

**From “Climate of Fear:
Latinos in Suffolk County, NY”:**

I travel to and from work every day on a bicycle. I have learned to keep an eye all around me. Many times, people have thrown things at me when they drive by. Apples, pens, bottles, cans. Sometimes they throw and miss and turn around to get another shot. This happens to a lot of us. My friend was hit by a car three times trying to avoid flying things from cars. He finally decided to go home [to Guatemala] because he was too scared to bike and walk in the street.

— Lorenzo, Guatemala

September 2007: Four young men ranging in age from 15 to 21 attack an immigrant from Ecuador, who has lived in the United States for 13 years, and a friend. Both men are hit from behind while walking down a street. One escapes while the attackers continue to beat the other. As lights come on in houses on the block, the attackers flee. When one of the men goes to the police station to report the attack, an officer asks him why he didn't stay in his own country.

May 2006: A young man is attacked while having lunch in Southampton Village by a cab driver, who slaps the man's sandwich from his hand while calling him derogatory racial names. The cab driver allegedly rams his taxi into the young man, whose right knee is injured. “He was cursing at me, telling me I'm an immigrant and to get out of this country,” says the young man. The cab driver is later convicted of misdemeanor aggravated harassment. The young man is not an immigrant—he is of Native American and Mexican ancestry.

LOCAL IMMIGRATION PROGRAM:

STRENGTHENING THE COLLECTIVE VOICE OF LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANTS

AS AMERICA'S FIRST SUBURB, LONG ISLAND for many people means home ownership, quality public education, and easy access to both the cultural richness of New York City at one end and the pristine beaches and tranquil farmland at the other.

Yet Long Island is also home to widespread racial and economic segregation, areas of largely ignored poverty, and hostility and violence toward immigrants, including immigrant children. Some local governments, school districts, individual residents, and community institutions have made it more difficult for new Long Islanders to integrate into the culture of their new homeland.

For many Long Island immigrants, their daily experience includes the fear of having their rights violated and being the victims of outright physical violence. Immigrants have witnessed or suffered extreme injustice in the place they now call home, from dehumanizing early-morning house raids by local code enforcement officers or Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to physical assaults by people looking for “someone different” to terrorize, as in the 2008 hate-crime murder of Ecuadorian immigrant Marcelo Lucero in Patchogue and in the many violent acts against Long Island immigrants that occurred before and since then. Some have even been victimized by local law enforcement officers, who create fear rather than inspiring trust in the community. Finally, many immigrant children who have made a harrowing journey to this country, often without an adult family member, arrive on Long Island only to find schools illegally trying to prevent them from enrolling.

To challenge unjust practices and the policies that often accompany them, Long Island's immigrant residents need opportunities to develop leadership skills, organize as a community and participate in civic life. Realizing these opportunities—and coupling them with expert legal advocacy to wage the court battles needed to safeguard human and civil rights—strengthens the collective voice of Long Island immigrants. Supporting organizations that work toward this goal is central to the mission of the Hagedorn Foundation's local immigration program.

Through litigation, community organizing, leadership training, and integrative projects, Hagedorn Foundation grantees work directly with immigrant communities to ensure their collective voice is heard by local and national leaders, the courts, the police, and other institutions and individuals that marginalize immigrants or infringe on their human and civil rights. By challenging unjust policies and practices, Long Island's immigrant residents work to transform what has been called a “climate of fear” for immigrants into a better Long Island for all residents.¹

¹ In 2009 the Southern Poverty Law Center published “Climate of Fear: Latinos in Suffolk County, NY,” a report funded by the Hagedorn Foundation that details the human and civil rights abuses perpetrated upon immigrants by some Suffolk County residents and government institutions.



Members and allies of Make the Road New York and Long Island Jobs with Justice march in support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the New York State DREAM Act.



Day laborers harvest vegetables from their organic garden adjacent to the Freeport Trailer to contribute to the daily hot meal Coloki provides.

Since 2005, the Hagedorn Foundation has granted nearly \$10 million to programs supporting Long Island immigrants, including \$4.3 million since 2009 to organizations working to strengthen the collective voice of Long Island immigrants. Grantees working toward this goal include:

CoLoKi: Runs the Freeport Trailer, a hiring site providing support, training, and English classes to day laborers.

Empire Justice Center: Engages in policy advocacy, individual and class action suits, and systems change litigation on behalf of immigrant and low-income residents.

Haitian-American Family of Long Island: Organizes and builds leadership in the Haitian community and encourages bridge-building through cultural competency education for local governmental and community institutions.

LatinoJustice PRLDEF: Engages in impact litigation to protect the civil and human rights of Long Island immigrants.

Long Island Jobs with Justice: Advocates and organizes for immigrant workers' rights, works with faith communities on social justice issues, and educates families and school personnel about options for undocumented youth.

Make the Road New York: Organizes Latinos in key communities in Suffolk and Nassau counties, engages in policy advocacy, and provides an array of direct services.

New York Civil Liberties Union: Engages in public education about immigrant rights and in policy and legal advocacy on behalf of the immigrant community.

SEPA Mujer: Provides leadership training and legal services to Latinas across Long Island.

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