

# In Pursuit of the American Dream: Day Labor in the Greater Washington D.C. Region

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## Key Findings:

In July of 2004, a research team led by the University of California at Los Angeles interviewed 476 day laborers at 16 hiring sites in the greater Washington D.C. region, including Baltimore. Each survey was conducted face-to-face and was undertaken in English, Spanish, or French. The results of these interviews indicate that:

- **The majority of day laborers are drawn to the region by the promise of economic opportunity (52%). They come to the region primarily from Central America (67%), with the majority (68%) having lived in the United States for less than 6 years, and 19% having lived in the United States for 11 years or more.**
- **Day laborers are new to this employment niche, they are relatively youthful, and the majority has had access to formal education. Forty-seven percent have worked as day laborers for less than a year, while an almost equal amount (41%) have worked as day laborers between 1 – 5 years. Sixty-three percent of day laborers are under 38 years of age. The majority (50%) has at least some middle school education, more than 39% have some high school education, and close to 10% have attended college.**
- **Day laborers are family oriented and a source of financial support for their immediate and extended families. More than two thirds (69%) have at least one child and of those that have children, almost 14% of those children are U.S. citizens. Eighty percent report utilizing their earnings to support their immediate and extended families.**
- **Day laborers are active members of the greater Washington D.C. community and live in neighborhoods close to day labor sites. Slightly more than half (51%) of all day laborers report going to church and 19% belong to a community organization such as a soccer club. More than half (58%) of all day laborers take between 1 - 15 minutes to reach the day labor site where they search for work.**
- **In contrast to other metropolitan areas in which day laborers are primarily employed by individuals, day laborers in the greater Washington D.C. region primarily work for construction contractors, subcontractors, or private companies (67%). Day laborers are also a source of labor for community residents, with almost 70% of day laborers indicating that they have been employed by residents of the communities in which day laborer sites are located in the last three months.**
- **Day laborers are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. More than half (58%) of all day laborers in the Washington D.C. region have experienced at least one instance of non-payment or a bad check from an employer, 33% have been abandoned at worksites, and 23% have experienced violence at the hands of employers.**

*“When I first came to the United States, I dreamed that my family would never want for anything ...”*

*–Day Laborer, Langley Park, MD*

## I. Introduction

An early morning walk, drive, or bus ride through most communities in the greater Washington D.C. region usually provides a glimpse of one or two curbside, open-air labor markets filled with groups of men waiting for prospective employers to arrive and select them for a day's work. If you were to observe this group of men more closely, you would notice that most are wearing work clothes for performing often difficult and dirty manual labor. You would probably also notice that most were speaking Spanish and appear to be Latino. Every morning at sixteen hiring sites throughout the District of Columbia's surrounding suburbs, hundreds of workers and their employers converge to exchange labor for individually negotiated wages. In hundreds of hiring sites nationwide, workers of similar background search for work in the same way.

For many of these workers, day labor is a chance to gain a foothold in the urban economy. For others, it is a first job in the United States or a last chance at securing some type of employment. For still others, it represents an opportunity to earn some income when temporarily laid off from a job or it is a viable alternative to wage employment in an unstable economy that pays poorly. As a result of these and other factors, many workers, including non-immigrants, U.S. citizens, and a host of different employers rely on the day labor industry. Coupled with historically low interest rates that fueled new home ownership, new construction start-ups, and the home improvement boom, day

laborers have emerged as the nation's easy to find, hire, and fire temporary employee.

Why do so many workers and so many sites exist? Certainly, the abundant supply of inexpensive and hard working laborers plays an important role in the resurgence of this unique labor market. But a simple supply and demand formula does not adequately explain why the market has grown so rapidly, why immigrant Latino workers predominantly undertake this type of employment, or why day laborers continue to exist and search for work during robust and recessionary economic times.

The National Day Labor Study was developed and implemented by a group of researchers under the direction of Dr. Abel Valenzuela Jr. from the University of California at Los Angeles, Dr. Nik Theodore from the University of Illinois, Chicago, and Dr. Edwin Melendez from New York University. A groundbreaking study, the research seeks to understand how workers participate in and acquire access to jobs in public settings (e.g., street corners, store fronts, sidewalks). The study also aims to better understand how the day labor market is organized and functions on a day-to-day basis. In the summer of 2004, data collection began and by the end of the process, 2,667 day laborers were interviewed in 143 cities throughout the nation. The findings from the Washington D.C. region are the first to be released and are the basis for this report. Future reports, including a national release, will be forthcoming in the next few months.

