

PROMOTING FINANCIAL JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS

MAY 25, 2011

DRAFT AGENDA

9 AM REGISTRATION

9:15 AM WELCOME & OVERVIEW

9:30 AM PANEL: IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

This panel will address how the financial collapse and economic downturn have affected NYC immigrant communities, in terms of jobs, housing, credit access, and overall economic opportunity. Local groups will discuss their work to prevent foreclosures, provide sound financial counseling, and defend workers' rights, at a time of heightened economic insecurity.

11 AM PANEL: PROMOTING IMMIGRANTS' FINANCIAL RIGHTS & INCLUSION

This panel will address immigrants' rights and options in the financial services landscape. Members of the NYC Immigrant Financial Justice Network will present "mystery shopping" research conducted at local financial institutions; and discuss advocacy campaigns to ensure equity and fairness for immigrants when opening credit union and bank accounts, obtaining loans and establishing credit, filing income tax returns, and sending remittances.

12:30 PM STRATEGY SESSIONS (LUNCH PROVIDED)

EXPANDING FINANCIAL ACCESS FOR IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Learn how worker centers and community groups have partnered with credit unions, banks, and community development financial institutions to ensure that their members have access to fair and affordable financial services. Facilitators will discuss the effectiveness of different strategies, concerns around prepaid cards, and how financial inclusion can strengthen immigrants' rights in the workplace and other realms.

WORKER COOPERATIVES AND MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Meet the organizers and members of worker-owned cooperatives in NYC. Learn about cooperative business models, and how these can provide fair work opportunity in industries that typically exploit immigrant workers. The session will also feature microenterprise development groups that provide financing, training, and ongoing support to entrepreneurs, to help them improve their standard of living and create jobs and community assets.

JUSTICE-BASED APPROACHES TO FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Hear from groups that have launched financial justice *promotores* programs that engage community residents in peer-led outreach and education campaigns, on banking, credit, remittances, taxes, and other issues. The session will also highlight emerging transnational financial education initiatives, which promote savings and investment through remittances, and know-your-rights curricula geared to immigrant New Yorkers.

2:30 PM REPORT-BACKS

3 PM NEXT STEPS & CLOSING