

LULACnews

January/February 2005



New Latino Senator Ken Salazar Shares His Vision

Latinos and Social Security: What's at Stake?

U.S. Treasurer Ana Cabral Tells Her Story

Al Gonzales is Confirmed as U.S. Attorney General



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Former Florida State Director Armando Pomar with newly elected U.S. Senator Mel Martinez (R-FL) and his wife during the Senator's victory party.

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LULACnews

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A MESSAGE from the President



(Photo by Luis Nuño Briones.)

We plan to work with the new members of congress, as well as the other members and the administration on a variety of issues that affect Latinos this year. One of the main issues LULAC will weigh in on this year is the debate on Social Security reform and its impact on the Hispanic community. We will be holding town hall meetings throughout the country to engage Latinos on this very hotly debated issue.

On a different note, as many of you know, each year we hold the LULAC National Legislative Awards Gala where we honor those individuals who have made a difference in the Hispanic community. We hope that you'll be able to join us for this very important event on March 14, 2005 in Washington, D.C.

Finally, don't forget to register for this year's national convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. The early bird deadline is quickly approaching and you don't want to miss out on the discounts. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Hector M. Flores
LULAC National President

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Happy New Year! We hope the new year brings all of you prosperity and happiness. With the new year comes hope for a better future for Latinos across the country. As you consider your resolutions for 2005 we hope that you will recommit yourself to advancing the cause of Latinos in your communities.

This year we are excited to see several new Hispanic faces in the United States Congress. Senator Mel Martinez (R-FL) and Senator Ken Salazar (D-CO) made history when they were elected last November and they ended a 27-year absence in that body. With two new Latino senators in office we expect to see legislation that will improve the lives of Hispanics across the nation.



LULAC President Hector Flores in front of the U.S. Capitol building during the inaugural activities this January.

New Senator Ken Salazar

Shares His Experience and Vision

By freelance writer Juanita White

Last November's election brought hope to Latinos around the country with two Latino brothers winning election to the United States Congress from Colorado. Voters elected Democrat Ken Salazar to represent them in the Senate along with his brother John Salazar to serve as a United States Representative.

Salazar's achievement is especially important because he -- along with new Florida Senator Mel Martinez -- end a 27-year absence of Latinos in that body. Both men are also the first Latino senators elected outside of the state of New Mexico.

While Salazar hopes to be a voice and example for Latinos, he feels that it is his priority to represent all citizens of Colorado regardless of race or political party. He feels that the issues that affect Latinos affect all Americans, in particular the issues of social security, the economy, and health care.

Salazar says that he will also focus on rural issues, which are vital in the state of Colorado. For example, health care in rural areas is an issue that health care providers fail to address. Not only do rural families have fewer alternatives for health care, their costs are more burdensome due to the lack of access to care. The Senator will have the opportunity to address rural issues as a member of the Senate Agricultural Committee. Salazar also



Past LULAC President Ed Peña, LULAC Coordinator of Program Development Miguel Fernandez with Senator Ken Salazar at a reception hosted by LULAC, MALDEF, NCLR, and NALEO to honor the new Hispanic members of Congress.

Salazar, continued on page 5.

New Council in Chicago Focuses on Persons with Disabilities



(L-R back) Jose Mendez, Norma Mateo, Council President Emma Villarreal, and Jose Aponte (L-R front) Anel Gonzalez and Ramon Canallada.

A new council was formed in the Chicago area to focus on persons with disabilities. Some of the issues council 5247 works on include public accommodations, affordable housing and employee rights.

Contributors to LULAC News

LULAC would like to thank Molly Mickinak for her contributions to this issue. Molly is a junior at Kenyon College where she majors in Spanish. Molly is currently participating in the Washington Seminar Program entitled "Transforming Communities" at the American University. Molly plans to attend graduate school upon completing her undergraduate degree.

Thank you also to Juanita White for her contributions to this issue. Juanita is a freelance writer and assisted in editing this issue.

LULAC Annual Report

By now we hope that all of you have received the Annual Report. Unfortunately, the report was missing three officers on page 4. We apologize for the error. A corrected version is available on our website www.lulac.org

Officers that should have been included are:
Margaret Moran, National Vice President for Women
Angel Luevano, California State Director
Rey Madrid, Oklahoma State Director

Massachusetts LULAC Council Registers Voters



LULAC Council 12113 partnered with 7 Eleven to conduct a voter registration drive project in Massachusetts. Every summer this council engages in this project. This year they registered 50 people in just 2 hours. This council involves both youth and adult members in this important project that has been going on for the past five years.

