST), is a network of national, regional and local level funders working to advance economic equity and opportunity in the United States. We believe in building an economy that works for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, education, income, religion, gender identity, disability or age. We support a strong public sector and policies that create a healthy, fair and just economy where opportunity and prosperity are broadly shared.*

*EOF focuses its work in three key and intersecting areas: poverty and opportunity, protecting and supporting workers, and tax and budget policies. We provide a platform for funders to share information, exchange ideas and best practice, and collaborate around identified areas of interest.*