

◊ LATINO AFFAIRS ◊

Volume 3, Issue 2

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

April, 1999



BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES

The Division of Latino Affairs conducts workshops, lunch & learns and in-services to give YOU the tools to foster cultural understanding in your environment. Call (515) 281-4070.

DID YOU KNOW...

WHAT IS Cinco de Mayo?

The 5th of May commemorates Mexican's independence from Napoleonic rule. Independence day in Mexico is actually September 16, when they gained their freedom from Spain.



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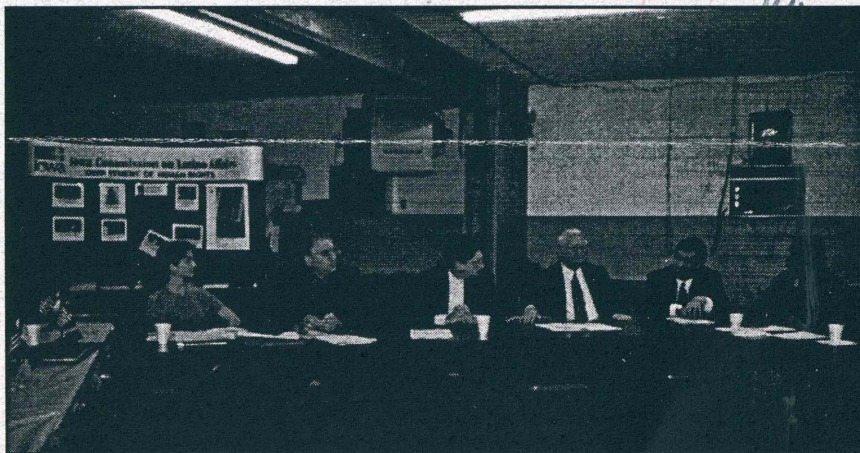
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See Editor's note, page 3.

We didn't all come over on the same ship, but we are all in the same boat. -Bernard Baruch

Commission Hosts Community Forum in Fort Madison

Fort Madison community leaders had the opportunity to discuss English Only legislation and other concerns at the Commission on Latino Affairs' meeting and open forum on April 3rd. Fort Madison, the site of Iowa's first Latinos who arrived 100 years ago to work on the railroad, hosts an annual Mexican Independence Day Celebration each September and is a model for building inclusive communities in Iowa. The Commission on Latino Affairs holds forums across the state to hear concerns and successes of the Latino community, no less than six times per year. The Commission, made up of commissioners appointed by the Governor, is bi-partisan, gender balanced, and serves various regions of the state. See page 4 for a list of Commissioners and page 2 for a feature on our Fort Madison Commissioner.



Many area community leaders, including Senator Mark Shearer, Representative Rick Larkin, Representative Philip Wise, and Senator Eugene Fraise participated in the forum.

Department of Human Rights Welcomes New Director



Rose Vasquez is the newly appointed director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights. Rose is not new to state government, however. Prior to receiving her appointment, she served the state of Iowa as an assistant attorney general assigned to represent the Iowa Department of Public Health. Rose received her law degree from Drake University and her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Iowa. Rose has lived in Des Moines since 1982. She is originally from the Quad-City area, having been raised in Moline, Illinois. Her goal for the Department of Human Rights and for the Division of Latino Affairs is to make them highly visible to their constituencies and to the public generally.

GET TO KNOW YOUR COMMISSIONERS

The Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs is a 9-member commission appointed by the Governor to serve a two-year term. We feature them in each issue of this publication!

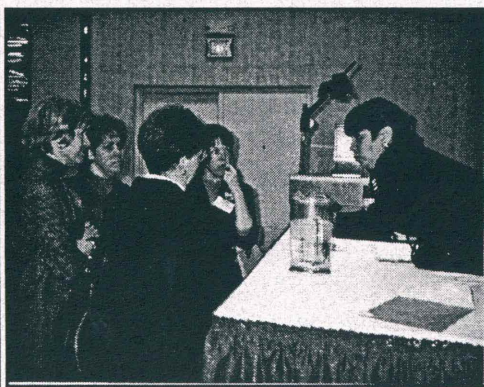


Veronica Mendez serves the Fort Madison and Burlington areas. She is a Family Development Specialist for Southeast Iowa Community Action, and also teaches Spanish I & II for Southeastern Community College. In addition, Veronica owns her own business as a bilingual translator and Hispanic Cultural Diversity consultant. Veronica's parents both came from Mexico so she is first generation to the United States. She and her husband Ruben recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary. They have two children, Adrianna, who is in 4th grade, and Gabriel, who is in 3rd grade. In her free time, Veronica enjoys reading about different cultures, and particularly enjoys Latino history. Her inspiration is her father, who passed away in July, 1998. He taught Veronica about her culture, language, heritage, and especially the love of Mexican music.