Minnesota LULAC Hosts Hispanic Business Fair



The LULAC Council of Rochester, Minnesota hosted a Hispanic Business Fair on December 18, 2004. The event was a tremendous success. Sponsored by the Minnesota Small Business Development Center and Business Network International, the fair attracted about fifteen different companies and more than thirty Hispanic individuals who were interested in starting their own small businesses.

Under the leadership of Enrique Soto Minnesota State Director, the event was held at the Rochester Community and Technical College. The program was developed to engage Hispanic business men and women from different markets. It will serve as a pilot program which will be implemented throughout all of Minnesota. LULAC of Minnesota hopes that this event will grow to become an annual event where Hispanics and local business people can come together to grow professionally and benefit the whole community. LULAC would like to thank all those that made this event so successful.

Salazar, continued from page 3.

“...for me politics has been a way for me to advance the common good.”

sits on the Senate Committees on Forestry, Energy, and Natural Resources, Nutrition, and Veteran Affairs where he hopes to make contributions, as well.

Salazar said that he got involved in politics because he wanted to make a difference in the world. “Politics is the embodiment of people trying to advance the common good, and for me politics has been a way for me to advance the common good,” said Salazar.

Like many politicians who are looking to make a difference, Salazar studied law. He went to law school at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor after earning his bachelor’s degree in political science from Colorado College. Salazar went on to practice law in Denver for several years.

Salazar says that his friend, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation and Denver Mayor Federico Pena inspired him to enter politics. Accordingly, Salazar pursued his dream. The first step in his political career occurred when Colorado Governor Roy Romer appointed him to be his chief legal council from 1986 to 1990. He then served as the executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources from 1990 to 1994 and Colorado State Attorney General from 1999 until recently before being elected to the United States Senate.

Although he had not officially entered politics, Salazar’s community service started while he was in college. He spent time working with Hispanic leader and icon Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers. Salazar says that he was always inspired by the incredible contributions made by Cesar Chavez, John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Senator and his older brother John have brought tremendous pride to the Salazar family by holding seats on Capitol Hill this year. The highly popular brother act brings hope to Colorado’s Latino citizens in particular, who expect to see the increased Latino representation as a positive move on their behalf. United States Representative



John Salazar represents the third district of Colorado, which includes Pueblo and Grand Junction. The brothers hope to work together on water concerns, which is an important issue for Colorado and the western states.

“Our parents always encouraged education, community, faith, and hard work.”

Both brothers credit their interest in water and rural issues to their upbringing on their family’s ranch near the southern border of Colorado. During their youth, they spent a lot of time “playing hard, riding horses, and taking care of cattle,” said Salazar. The ranch that they grew up on has been in the Salazar family for about 150 years. Their family settled in that region about 406 years ago when their forebearers helped settle the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Although their family’s history is rich, their family was financially very poor when they were growing up. Their family’s ranch, which is in a remote area, had no electricity or telephones until 1981. The brothers and their four other siblings, who grew up speaking Spanish at home, all shared one room. Despite their hardships, all of the Salazar children went on to receive college degrees. Salazar attributes these successes to his family’s values. “Our parents always encour-

aged education, community, faith, and hard work,” said Salazar.

The Salazar brothers will not only work together on Colorado issues but they will live together while in Washington, D.C., as well. Salazar says that he is very excited to live with his brother again and describes their relationship by saying that they are the “best of friends.”

“The fact that someone from my background can be sitting here as a United States Senator is testament that with a lot of hard work you can do anything.”



Senator Ken Salazar (right) with his brother United States Representative John Salazar (left). Photo by Erin Macgillivray Smith, copyright 2005.

Salazar’s advice to Latinos who want to get into politics or make a difference in their communities is to get involved early and know that the sky is the limit for what they can achieve. They should also have confidence that they can do anything. “The fact that someone from my background can be sitting here as a United States Senator is testament that with a lot of hard work you can do anything,” said Salazar.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Al Gonzales is Confirmed as U.S. Attorney General



(Photo by Luis Nuño Briones.)

Al Gonzales was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the United States Attorney General on February 3, 2005. The LULAC National Board chose to support Gonzales' nomination and has been very supportive during the process. Gonzales has served as Counsel to President Bush for the past several years. LULAC looks forward to working with Gonzales in his new and important role. Gonzales has demonstrated his commitment to Latinos with his record of community service and an "open door" policy with LULAC. Gonzales has expressed that he plans to continue working closely with LULAC on issues that affect Latinos in his new position.



Al Gonzales during the Senate hearings. LULAC President Hector Flores, Former LULAC President Ed Pena and LULAC Executive Director Brent Wilkes were present to demonstrate LULAC's support.

