



## *Margarita Vargas*

Shortly after leaving her Homecoming Dance at Richmond High School on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 a 16 year old female student was violently accosted by at least seven men where she was beaten, robbed and gang-raped. As many as 20 of her neighbors and classmates stood by and instead of calling the police or stepping in to stop this vicious attack, for two and a half hours they stood around and watched with some of them using their cell phones to take photos and video clips. Some even called their friends to come by and join in.

When Margarita Vargas, an 18 year old single mother, heard what was going on, without hesitation she called the police and promptly went to the scene of the crime to see what she could do to assist the young woman.

The following day, when Margarita saw one of the alleged perpetrators of this heinous attack, she again picked up the phone to tell the police where they could find one of the attackers.

Margarita knew that where she lives, the code of the street is “snitches get stitches” yet she still made those calls and has continued to speak out against violence in her community and against women.

Margarita works full time while taking care of her family and still attends school to earn her degree. Not as a reward for her brave deeds but as recognition of her strength of character, Local 342 has presented Margarita with a new laptop, printer and all of the trimmings to help her as she works to get an education that will help her provide for her family and offer them a better future.

In a world where too many young people can’t see that acts like these are wrong, Local 342 salutes and embraces brave citizens like Margarita.