



# Alianza Hispana

April 2007

## LA VOZ

### La Alianza Hispana's Newsletter



Mercedes Ponce, education counselor and Rosa Bastian volunteer coordinator with Janet Collazo.

## ¡Saludos!

In this issue of *La Voz* I want to share with you all the ways in which La Alianza's team is *leading change* and increasing its impact in the community.

### Leading change through volunteerism

On April 13th, La Alianza celebrated its 22 volunteers in the *Haciendo Caminos* (Making Pathways) Program. Rosa Bastian, Volunteer Coordinator, and Mercedes Ponce, Educational Counselor, organized a beautiful luncheon to honor La Alianza's dedicated volunteers. The fact that both Rosa and Mercedes started at La Alianza as volunteers; (Rosa in 1996 and Mercedes in 2003) affirmed the power of volunteerism and how volunteer opportunities can open many doors to

personal and career development. Rosa and Mercedes are two women who have proven to be excellent role models for our volunteers. They have led change in our organization by building the capacity of *Haciendo Caminos* to be a goal-driven workforce development program. This program has had a tremendous impact on building skills, increasing self-confidence and creating new opportunities for career development. As you will see in April's feature article in this issue of *La Voz*, Belkys, a volunteer who intended to work at La Alianza for one week and stayed for a year, has discovered a new community, a new sense of self-confidence, and a new career path as a social worker.

### Leading change by offering new educational opportunities

Our team at the Latino Family Counseling Center is organizing La Alianza's Professional Development Lecture Series which offers training to the health and human service workforce in the Roxbury area. Topics will include dealing with public health issues such as poverty, homelessness, HIV, domestic violence, substance abuse as well as clinical issues that are often co-morbidly related such as depression, bereavement, and a variety of psychiatric issues. We look forward to creating a professional network among providers in Roxbury. La Alianza is honored to host Dr. David Lisak on May 24th and Dr. Mary Guilfus on May 31st as our first guest lecturers in this series. For more information, please see the Save the Date in this issue of *La Voz*.

### **Leading change through collaboration and partnerships**

For the first time ever, La Alianza Hispana and El Jolgorio de Massachusetts, in collaboration with Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the City of Boston's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events, will present the first annual Festival de Salud y Trova: Access to Your Health and Trova (typical folk music) Festival to be held at Boston City Hall Plaza on Sunday, July 15, 2007. This is the largest health fair in La Alianza's history and expects to reach over 2,000 people with important health information. We are grateful to our honorary committee and media partner, El Planeta Newspaper, for making this event possible!

### **Leading change by bringing together our community of supporters**

Lisette Garcia, a highly energetic and dedicated La Alianza's fundraising volunteer, is rallying support for us by organizing a Cinco de Mayo Fiesta to benefit La Alianza Hispana. Cinco de Mayo Mexican Fiesta will be a night of Mexican Loteria (Mexican Bingo), Veronica Robles (*La Mera, Mera*) and her Mariachis, Karaoke, including the most common Spanish songs, costume contest and a raffle at the Milky Way Lounge and Lanes on Friday, May 4th. Doors will open at 9 p.m. for those who want to try their luck at the Mexican Lotería or pick your song in order to impress your amigos. This event is generously sponsored by The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at UMass/Boston and The Institute on Urban Health Research at Northeastern University. We hope to see you on May 4th!

As you can see, our team is your team! Please join us in our efforts to lead change at La Alianza.

***¡Si se puede!***



Janet Collazo

## **Haciendo Caminos**

***A Story from La Alianza's Volunteer Program***

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In 2005, Belkys, a mother of three, began volunteering at her children's elementary school. Serving as an assistant in a kindergarten class, Belkys helped the teacher communicate with the Spanish -speaking children and provided translation and support for parents. This was a rewarding experience and she discovered she had a lot to offer the children, teachers and parents. The school valued Belkys and recognized her for her commitment and leadership.

"At first, I thought this experience was the best way for me to improve my English. However, the kids seemed to learn faster than me," chuckled Belkys. Learning another language as an adult is a challenge for anyone. It takes a great deal of determination and requires a supportive environment. Belkys was determined to improve her English and made a commitment to herself to actively engage in the community and improve her skills while helping others.