LULAC Calendar

- Texas Legislative Gala
WHEN: February 24, 2005
WHERE: Doubletree Hotel Austin, Texas
CONTACT: Roger Rocha at rocha_roger@msn.com or Oscar Moran at oscarmoran@aol.com
- Texas Young Adult Conference & Legislative Rally
WHEN: February 26-28, 2005
WHERE: Doubletree Hotel North Austin 6505 IH-35 North Austin, Texas 512-454-3737
CONTACT: Ray de los Santos phone: 214-943-2528 or rsantos@inesc.org
- Deadline: LNSF Partnership Agreement with LNES
WHEN: March 1, 2005
CONTACT: Lorena Garrido at 202-835-9646 or lgarrido@inesc.org
- LULAC Legislative Orientation Seminar sponsored by LULAC Northeast Region
WHEN: 9:30-1:30, March 12, 2005
WHERE: Framingham Public Library in Framingham, MA
CONTACT: Laura Medrano at Lauramedrano@lulac.org
- LULAC Massachusetts Sweetheart Talent Show Scholarship Gala
WHEN: 7 pm, March 12, 2005
WHERE: Holiday Inn in Dedham, MA
CONTACT: Regla Gonzalez at REGLAG@aol.com or 617-327-6760
- 58th Annual California LULAC State Convention
WHEN: March 13-15, 2005
WHERE: Radison Hotel 500 Leisure Lane Sacramento, CA
CONTACT: Angel Luevano at 877-77-LULAC
- LULAC National Legislative Gala
WHEN: March 14, 2005
WHERE: J.W. Marriott Hotel Washington, DC
CONTACT: Carlos Zapata at 202-833-6130 or czapata@lulac.org www.lulac.org
- Seattle Latino Parent Summit
WHEN: Saturday, March 19, 2005
WHERE: Chief Sealth High School
CONTACT: Adrian Moroles 206-790-0106
- National LULAC Youth Health Fair & Volleyball Tournament
WHEN: March 18-19-2005
WHERE: Fort Worth, Texas
CONTACT: Mr. Alberto Govea at 817-797-4015 or www.lulac.org
- Kansas State Convention
WHEN: April 1-2, 2005
WHERE: Topeka, Kansas
CONTACT: Michael Martinez at marinecorpvet@hotmail.com
- Minnesota State Convention
WHEN: April 7-8, 2005
WHERE: Minnesota State University, Mankato, Minnesota
CONTACT: Enrique Soto at enrique.soto@conagrafoods.com or 507-375-3124
- National Women's Conference
WHEN: April 8-9, 2005
WHERE: Flamingo Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada
For more information visit: www.lulac.org (click on "Women's Conference" icon) or CONTACT: Margaret Moran at Moran0529@aol.com or (210) 733-0406
- Wisconsin State Convention
WHEN: May 14, 2005
WHERE: Kenosha Country Club, Kenosha, Wisconsin
CONTACT: Yolanda Adams at adams@milwaukeeeser.org or 414-649-2646
- Florida State Convention
WHEN: May 27-29, 2005
WHERE: Bellevue Biltmore Hotel Clearwater, Florida
CONTACT: Anita De Palma at 727-446-0272
- Texas State Convention
WHEN: June 2-5, 2005
WHERE: Hilton Airport Hotel San Antonio, Texas
CONTACT: Roger Rocha at rocha_roger@msn.com or Oscar Moran at oscarmoran@aol.com
- LULAC National Convention
WHEN: June 27 - July 2, 2005
WHERE: Little Rock, Arkansas
CONTACT: (202) 833-6130 www.lulac.org

FORD AD

Latinos and Social Security: What's at Stake

By Dr. Gabriela Lemus, LULAC National Legislative and Policy Director

The buzz around Washington D.C. these days alternates sharply between the “Bush Doctrine” and the war in Iraq, and whether or not Social Security is really in need of drastic reform. The newly re-elected Bush Administration has determined that its number one priority for domestic policy these next few months will be the overhaul of Social Security. Pundits and politicians would have us believe that the nation's retirement plan established in 1935 as a response to the economic ravages of the “Depression” is bankrupt – financially, morally and socially. The arguments in favor and against re-examining the value of what many argue is America's economic security program covering retirees, dependents and pay survivors, and disabled workers are sometimes overstated and most often confusing. At the very least, the question of Social Security is a complicated issue in part because of its inter generational equity aspects and financial formulas seeking balance between future social security benefit commitments and payroll taxes, and total projected federal expenditures and taxes. At its most simplistic the debate entails the question, who should have to pay for what? But, life and politics in Washington are never simple.

