

WASHINGTON STATE

COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS

September 25, 2006

Volume I, Issue VII

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Meeting Dates 2006

February 9-11
Olympia

April 14-15
Mattawa

June 23-24
Yakima

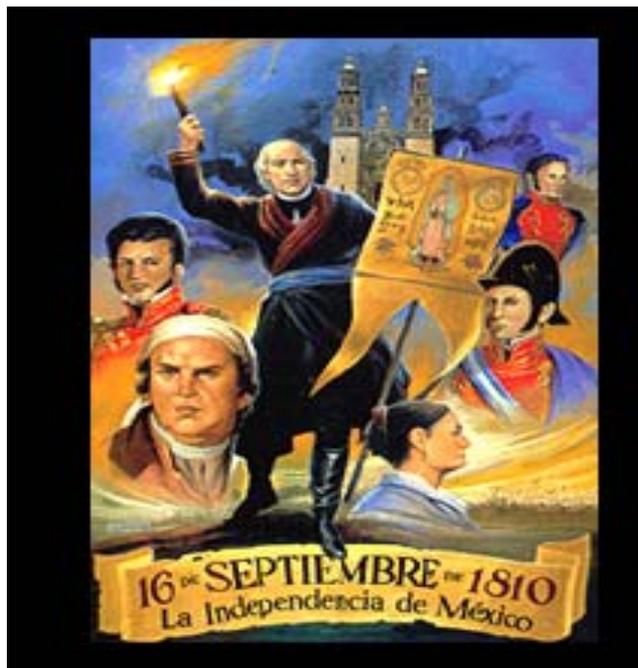
August 18-19
Quincy

October 20-21
South Park, Seattle

For more information
visit our website,
www.cha.wa.gov

Washington State
Commission on Hispanic Affairs
P. O. Box 40924
Olympia, WA 98504-0294
Phone: (800) 443-0294
(360) 725-5661
Fax: (360) 586-9501
Email: Hispanic@cha.wa.gov

HAPPY FIESTAS PATRIAS & HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH 2006



Happy
Mexican
Independence Day
9-16-2006

Don Miguel Hidalgo y
Costilla
Parish Priest of Dolores

Happy
Independence Day
9-15-2006
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Nicaragua

9-18-2006
Chile



Message from the Director—Summer Fall 2006

The Commission continues to make progress in its advisory role to the governor, legislature, and community groups. The following are some of the positive measures undertaken by CHA to enhance delivery of government services and to better serve the needs of our Latino/Hispanic community.

The Commission partnered with the Department of Health (DOH) to effect change within these agencies in order to better serve undocumented workers. Consequently, advice memorandums now state that DOH employees through their relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) **should not** provide ICE with information concerning the legal status of their clients. DOH also recently intervened to help contain a tuberculosis outbreak in Skagit and surrounding counties. Through their investigative process, a thorough report was compiled and it now serves as a foundation for improved relations with the community and county officials in that area.

In June, the Commission held a joint public meeting with DSHS in Yakima. This significant meeting facilitated dialogue and created a firm partnership with DSHS. The meeting also served as an opportunity to convey the need for additional services in this community. The Commission is therefore conducting follow-up meetings to obtain input from community members that will assist in identifying where and how to increase the number/availability of services. In addition, the Commission facilitated resolution of a DSHS foster care provider issue. Subsequently, DSHS, the foster care provider and the Latino/Hispanic community have benefited due to the increase in foster care services which are desperately needed.

The Commission held a joint education conference with the Commission on African American Affairs, the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs. Community advocates and members of Washington Learns joined us to discuss and formulate achievable goals and solutions to Washington State challenging education issues. A follow-up community educational meeting took place to further refine the educational challenges and goals that Latino/Hispanic youth face statewide.

We continue to meet with Governor Gregoire to clarify the role of the Commission so that we can provide better service and support to all Latino/Hispanics in Washington State. Within the next few months, we hope to launch a new improved website with enhancements such as, a community activity database; community contact database for Commissioners; a subscriber sign-up (to remain updated on the Commissions activities/progress); as well as additional links and information.

Along with our commitment to greater service, Governor Gregoire appointed two new Commissioners on September 11, 2006 to assist with our mandate compliance. The Commission has the pleasure of welcoming Ninfa R. Gutierrez from the Diocese of Yakima Housing Services and Rosalba Pitkin from Clark College in Vancouver.



