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Above left: The Cervantes family, shown on page 7, stands in front of its new three-bedroom apartment, one of many units in newly-opened Nueva Amanecer Phase IV, a Farmworker Housing Development Corporation complex in Woodburn. Their previous housing was a studio-size apartment. Top right, a traditional welcoming bowl of fruit sits in the families new kitchen.



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Right: One of the family's daughters gets a drink of water from the dispenser the family brought with them from their previous living quarters. A view of the apartment complex's commons can be seen through the sliding glass door.

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change. They're not informed about the kind of support services you and I would attempt to access because we know they exist. They don't exist in Mexico or where they come from. Especially indigenous folks from a rural area. There's a high likelihood that they don't speak Spanish, and so it's not just accessing the English speaking culture, there's a barrier with the Spanish-speaking population as well.

J.Z.: That sounds like a very scary existence.

R.J.: I guess it's a real testament to the perseverance of the culture and the individuals.

J.Z.: What support services do you offer?

R.J.: We offer two educational services. Like most other nonprofits, we've been subjected to funding cuts and so we went back to folks living in our housing and asked them to help us prioritize the services for funding. What they said was early childhood literacy program was the most important program for them. The others said an afterschool program: for parents who don't speak or write English, and for a place for

the children to go after school. A lot of it is just keeping kids occupied and active and engaged in a positive way. It's a very supportive environment among the different families.

Ninety percent of the families who came to live in our housing were technically homeless before they came to live there. So we're stabilizing families, and it's all graduated from there on up. The point is, once they're stabilized in housing, chances are they're eating better. Chances are their children are attending and learning in school, not just sitting there. About 20 percent of our families move beyond our housing annually. What happens is: Schools are in close proximity, groceries are in close proximity. Somebody doesn't have to spend all day trying to figure out how to get a meal to the family, and that person is freed up to work part time, and full time. Family income increases, and they can move on. We want them to move on because there's such a large percentage of really needy families behind them wanting to come in.

J.Z.: How big is your waiting list?

R.J.: For one 50-unit property in



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Little sister giggles as big sister carries family possessions upstairs for unpacking.

See more shots from Alan Borrud's photodocumentary of farmworkers at news.streetroots.org

Look for the second half of this two-part photo series, focusing on the next generation, in the June 7 edition of Street Roots.

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