## II. Methodology

Any scientific study of day laborers—a highly mobile, highly visible, yet largely unknown population—requires creative research approaches. To study mostly Spanish-speaking men attempting to secure employment for the day or week in open and public spaces required some novel research approaches, including standard methods and interview protocols.

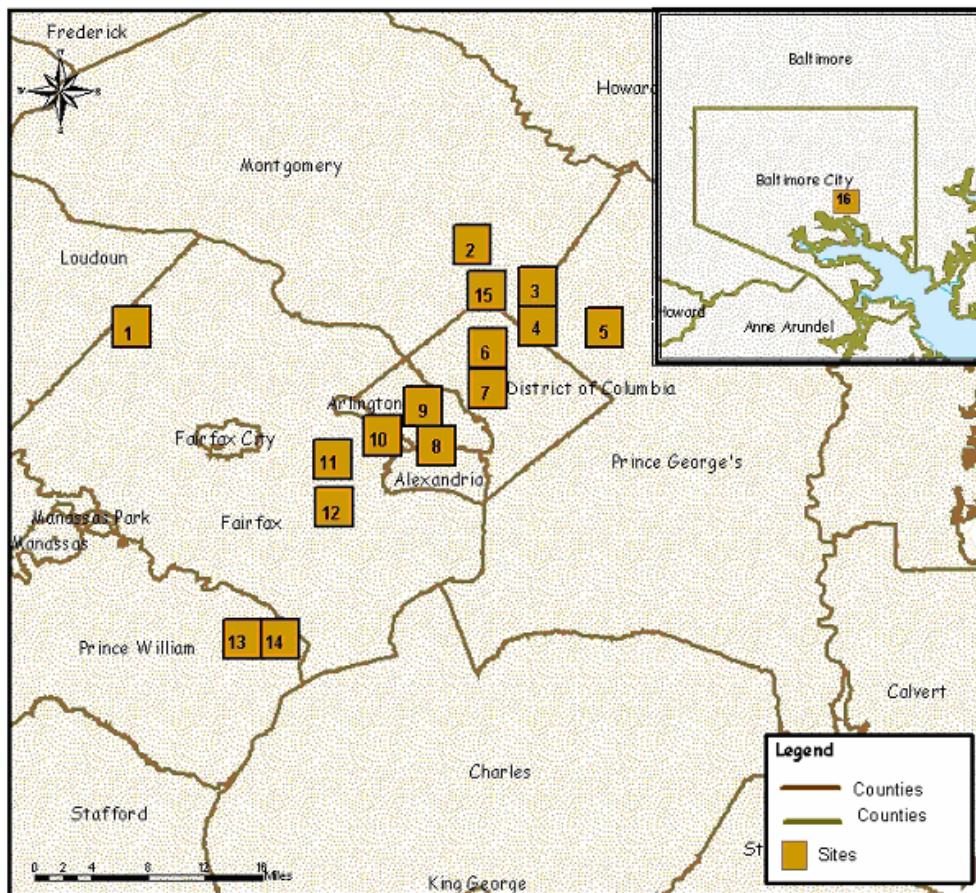
In the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, researchers worked closely with day laborers, community advocates and government representatives to identify 16 day laborer sites throughout the region. In July 2004, research teams randomly surveyed respondents at each of the identified sites. A total of 476 day laborers were surveyed, with interviews conducted in Spanish, English, or French. Each interview included more than 130 questions including charts, skip patterns, and an addendum that included questions specific to the Washington D.C. region. The survey took an average of 40 minutes to complete. Findings presented in this report do not exhaust all the questions in the survey protocol. Table 1 lists the number of hiring sites, their location in the greater Washington D.C. region, and the number of completed surveys for each site.

**Table 1. Location and Number of Hiring Sites for the Greater Washington D.C. Region**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Sites</b>	<b>Completed Surveys</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>237</b>
Arlington	2	58
Springfield	1	9
Herndon	1	33
Dumfries	1	12
Woodbridge	1	11
Culmore	1	54
Annandale	1	60
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>184</b>
Langley Park	1	53
Takoma Park	1	21
Silver Spring	1	49
Baltimore	1	24
Riverdale	1	23
Wheaton	1	14
<b>Washington D.C.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>55</b>
Scott Circle	1	49
Mount Pleasant	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>476</b>