National Latina Leaders Visit Iowa



Pat Mora, a Mexican American author, stressed the importance of teachers' roles during her keynote address at the University of Northern Iowa's Beginning Reading Conference on April 23rd. Pat has written 11 children's books in English and Spanish, as well as five collections of poetry and two volumes of nonfiction. Show your commitment to children and books by helping Pat promote April 30th as *Día de los niños: Día de los libros, a Bilingual Literacy Day*. Help to celebrate through co-sponsorships with universities, schools, libraries, and community groups. Contact the Texas State Library and Archives Commission at (512) 463-5460 for more information.



LTC Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch (pictured left) returned to Iowa February 17th to deliver an inspiring keynote address at the English as a Second Language/Bilingual Education and Refugee Concerns Conference. Educators from around Iowa and other states attended the 2-day conference.

HOT RESOURCES!

Contact the Division of Latino Affairs at (515) 281-4070 to obtain the following resources:

- ♦ Immigration attorney list
- ♦ Bilingual attorney list
- ♦ Latino-owned businesses
- ♦ State-wide ESL and Citizenship class directory

New for 1999: Look for our Latino Cultural Affairs Directory

Do you know of Latino dance groups, singers, storytellers, artists, cooks, or other experts who should be included in our new directory?

Call the Division of Latino Affairs at (515) 281-4070.

HOT OPPORTUNITIES!

Volunteer Mentors Needed

Friends of New Parents, a program of Lutheran Social Services, needs bilingual volunteer mentors to work with pregnant and new moms to provide extra support during a potentially stressful time in their lives. Call Joy Esposito at 271-7446.

Travel/Study in Patzcuaro, Mexico

The University of Iowa's School of Social Work and Summer Programs Abroad Office is sponsoring a seminar on Latino/Hispanic Immigration in Patzcuaro, Michoacan from August 5-20, 1999. For information, call John-Paul Chaisson at (319) 335-4965.

WERE YOU THERE?

Not only Latinos, but native Iowans as well, packed the New Val Air Ballroom on April 23rd to dance to the music of *Cubanismo*, a hot band from Havana. The crowd cannot wait for more electric performances like this one!

LATINO AFFAIRS

Photo Insert

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

April, 1999

Drake University Hosts Pan American Program *Todos Somos Americanos - We Are All Americans*



Drake University's program in honor of Pan American Week on April 5, 1999 featured Dr. Jorge F. Garcia (*pictured left*), Superintendent of the Tucson Unified School District in Tucson, Arizona. A panel discussion, *Preparing All People for the Changing World*, offered encouragement and words of wisdom to students and all participants. Panel experts included (*pictured above*) Dennis L. Dixon, International Director of Hy-line International, Rick Negrete, General Sales Manager & Writer at KKDM FM, Rose Vasquez, Director of Iowa Department of Human Rights, Dr. Lorenzo Jasso, Principal at McKinley Elementary School, and Mirtha Vaca, Reporter at WHO News, TV 13.



Professor Hilda Prieto, and Antonio Prieto (*pictured left*), coordinators of the Pan American Program, display the Proclamation for Pan American Week, signed by Governor Thomas J. Vilsack. Pictured above are Rose Vasquez, Director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Antonio Prieto, and Mirtha Vaca from WHO News, TV 13.

Commission and Division of Latino Affairs Activity Highlights



Senate File 449: English Only Defeated

Community members, agencies, and organizations collaborated to show their disapproval of English Only. Steps were taken to show that "Learn English" and "English Only" are two separate thoughts. If this bill resurfaces in the future, we can continue effective strategies to illuminate others as to why this bill clearly does not demonstrate the real Iowan spirit of welcoming new immigrants.

Call your legislators, write letters to the editor, and hold forums in your community. For a copy of the Commission on Latino Affairs' position paper, call (515) 281-4070.

The Commission has held several meetings and community forums over the past few months. Community members, legislators, and other leaders attended these forums to learn about the commission's activities and to share current happenings in their communities. Recent forums have been held in:

- **Marshalltown**, February 6th
- **Davenport**, March 6th
- **Fort Madison**, April 3rd

Other events in which the Commission has participated over the past four months include a legislative reception hosted by the Department of Human Rights, the **ESL/Bilingual Education and Refugee Concerns Conference** in Des Moines, the **Strengthening and Valuing Latino Communities in Iowa Conference** in Iowa City, the **Iowa Immigrant Rights Network Statewide Meeting** in Perry, and the **Marshalltown City Council Meeting** in which deputization of local police officers to do immigration work was discussed.