In addition to the overall economic arguments for reform, promoters of the plan for a massive overhaul of the Social Security system, such as Michael Tanner of the Cato Institute, have as an underlying philosophical goal “changing fundamentally the relationship of people to their government.” More bluntly, according to White House aide Peter H. Wehner, Director of Strategic Initiatives states that Social Security reform is “a moral goal and a moral good,” as it “will rank as one of the most significant conservative governing achievements ever.” In other words, government does not need to play a role in planning for retirement, irrespective of historical lessons. The agenda is therefore not only economic, but political. Individuals need to care for themselves, and anything more is tantamount to government welfare. Add to this argument more recent commentary by Representative Bill Thomas (R-CA) that linking Social Security benefits to race

and gender should also be a consideration and we have a potentially explosive situation that downgrades a serious examination of the Social Security question from one of what do Americans need to do to save enough money for retirement, to one of political race and gender warfare.

Approximately 22 percent of older Latinos are living in poverty. Without Social Security, the numbers would definitely increase placing additional burdens on their families.

So, what is at stake for the Latino community? Where do we fit in with all of these equations, both economic and political? Let us examine some of the data. According to information from the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos are disproportionately represented among low-wage and moderate wage workers. More than 75 percent of Latinos aged 65 or older receive income from Social Security, but only 15 percent have income from pensions or annuities and 28 percent have income from assets. Over three-quarters of these individuals are reliant on Social Security for half or more of their total income. Almost half rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their total income. The overall numbers increase even more for non-married Hispanic men and women, particularly unmarried Latinas: 83 percent rely on Social Security for 50 percent or more of their total income. The numbers are clear, the Latino population over 65 years of age is heavily reliant on Social Security and according to the U.S. Bureau of Census, without it, 33 percent of older Hispanics would fall into poverty. As it stands, approximately 22 percent of older Latinos are living in poverty. Without Social Security, the numbers would definitely increase placing additional burdens on their families and diminishing their sense of independence.

Our focus should be on improving it, not eliminating it.

Clearly, the Latino community needs to watch closely the decisions made in Washington regarding any changes to Social Security. This is not the first time that the issue of the fund's solvency has been discussed given the aging “baby boom generation” that is rapidly approaching retirement and the decrease of the number of overall workers contributing to the pool. In 1998, Bill Clinton stated that there was an impending crisis with the Social Security fund and that the program needed to be saved. The Clinton Administration proposed that what required examination was how to increase individual savings rates to maintain a global competitive edge, not the dismantling of the Social Security Administration which provides a guaranteed monthly check for the neediest of families. Judging from the current rates of Latino retirees dependent on Social Security and the rate of poverty among our older Latinos, a plan is needed to increase our retirement funds, not an elimination of our safety-net which is part of the social contract that we have with the nation.

The president's plan has yet to be spelled out in detail.

If indeed the issue of Social Security reform is going to be discussed, our focus should be on improving it, not eliminating it. One plan suggested by Laura D'Andrea Tyson, dean of the London Business School and a Business Week columnist would be to create private accounts as an “add-on” whereby households of modest means could build adequate retirement savings through tax incentives and federal matching contributions with limited choices. This would keep the plan simple as well as keep the costs in check, instead of diverting funds from the overall Social Security pool. President Bush

POLICY and Legislation

Current estimates state that the government would have to borrow anywhere from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion to create private accounts.

is right to be concerned about our younger generations and it is clear that increasing savings rates throughout the country only improves the overall economic health of the nation. The president's plan has yet to be spelled out in detail, but if current economists such as Gregory Mankiw, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers are to be believed, privatization will have to include major cuts in guaranteed benefits as well. Lastly, every dollar diverted to private accounts will add a dollar to public borrowing. Current estimates state that the government would have to borrow anywhere from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion to create private accounts. Ultimately it will be young Latinos, among other young people, who will have to foot the bill.

Ultimately it will be young Latinos, among other young people, who will have to foot the bill.

LULAC National President Meets with Arkansas Leaders



In January, LULAC National President Hector Flores held a press conference in Little Rock, Arkansas to formally announce that LULAC will hold its National Convention in Little Rock this coming June. President Flores (middle) was joined by Little Rock Mayor Jim Dailey (left), North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Henry Hays (right), and United States Senator Blanche Lincoln's (D-AK) Chief of Staff Steve Patterson (far right) during the conference.

During the conference, President Flores also expressed LULAC's intention to fight against anti-immigration legislation that was recently introduced in the Arkansas legislature.