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

## Day Labor Hiring Sites in the Greater Washington D.C. Region



### Location of Sites

1. Alabama Dr. & Elden Street, Herndon, VA
2. Veirs Mills Rd. & University Blvd., Wheaton, MD
3. New Hampshire Ave. & University Blvd., Langley Park, MD
4. Centro de Empleo y Liderazgo – Worker Center, 3810 New Hampshire Ave., Takoma Park, MD
5. Kenilworth Ave. & East West Hwy., Riverdale, MD
6. Mount Pleasant St. & Kenyon St., Mount Pleasant, DC
7. 15<sup>th</sup> St. & P St., Scott Circle, DC
8. Shirlington Employment & Education Center – Worker Center, 2701 S. Nelson St., Arlington, VA
9. Glebe Rd. & Pershing Dr., Arlington, VA
10. Leesburg Pike & Glen Carlyn Dr., Culmore, VA
11. Annandale R. & Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA
12. Commerce St. & Backlick Rd., Springfield, VA
13. Jefferson Davis Hwy. & Longview Dr., Dumfries, VA
14. Jefferson Davis Hwy. & Mary's Way, Woodbridge, VA
15. Centro de Empleo Trabajadores Hacia el Progreso – Worker Center, 734 University Blvd., Silver Spring, MD
16. S. Broadway & Lombard St., Baltimore, MD

### III. Findings

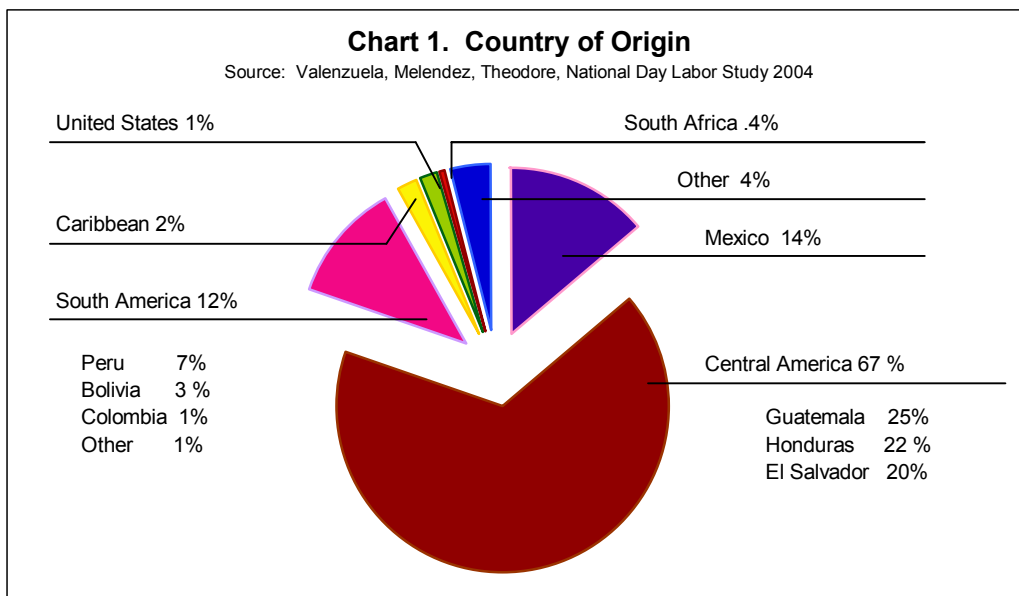
***A. Day laborers from the Washington D.C. region come primarily from Latin America, have varied educational backgrounds and have, for the most part, lived in the United States for less than 6 years.***

In the Washington D.C. region, an overwhelming majority (94%) of day laborers are Latinos, with Central Americans comprising the largest group of day laborers in the area. Central Americans make up 67% of day laborers, followed by Mexicans (14%) and South Americans (12%). Approximately 7% of day laborers are either U.S. born or of a non-Latino background.

Day laborers are a diverse group of workers. They range in age from 15 to 89 years and comprise a relatively

youthful workforce with a mean age of 35. Given the labor-intensive nature of day laborer work, its instability, and competitiveness in securing jobs on a daily basis, it is not surprising that more than half (63%) of the day laborers are younger than 38 years of age, with only 3% on the verge of reaching and surpassing the U.S. official retirement age of 65.

Approximately 50% of day laborers have more than six years of formal education. Ten percent have between seven and eight years of education, and another 30% have between nine and twelve years of education – the equivalent of some college in countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Close to 10% have greater than 13 years of education. Approximately half of day laborers have one to six years of education or none whatsoever.



