how public policy on air pollution is made and to learn about those on the other side of the environmental struggle. By the end of the fourth week, they had already doorknocked over 600 homes and learned some of the technical aspects of air pollutants and how to do house visits.

Among other organizing experiences, the interns joined Local 11 of the H.E.R.E. (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union) in their "Boycott Hyatt Campaign." They played an instrumental role in helping to coordinate and participate in numerous actions and large demonstrations with union members, members of the U.F.W., and employees of the hotels, as well as with other community supporters. In addition to working with H.E.R.E., the interns participated in a leafletting action with S.E.I.U.'s Local 399 "Justice for Janitors" campaign. Organizing with unions was very empowering and educational.

The experiences gathered in the internship have been instrumental in pushing forward each intern's ongoing commitment to social and economic change. "It's been overwhelming for me to see that people of color and low-income working class people living in these marginal areas are being oppressed by yet another force — corporate polluters. I feel that organizing will allow me to be a catalyst for change," stated Maria. Sam had this to say: "This internship has provided an arena for me to test my idealism in practice and to determine whether community organizing is the direction that will lead me to ending the inequalities that working class people and people of color experience."

Claudia viewed her experience as "a good opportunity to speak to people in my native language — Spanish, and learn how they are being affected by air pollution." Amy quickly learned that air pollution affects people of color and working class people disproportionately. "It was amazing, as well as disheartening, to find out the prevalence of asthma among children in predominantly Latino working class neighborhoods." Most residents are fully aware that more affluent areas would never have oil refineries and chemical factories surrounding them, and that has angered many of them. As one Carson resident put it: "All of us have to get together and go up to the refineries and tell what we think! Only then will corporate polluters start cleaning up their mess."

Having four interns in Los Angeles — the most at any site — really forced the group to learn what the word "teamwork" means in order to accomplish tasks at hand while paying attention to the roles of each participant. "We had to like each other in order to work together to get the job done. Sometimes it was hard not to step on each others' toes, but in the end we learned a lot about being sensitive to the experiences of others and to appreciate each other's unique contribution to the group," said Amy. For instance, Maria kept the group's morale up by acting as team cheering squad, shouting "ALL RIGHT, SAAAMM!" while Amy chimed in with her newly learned Spanish cheers: "Andale! Orale! Hijole! Arriba!" Maria also buttered up site coordinator Joselito with her endless compliments.

Joselito, also known as "Debriefing King," and Rinku, one of CTWO's co-directors (famous for her ability to stay cool under stressful circumstances) accompanied and trained the interns and taught them the intricacies of doorknocking and action planning.

To get through the group's daily routine, Amy's good nature and professionalism shined through, since she was the group's sole driver. Sam served as part-time navigator, as well as taking responsibility for tracking adbook progress. Maria acted as the group's translator and press release contact, while Claudia kept the group punctual and on the straight and narrow.

Although there was not much free time, the interns did a lot of sightseeing together and attended many cultural events including plays and festivals. Sam and Amy learned a lot about Latino and Chicano culture and politics, whereas Claudia and Maria were exposed to the experiences of Asian-Americans.

By the time the internship ended, all agreed that "we became good friends as well as good team workers!"

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MAAP FIELD REPORTS: Denver, Colorado

Denver janitors go downtown

The Interns
Lupe Medina
Patty Wing Lau
Karen Khor

The Campaign
Justice for Janitors

Most Memorable Experience
Karen yelling "get a love life" at an obnoxious building supervisor during a boisterous picket.

The Service Employees International Union's (SEIU) highly successful "Justice for Janitors" campaign was started five years ago as a high-profile effort to raise labor standards for the nation's building cleaners. This summer, MAAP interns Lupe Medina, Karen Khor, Patty Wing Lau, and team leader Danny HoSang continued the "Justice for Janitors" struggle at its birthplace, SEIU Local 105 in Denver. After a three-day trek in a "challenging" automobile from Oakland, the MAAP interns quickly became involved in a variety of activities aimed at organizing janitorial companies in downtown Denver.

During the first two weeks, the interns turned heads in downtown Denver by leading boisterous pickets at buildings cleaned by Colorado Maintenance and Janitorial Unlimited, two non-union janitorial contractors with numerous buildings in the business district. These janitorial companies refused to sign the downtown union contract, even though a majority of janitors in both buildings had signed cards authorizing the union to represent them in collective bargaining. In order to further pressure Colorado Maintenance to sign the union contract, the interns organized support from the building's tenants by personally delivering leaflets explaining Colorado Maintenance's unfair position.

"The importance of our campaign is not only to help employees of non-union janitorial companies get better wages and benefits; it is necessary to protect the standards for all union janitors," says Rick Hall, president of Local 105. "If we allow non-union companies to offer cheaper rates because they pay exploitation wages, then the improvements we have made in wages and benefits are at risk."

After only two weeks at Local 105, the interns celebrated their first victory: Colorado Maintenance signed the union contract for the Petroleum Club Building. In the following week, they won two other significant victories at two other union sites. The did this by building majority status among the workers at these workplaces, allowing the union to begin contract negotiations with the cleaning companies.

MAAP interns make some noise outside a building cleaned by a non-union contractor in Denver.

According to Danny HoSang, team leader, "three victories in two weeks is an impressive accomplishment . The