Washington Agricultural Families Assistance (WAFA) Creates Opportunity for Farmworker Home Ownership

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs was honored by former Governor Mike Lowry's presence at our August 18, 2006 Public Meeting in Quincy. The purpose for attending the meeting was to inform the community of Quincy of the Washington Agricultural Families Assistance (WAFA) farm worker family homeownership program. He stated that WAFA had already built 10 homes in Ephrata, 5 in Royal City and that their goal was to build another 24 homes in Quincy beginning this fall.

Mr. Lowry said that WAFA has been meeting with farm workers, agricultural, and community organizations for over two years to address farm worker housing. His outreach together with valuable assistance by the Housing Authority of Grant

County has helped develop the WAFA Farmworker Homeownership program. This program now serves as a model for our region and the entire nation. It accomplishes a number of goals; most important is to make it possible for farm worker families to own their own homes in the communities where they work and live.

The basic requirement for qualifying for this program is that some of the applicant's income must come from agricultural labor.

WAFA recognizes that agricultural workers are important contributors to Washington's economy, yet many still face the challenge of finding a decent place to live. This program will surely help in providing new homeowners with desirable housing, improve the local tax base and

strengthen communities.

For further information please call 1-866-272-6555.



"WAFA recognizes that agricultural workers are important contributors to Washington's economy..."



Given the lull in the immigration debate (Congress will take up the issue again after Labor Day), it might be helpful to reflect on what the debate is about and how reforms might affect us. Allow me to share a personal story to put this in context.

I'm a fourth-generation Latino (Mexican American) born and raised along the Rio Grande border in El Paso. I consider myself full-blooded American. I grew up bilingual and bicultural. My grandmother who raised me had only a cursory use of English. As a kid in the 1950s, my Spanish-speaking friends, my family, and my "barrio" (neighborhood) were my immediate world; all else was "out there." Images on TV, the media and the language of my teachers were products of my white Anglo Caucasian world. As a kid, this struck a dissonant chord in me, but I was never quite able to make sense of it. Why was my family so different from the real world - our skin, our language, our food, our celebrations, our values, even our way of thinking?

In my late 20s, things became clearer. I was in college, and the civil rights movement of the 1960s brought disparities and social inequities into view - the Vietnam War, the erosion of our cities, assassinations of leaders like the Kennedys, Dr. King and the campus unrest - these were my indicators. I was getting an education about my rights as a citizen, about privilege that accrued to some but not all, and about discrimination.

During my 30's and 40's, my Latino identity, though a private matter, became a source of pride. I was proud to be multilingual; to have traveled and lived in Canada, Puerto Rico and Mexico; to have studied with French and Italian professors; to have experienced Eastern meditation; and to revere my Mexican grandmother who taught me so much through her "dichos" (proverbs or sayings).

I came to realize what a large place the world is, and how insignificant my role was. By contrast, my travels

made me see how connected we are. I made friends from all cultural backgrounds wherever I taught in colleges from

Idaho, California, Washington to Texas. It was then that I realized Latino Hispanics resided in every state. Now, my closest friend is Pablo, born in Uruguay. He works as a freelance musician in New York City. At Walla Walla Community College, I work with colleagues from Chile, Russia and China.

Given this context, it's difficult for me to answer questions about Latinos and immigration. I am, after all, the product of Texas-Mexican migrants. My travels through Washington on behalf of the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs bring me to community forums where I face thorny questions. Here are a few examples:

Why do Hispanic immigrants come here?

Immigrants come for a better life, for the American Dream, and to survive. Intolerably low wages in Mexico, Central and South America force heads of household to seek a living wage elsewhere. Wouldn't you do the same if it was a matter of keeping your family alive? If you lived in poverty, would you come if you stood to earn four or five times the wage you now make?

Why do immigrants insist on speaking Spanish?

Language is the closest thing to personal identity, and it is probably the most precious thing, culturally speaking, to first-generation immigrants. It's what the individual brings with him/her. Spanish is no different than the language of earlier U.S. immigrants who brought with them German, Irish-English, Russian, Italian, Polish or Czech tongues. Try to recall the stories you may have heard your grandparents tell about their parents or grandparents, how they struggled, or spoke differently or had difficulty adjusting.

But aren't immigrants drug-dealers, criminals and felons?

