



Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs



Newsletter
September – December

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

September 15th through October 15th marked Hispanic Heritage Month. Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16 and Chile on September 18. OLA embraces Hispanic Heritage Month each year as a time to celebrate DC's Latino community and all it brings to our great city. There are over 50,000 DC Latino residents, a majority from El Salvador. Our Latino community is a large part of what makes DC a great international city. For the second year in a row we opened the month with the help of the Mayor at the DC Historical Society. We held our "second-annual" seniors breakfast with our "abuelos" and "abuelitas" from Vida Senior Center and celebrated the opening of exhibits by Latino Art Beat and the Latino GLBT History Project.



A month later, on October 16th, we closed out the month (for the third year in a row), with our friends at the Mexican Cultural Institute. We continued the tradition of recognizing the high-school student winners of the DC Latino Art Beat contest and started a new tradition of recognizing unsung heroes of our community and of OLA. These unsung heroes are people that work with OLA, day to day, to help improve the lives of DC's Latinos without any reluctance or second thought. They are people that are always there, without being asked, always willing to help out beyond their normal job duties, one, completely as a volunteer.

UNSUNG HEROES AWARDS

Pedro Cruz, an employee of DC Jobs with Justice, has worked with OLA over the years in reaching out to some of our most vulnerable Latino residents, day laborers. He is more than just a resource for this community; his commitment and compassion make him a real friend to the day laborers and to OLA. Mr. Castillo (and his son Jose) is more than our friend; he is almost like an OLA employee! Mr. Castillo is at most of our events volunteering, he is also one of the best interpreters in our community. Thanks to Maria Nunez 80 Latino families have received vouchers to help them with rent and now have stable homes. Maria has worked closely with Maria Rosa Jimenez at OLA. With their dedication, vouchers that had stalled for some time were processed in a timely and compassionate manner. Pastor Casanova has served Latino families at the Central Mission for many years. He is a trusted friend in the community and an eager partner of the office.



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OLA AWARDS \$1, 850,000 IN GRANTS

In September OLA announced grant awards for fiscal year 2010 to over forty community based organizations serving DC's Latino Community. Over \$1,300,000 were awarded to fund a wide variety of programs including, youth programs, programs dealing with Latino elderly, arts and education. All the funded organizations will provide much needed services to DC's Latino community and will serve thousands of residents in need. We are excited to be able to fund, and look forward to working with, the following organizations;

Andromeda Transcultural Health Center, ARRIBA Center, Ayuda, Barbara Chambers Children's Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters - Latino Outreach, Capitol Area Asset Builders, Capitol Letters, Catholic Charities, Central American Resource Center (**CARECEN**), CentroNía, Council for Court Excellence, DC Arts Center, DC Jobs with Justice, DC SCORES, FIDMi, GALA Hispanic Theater, Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Jubilee Jumpstart Kids' Corner, La Clínica del Pueblo, La Trenzta [National Multicultural Institute] Language ETC, Latin American Youth Center (**LAYC**), Latino Economic, Development Corp. (**LEDC**), Latino Student Fund, Life Skills Center, Mary's Center, Multicultural Career Intern Program (**MCIP**), Multicultural Community Service (**MCS**), Quality Trust, SAFE, Spanish Catholic Center, Spanish Education Development (**SED**) Center, Teaching for Change, The Esperanza Fund, The Family Place, Inc., Vida Senior Center, WEAVE, Work Achievement Values Education (**WAVE**), Young Playwrights Theater, San Miguel School.

In December OLA also announced the Latino Health grant awards, awarding \$500,000 to Latino serving health organizations. Awardees include; Andromeda Transcultural Health Center, La Clinica del Pueblo, Mary's Center for Maternal Child Care, Nueva Vida, Spanish Catholic Center and Vida Senior Center.

Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GWHCC) recognizes Ambassador Gallegos

Angela Franco, president and CEO of the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Greg O'Dell, president of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority hosted a dinner on Tuesday, December 1st at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center honoring Ambassador of Ecuador, H.E. Dr. Luis Gallegos for his work promoting human rights. Mrs. Jane Lee Garcia, dinner chair and president and CEO of Garcia and Associates, organized the event with the support of former Congressman Robert Garcia of New York.



Dr. and Mrs. Gallegos, Mercedes Lemp, Jane Lee Garcia

Political leaders, ambassadors and diplomats from several Latin American countries gathered as Dr. Gallegos received a proclamation, presented on behalf of Mayor Adrian M. Fenty by Mercedes Lemp, Director of the Office on Latino Affairs. The proclamation highlighted Dr. Gallegos' enormous efforts in the international community in favor of the rights of incapacitated people. Congressman Eliot Engel, chairman of House Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and Dr. Arturo Valenzuela, Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere participated in congratulating Dr. Gallegos for his accomplishments and his commitment to his mission.

CENSUS 2010

April 1, 2010 is fast approaching. Ensuring a complete count is a priority of the city and especially of the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs as the Latino community is one of the most undercounted. OLA has held many events in the past months and will continue to spread the word through April 1, 2010 (Census Day), and thereafter, to capture any residents that did not send their forms in. OLA Director, Mercedes Lemp was honored to be asked to present testimony to the "Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee, Oversight and Government Reform Committee" on December 2, 2009. The congressional hearing was focused on identifying best practices in reaching "hard to count" communities. Communities are defined as "hard to count" if they speak a language other than English, if there is high poverty, if there is a high proportion of renters, among other things. In fiscal year 2007, Washington DC federal funds allocated based on Census data were almost \$2.1 billion, \$3,527 per person. The majority of funds were directed to medical assistance programs, highways, housing and employment. For each person that is counted the city receives much needed increased services. For more information on the cities Census campaign, DC Counts, see www.census.dc.gov

United States
Census
2010

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QUESTIONS. MINUTES.
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