

“Remember that when you say “I will have none of this exile and this stranger for his face is not my face and his speech is strange,” you have denied America with that word.”  
--Stephen Vincent Benet

# **IOWA COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS**

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

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## **AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN**

**LUCAS STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319  
(515) 281-4080, (515) 242-6534  
FAX (515) 242-6119  
[www.state.ia.us/dhr/icla](http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/icla)**

**Submitted February 3, 2003**

## IOWA DIVISION OF LATINO AFFAIRS STORY

The Iowa Division of Latino Affairs was legislatively mandated in April of 1974. It was legislatively funded in July of 1974 through 1974 and when it became a commission in July of 1976, its budget appropriation was established by the 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Robert Ray. Originally it was a task force called, "Governor's Spanish-Speaking Task Force." In 1986, an overall reorganization of Iowa State Government formed the Department of Human Rights and the Spanish-Speaking People's Task Force became the new division of Spanish-Speaking People's Commission. In 1990, the name was changed to its current name, The Iowa Division of Latino Affairs.

The composition of the Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs is as follows:

- Established under Iowa Code Section 216A.12
- Consists of nine members from around State of Iowa with consideration given to geographic residence and density of the Latino population represented by each member as stipulated by Iowa Code Section 216A.12. It is bipartisan and gender-balanced as required by Iowa Code Sections 69.16 and 69.16A.
- All nine commission members are appointed by the Governor of Iowa.
- Commission members serve a term of two years beginning in July of the odd-numbered year.
- Commission Members hold meetings not less than six times per fiscal year and all meetings are announced publicly and open to the public.
- The Governor appoints the Division Administrator, subject to Senate Confirmation, and is the administrative officer of the commission.
- The Director of the Department of Human Rights serves as an *ex-officio* member.
- The Division Administrator serves at the pleasure of the governor.
- The administrator and commission are responsible for the policy, goals, operation, direction, implementation and leadership of the division in conjunction with the Governor's leadership agenda under the Iowa Accountable Government Act.

**IOWA COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS  
2002-2003 MEMBERS**

Edward Cervantes	Davenport, IA	Term Expires -6/2003
John Paul Chaisson	Iowa City, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Jason Follett	Cedar Falls, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Veronica Gonzalez	West Des Moines, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Sara Monroe-Huddleston	Storm Lake, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Lorenzo Jasso	Des Moines, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Frank Martinez	Ames, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Paula A. Martinez	Carlisle, IA	Term Expires-6/2003
Irene Muñoz	Ottumwa, IA	Term Expires-6/2003

**ICLA Staff**

Administrator Elizabeth Salinas Newby---Appointed-September 1999  
 Program Planner-----JoAnn Mackey—Joined staff 2/ 2000  
 Administrative Assistant-----To be filled  
 Interns-----Scheduled

**ICLA MISSION STATEMENT**

The Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs was established and given a legislative mandate according to Iowa Code Section 216A.12. The ICLA Commission with its staff and support from Iowa Latinos, State and Private Agencies and Organizations, Latino Leaders and Community Leaders will advocate, review and provide recommendations for services, promote policies, legislative actions and administrative rules that will empower Iowa Latinos and improve their quality of life to participate and help in the development of a diverse, strong, fair and economically healthy State of Iowa.

## **ICLA VISION STATEMENT**

The Division of Latino Affairs is legislatively mandated to promote and advocate for Iowa Latinos. In the belief that a diverse citizenry enhances our state as a whole, this Commission in conjunction with Iowa Latino/a Citizens shall do the following:

- **Study, review and make recommendations** for changes in state policies, practices and program development that **negatively affect** Latinos in Iowa.
- **Strengthen and support efforts** to increase Latino parents' participation in the education of their children, LLP programming, encourage development of appropriate multicultural educational programming in schools, increase minority teachers and staff and **help to close the achievement gap** of our Latino Students.
- **Increase accessibility** of healthcare and social services for Latinos.
- **Partner with IWD and IED to strengthen and enhance** the Iowa Latino workforce and assist Iowa Businesses with Latino worker issues, concerns and solutions.
- **Enhance, strengthen and seek funds** for the appropriate training for Spanish interpreters/translators and **to maintain an updated state interpreters/translators roster**.
- **Foster, nurture and promote** cultural events, programs and educational forums, conferences and seminars.
- **Become a major link and information resource center** for Iowa on information and resources about Iowa Latinos and Latinos in general.

## **ICLA Agency Strategic Plan**

### **CORE FUNCTIONS**

#### **Education, Healthcare and Social Services, Information and Advocacy, Interpreters**

**Education:** Strengthen and support efforts to increase Latino parents' participation in the education of their children, promote increase funding for LEP classes and teachers, encourage Latino participation in the development of school policies and programming, promote the hiring of minority teachers and staff in schools, pro-actively support and participate in efforts to close the achievement gap of Latino students.

**Goal: ICLA will actively participate, promote and lead efforts to:**

- Focus on the Achievement Gap issue for Latinos
- Research proven and successful multicultural educational programs for Latino students and minorities and share with school/educational channels
- Review and study school policies which are culturally weak and dated and make recommendations
- Promote, encourage, and support outreach efforts with Latino Parents as part of the solution of the Latino youth achievement gap, educational issues and barriers.

