

GUILLERMO MARTINEZ MEMORIAL INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL
(February 2021)

SUMMARY:

This internship honors Guillermo Martinez, who was an invaluable member of the Michigan Advocacy Program governing board and the Farmworker Legal Services advisory board until his untimely death in July 2020. To memorialize Guillermo's lasting contributions to the cause of farmworker legal advocacy in Michigan, the creation of a legacy internship program within the farmworker advocacy units of FLS/MIRC is proposed. The dual objectives of this program are: (1) to develop leadership potential from within farmworker communities by providing hands-on advocacy experience and tutelage to committed students in those communities; and (2) to enhance the ability of the FLS and MIRC farmworker advocacy programs to effectively serve prospective and current clients among Michigan farmworkers.

GUILLERMO MARTINEZ' LEGACY OF FARMWORKER ADVOCACY:

Guillermo Martinez lived a creative and inspirational life as a musician, poet and activist. The youngest son of migrant farmworkers, Guillermo spent his early childhood traveling with his family between "the valley" of South Texas and the upper Midwest. His family eventually decided to "settle-out" on a farm in Fennville, Michigan, when Guillermo was seven. During his early years, family members taught Guillermo to play numerous instruments, which he performed in the family's band. As a student at Kalamazoo Valley Community College in the 1970's, Guillermo first encountered Cesar Chavez and was inspired to embark on his lifelong career of advocating for farmworkers, initially as a recruiter for summer migrant education programs, later as an agricultural employment specialist with the state of Michigan employment services, and finally as the coordinator for migrant parent engagement with the Van Buren [County] Independent School District (VBISD).

Guillermo's passion to uplift farmworkers carried over to his parallel musical career, which gained national recognition in the 1990's with his Tex-Mex influenced band, "Los Bandits de Michigan," co-founded with former FLS outreach coordinator Rene Meave. Among other venues, Los Bandits often performed in schools, bringing Hispanic cultural awareness and sensitivity to local students – efforts for which Los Bandits received special recognition from the Governor and the Hispanic Caucus of Michigan in 1999, as well as numerous other accolades. The 2005 film, *More Than a Tex-Mex Band*, documents the broad influence of Los Bandits, as well as Guillermo's early life and significance as a musician, lyricist and cultural ambassador.

<https://www.facebook.com/adelante.dano.5/videos/896716327532777/?d=n>

An anchor within the migrant services community of Southwest Michigan, Guillermo was committed to centering agency policies and staffing decisions around the migrant farmworker reality. He was an early and constant promoter of the equal

access to services rubric laid down by “the Judge Richey court order,” the federal consent decree redressing systemic discrimination perpetrated against minority farmworkers in the national employment service system. *NAACP v. Brennan*, 360 F.Supp.1006 (DDC 1973). In the 1990s, Guillermo served as a respected voice for Michigan farmworkers during his appointment on the National Advisory Council on Migrant Health. As one of the earlier and long-standing members of the FLS Advisory Board, Guillermo brought his experience and credibility to FLS’ efforts to earn the respect of the migrant farmworker community throughout Michigan.

As the coordinator of migrant parent engagement activities for VBISD, Guillermo worked in conjunction with FLS and MIRC farmworker program staff to provide trusted forums to effectively reach clients with legal education, intake and referral services. In later years, Guillermo proudly organized an annual Summer Migrant Student Golf Outing in which over 50 migrant students were paired with mainly Hispanic role models, themselves college graduates, who offered informal mentorship, both in the activity of the day as well as with potential career choices.

PROPOSED MEMORIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:

The Internship Program:

The Guillermo Martinez Memorial Internship will provide 8-to-10-week-long internships similar to the long-standing FLS Summer Internship Program, see <https://farmworkerlaw.org/fls-summer-position-description>. In this way, the Martinez internship program will build on FLS’ tradition of utilizing summer law clerks and other interns as outreach workers and advocacy assistance during the “migrant season” (June-August). Like previous seasonal internships, it is expected that the majority of interns would be placed within the FLS or MIRC farmworker programs during the peak migrant season. However, Martinez interns could also be placed during the regular school year, depending on the location of intern, the placement, virtual work availability, and other factors.

The compensation structure could take one of two forms: (1) limited-term employment on a wage scale similar to the FLS Summer Internship Program, above; or (2) a volunteer position with a fixed, monetary stipend (e.g., a scholarship).

Direct supervision will be provided on a one-to-one basis by professional or paraprofessional staff. The supervision, as well as evaluation, protocols will be modeled upon the internship program sponsored by Kalamazoo College, with which FLS and MIRC has collaborated for several years, including:

1. a Learning Contract that the supervisor and intern would create together within the first week of the internship to establish goals and expectations for the internship (see e.g. <https://cce.kzoo.edu/opportunities/community-building-internships/cbi-learning-contract/>),

2. A weekly check in (see e.g. <https://cce.kzoo.edu/opportunities/community-building-internships/>), and
3. An end-of-the-internship evaluation (see e.g. <https://cce.kzoo.edu/opportunities/community-building-internships/cbi-supervisor-weekly-check-in/>).

In addition, to fulfill Guillermo's special interest to provide career role models for youth, each intern will have an opportunity to "job shadow" an employee within the MAP organization (which, based on the intern's preference, could be in delivery of services other than farmworker advocacy, non-profit administration, etc.).

Prospective Interns:

A defining feature of the Martinez internship program is the emphasis on identifying promising candidates who hail from agricultural worker households and who would benefit from the mentorship opportunity offered by FLS and MIRC farmworker staff. The internship will be open to college-bound and college students, recent college graduates and graduate students. In selecting interns, special emphasis will be placed on the personal and family history of applicants (e.g., from a farmworker household; bilingual in a relevant non-English language(s) as well as English; limited resources available for financing college or graduate education; relevant references and/or referrals from collaborating non-profits and institutions).

Internship Program Support and Evaluation:

It is recommended that a standing subcommittee of FLS Advisory Board be appointed to assist in recruitment and selection of internship candidates, evaluation of the program, and any other related tasks delegated by MAP management. The composition of the subcommittee should also include an appointee from FLS and MIRC farmworker program staff/management.

Funding:

The aspiration is that the internship program will be instituted to provide funding for two (2) to four (4) budgeted limited-term position(s) =
It is expected that, for the first three years, this will be a MAP-funded program, leading to the potential for future external fundraising opportunities.