



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Grand Opening

The grand opening of **Gaby's Cake Supply** will be on Saturday August 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am. This endeavor is a joint effort with AnewAmerica, a non profit that promotes the long-term economic empowerment of new Americans - new citizens, immigrants, refugees – and encourages their full participation in America's political, social and cultural growth. The venue is: *179 San Marin Drive, in the San Marin Plaza Shopping Center, Novato, CA 94945.*

"I came to America on January 28, 2001," says Bernina Contreras. That was the day that she decided to change her life, her job, her husband, and her country. She says even her personality changed. A graphic artist by education and training, Bernina owned a print shop in Peru, a profession that she loved despite the toxic inks and chemicals. The toxins were not the only things that were hurting her; Bernina was also a victim of domestic abuse. "When I arrived in America, I was hurt, bruised, and betrayed," she remembers sadly.

Bernina left Peru as a refugee, fleeing the Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path, an extremist guerilla group that uses violence to spread its message. She arrived in California with her child, desperate to begin a new life. As with many immigrants, she began working two jobs, fighting her way out of poverty. But Bernina's luck was about to change. Her therapist recommended that she call AnewAmerica and soon after she attended her first Business Incubation class in Spanish.



**Bernina Contreras**  
**Gaby's Cake Supply**  
(415) 897-4581

Through AnewAmerica's program, Bernina learned to write a business and asset plan, develop a budget and marketing strategy, and build her credit. "The most important part of AnewAmerica's support was the advice." She also saved \$2,200 in AnewAmerica's Individual Development Account program. With her new skills and savings she was able to acquire a \$25,000 loan from Circle Bank. But Bernina's story does not end there. While she was very proud of her house cleaning business, she also had a desire to pursue a career in cake decorating. "I have had this idea for many years, but AnewAmerica gave me the push I needed to make it happen." She returned to Circle Bank and was granted a second loan for \$35,000. "There are not many banks that will help people start a business. I recommend that everyone knock on the door of Circle Bank," she says. "The owner truly wants to help Latinos and without their support, I wouldn't be where I am today."

AnewAmerica was established in 1999 by a group of community leaders representing immigrants and community development advocates who saw a continuing lack of integrated job creation, asset development and community empowerment strategies for low-income new Americans living in the Bay area. Their client base includes entrepreneurs from over 40 countries covering the nine bay area counties.

**New classes starting:** AnewAmerica is currently recruiting clients. Classes begin Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup> 2007 for the English group and Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> 2007 for the Spanish. For more information, please call Carolyn Carr at 510-540-7785 x314 or email [ccarr@anewamerica.org](mailto:ccarr@anewamerica.org). For immediate information, please visit our website: [www.anewamerica.org](http://www.anewamerica.org).  
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