No. The majority of immigrants are religious, family-based, moral people, no better and no worse than Americans. The erroneous belief that immigrants are criminals and drug-dealers is a stereotype perpetuated by many societies, including our own, for xenophobic reasons.

But they're not like us, these Hispanic immigrants. They're not like your typical American.

What is the typical American? There is no one norm of an American. This is 2006 and we're not in Mayberry anymore, Andy. To think America is - or should be - only a white Anglo Caucasian culture is to miss the point of our great country. Every immigrant wave stretching back for centuries has brought with it a unique cultural contribution, each adding to the mosaic that is America. The Hispanic Latino immigration is no different.

How can I ever bring myself to like these people?

It may be necessary to notice our choice of words and stop distancing ourselves from "them." Such pronouns as "they, them, these, those" are powerful barriers that separate "us" from "them." At the debate's heart is a territorial question, a fear-driven, ethnocentric attitude that causes us to dislike a person who is not "like us." I believe it's important to move beyond tolerance into acceptance of others' cultural ways, beliefs and behaviors. It's important to stop vilifying and demonizing people because of differences of language, skin/hair/eye color, ethnicity, religion or culture.

For me, what is most absent in the debate is the idea of human conscience - the Christian, Jewish, Muslim or Buddhist belief in love and concern for another. In this sense, the debate is a squabble over what we perceive as "ours" in much the same way a family fights over its possessions or inheritance.

Immigration continued from page 3

Granted, the debate is not new, but it's one we have yet to evolve out of. The question is, will we ever?

If you think I have missed the point about immigration being an "illegal" question, it might be useful to frame the debate in terms of supply and demand. Corporations demand high profits and pay workers low wages to obtain them. Hispanic Latino workers supply such a demand in lieu of American workers who won't work for wages that low. The illegality cuts both ways. Before we blame the immigrant, we should first look to our corporate-driven, consumer-based way of life and the many services that are provided by immigrant workers. This puts the illegal question in a different light.

In the end, the reforms the Senate will consider need to focus on amnesty and enacting guest worker programs -more than on criminalizing undocumented millions and erecting border walls. Legislation should reflect the American spirit of fair and humane treatment and promote the healing of discrimination and hatred, behaviors that are eroding the fabric of America. It's my hope that, for the good of all, the Senate vote will be guided by such a generous spirit.

- Victor Chacón - Walla Walla Commissioner and Director of Multi-Cultural Services at Walla Walla Community College.

Plaza Bank Grand Opening

Plaza Bank, the community, commercial bank with a Latino focus celebrated its Grand Opening on Fiestas Patrias - September 16, 2006. It is one of only a handful of banks in the U.S. to be founded by member of the Hispanic community.

President & CEO Carlos Guangorena eagerly welcomed several prominent guests from the local Latino communities including the Mayor of Kent, Suzette Cooke and Edgar Martinez, former designated hitter for the Mariners, who graciously signed baseballs for new customers.

Plaza Bank will offer business and consumer checking and saving accounts as well as small business and personal lending services. The bank will also provide customers the accessibility to more than 230 ATMs, service-charge-free, throughout the Puget Sound region, and will provide online banking in English and Spanish, money remittance and VISA card products.

The Bank initially opened its doors in June after collecting a record \$22 million in capital. The bank's central office is located in downtown Seattle to serve business clients; its branch is located in Kent for full service banking. For more information about Plaza Bank, visit <http://www.plazabank.w.com>.

The U.S. Census Bureau now counts 551,000 Hispanics permanently residing in Washington state. In the Seattle-Tacoma designated market area alone, Hispanic buyer power stands at \$3.7 billion, according to the Larson Northwest Hispanic Market Report for 2006-07. Companies serving consumers and businesses locally, like Plaza Bank, are becoming aware of this important and fast-growing market.



Plaza Bank Grand Opening



Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies Mike Sotelo, Carlos Guangorena, & Mayor Suzette Cooke



Edgar Martinez, former Mariner DH

Grays Harbor Hispanic Network Group

A new Hispanic network that is comprised of Hispanic and non-Hispanic leaders from Grays Harbor has been formed. Their board is composed of educators, school districts, business managers and owners, community based advocacy and health organizations, and local media and meets monthly at the Grays Harbor Community College.

The network was formed to address and meet the needs of the Hispanic community which continues to grow and expand throughout the cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam.

