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## Helping Hands for the Unemployed and Uninsured

There is always something you can do and organizations in LA and OC that can help

By **Kat Avila, Contributing Writer** | Published on LatinoLA: October 22, 2012



The other day I was jogging home from Target when I was stopped by someone running for city council. He lost points when he grabbed my elbow. Ignoring my glare, he told me to vote for him.

"I already mailed in my ballot," I said. That stunned him for a moment, and I managed to escape but not before he yelled, "You HAD BETTER have voted for me!"

This morning I saw the street corner had sprouted colorful campaign yard-signs, and there was that clown's name among them. Trick-or-treat!

Jobs are on everyone's mind, but the Republican trickle-down theory only benefits people at the top more than people at the bottom scrambling for an opportunity. So, did you get an email threatening you with the loss of your job if Obama wins another term? Don't you love CEO lords telling their serfs how to vote?

Not that local government necessarily acts much better. My experiences this past month with Orange County's Medical Services Initiative (MSI) Program (similar to Healthy Way Los Angeles) were enough to make me think of joining the Tea Party. It's so fun having a faceless government employee screeching like a harpie at you over the phone. The woman's writing wasn't much better, resembling something mashed through Google Translate.

Three months and two unanswered letters-of-complaint later I have a rejection of my MSI application to show for my efforts. It can take as long as two months just to get an appointment to submit an application. Thank goodness for free clinics! I only have to wait three hours and not three months for some medical care.

I plod on toward a better day taking Microsoft Office refresher courses at South County Outreach's computer learning lab in Laguna Hills. It's generally \$10 for course materials per one-week class, and the otherwise free classes are taught by volunteers.

I heard about the computer lab after visiting Irvine's One-Stop Center (similar to L.A.'s WorkSource), which is a collaboration of government, educational institutions, and local businesses. Bring your California driver license and social security card if it's your first visit. Career coaches and computers are available.

Additionally, the various One-Stops in Orange County have free workshops in interviewing, resume preparation, managing conflict, and so forth. The best part about the center is the people you meet; in other words, networking. You can share with others about what works and hasn't worked out for you.

If you are unemployed or underemployed, just know there are many good people reaching out with a helping hand. Some of them are only one step ahead because they got job information and tips earlier than you did. Don't give up! There is always something you can do.

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### HOT STORIES IN LATINOLA

**Another Great Night in the Land of 1000 Dances**

**Ivonne Coll: Glamorous Renaissance Actress**

**Getting Suckered by Props 30 and 38**

**Helping Hands for the Unemployed and Uninsured**

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### ¡LATINOLA RECOMMENDS!

**Brazilian Singer-Guitarist GILBERTO GIL**  
Tuesday, October 23

**ARTEQUE Latin Digital Art/DJ Experience with Peligrosa All-Stars**  
Tuesday, October 23

**Emerging Latinas Program Provides Tools for Career Success**  
Wednesday, October 24  
to Wednesday, November 14

**Happy Hour With a Cause: Home For Good**  
Thursday, October 25

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1. Healthy Way Los Angeles - <http://www.ladhs.org/wps/portal/HWLA>
2. Medical Services Initiative (MSI) Health Care Agency - <http://ochealthinfo.com/medical/msi>
3. Orange County One-Stop Centers, linking business and people - <http://www.oconestop.com>
4. South County Outreach, preventing hunger and homelessness - <http://www.sco-oc.org>
5. WorkSource Centers Los Angeles - <http://www.worksourcecalifornia.com>

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