

NJTESOL/NJBE Awards NJIPN Executive Director with "Advocacy on Behalf of Immigrants" Award

(Somerset, NJ- May 21, 2009)—Charles "Shai" Goldstein, Executive Director of New Jersey Immigration Policy Network (NJIPN), received the Advocacy Award at the 5th Annual New Jersey Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/New Jersey Bilingual Educators (NJTESOL/NJBE) Legislative Conference for "Ground-breaking work on behalf of Immigration reform." **Last year's recipient was Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ).**

The award was kept as a surprise to Goldstein and NJIPN until the actual legislative conference. Jory Samkoff-Oulhiad, socio-political concerns representative for NJTESOL/NJBE, later explained that board members decided to recognize NJIPN at this venue in order to highlight NJIPN's efforts on behalf of New Jersey's immigrant populations.

Jory Samkoff-Oulhiad explained: "We recognize that NJIPN is one of many immigrants' rights organizations in the state and we appreciate the diligent work that they do on a daily basis to inform and engage the public at-large. The main reason why we decided to recognize NJIPN this year is because of the leadership role that NJIPN plays in the state of New Jersey in addition to the wide range of issues they address. This year, a representative from NJIPN joined the Bilingual Advisory Committee for the NJ Department of Education and offers parent training classes in several towns throughout the state. This organization continues to advocate with and for immigrants on issues ranging from bilingual parents' rights, to the right for undocumented immigrants to attend college at in-state tuition rates, to fair and just immigration reform."

Goldstein has worked for over 20 years as a civil rights, labor, Jewish community, interfaith, and immigrant rights advocate throughout New Jersey. Senator Robert Menendez has described NJIPN as one of the most important immigrant rights organizations in New Jersey stating "The New Jersey Immigration Policy Network provides crucial leadership for advancing the rights of immigrants." Samkoff-Oulhiad added, "This is the second year that Mr. Goldstein has represented NJIPN by participating on our advocacy panel at our Annual Legislative Conference and we look forward to engaging in future joint ventures. NJTESOL/NJBE understands the importance of joining forces with other organizations that further immigrants' access to education—it is through our joint efforts that our common goals will be heard and accomplished.

This year, in addition to providing leadership for Governor Jon Corzine's Blue Ribbon Panel on Immigrant Policy, NJIPN launched its Empowering Immigrant Parents program in bi-lingual districts throughout New Jersey. The program has empowered parents who are immigrants in 20 school districts to establish their own Parental Bi-Lingual Advisory Committee to ensure that immigrant parents are playing an active role in their children's education. The program is being conducted throughout the state in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Education, grass-roots and other advocacy organizations. **The**

program was specifically cited in the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel report issued on March of 2009.

Commenting on the program and the award Goldstein explained: "This award belongs to the Board Members, activists, Funders, foundations and staff of NJIPN. The program would not have been successful without the hiring of Kety Rosario who heads the Empowerment] project. Furthermore, members of the Board of Trustees have provided direct training and support for the program and will continue to do so.



From left to right:

Sean Hadley (NJEA), Al Alvarez (Deputy chief of staff, Jon Corzine's office), Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, Ana Cruz (NJTESOL/NJBE), Shai Goldstein (NJIPN), Diana Autin (SPAN), Stan Karp (Education Law Center), John Segota (TESOL, DC Office).