

Ulster Immigrant Defense Network



Red de Defensa de Inmigrantes de Ulster



Newsletter  
March, 2023

## WHY WE'RE NEEDED MORE THAN EVER

As economic and political conditions in key parts of Latin America deteriorate, Kingston continues to see immigrants escaping danger and extreme poverty. This year, we have welcomed 100 new families to the food pantry. On two occasions we welcomed 200 families in two hours. We anticipate as the weather gets better we will see 175-200 families each week. In mid-March, we'll be moving outdoors and will need more volunteers.



**(left) Winter in the food line. (right) Organizers of the Wednesday market pay special attention to kids. They arrange for health care providers and share information about free and low-cost services available to the immigrant community.**

## MEET ONE OF OUR FAMILIES

Pedro's family of four moved here from Guatemala three years ago. One of the children is in primary school, one in middle school. The third, born a year and a half ago, thus a US citizen, is disabled. There should be speech and physical therapies available to him, however, because the rest of the family doesn't have citizenship or working papers, it is almost impossible for them to access that help. The Department Social Services is ill equipped to help immigrants; they don't have enough bilingual employees, and none who speak Q'eqchi. Most of the people we serve are from from Guatemala, and many speak the Q'eqchi dialect.

Not only has Pedro found full-time work (although work is scarce in the winter for immigrants who mostly work in contracting and landscaping) but he hopes to soon start his own contracting/renovation business. (Even if undocumented, you can own your own business in the US). Pedro is an activist in his community, standing up for injustice. Through UIDN, he helps on his days off by driving others to appointments.



OSCAR is a junior at Onteora High School and very committed to helping the immigrant community

## A Note From Our High School Reporter

As a Mexican-American, growing up in a predominantly white area has been hard. When I started school, my classmates' English was clear and their skin was fair. I struggled to assimilate, to understand them, but I had to repeatedly explain my own culture. My identity as an outsider was made clear to me before I could even begin to understand who I was. It is hard to admit that I grew resentful towards myself. But hearing stories of immigrants, their triumphs and tribulations, helped me figure out who I am. I was able to relate to the raw version of who they were, and their inner and outer struggles. Now, I believe that the ability to share and listen to stories is vital not only to self-development, but also to the advancement of our culture. Stories push us forward by allowing us to recollect and reflect on our experiences, to celebrate who we are and where we come from.

## A SUCCESSFUL UIDN COLLABORATION

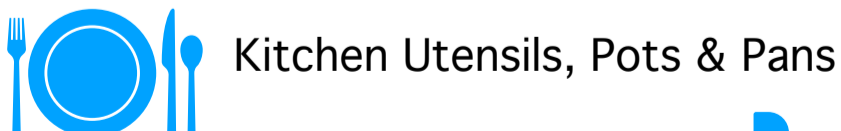
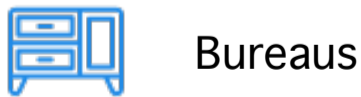
Early in February 2023, UIDN was alerted that a Mexican family of twelve (comprised of five adults, six children, and an infant) was arriving by bus at Kingston the next day. The brother of one of the adults lives in a single room and could not accommodate the family. Local homelessness has been rising, and all temporary shelters were filled.

Within two days, and with the help of a

compassionate landlord, UIDN was able to house the family in a three-bedroom apartment.

This does not happen without strong community collaboration. UIDN partnered with United Way and the family's brother to pay a month's security and the first month's rent. With donations of beds and furniture, this family is now settled in a city that has truly welcomed them.

### WHAT WE NEED



### DONATE TODAY!

We need your support! Just use the camera on your phone to click on the QR code here. It will take you to our online donation page. Thank you!

