



*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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MEMBER OF ADELANTE’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS DETAINED BY ICE

BIRMINGHAM, AL – Today, Adelante Board member, Marcos Baltazar, and his son, Juan, were detained by ICE during a routine check-in at their Homewood office. Two community advocates accompanied the family to their appointment, which quickly turned into a dangerous situation. “ICE brought all three of us upstairs. Suddenly, I was told to wait outside,” recalls Elizabeth, one of the accompaniers. “Later when I asked why they were being detained, I was told a decision had been made and to ‘have a nice day,’ and the officer disappeared. I didn’t even get to say goodbye.” This unnecessary show of force is an example of the type of gross intimidation tactics used by ICE.

ICE often requires immigrants to attend check-ins in order to monitor their location and movement within the country as they await their day in court. Marcos and Juan had no criminal record, and were doing everything in their power to comply with ICE’s requests. ICE’s decision to detain them was not only unnecessary, but bewildering and cruel.

Three years ago, Marcos migrated to the U.S. after his wife gave birth to stillborn twins and died in the following weeks. A victim of wage theft, he came to Adelante seeking help and was able to secure a victory through organizing and litigation. He has since remained an advocate for his community and a dedicated member of Adelante. In April of this year, Marcos was elected to serve on Adelante’s Board of Directors.

Gabriel Cabán Cubero, Adelante’s Detention and Enforcement Organizer, calls the detention of Marcos and Juan, “a clear example of the type of intentional cruelty utilized by ICE locally and nationally to destabilize families. What happened today is an example of how swiftly ICE was able to activate terrorism.”

Soon after being detained, Marcos and Juan were transported to Etowah County Detention Center in Gadsden, AL. This facility has frequently been cited by human rights organizations, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center, as one of the worse immigrant detention centers in the nation. Adelante is calling on members of the community to call the Gadsden ICE office (256-543-8154) and demand the immediate release of Marcos and Juan Baltazar.

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Adelante is a nonprofit organization that unites low-wage immigrant workers and their families in the Birmingham area to defend our rights, promote our dignity, and pursue justice for all. To learn more and get involved visit www.adelantealabama.org