



New Life, NEW BEGINNINGS

“For I know the plans I have for you, to prosper, not to harm you, to give you a hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

Dear friends and partners,

As always, we at *Caminando Juntos* (Walking Together) thank you for supporting our mission to live out the Gospel mandate to love one another and to welcome the stranger. In our ministry and in our daily lives, we are challenged to follow in the footsteps of Christ, whose light inspires us to provide hope and a new beginning for newly-arrived immigrants. As we move through the Lenten season and draw nearer to spring, we are reminded of the wonderful gift of new life and new beginnings made possible by our Savior. This letter captures a few of the ways our ministry has provided a new life for our Latino brothers and sisters this year, as well as the new beginnings they are undergoing in their own lives. •

A NEW BEGINNING FOR A “DREAMER”



A surge of potential new applicants lit up our phones recently when the Department of Homeland Security announced they would again accept first-time DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) applications. It’s a daunting process for many to prove they’ve resided continuously in the U.S. since June 2007; fourteen years of documentation. It’s also daunting to come up with \$495 to pay the filing fee charged by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It’s doubly daunting for a mother trying to help not one, but two daughters submit their applications at the same time. So when a very generous and

thoughtful woman contacted Caminando Juntos about helping someone with their DACA fee, for one of these young women it seemed too good to be true. For the two sisters DACA will mean doors opening to employment, obtaining driver licenses, further education and protection from possible deportation. Miracles happen day after day as God cares for us and those with whom we minister at CJ.



“We are blessed by the new life our Support Services team member, Angelica, brings to our ministry.”

WHAT DOES YOUR DONATION MAKE POSSIBLE?

\$50

- » **Immigration Legal Services** for low-income individuals who cannot afford the high application fees
- » **Textbooks** for five English language learners

\$25

- » **Food cards** to local grocers for food necessities, diapers, and formula
- » **Good Neighbor Fund** to help with emergency situations (housing, weatherization, other basic necessities)

DOORS OPENING FOR IMMIGRANTS

The U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021 gives hope for new beginnings to many with whom we minister. A few highlights from President Biden's immigration reform bill follow:

- »An earned path to citizenship for undocumented individuals, physically present in the U.S. since January 1, 2021, who would apply for temporary status, then for green cards after five years if they pass criminal and national security background checks and pay their taxes.
- »Immediate access to green cards for Dreamers, long-term residents with Temporary Protected Status, and farmworkers who meet requirements. After three years all green card-holders who pass additional background checks and demonstrate knowledge of English and U.S. Civics could apply for U.S. citizenship.
- »Recognize America as a nation of immigrants by changing the word "alien" to "noncitizen" in our immigration laws.

Check out this link for more information: <https://www.aila.org/File/Related/21011407b.pdf>



PROVIDING WARMTH IN A NEW CLIMATE

One cold morning, a young couple stopped by our office looking for luggage. They said they were moving to Washington state and needed something to carry their belongings in. Unfortunately, we did not have luggage for them, but instead were able to offer them warm winter items to take to their new home. We could tell they were in need of such items, as it was in the midst of the coldest part of winter, and the couple did not have appropriate

clothing on. The woman was wearing fabric shoes, which were wet because of the melted snow. Due to the help from our community partners, we were able to send them away with jackets, warm boots, clean socks, gloves, hats, and other warm winter items. They were so thankful! Even the smallest gesture of this kind helps warm the hands and hearts of those in need. We thank all of our community sponsors and donors for making this possible.



NEW BEGINNINGS THROUGH A NEW LANGUAGE

Through the gracious contributions of our many English tutors and teachers, hundreds of adult learners have the opportunity to learn English and advance their daily lives each year. They can also take 1:1 Citizenship classes with a tutor. This year, due to the pandemic, most of our classes are being held online, in a 1:1 format,

which allows learners and educators more flexibility and protects their health. Dozens of young people from USF and Augustana University, as well as others from the community, help students acquire important skills to begin their new life here in the United States.



As spring approaches, we at Caminando Juntos want to thank our donors, supporters, partners, and friends for the new beginnings you have made possible for countless immigrants in our community. Thank you for holding dear the mission of Caminando Juntos and for helping to grow the seeds planted by God and the Presentation Sisters.

In God's all-embracing heart,

April Ross, Director & Educational Coordinator
Katherine Donis, Office & Resource Manager
Sr. Janet Horstman, Immigration Legal Services
Angelica Narez Gutierrez, Support Services