**Table 2. Demographic Characteristics**

	Percent
<b>Age (n=470)</b>	
Less than 18	1.5
18 - 27	28.3
28 - 37	33.6
38 - 47	21.9
48 - 57	11.7
58+	3.0
Mean Age	35
<b>Educational Attainment (n=469)</b>	
No Education	7.7
1 - 6 Yrs.	42.6
7 - 8 Yrs.	10.4
9 - 12 Yrs.	30.1
13+ Yrs.	9.2
Mean	7.4

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

More than two thirds (68%) of the Washington region's day laborers have lived in the U.S. for fewer than six years, and 17% immigrated to this country during the previous year. Not all, however, are recent arrivals—19% of day laborers in the region have resided in the U.S. for more than 10 years, while another 6% have lived here for more than 20 years.

**Table 3. Years Living in the United States**

	Percent
<b>Years in the U.S. (n=464)</b>	
Less than 1 Yr.	17.2
1 - 2 Yrs.	29.9
3 - 5 Yrs.	21.2
6 - 10 Yrs.	12.4
11 - 20 Yrs.	12.9
21+ Yrs.	6.3

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

## ***B. Day Laborers are responsible and family oriented men.***

More than two-thirds (68%) of day laborers have at least one child and approximately 14% of those children were born in the U.S. A large number (48%) of day laborers have never been married and an almost equal number (44%) are either married, living with a partner, or widowed. Day laborers are not only supporting themselves, but are also contributing to a larger household.

**Table 4. Household Characteristics**

	Percent
<b>Marital Status (n=472)</b>	
Never Married	47.7
Married	35.4
Living with Partner	8.3
Separated	4.7
Divorced	3.4
Widowed	0.7
<b>Number of Children (n=475)</b>	
None	31.2
1 - 3 kids	48.4
4 - 6 kids	16.6
7 - 10 kids	3.6
More than 10 kids	0.2
<b>Born in the U.S (n=382)</b>	
None	86.4
One	6.0
Two	3.7
Three	2.1
Four	1.3
Five or more	0.5

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

To care for immediate and extended family in their country of origin, day laborers remit thousands of dollars back home. An overwhelming majority (80%) send money to their country of origin with the average number of remittances equaling 10 per year. The mean amount remitted per year is \$3,105.

**Table 5. Remittances**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Frequency (n=476)</b>	
None	20.6
1 - 6 Times	34.7
7 - 12 Times	30.7
12+ Times	14.1
Mean	10.4
<b>Amount (n=358)</b>	
<\$500	10.1
\$500 - 1,000	16.8
\$1,001 - 3,000	39.9
\$3,001 - 5,000	16.5
\$5,001 - 10,000	14.5
\$10,000+	2.2
Mean	\$3,105

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

Of those that remit, almost all (99%) send money to family and relatives primarily for food, clothing, medical expenses, housing, their children's education, debt reduction, legal expenses, and to open a business.

***“When I have work, I send money at least twice a month...I support my mom, my daughter, and my sisters...I send the money to my mom because she knows best how to use it...”***

*—Day Laborer, Langley Park, MD*

***C. Day laborers are involved in community organizations, live close to hiring sites and often work for residents in the community.***

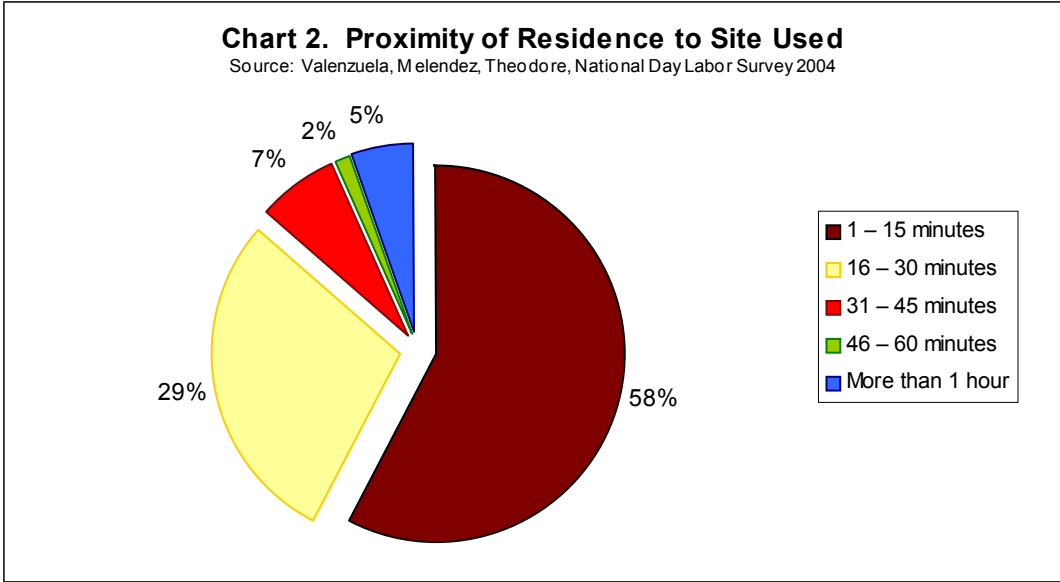
Day laborers are active members of the greater Washington D.C. community. More than half (51%) frequent churches, 28% are members of a worker center, 19% play organized sports, 5% frequent consulate offices, 3% are members of a hometown association, 3% are members of a neighborhood association, and 2% frequent some kind of community-based organization.