Commissioner Felix L. Negrón, was invited to address the new network on behalf of the Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs. Commissioner Negrón stated that "the network will be a total success because the community has taken ownership of their community needs"

Attorney General's Latino Consumer Education Conference

Attorney General Rob McKenna is inviting you to participate in a Statewide Latino Consumer Education Conference to help improve outreach to Spanish-speaking communities in Washington.

There are two dates to choose from: October 3rd at the Doubletree Hotel-SeaTac Airport in Seattle and October 20 at the Yakima Convention Center in Yakima, WA.

Keynote Speaker for the October 3rd session is Rosario Mendez of the Federal Trade Commission in Seattle. Keynote speaker for the October 20th session is Pastor Herrera, Jr. of the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer Affairs.

Cost is \$12 in Yakima and \$19 in Seattle which will be collected at the door on the day of the event.



Message from the Chair

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH 2006

Spokane, Washington State and the nation are recognizing National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15, 2006). This special month celebrates the history, culture and contributions of the nation's Hispanics and commemorates 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.

The term Hispanic, defined by the United States Census Bureau, refers to Spanish-speaking people in the United States of any race. However, Hispanics living in the U.S. often feel more comfortable identifying as Latinos and Latinas, Chicanos and Chicanas, Tejanos, Hispanos, Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central American, South American, Spanish, and Portuguese.

During Hispanic Heritage Month I, along with all the Washington State Hispanic Affairs Commissioners, will be attending events in our communities. Later this month I will also be sharing with you the History of Hispanics in Washington State thanks to research compiled by Antonio Sanchez. Antonio works in the Lt. Governor's office, but is also a historian who has spent considerable time exploring the history and contributions of Hispanics/Latinos in our state. Until then, can you answer the question "Washington State was a part of Mexico until what year?" 1776? 1819? Never?

SPOKANE AREA NEWS

OCTOBER HBPA MEETING

The Spokane Hispanic Business Professional Association will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with a special no-host luncheon at Grant Elementary on Wednesday, October 11. The lunch meeting is scheduled from 11:30 – 1 p.m. and will feature entertainment by Grant students as well as a presentation on the History of Hispanics in Washington State. Space will be limited for this luncheon and reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis. For more information contact HBPA President Joni Riojas Hubbard at: jonih@yahoo.com

LANUGAGE ACCESS SUMMIT

Plans are underway for a Language Access Summit in the spring of 2007 in Spokane to address translation/interpretation issues in the greater Spokane area. The summit will be sponsored by the Washington Commission on Hispanic Affairs in collaboration with local and county government, agencies and organizations. Addressing both language and hearing impaired issues, the focus of the summit is to assess community needs and identify current services and resources.

AROUND WASHINGTON STATE

LEGISLATIVE DAY 2007 PLANNING MEETING

The first organizational meeting for the Washington Hispanic 2007 Legislative Day is scheduled on Saturday, September 23 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Central Washington University, Ellensburg. The meeting will be held in SURC 135. Anyone interested in actively participating in the planning of this event is encouraged to attend. For more information contact Carlos Jimenez at wastatehld@yahoo.com

ZAPOTEC WEAVERS IN WALLA WALLA

Two women representing the Zapotec Women's Weaving Cooperative from Oaxaca, Mexico will be visiting Walla Walla later this month. The Latino American Forum will host a potluck dinner honoring them on Thursday, September 28 from 5:30 - 7:00 pm at the Congregational Church Fellowship Hall, Palouse and Alder streets, Walla Walla. There will also be a public exhibit and sale of their rugs from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. following the potluck. In addition, the weavers will be showing and selling their rugs at Whitman College, Kimball Theater, Hunter Hall 212 on Wednesday, September 27 from 7:30 - 8:30 pm.

LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL IN TACOMA

The Electronic Communication and Information Exchange (ECIE) is hosting a Latin American Music Festival at Mt. Tahoma High School, 4634 S. 74th Street, Tacoma, WA on September 30 from 2:30 – 5 p.m. A musical and cultural trip through Latin America, the festival features a fashion show from pre-Hispanic period to the dresses of today as well as entertainment. For more information and admission prices, call (253) 503-6213 or visit www.ecie.org/festival_2006/

LATINO HEALTH FORUM IN SEATTLE

A free Latino Health Forum, in conjunction with the 6th Annual Binational Health Week, is scheduled on October 10 from noon – 5 p.m. at South Seattle Community Center. The goal of the forum, sponsored by Sea-Mar Community Health Centers, the Consulate of Mexico, Seattle, and Public Health, Seattle-King County, is to define problems and identify solutions for issues facing Latinos in Washington State. The event will feature round table discussions lead by recognized and leading healthcare professionals. Topics include the perils of being uninsured, issues related to occupational health, cancer in the Latino community, the effects of immigration on mental health, effects of diabetes on health status, and HIV/AIDS. For more information, contact Carolina Lucero, Sea-Mar Community Health Centers at 206-788-3219 or e-mail CarolinLucero@seamarchc.org.

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BENEFIT WILL PROVIDE ART SCHOLARSHIPS FOR LOW-INCOME HISPANIC STUDENTS

Centro Cultural Hispanico Americano and the University of Washington Spanish and Portuguese Studies Program are hosting a fundraising event to support art scholarships for low-income Hispanic students pursuing a career at the university level. The event features Música y danza mágica: Enrique Henao in concert as well as a flamenco performance by Jacquelinas "Dances of Spain." The event, which will also honor people who have contributed to arts and education, is scheduled for Saturday, October 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the HUB Auditorium, Stevens Way on the UW campus in Seattle. Admission is \$35 and \$18 for students with a valid ID. Tapas and refreshments are also available for purchase. For more information visit: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/> or call 1-800-838-3006.

EDUCATION

WASHINGTON LEARNS

I attended the Washington Learns standing-room-only public hearing here in Spokane earlier this week. For more than three hours parents, community members and educators shared their observations and recommendations with the Washington Learns representatives. There are three more hearings scheduled in Washington and I encourage you to attend one of these. If you are unable to attend a hearing, please submit your written comments on the Washington Learns website at www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov

Washington Learns, created and led by Governor Chris Gregoire, is conducting a top to bottom, 18-month review of Washington's entire education system, its structure and funding. The final report is due November 15, 2006. The Washington Learns website features extensive information about this initiative as well as a copy of the draft report for public comment.

WSU RESIDENTIAL GED PREP CLASS FOR MI-GRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKERS & THEIR FAMILIES

Washington State University is offering intensive residential GED preparation courses for migrant and seasonal farm workers and their children. WSU pays for tuition, room and board on the Pullman, WA campus, testing and gives students a weekly stipend of \$20 per week. Students pay for their own transportation to and from Pullman. Course length varies between 5 and 9 weeks, depending on the time of year and students' ability levels. Remaining starting dates for the 2006/2007 academic year are October 15, 2006 and January 7 and March 18, 2007. To be considered for a specific entry date, applications must be received at least three weeks before entry date. For more information, please contact Ron Rosebrook (Tel: 509 335-5121; e-mail: rosebruk@wsu.edu) and visit the web site at <http://education.wsu.edu/hep/>

GOVERNOR GREGOIRE APPOINTS FIRST EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN

Washington Governor Chris Gregoire has appointed Adie Simmons as Director of the Office of Education Ombudsman. The Office of the Education Ombudsman will serve as a neutral and independent resource to provide parents and community members with information on parental involvement related to state education standards and programs. The appointment is effective September 18, 2006.

Simmons most recently managed the Office of Family and Community Partnerships for Seattle Public Schools where she advised district administrators on overcoming obstacles to diverse family and community involvement. She directed the Readiness to Learn Program for the Shoreline School District and the Elementary S.A.V.E. program for Mothers Against Violence in America. She has received four PTA Golden Acorn awards for child advocacy, a Washington Excellence in Education award and a National Partnership District Award from Johns Hopkins University.

The 2006 Legislature authorized the creation of the Office of Education Ombudsman within the Office of the Governor to assist parents and community members with issues related to public K-12 education.