Social Security Facts

- June 8, 1934 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt announces his intent to provide an economic security program in response to the Great Depression. And, on August 14, President Roosevelt signs the Social Security Act into law.
- \$4.5 trillion dollars have been paid into the Social Security Trust Fund since 1937.
- \$4.1 trillion dollars have been paid out from the trust fund in benefits through the year 2002.
- In 2002, 46.4 million people received monthly Social Security Benefits in 2002.
- In 2018, it is expected that Social Security payments will exceed the system's annual tax receipts. The deficit would be made up by drawing down on the Social Security trust fund.
- In 2042, it is expected for the trust fund to run dry and benefits would have to be drawn from ongoing tax receipts.
- 20 percent of Americans' sole income source was Social Security in 2002.

SOURCE: History of Social Security, www.ssa.gov/history/

- 3 of every 4 Latinos that receive Social Security benefits depend on it to provide half of their income.
- More than 75 percent of older Latinos receive Social Security benefits.
- Without Social Security, almost 33 percent of older Hispanics would fall into poverty.
- 83 percent of non-married Hispanic women and 81 percent of non-married Hispanic men over age 65 rely on Social Security for 50 percent or more of their income.

SOURCE: Social Security Administration. 2002. Income of Population 55 or Older, 2000.

LNESC Receives Grant to Reach out to Middle Grade Students

While the Hispanic dropout rate is still one of the biggest problems facing the Hispanic community, another issue that has not garnered as much attention is the Hispanic post-secondary enrollment rate. This rate measures the number of Hispanic students who complete high school and then go on to complete a four-year college or vocational degree. Currently the rate stands at about 9% for Hispanics while it stands at 27% for non-Hispanic Whites. As the size and proportion of Hispanic population continues to grow, it becomes imperative that additional outreach channels are created in order to have a properly trained workforce.

LNESC is collaborating with the Education Development Center, the National Forum for the Acceleration of Middle Grade Reform and the Lumina Foundation for education to help create one of these outreach channels. Through a three-year grant from the Lumina Foundation, the PALMS project has been created. PALMS (Post-secondary Access for Latino Middle-grade Students) is a three-year project that will identify and catalogue effective strategies for providing Hispanic families with information about how to prepare their middle-grade students for college.

Over the next few months, we will be conducting interviews with the staff of postsecondary access programs across the country to learn about their work with Hispanic families. PALMS will develop online profiles of programs that can demonstrate particularly strong evidence of success in reaching this target population. These profiles will be available in the summer of 2005 and will serve as a resource for schools and other organizations that are interested in reaching the families of Latino middle-grade students. In its last year, the PALMS project will create a tool-kit that pulls together the best strategies of the profiled programs and make them available to middle grade counselors and principals in an effort to help them reach the Hispanic family, and ultimately increase the Hispanic Educational Attainment rate.



(L-R) LULAC National President Hector Flores (middle) and LNESC Executive Director Richard Roybal (far right) with several gentlemen who attended the Women's Civil Rights Conference in Puerto Rico.

Framingham, Massachusetts Gains New Young Reader's Program



On December 1st, 2004, Council 12105 kicked off the Young Readers program at the Barbieri Elementary School in Framingham, Massachusetts. Parents and children were treated to a delicious traditional dinner and a folk storyteller.

Pictured along with the young participants are (L-R) Verizon Regional Affairs Manager Rick Colon, Framingham School Superintendent Dr. Chris Martes, National VP for the Northeast Laura Medrano, Council Treasurer Carol Sanchez, and School Committee and LNESC Board member Cesar Monzon.

Ford Science Program Takes Shape

The Ford PAS Science Corps program, a component of the Ford Motor Company's million dollar contribution to LULAC, is focused on fostering the pursuit of science, engineering, and technology-based study in middle school and beyond.

The Science Corps program includes, at its core, hands-on lab experiences, parent and community involvement and mentorship by science field professionals. Field excursions tied into the learning units are also incorporated into the program to help students experience science in action.

Science Corps is one of LNESC's signature programs and was developed to help address the lack of women and minorities in applied science programs at the university level. The program will launch in the fall in five cities across the nation including San Francisco, Pueblo, Dallas, Corpus Christi and Miami.

Sprint AD

HISPANIC LEADERS

Leading the Way

U.S. Treasurer Ana Cabral, Shares Her Story

By LULAC News Editor Lorraine Quiroga Mullaly



Ana's story is an inspiring one that took her from a modest Mexican-American home in California to a top position within the Bush Administration. Cabral was recently appointed by President Bush and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to the position of U.S. Treasurer.