**Table 6. Community Involvement**

<b>Do you belong to or frequent a:</b>	<b>Affirmative Responses</b>
	<b>Percent</b>
Church	50.9
Worker Center	27.7
Organized Sports	19.0
Consulate Office	5.1
Hometown Association	2.8
Neighborhood Association	2.8
Community Based Organization	2.1

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

Day laborers stay close to home when choosing a site to look for work. More than half (58%) live within 15 minutes of the hiring site while almost a third (29%) live within 30 minutes of the hiring site. Only 5% travel more than an hour to get to their hiring site. When asked whether they have worked for residents in the community within the last three months, 70% of day laborers responded that they have worked for residents in their community at least once. One quarter stated they have been employed 1 to 5 times by residents, another quarter stated 6 to 20 times, 14% stated 21 to 50 times, and 5% stated more than 50 times.



Clearly, residents and day laborers are interacting and undertaking economic activities with each other quite frequently.

**Table 7. Number of Times Day Laborers Have Worked for Residents in the Community**

In the past three months (n=424)	Percent
None	30.4
1 – 5 Times	24.8
6 – 20 Times	25.9
21 – 50 Times	14.4
50+ Times	4.5
Mean	12

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

**D. Day laborers are distinct in the nation’s capital region**

Day laborers in the greater Washington D.C. region are distinct from day laborers in the rest of the United States in two primary ways, they are: 1) more likely to be from Central America; and 2) hired by contractors and subcontractors at greater rates than individuals. For example, in the Washington D.C. region, 67% of day laborers are from Central America compared to 32% for the rest of the United States. Day laborers in the Washington D.C. region are hired more often by contractors and subcontractors (64%) compared to the rest of the United States (46%).

*“My best experience was when I earned \$55 an hour moving furniture. We did the work in an hour and the lady gave us \$35 a piece. Since she didn’t have time to give us lunch, she gave us \$10 and another \$10 as a tip! There are people that value the work of a Latino, and others that do not...”*

–Day Laborer, Culmore, VA

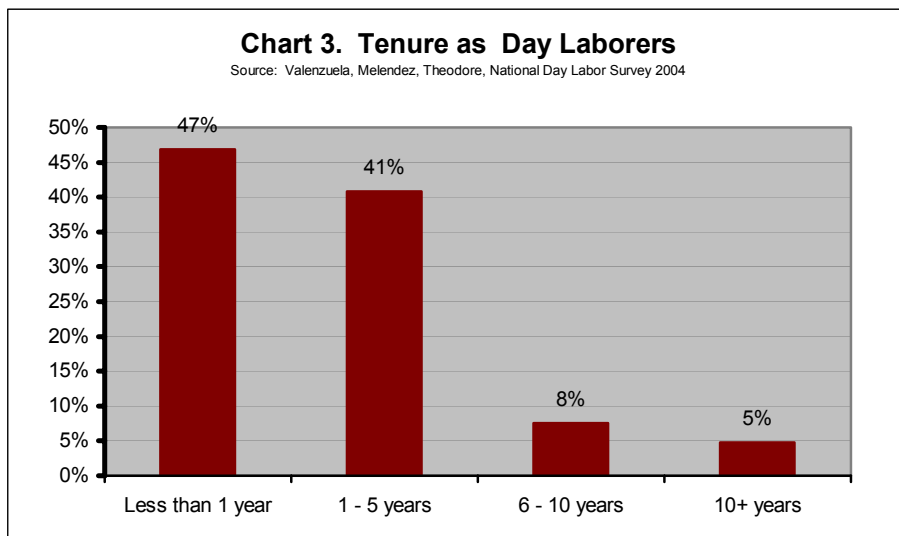


A typical profile of a day laborer in the Washington D.C. region would likely have these characteristics:

- ❖ Country of Origin: Guatemala (25%), Honduras (22%), or El Salvador (20%)
- ❖ Age: 35 years (median)
- ❖ Marital Status: Never Married (48%)
- ❖ Number of Children: 2 (mean)
- ❖ Highest Level of Education: 7.4 years (mean)
- ❖ Native Language: Spanish (87%)
- ❖ Main Reason for Coming to Region: Heard there were better job opportunities (52%)
- ❖ Years Living in the US: 5.8 years (mean)

**E. Most day laborers are new to this employment niche, do not hold another job, and search for employment daily**

A common perception of day laborers is that these workers are desperately seeking work – any type of work. Furthermore, many perceive that workers doing day labor work are using it as a stepping-stone to better employment opportunities or as a temporary holdover from a firing layoff or other work interruption. Chart 3 shows that a large proportion (47%) of day laborers are new to day labor work and an almost equal amount (41%) have been working as day laborers from 1 to 5 years. A small minority (5%) of day laborers has been working in this employment niche for over 10 years. A small minority (10%) reported having another job in addition to seeking work as a day laborer. On average, day laborers looked for work six days per week, with 84% looking for work at least four days per week. An overwhelming majority (82%) of day laborers look for work four weeks out of the month.



**Table 8. Day Labor Work**

<b>Hold other job? (n=474)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	9.9
No	90.1
<b>Days seeking day labor work per week (n=458)</b>	
<=3 days	16.2
4 days	4.4
5 days	9.4
6 days	20.3
7 days	49.8
Mean number of days looked for work	5.6
<b>Weeks per month seeking day labor work (n=443)</b>	
One	3.8
Two	5.9
Three	8.1
Four	82.2

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.

### ***F. Day laborers undertake labor intensive, difficult, and dangerous jobs***

Day laborers perform a wide variety of jobs, including dangerous tasks that might expose them to chemical wastes and other occupational hazards. Approximately 79% of day laborers consider some of the jobs they do to be dangerous. When asked whether they received training on job safety or on how to prevent a work-related injury while working, an overwhelming majority (81%) reported not receiving any type of job safety training. Equally troubling, more than half (51%) reported not receiving safety equipment (i.e., gloves, boots, masks, etc.) that can prevent a workplace injury. One quarter of all day laborers

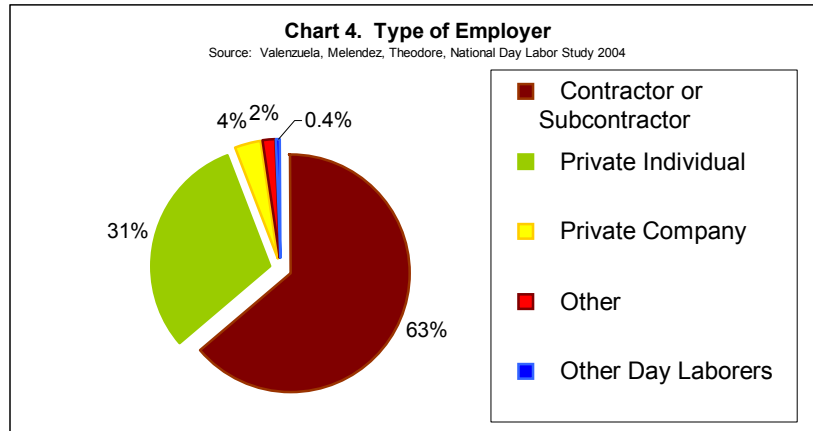
reported having suffered an injury or illness resulting from their day labor work serious enough to require medical attention or treatment.

Day laborers also perform labor-intensive tasks that drive the demand for their services. Table 9 lists the most common jobs performed by day laborers. Respondents were asked to select which of the following occupations they have performed as day laborers. Among the most common jobs performed by day laborers are construction, demolition, or clean-up (88%) moving or hauling (85%), landscaping, gardening, or digging (81%), painting (75%) and carpentry (63%).

**Table 9. Jobs Performed**

<b>Job</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Construction/Demolition /Clean-Up	87.8
Moving/Hauling	85.0
Landscaping/Gardening /Digging	80.8
Painting	75.3
Carpentry	62.7
Drywall	58.2
House Cleaning	57.5
Roofing	54.1
Field Work/Farming	47.4
Dishwashing	37.1
Plumbing	32.7
Car Wash	30.6
Electrician	17.8
Cook	17.1
Other	6.6

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004.