MISCELLANEOUS

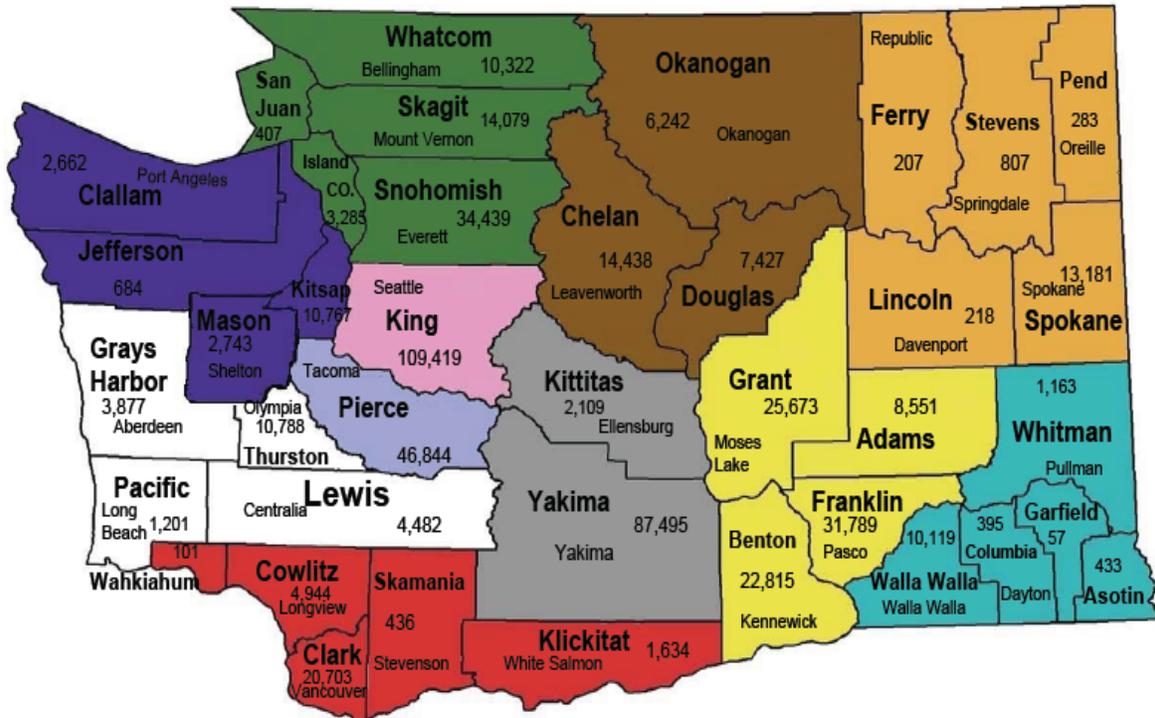
PANDEMIC FLU INFORMATION IN SPANISH

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services now has a site available for viewing in Spanish to provide up to date information about the pandemic flu. Visit the site at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/espanol/>

Yvonne Lopez Morton, Chair works for the Spokane School District and can be reached on 509-354-7290 or via email on yvonnem@spokaneschools.org

Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs

Commissioners Designated Areas



Rebecca Villareal
(206) 324-4330 x115

Félix L. Negrón
(360) 664-4456

Ruben Baca
(360) 676-6920

Vacant

Ninfa R. Gutierrez
(509) 965-7100

Yvonne Lopez Morton
(509) 354-7290

Rosalva Pitkin
(360) 992-2672

Lourdes Portillo Salazar
(425) 452-7194

Vacant

Gabriel Portugal
(509) 222-5600

Víctor Chacón
(509) 524-4797

Newly appointed CHA Commissioners

CONGRATULATIONS!

Ninfa R. Gutierrez was appointed Commissioner for the Yakima area in September. Ninfa works for the Diocese of Yakima Housing Services in Yakima and can be reached on 509-965-7100 or via email at: ngutierrez@cfcsyakima.org.

Rosalba D. Pitkin was appointed Commissioner for the Vancouver area in September. Rosalba works for Clark College in Vancouver and can be reached on 360-992-2672 or via email at: rpitkin@clark.edu.

Welcome and we look forward to working with you and your communities.

Save the Date

Commission on Hispanic Affairs Public Meeting

Location: South Park Community Center in Seattle
8319 8th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98108

Date: Friday, October 20, 2006

Time: 4:30 PM to 8:30 PM

The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

There will also be a Commissioner Study Session on Saturday, October 21st at the Bellevue City Hall in Bellevue, WA.

For further information please call the Commission on Hispanic Affairs on 1-800-443-0924.

Whatcom Hispanic Organization will be celebrating its 9th annual Latino Fest in Bellingham WA. All proceeds will benefit the Whatcom Hispanic Organization scholarship fund program.