As a young person, Ana worked evenings and weekends to help support her family while she attended high school. Despite her straight "A" average, Ana never considered college because none of her family members had ever gone to college, in fact many of them never graduated from high school. Ana planned to finish high school and work at McDonald's to continue making a contribution to her large family. Fortunately, her math teacher believed in her and convinced her to apply to college. He assisted her with her applications and in obtaining the necessary financial aid. "My math teacher made such a difference in my life, who knows how my life would have turned out were it not for him," said Ana.

When she got to college she began to realize the importance of public service. "It sickened me to know how much potential I left behind in my home town. How many young Latinos would not use their wonderful minds because someone like my math teacher did not help them see their full potential," explained Ana. "College helped me to realize that there is a world of hope for people, so long as they can obtain an education."

Ana's mother is her role model and for good reason. In her fifties her mother went back to high school and graduated. "My mother is the soul of our family. Against all odds she persevered and fulfilled her dream to graduate from high school." Her mother's courage and strength inspires Ana's whole family.

"It sickened me to know how much potential I left behind in my home town. How many young Latinos would not use their wonderful minds because someone like my math teacher did not help them see their full potential."

Previously, Ana served as the Director of the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives where she helped nineteen museums improve Latino cultural representation within the United States. Prior to this position, Ana served as President and CEO of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, as Deputy Staff Director for the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, and as the Executive Staff Director for the U.S. Senate Republican Conference Task Force on Hispanic Affairs. Ana earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Davis and her master's degree from the John F. Kennedy's School of Government, Harvard University.

Ana feels that some of the most important issues affecting Latinos today are education and economic development. "As Treasurer, I plan to focus on improving financial literacy for Latinos around the country because I feel this would positively impact education and economic development. If more Latinos were able to buy their own homes and pay for college I believe we would see a huge improvement in the lives of Latinos," said Ana.

When asked what advice Ana would give to young Latinos she said, "I challenge Latinos to stay in school, we need their energy and input to make a difference. Get as much education as you can and you will succeed." Her children certainly have taken her up on this challenge. Two of her eldest children have already graduated from col-

"College helped me to realize that there is a world of hope for people, so long as they can obtain an education."

lege and hold positions within the government. Both daughters seem to have been inspired by their mother and are following her footsteps by engaging in public service. The eldest daughter currently works in the Secretary's office at the Department of Energy and another daughter works on the Senate Judiciary Committee. The third daughter aspires to attend law school this fall and the youngest son attends MIT where he is studying nuclear engineering.

Ana resides in McLean, Virginia with her husband Victor who is Senior Counsel for NBC/Universal Telemundo in the Government Affairs office and serves on LULAC's Corporate Alliance advisory board.

Attention LULAC

Celebrating 76 Years of Service

Excitement builds among LULAC members as we prepare for our next convention in beautiful Little Rock, Arkansas. We anticipate a spectacular convention June 27 - July 2, 2005.

Be sure to sign up by May 15, 2005 to receive your \$25 discount on registration.

For more information please contact LULAC at 1-866-577-0726 or see our website at www.lulac.org

See you there!

GM AD

A Latino Solider Gives His Life, Will the Government Remember Him?

by LULAC National Intern Molly Mickinak



Sergeant Rafael Peralta, a Latino originally from Mexico, made the ultimate sacrifice last year when he gave his life in the line of duty. Peralta, of San Diego, was eager to join the Marines as soon as he received his green card. Shortly after he became a marine he proudly gained United States citizenship. At the age of twenty-five he demonstrated his loyalty and dedication to the Marines and his new country when he chose to forgo his own life in order to save the lives of his fellow marines in Iraq.

As a platoon scout, Peralta was not required to join this mission, but instead he decided to volunteer to help the junior marines. In Fallujah, they went into houses that were suspected of harboring terrorists. In one house, they knocked down two doors that led to empty rooms. The third door, however, was unlocked, so Peralta opened it and was immediately shot. He fell out of the way so that the other Marines could shoot. At one point during the crossfire, a yellow grenade soared out of the room and landed near Peralta, who was still alive. Peralta grabbed the grenade and held it close

Left: Cmdr. Robert D. Delis gives a cross to Rosa Maria Peralta, after her son Sgt. Rafael Peralta's body is laid to rest November 23, 2005. Photo by Cpl. Edward R. Guevarra Jr.

to him, taking most of the blows himself, while shielding his fellow Marines, and saving half of the fire team. It was at this time, that Peralta lost his life to protect others. Cpl. Rob Rogers, one of Peralta's platoon mates reportedly stated that, "He'd stand up for his Marines to an insane point."