Senator Harkin and Former Iowan Featured in Child Labor Discussion



Pictured left: Guest speaker Victor Arango had the opportunity to meet with Des Moines area Latinos, including Mary Marean.

Senator Tom Harkin and Victor Arango (pictured left) led a session on Child Labor held March 6 at Drake University, sponsored by the United Nations Association. Senator Harkin spoke about the problems of child labor abroad, and Victor Arango, Associate Producer for Dateline, NBC, and a former Iowa resident, shared part of his documentary, *Children of the Harvest* which gives insight to migrant workers and child labor in the U.S.

Great Things are Happening in Iowa!

Postville - At the invitation of Becky Meyer of the Chamber of Commerce, the Division of Latino Affairs, along with Commissioner John-Paul Chaisson and Iowa State student Marti Dettman shared ideas on how to further outreach to newcomers in Iowa communities. In attendance were leaders from area businesses who plan numerous positive activities welcoming individuals from **18 nationalities** who reside in Postville. An annual event is held each August which showcases the food, music, dance, and culture of Postville's diverse residents.

Ottumwa - The Division of Latino Affairs Administrator presented information on the Latino culture to the Ottumwa Human Rights Commission on April 23rd, hosted by Gail Quinn. The program, *So We Have New Neighbors*, was geared toward supervisors, landlords, domestic abuse workers, and those interested in learning about the Latino culture.

Editor's Note

As some of you may know, I have accepted a new position in Guatemala conducting training for individuals entering the Peace Corps. I wanted to take this opportunity to say good-bye and to express my appreciation to all of you with whom I have had the opportunity to work and share in the building of bridges between cultures. I feel fortunate to have worked with Sylvia and so many other talented and giving individuals. I will certainly take this experience and wisdom with me to pass on to others who can in turn, make a difference. Take care, and I look forward to hearing about all of the positive happenings in your communities! -Marilyn E. Murphy

Congratulations to Barbara Quijano Decker, vice provost for human resources at Drake University, who recently received the Eugene J. Paul Award for Excellence in Human Resource Management. The award is given to human resource professionals with a minimum of 10 years in the profession and who have made noteworthy contributions to their companies, their community, and the human resources profession.

Take Note...



Please share the following announcements with others in your community.

ESL/Citizenship Classes

The Division of Latino Affairs continues to help prepare individuals for the INS citizenship exam and to improve their English. Call (515) 281-4070 for more information.

Help Fight the War on Drugs

Call the Division of Narcotics Enforcement anonymously to report methamphetamine and/or other illegal drug activity: 1-800-532-0052. Calls can be taken in English or Spanish.

The solution of adult problems tomorrow depends in large measure upon the way our children grow up today. There is no greater insight into the future than recognizing that, when we save children, we save ourselves.

Margaret Mead

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| May 8 | Commission on Latino Affairs Meeting,* Storm Lake 10:00 AM
AEA (Area Education Agency) Building, 824 Flindt Drive |
| May 15 | LULAC State Conference, Davenport - Contact Perry Ramirez at (319) 355-3500. |
| May 27 | Des Moines Latino Service Provider Coalition Meeting, Hosted by Polk County Board of Supervisors, Administrative Office Building, 111 Court Avenue 4:30 - 6:00 PM |
| June 24 | Des Moines Latino Service Provider Meeting
Place to be announced. [Call (515) 281-4070] |

***Public Invited**

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**Commission on Latino Affairs
Department of Human Rights**

Ray Gimenez, Chair	Clinton	(319) 242-9016
Veronica Mendez, Secretary	Burlington	(319) 463-7350
Maria Moravec, Parliamentarian	Sioux City	(712) 274-0804
John-Paul Chaisson	Iowa City	(319) 335-2203
J. Guadalupe Flores	Muscatine	(319) 263-4722
Paula A. Martinez	Carlisle	(515) 989-0930
Sylvia Tijerina, Administrator, Division of Latino Affairs		(515) 281-4070
Rose Vasquez, Director, Department of Human Rights		(515) 281-8725

The mission of the Commission on Latino Affairs is to improve the quality of life of all Iowans by increasing statewide understanding of the social, cultural and economic contributions Latinos make in Iowa.

Additionally, our mission is to serve as a resource center which promotes positive change by assessing the issues and making recommendations to decision makers of the challenges facing Iowa's Latino community.

Department of Human Rights
Division of Latino Affairs
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Address Correction Requested

William P. Angrick II, Director
Citizen's Aide/Ombudsman
215 E. 7th St.
LOCAL