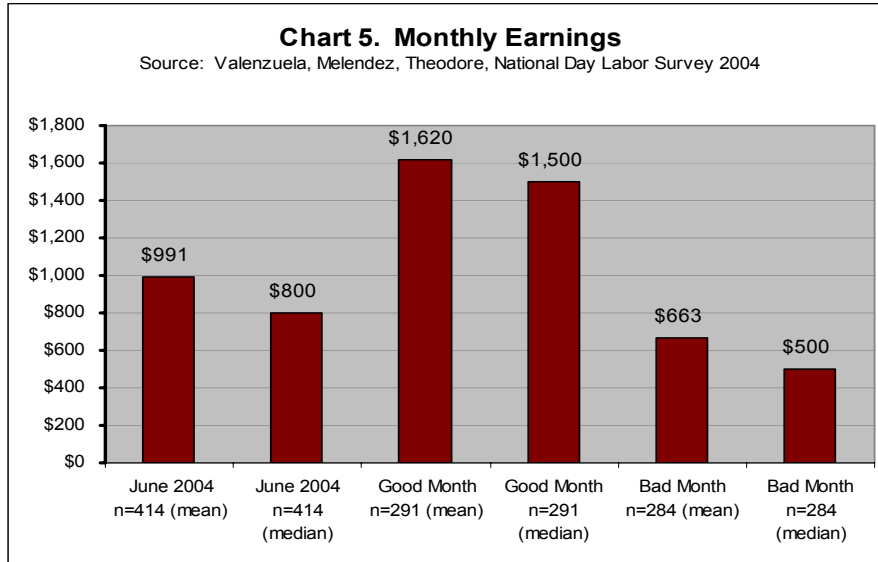
**G. Day laborers primarily work for construction subcontractors and private individuals. Earnings fluctuate by type of work, employer, and season**

The day labor market could not exist without the demand from employers for this type of work. Indeed, from conversations with day laborers, the proliferation of sites throughout the greater Washington D.C. region attests to the increased number of employers seeking this relatively inexpensive, hard working, and trouble free workforce. Chart 4 identifies what type of employer hires day laborers most often.

Calculating the hourly wage rate or monthly income for day laborers is difficult due to the fluidity of the work, its seasonal nature, and the inconsistency in getting work from the same employer. Through a series of questions, we queried day laborers on a host of income and wage indicators. A common way of determining a minimum wage for day laborers is to

ask them their reservation wage. A reservation wage is the lowest amount (usually per hour) a person is willing to accept for work. The mean reservation wage for day laborers under normal conditions was \$10.38. That is, on an average day, laborers refused to work at a rate lower than \$10.38. The median wage (the wage of the absolute middle worker in the occupation) for day laborers under normal conditions was \$10.00. That is, one-half of day laborers earned an hourly wage below the median and one-half of day laborers earned an hourly wage above the median. When we asked day laborers what they had earned during the most recent month (June 2004), they indicated that their average earnings had been \$991. Further, they responded that typical earnings during a “good month” averaged \$1,620, and typical earnings during a “bad month” averaged \$663. Chart 5 lists the monthly earning reported by day laborers and illustrates the degree of fluctuation that occurs during “good months” and “bad months.”

***“There are those that will work for less money than others—not all of us have the same hunger...”***  
*—Day Laborer, Langley Park, MD*



**H. Day laborers experience abuse, harassment, and violence in their search for work**

A large percentage of day laborers have experienced a variety of abuses from employers. In our discussion with day laborers, they reported that their employers and others don't believe the workers will report their unscrupulous actions to officials. This perception appears to be based on the understanding that employers believe that the legal status of day laborers, coupled with their limited knowledge of worker rights in the U.S., reduces the likelihood that day laborers will report their actions.

The most prevalent abuses reported by day laborers from employers were: nonpayment of wages or receiving bad checks, being paid an amount less than agreed upon, receiving no food or breaks, and being abandoned at a worksite. Table 10 lists the most common types of abuses experienced by day laborers by employers.

A smaller percentage of day laborers report harassment from police and/or security guards. Approximately 16% of day laborers stated they have been insulted or arrested, 16% were asked about their immigration status, and 16% were photographed or videotaped by police. About 15% of day laborers have been insulted, harassed, or threatened by security guards and 17% have had security guards report them to the police or to immigration authorities.