Although there are rumors that Peralta may be nominated to receive a Congressional Medal of Honor, nothing has been confirmed. Gordon Trowbridge, senior staff writer for *Times News Service/ Army Times Publishing Co.* stated that Peralta, "is almost certainly under consideration for a medal beyond the Purple Heart he will receive, though we could only speculate on what award might be recommended."

According to the criterion stated for consideration of the medal, the individual who is a member of the armed services distinguishes himself by gallantry beyond the call of duty while engaged in conflict against a foreign force or while served within an armed conflict against an opposing group where the United States is not belligerent. The deed must be one where the individual risked his or her life in an outstanding manner of bravery and self-sacrifice for the good of his comrades. Clearly Peralta meets these standards; we anxiously await his proper recognition.



As of today, we are unsure whether or not Peralta's immediate family is receiving benefits. Under current laws, Peralta's family is ineligible for benefits if they are not United States citizens. Unfortunately, LULAC was unable to reach Peralta's family to see how they are managing after the loss of their family member.

There have been many outstanding men and women who have proudly served the United States in the armed forces and whose bravery and courage will not go unnoticed. Their efforts should be rightfully rewarded. We seek recognition for these honorable people, so as not to forget their service. Peralta went beyond the call of duty and gave up his life for the United States. Now is the time for the United States government to fulfill their duty by rightfully recognizing one of their most notable soldiers. It is also time for the government to change the current laws so that the family members of servicemen are properly cared for irregardless of their immigration status.

Sources: <http://www.americal.org/awards/> "Marine Sacrifices his Life for Others in Grenade Blast," by Gordon Trowbridge, The Seattle Times

Military Immigration Laws

As of Oct. 1, 2004, citizenship processing fees have been waived for immigrants that serve in the military, and naturalization oaths and interviews have been conducted overseas.

Immigrants serving in the military during wartime are also immediately eligible for citizenship, and during peacetime, they must wait one year (this applies to reservists as well).

The law also ensures protection and expedites the process for the fallen soldiers' immediate family members, however, this excludes undocumented family members.

SBC AD

LULAC Young Adults Attend Monthly Chorizo & Menudo Gathering with Council 102



LULAC members from the University of North Texas chapter with LULAC National President Hector Flores (middle), Civil Rights Chairperson Domingo Garcia (middle left) and Syndicated Columnist Ruben Navarette (far right).

Recently, LULAC Council 102 of Dallas hosted a “menudo and chorizo” breakfast for young adults from the University of North Texas.

LULAC VP for Youth Meets with Puerto Rican Youth



LULAC Youth stand in front of the LNES Center in Bayamon, Puerto Rico during a visit by National VP for Youth Javier Montanez (front right). Some of the members are holding UFW flags that Mr. Montanez brought to share with the students.

Submission Criteria

We would like to include as much as possible in the LULAC News. To ensure quality and accuracy please be sure to properly label all information that you submit. If sending photos, please send high resolution photos and be sure to provide sufficient information on each photo. Please email to lquirosa@lulac.org or mail to LULAC, 2000 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, Attn: LULAC News. All information is subject to editing.

LULAC Young Adults in Texas Help Over 400 High School Students at the “Education is Liberation Conference”



LULAC Young Adult members are pictured with National Vice President for Women Margaret Moran and LULAC National President Hector Flores.

LULAC Young Adult Councils 4752 and 4753 at St. Mary’s University offered their support to a very important leadership conference entitled “Education is Liberation Conference” for high school students in the San Antonio area. The program seeks to empower students through leadership training, cultural awareness, and encouraging community service.

LULAC Holds Informative Youth Conference in Massachusetts



LULAC of Massachusetts held an exceptional conference called “Helping Latino Parents Guide their Children to a Successful Academic Future” this past October. Over one hundred parents attended this important conference where they had the opportunity to learn about the college application process; the importance of SAT scores; and financial aid and scholarship resources. “The program was meant to prepare parents and children in the often daunting college application process. I believe a lot of parents walked away from the conference with a much better understanding of what lies ahead for them and their children,” said National Vice President for the Northeast Laura Medrano.

New Youth Councils Form in Arkansas

LULAC Youth prepare for the LULAC National Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas this summer.



Recently, National Vice President for Youth Javier Montanez traveled from his home state of Texas to meet with young people in Little Rock and northwest Arkansas. Javier's trip was very successful in that he was able to recruit new young people to join LULAC. This was Javier's third trip to the state with the goal of preparing the Latino community for the LULAC National Convention, the most important Hispanic event to hit the region. In addition, LULAC Director for Federal Relations Emma Moreno also recently met with a variety of community leaders in Little Rock to get out the word about the LULAC National Youth Conference .



