

Hundreds turn out for Immigrant Action Day

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More than 400 people attended Immigrant Action Day at Chemeketa Community College today.

This year's event came on the heels of a workplace raid in Bellingham, Wash., that nabbed 28 people. The raid was the first under the Obama administration.

The local event was sponsored by CAUSA, an immigrant-advocacy nonprofit based in Salem.

Topics included the latest information regarding immigration reform, advocacy efforts, driver's license information and details on immigrant rights.

Organizers also talked about ongoing plans that they hope will bring 10,000 or more people to a May 1 rally at the state Capitol.

Salem immigration lawyer Barbara Ghio spoke about immigrant rights during the conference.

Afterward, she and her husband, Kurtz Muntz, who's also an immigration lawyer, fielded questions from a host of people.

Maria Ceja, of Salem, was among those who stood in a long line waiting to ask Ghio and Muntz questions related to immigrant rights.

"My daughter came here with a visa and later got married to a (U.S.-born) man," Ceja said. "She wanted to complete paperwork so she could get her residency but then she left him because of domestic abuse. So we have a lot of questions about what will happen now."

Anastasia Lindner Hernandez-Vasquez, and her three children, traveled to Salem from Hillsboro to attend the event for the third consecutive year.

"I come here every year for Immigrant Action Day to show my support for immigrants and all people who live in our nation," the migrant health care worker said.

The five-hour conference drew immigrant-rights groups from as far away as Florida, New York and Michigan.

The groups were there to study CAUSA's organizing process and apply the same to their efforts in their states.

Between 25 to 30 people — members of the Oregon Chapter of Minutemen and Oregonians



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Participants end today's Immigration Action Day activities with the CAUSA chant at Chemeketa Community College.

for Immigration Reform — protested the event.