***“There are those that drink and litter—because of this the police become angry. This really bothers the rest of us because their actions affect us all...”***

***—Day Laborer, Langley Park, MD***

**Table 10. Frequency of Employer Abuse Police and Security Guard Interaction**

	Percent			
	Never	1-5 Times	6-10 Times	>10 Times
<b>Employer Abuse</b>				
Non-Payment/Bad Check	42.0	50.0	3.2	5.1
Pay less than agreed	43.4	46.4	5.3	4.9
Abandoned at worksite	67.2	27.8	2.4	2.6
No food or breaks	57.4	27.5	4.5	10.5
Violence	76.8	19.1	1.3	2.8
Insulted or threatened	67.1	27.3	2.4	3.2
Worked more hours than agreed	63.4	26.9	3.9	5.8
<b>Police Interaction</b>				
Insulted/Harassed	83.7	12.5	0.1	3.2
Arrested	90.9	8.3	0.2	0.6
Cited	91.5	7.7	0.2	0.6
Confiscated papers	95.1	4.5	0	0.4
Forced to leave the site	66.4	22	2.4	9.3
Asked about immigration status	83.7	12.3	0.9	3.2
Photographed/Videotaped	83.7	13.7	0.9	1.7
<b>Security Guard Interaction</b>				
Insulted/Harassed/Threatened	85.1	9.0	1.3	4.7
Violence	92.5	4.5	0.6	2.4
Robbery	96.5	2.6	0.4	0.4
Reported to police or Immigration Authorities	83.4	8.2	1.1	7.3

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004

**“Sometimes we fight for work...here it’s ‘every man for himself.’”**

**–Day Laborer, Culmore, VA**

Day laborers are exposed to many dangers while searching for work in public settings. Approximately 8% of day laborers have been victims of theft and 6% have been beaten or have been involved in a fight. Day laborers have also been assaulted, robbed, and sexually abused or harassed while searching for work.

**Table 11. Abuse**

<b>While looking for work or working as a day laborer, have you been a victim of the following:</b>	<b>Affirmative responses Percent</b>
Theft	8.0
Assault	4.0
Robbery	4.6
Beatings/Fighting	6.0
Sexual Abuse/Harassment	2.1

Source: Valenzuela, Melendez, Theodore, National Day Labor Survey 2004

A typical profile of a day laborer in the Washington D.C. region would likely have these characteristics:

- ❖ **Tenure as a Day Laborer: 2.5 years (mean)**
- ❖ **Days Looking For Work: 5.6 days (mean)**
- ❖ **Weeks per Month Looking For Work: 3.7 weeks (mean)**
- ❖ **Consider Day Labor Work Dangerous: Yes (79%)**
- ❖ **Most Frequent Jobs Performed: Construction (88%), Moving (85%), and Landscaping (81%)**
- ❖ **Type of Employer: Construction Contractor or Subcontractor (63%)**
- ❖ **Hired Repeatedly by Same Employer: Yes (69%)**
- ❖ **Hourly Reservation Wage: \$10.38 (mean)**
- ❖ **Monthly Earnings: \$991 (Mean in June 2004), \$800 (Median in June 2004)**
- ❖ **Abuses: Non-Payment/Bad Check (58%), Paid Less than Agreed Upon (57%)**

## **V. Conclusion**

The work presented in this report represents an attempt to obtain a more complete understanding of day laborers, their lives, and their experience in the labor market of the greater Washington D.C. region.

The data indicates that laborers have been drawn to the region by the promise of employment and economic opportunity. At times, it appears that this promise is realized, laborers have found work in the region's growing construction and service industries, and they have become part of the economic and social fabric of the communities in which they live.

The data from this study indicates that day laborers are new to this employment niche, their only subsistence is day labor work, and they are constantly looking for work. In addition, day laborers are hired most often by construction contractors/subcontractors and private individuals who hire them repeatedly and often do not provide job-safety training. Lastly, day laborers are very vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The most prominent abuses are: non-payment, paying less than agreed upon, and not providing food or breaks.

The data presented in this report represent an original and geographically comprehensive first look at a highly visible though relatively unknown labor market in our nation's capital and surrounding area. Day labor, its processes, and its day-to-day activities are varied and rich in information. This report just scratches the surface while providing key and timely information on a burgeoning market throughout the Washington D.C. region. Equally complex and detailed are the larger factors that induce the growth of day labor and fuel the demand among contractors and private individuals. Part of planning and instituting policies on behalf of different segments of a populace is an accurate portrayal of that population in question. This of course requires meticulous work, painstaking studies, and careful data collection and analysis.

This is the first of many reports that will help gain a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding day labor work. The findings presented in this report will provide information that can be utilized to formulate programs and policies that respond to the needs of this workforce and the communities they live in. We believe that the richness of the Washington D.C. region data will provide for further analysis and future research on this dynamic labor market.

## For More Information:

**Center for the Study of Urban Poverty**  
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