LULAC National Vice President Javier Montanez (right) administers the LULAC Oath of Youth Office to youth in Arkansas.



*The League of United Latin American Citizens
and its Corporate Alliance
cordially invite you to attend
The Eighth Annual*

LULAC National Legislative Awards Gala

**Celebrating Legislative Service to the Hispanic
Community**

Honoring:

***Arkansas Senator Blanche L. Lincoln
Utah Senator Orrin G. Hatch
Colorado Senator Ken Salazar
Colorado Congressman John Salazar***

*J.W. Marriott Hotel
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC*

Black Tie

Monday, March 14, 2005

6:00 pm Cocktails

7:00 pm Awards

8:00 pm Dinner

Legislative Day

Visits with Congressional and Federal Leaders

9 am to 5 pm

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

For more information, please call (202) 833-6130 or visit our website at www.lulac.org

LULAC Women's Civil Rights Conference in Puerto Rico



(L-R) Massachusetts State Director Regla Gonzalez, LULAC First Lady Tula Flores, Former VP for the Southeast Elsie Valdez, VP for the Southeast Haydee Rivera, VP for the Northeast Laura Medrano, Lydia Welch and Director of Policy and Legislation Gabriela Lemus during the Women's Civil Rights Conference in Puerto Rico.



Letter from the National VP for Women

Greetings from the National Vice President for Women, As we begin a new year, let us first reflect on the many accomplishments our members throughout the country have enjoyed during 2004.

Our women are major stakeholders in our organization having been at the forefront of issues such as getting our Latina leaders elected to various positions within their respective parties; mobilizing and coordinating Town Hall Meetings to register voters; hosting a women's civil rights conference in Puerto Rico; coming to the rescue of those whose rights were violated during housing evictions; providing the resources necessary to victims of domestic violence; and in one instance assisting a Spanish speaking mother enroll her child in a school.

Many of our women across the country have also participated in health awareness programs in the areas of heart disease, HIV/AIDs, and the benefits of diet and exercise programs. I applaud those that volunteer as mentors in our reading programs. As volunteers, and as leaders in our local communities, your work has not gone unnoticed. I thank you for your leadership and pledge to work together with all the members of our organization in a cohesive effort to bring about success and a better future for all. On behalf of our LULAC Women's Commission we wish everyone joy, success and peace.

We hope that all of you will join us on April 8-9, 2005 at the beautiful Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada as we launch our 2005 agenda during the Annual Women's Conference. This year's theme is "Latina Women: Leaders on the Pathway to the Future." See you there!

Sincerely,

Margaret Moran

Save the Date!

National Women's Conference

WHEN: April 8-9, 2005

WHERE: Flamingo Hotel

Las Vegas, Nevada

For more information please visit

www.lulac.org and click on the

"Women's Conference" icon or call

202-833-6130 or contact Margaret

Moran at moran0529@aol.com or

call 210-733-0406

(Top Left Photo): A group of organizers and attendees at the Women's Civil Rights Conference in Puerto Rico.

(Bottom Left Photo): National Youth President Arlinda Arriaga, VP for the Midwest Blanca Vargas, VP for Women Margaret Moran and VP for the Elderly Angie Garcia during the Women's Conference.

Tyson's AD



Recently, LULAC National President Hector Flores and other Latino national leaders from around the country met with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to discuss issues related to Arizona, such as immigration, the US-Mexico border, and the effects of Arizona Proposition 200 which passed in November. (L-R) Dr. Marco Rico, Founder of the Hispanic 100 Group Carlos Olamendi, Senator McCain, Presidential Appointee to the Federal Labor Relations Authority John Cruz, LULAC Secretary for International Affairs Luis de la Garza, and LULAC President Hector Flores.

Yes! I want to be a LULAC member!

All persons who are residents of the United States or are U.S. citizens residing abroad, are 18 years of age or older, and whose loyalty to our country is unquestionable, are eligible for membership in LULAC. LULAC members receive a copy of the LULAC Constitution, a membership card, a membership pin, and a complimentary subscription to the *LULAC NEWS*. Please mail the below card to LULAC National Membership Office, 201 East Main, Suite 605, El Paso, TX 79901.

- I want to join LULAC as an active member. Please send me information on councils in my home area.
- I want to join LULAC as an associate member. Please find a check of \$25 enclosed.
- I want to become a lifetime member of LULAC. Enclosed is a contribution in the amount of \$1,000.
- My company would like to join LULAC as a corporate associate. Enclosed is a contribution of \$1,000.
- Please send me information on how I can start a LULAC council in my hometown.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Fax _____ Email _____



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