



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **Jewish Social Action Group Receives Grant to Aid Immigrant Families**

#### **\$2,500 award earmarked for Proyecto Faro's food purchase & distribution program**

**November 9, 2020, Pearl River, NY** – Rockland Jews for Immigrant Justice (RJIJ) recently received a \$2,500 grant to purchase and distribute food to 200 local immigrant families who have been getting emergency food assistance from [Proyecto Faro](#), which supports those impacted by detention and deportation. The immigration justice mini-grant was funded by the Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus Institute for Immigrant and Refugee Justice at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

Members from three of Rockland County's Reform temples (Beth Am Temple, Temple Beth Sholom, and the Reform Temple of Rockland) collaborated on the grant writing with assistance from a member of Congregation Sons of Israel and other members of RJIJ. The project was led by Jeff Shalom, chair of the social action committee at Beth Am Temple, which received the grant on behalf of RJIJ.

[RJIJ](#) partners with Proyecto Faro/Project Lighthouse to support families facing issues due to their immigration status or the detention or deportation of a loved one. The immigrant-led organizing effort holds a monthly Zoom aid clinic to assist undocumented immigrants with legal questions and completing immigration documents and other paperwork, and also operates a Rapid Response Hotline at (845) 262-9586 in the event of an ICE detention.

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, Proyecto Faro and RJIJ have focused their efforts on providing emergency food aid to immigrant families. Shalom said so many immigrant families have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic. They are suffering job losses or must work in dangerous conditions and are struggling to put food on the table. Most of these families have one or two children or a young adult member.

"This is a time of desperate need for these immigrant families," he explained. "The support from RJIJ and the members of the partner synagogues demonstrates our Jewish community's deep concern for their well-being at a time when they might otherwise feel most vulnerable and isolated from the world."

During the course of the outbreak, the reduction in food donations and other resources has led to a substantial decrease in the number of families being fed from 200 per week to 200 each month, according to Proyecto Faro Founder Charo Ureña.

"We are receiving the grant money at a crucial moment for Proyecto Faro," Ureña said. "Since we are not receiving large food donations from other organizations and we have continued to distribute food to 200 families each month, we are focusing on providing food to the immigrant families that, due to their status, do not receive any extra help from the government. Proyecto Faro will always be grateful for the generosity. We believe that the only way to comfort the most vulnerable is by helping them, and in this journey, we are blessed to have good people who are making this possible."

RJJ and Proyecto Faro have been active in seeking food donations and funds from different sources. Synagogues have organized food drives and donations have been received from private businesses, supermarkets, restaurants, other religious groups, local governments, and individuals.

Proyecto Faro's mission is to ally "with immigrant and non-immigrant religious and secular communities and organizations to galvanize support and action among those in Rockland County who feel insecure due to their immigration status."

RJJ "organizes with and supports immigrant neighbors and mobilizes the Jewish community for humane and just immigration policies. It is a grassroots project working to build a safe, diverse, and equitable community base."

Learn more about Proyecto Faro and how to assist at: <https://proyectofarorockland.org>.

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