interns helped the workers win higher wages, paid vacations and holidays, protection on the job and dignity and respect in the workplace." Danny, a 1990 MAAP graduate, was responsible for helping site coordinator Sonia Peña supervise and train the interns in Denver.

BSI is the Big Challenge

In the last three weeks of their field placement, the Denver team faced their biggest challenge, organizing approximately fifty janitors working for Barela & Sons, Inc. (B.S.I.), the largest non-union janitorial company in downtown Denver. Through regular contact at the worksite and at their homes, the interns talked to janitors about how the union would secure their rights as workers. The interns also helped to form an internal organizing committee, and carried out research on Art Barela, the owner of B.S.I. and a prominent member of Denver's Latino community.

"I learned that talking with workers about their problems is a very important skill in the development of an organizer," says Lupe. Lupe, a student at Merced College in California, came to MAAP after organizing with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers.

Patty has learned about how the targeted companies respond to organizing efforts. "I didn't realize the level of sophistication of the opposition. They hire professional union-busters to break up our efforts. So we have to find creative means of busting them." Patty, originally from Hong Kong, has been living in Oakland, California since the age of nine. She is a recent graduate of Amherst College in Massachusetts where she organized around gay/lesbian/bisexual issues.

MAAP has also built a clearer vision of the future for Karen. She says, "This experience has made me see that changing social inequities in our society can be a reality at the grassroots level, and it is very rewarding. I see myself continuing to work for social justice from the grassroots level in the future." Karen, a citizen of Malaysia, recently graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, where she was an active member of the group People of Color for the Environment.

According to Eduardo Canales, SEIU Local 105 staff organizer, "MAAP has proven to be a valuable asset to the union's downtown organizing efforts. This summer, with solid organizing help from MAAP interns, Local 105 has solidified its downtown jurisdiction."

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MAAP FIELD REPORTS: Providence, Rhode Island

The "Fiercesome Foursome" DARE to make a difference

The Interns
Rochelle Dodd
Aida Franco
Linh Hong

The Campaigns
"Neighborhoods Now"
"Home Day Care Justice"

Most Memorable Experience
"We knew we were on the East Coast when a rat the size of a cat on steroids ran across our feet the first day doorknocking."

Imagine your five-year old daughter playing in a garbage-filled, rat-infested vacant lot. How would you feel if these lots were the only place for your children to play? Or if one were located next to your home?

Well, this is the situation for many low-income families in South Providence, Rhode Island. Fortunately, the community of South Providence has an organization called Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE), which unites people to fight for better living conditions in their neighborhoods. DARE is in its fifth year of working for rights and social justice in South and West Providence, Rhode Island. Interns from CTWO's Minority Activist Apprenticeship Program joined DARE in the fight for rights and equality by assisting in the "Neighborhoods Now" and the "Home Day Care Justice" campaigns.

As a MAAP site, DARE was the summer home for three culturally diverse and hard working women: Rochelle Dodd, Aida Franco and Linh Hong. Rochelle has a husband and two children, and she is the director of the Midtown Daycare Center in Jackson, Mississippi. As a MAAP intern, Rochelle experienced her first ride on a plane, and her first tastes of Asian and Latin food. "This food ain't got no taste," she remarked.

The three interns — Linh, Rochelle and Aida — stand near a vacant lot full of trash.

"We could never find any food that Rochelle liked besides soul food," said the other two MAAP interns.

The second intern was Aida Franco, a native New Mexican. She is very politically active in her community, and works as a Recreational Site Director with Tierra Del Sol Child Center in Albuquerque. Rochelle and Aida were accompanied by Linh Hong, a Chinese-American from Vietnam. Linh is a senior at U.C. Davis majoring in Applied Behavioral Science.

The DARE interns were also joined by Pam Rice, an organizer for the Coalition for Consumer Justice (CCJ), located in Providence. Pam participated in DARE's cross-training program with the three MAAP interns. Mark Tony, the executive director of DARE, called the interns "the fiercesome foursome."

This "fiercesome foursome," along with DARE members and staff, tackled vacant lots in the "Neighborhoods Now" campaign, and the issue of gaining