Latino Fest 2006: Sunday, October 1, food and entertainment from 12 PM to 5 PM at Bloedel Donovan Park, 2214 Electric Avenue in Bellingham. The day will be filled with music, pony rides, tasty Mexican food, children's activities, piñatas, arts & crafts and community informational booths (\$1 donation or \$5 for family).

Entertainment: Mariachi Ayutla, Guelaguestza Mexican Dance Group, and Crazy DJ and his guest.

The Whatcom Hispanic Organization is an all volunteer, non-profit 501(C) 3 organization, whose mission is to promote and support literacy among the Latino community, since 1990 (WHO) has awarded over \$150,000 in scholarships to students attending institutes of higher learning in Whatcom and Skagit County.

Sponsors for 2007 call Pedro Perez at 360 840-7896. Tables are available for vendors (Call Susie Marino at 360 676-6317)

Latino Fest sponsors: Robinson & Kole, Attorneys at Law, The Bellingham Herald, Key Bank; Bellingham Cold Storage, Pioneer Food Service-McDonald's, TC Trading Company, El Gitano, Espinoza's Restaurant, Taqueria El Polivoz Mexican Restaurant, Chihuahua Restaurant, Taco Lobo, El Rinconcito Restaurant; BP America.

The 4th Annual Latino Summit will be held on Friday, October 13, 2006 at St. Martin's University in Lacey, WA. It will commence at 8 AM and end at 2 PM. The summit is for Hispanic High School students in the Thurston, Lewis, Mason, and Grays Harbor counties.

The keynote speaker will be State Representative Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney.

Workshops series include Education, Finance, Leadership, Your Future, Career Paths, and Healthy Choices. Continental Breakfast and lunch will be served.

The summit is limited to 350 students, and is on a first come first serve basis. **Registration is required to attend the summit.** For more information regarding registration please visit: www.hispanicroundtable.org. or write to hispanic@hispanicroundtable.org.

The summit is sponsored by a number of community organizations including Hispanic Round Table, North Thurston School District, Thurston County Public Health and Social Services, Satin Martin's University and Timberland Regional Library.

Volunteers are needed to assist with this wonderful event so please contact the Hispanic Round Table or visit their website.

Congratulations Jose Rodriguez, Assistant Vice Principal of Sammamish High School



Mr. Rodriguez was recently appointed Assistant Vice-Principal of Sammamish High School in the Bellevue School District. Prior to his VP appointment he taught for 15 years in three other districts; however, it is in the Bellevue School District that he has seen the mission of educating all students put into practice. He has also served as Social Studies Curriculum-Technology Coach in the Bellevue School District and taught Advancement Placement and International Baccalaureate courses at Interlake High School.

A native of Texas, Mr. Rodriguez was born and raised in Edinburg, where he had the pleasure of teaching at one of the local high schools before moving to the Austin area.

He taught one year at the Austin Independent School District, seven years at Round Rock Independent School District (US Government/AP US Government), and three years as Adjunct Instructor at Austin Community College (American and Texas Government).

Mr. Rodriguez's professional goal is to help broach a very controversial subject; the way in which we educate students in the United States. He says that if we are going to be serious about eliminating the achievement gap, we must change our current two-tier system of educating students (one tier that preps only a small percentage of kids for college and another that classifies students as not college material) to a system that provides a rigorous curriculum for students and which will open and not close the door of opportunity to classes such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. He adds that if our country is to maintain a healthy democracy in an ever- changing home environment and maintain a competitive edge in a global market, it must dismantle the philosophy that perpetuates the two-tier system of education.

Role models like Mr. Rodriguez that are present and accessible for support, leadership, and guidance to our Latino/Hispanic students will undoubtedly assist CHA in complying with our priority mandate; reduce the drop out rate and eliminate the achievement gap amongst Latino/Hispanic students.

Staff

Uriel Iñiguez, Executive Director

Alicia Luna, Executive Assistant



Commissioners

Yvonne Lopez Morton, Chair, Spokane

Gabriel Portugal, Vice-Chair, Pasco

Ruben Baca, Executive Committee, Mt. Vernon

Victor Chacón, Education Committee, Walla Walla

Ninfa R. Gutierrez, Yakima

Félix L. Negrón, Education Committee, Olympia

Rosalba D. Pitkin, Vancouver

Lourdes Portillo Salazar, Executive Committee, Bellevue

Rebecca Villareal, Chair-Economic Development Committee, Seattle