**Strategies:**

- Research study and discuss Latino educational achievement gap and other related educational barriers for Latino students with Latino educational groups, Latino parents and educational officials.
- Support and Lobby for Legislative educational proposals that seek to address the achievement gap and other pertinent educational proposals that enhance and strengthen minority educational issues.
- Communicate, inform and advocate Latinos' ideas, concerns, solutions, action and voice to the Governor, General Assembly and Iowa Department of Education.

**Measures:**

- Electronic (hard copy upon request) briefs of educational meetings, research of models and programs, attendance, action taken, decisions made and final report of specific steps taken towards achievement gap solutions.
- Meetings with legislators, educators to listen, learn and educate
- Numbers of e-mail contacts for information from Latinos through ICLA Website and e-mails
- Track meetings (attendance, discussions and actions) with Latino parents regularly through school and other Latino volunteer personnel to help schools work with their children and to keep them informed of their children's progress and areas of need of improvement.

**Healthcare and Social Services:** ICLA will increase the accessibility of healthcare and social services for eligible Iowa Latinos, promote cultural training and education of healthcare providers and social service workers, study, review and make recommendations for change or adjustment of healthcare and social services programs that exist to make them more user friendly for Latinos, advocate for the provision of Spanish Speaking Interpreters/translators.

**Goal:** ICLA will partner with healthcare providers and social service providers to provide accessibility of services to Latinos. ICLA will encourage and promote strongly for cultural competence training of healthcare and social services workers. ICLA will strongly advocate for the use of Spanish language interpreters by healthcare provider and social services providers.

**Strategies:**

- Contacts with healthcare and social service providers regarding accessibility problems and concerns
- Provide healthcare and social services providers with cultural information that will assist them in their outreach efforts to Latinos
- ICLA will offer cultural competence training opportunities and available resources in this area
- Firmly promote the Federal Law supporting the use of interpreters for Limited English Proficiency clients
- Promote the access of interpreters' dollars available through Medicaid and other Federal Social Service Programs.
- Provide lists of Latino healthcare and social services available

**Measures:**

- Number of contacts made and responses
- Number of requests for Latinos and Healthcare Information
- Number of requests for cultural competence trainings
- Number of requests for interpreters and complaints that no interpreters were used
- Status of interpreters' dollars through Medicaid and other social service programs
- Updated lists of Latino healthcare and social services providers, clinics, programs

**Information and Advocacy:** ICLA will provide information and education on issues regarding Latinos to the general public. ICLA will speak on behalf of Latino concerns, issues and needs.

**Goal:** Major link and resource center to general public, administration, legislators and Latinos. Major contact for Latino concerns, needs and issues. ICLA will promote and encourage development of Latino emergency response teams, political information and voter education, and Latino providers' coalitions.

**Strategies:**

- Develop strong ICLA website and support links
- Promote ICLA state office to Iowa Latino Communities and all Iowa Citizens
- Accessibility to ICLA by Latino constituency and general public

**Measures:**

- Number of information requests on Latino website
- Number and types of complaints filed
- Increase number of Latino advocacy groups
- State hearings and ICLA bi-annual reports (February, 2003), website

**Interpreters:** ICLA will promote and encourage legislative support for interpreters' guidelines and appropriate training. ICLA will seek funding for the training of Spanish speaking interpreters. ICLA will maintain and update make available interpreters' rosters that are from around the state.

**Strategies:**

- Provide legislators with information on the importance of a legislative interpreters' aptitude training program to ensure quality interpreters/translators
- Submit a proposal for legislative and administrative consideration of language interpreters' qualifying program for Iowa
- Research possible grants and funding from state and outside resources
- Available Latino Website list

**Measures:**

- Track interest, support and response of legislators
- Track the movement of proposal through legislative process
- Successfully find financial backing
- Number of requests for interpreters through ICLA

## **ICLA Assessments**

### **Internal:**

#### **Strengths:**

- Long history—established by legislative Iowa Statute 216A.12
- Committed and friendly staff
- Strong support from Latino Community
- Credibility and respect from general public, legislators, businesses, educators, healthcare providers, courts, etc.
- Well linked and partnered with Latino advocates, groups, local, state and national governments, organizations and agencies
- Highly accessible office/staff/commissioners
- Work Plan for reduced budget and small staff

#### **Weakness:**

- Three staff members
- Reduced budget

### **External Assessment:**

#### **Opportunities:**

- Latinos are the largest minority in Iowa and the USA
- ICLA partners and networks with many organizations, agencies, groups and businesses to empower and enhance the quality of life of Iowa Latinos
- Iowa welcomes and encourages immigrants to our state
- Emerging Latino Markets
- Dedicated and reliable Latino workforce
- Elderly state
- Latino values same as Iowa Values

#### **Threats:**

- Iowa Latinos are major contributors to Iowa economy and receive few to no benefits, Latinos have lowest rate to healthcare (ICLA Website)
- Educational opportunities/Latinos have highest HS Dropout rates (ICLA Website)
- Low Latino earning power (ICLA website)
- Latinos suffer high civil rights violations and discriminatory practices (ICLA Website)
- Anti-immigrant behavior (ICLA Website)
- Ignorance about Latinos (ICLA Website)
- Large achievement gap for Latino students (ICLA Website)
- Lack of Latino representation on all levels of Iowa government (ICLA website)