Belkys didn't take a break from her commitment to learn and serve. During school vacations she joined the *Haciendo Caminos* (Making Pathways) Volunteer Program at La Alianza. "When I signed up, I thought I would have the opportunity to help my community and an organization I cared about, but I didn't expect that I would gain so much in return. In a month, I enrolled in workplace English classes in La Alianza's Adult Education Program, and I was even named the Student of the Month!" exclaimed Belky.

Belkys serves in many volunteer roles at La Alianza: reception, community outreach, and event coordination. She, like the others in the *Haciendo Caminos* Program, have a wonderful "can-do" attitude and pitch in where ever their help is needed. "I especially like working in reception. Many people come through our doors every day looking for help. I really like when I can connect them with the services they need. Sometimes I refer them to English classes and they become my classmates. And sometimes I need to refer them to other agencies. They come back though. La Alianza is like a family. The people we serve feel a strong connection to us because we are an important advocate for newcomers to Boston."

Belkys, together with her Education Counselor, is designing a career path to become a social worker. Belkys summarized by saying, "I believe in La Alianza. I'm constantly seeing how La Alianza changes people's lives and I want to be part of making this happen. I want to go to college and return to join the staff at La Alianza."

*Below are some pictures of Rosa Bastian and the group of volunteers during the Haciendo Caminos (Making Pathways) event.*



## Acceso a Su Salud y Festival de Trova 2007

*Access To Your Health and Trova Festival 2007 on July 15th*



La Alianza Hispana and El Jolgorio de Massachusetts, in collaboration with Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the City of Boston's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events, present the first annual Festival de Salud y Trova: Access to Your Health and Trova (typical folk music) Festival to be held at Boston City Hall Plaza on Sunday, July 15, 2007.

By incorporating public health outreach with cultural activities, Salud y Trova hopes to improve access to health care for immigrants and Latinos by linking them to appropriate community resources. For the first time ever, La Alianza Hispana and El Jolgorio are partnering for this event and creating an educational and cultural event which is certain to attract ample participation from numerous vendors and city residents alike. With El Planeta as our key media partner, Salud y Trova anticipates reaching 2,000 families at this event.

### **Acceso a Su Salud y Festival de Trova's Focus on Health**

La Alianza Hispana has a long history of providing public health outreach and support services in Boston's Latino community. Salud y Trova builds upon the successes of eight years of annual health fairs in the Dudley neighborhood of Roxbury. Growing attendance and interest from other health care providers inspired La Alianza to broaden our reach and enrich this year's event through the collaboration with the City of Boston and El Jolgorio. La Alianza has been actively engaged in a number of health related outreach and research projects: (1) partnering in a study of health disparities in older Puerto Ricans in conjunction with Tufts and Northeastern Universities, and (2) an outreach grant recipient to provide community education sessions and enrollment for the Network Health and Commonwealth Care's health plan.

### **Acceso a Su Salud y Festival de Trova's Focus on Arts and Culture**

El Jolgorio is dedicated to advancing education through Latino arts and culture. This year, El Jolgorio has engaged Grammy Award nominees Ecos de Borinquen, led by master Jíbaro-music

trovador Miguel Santiago Diaz and featuring singing sensation Karol Aurora de Jesús Reyes. Also, the next wave of Puerto Rican musical superstars, El Grupo Rumba Caribe, led by cuatrista and trovador Ricardo Villanueva Serrano will be performing. In addition to this stellar musical line up, dance troupes, cultural arts exhibits and children's activities will be showcased.

La Alianza would like to thank Mayor Menino and the City of Boston's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events, El Jolgorio, and El Planeta for there generous support and partnership. We are also grateful for the growing support from our Honorary Committee.

### **Honorary Chairperson**

**Mayor Thomas M. Menino**  
City of Boston

### **Honorary Committee**

**Professor Iain Cockburn**  
*Economist*, Boston University School of Management & National Bureau of Economic Research

**Jovita Fontanez**  
*Special Assistant*, Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Service, City of Boston

**Elmer Freeman**  
*Director*, Urban Clinical Bouvé College of Health Sciences, Northeastern University

**David Morales**  
*Senior Advisor*, Office of Governor Patrick

**Ana Ortíz, Ph.D.**  
*Director*, Child and Family Counseling Center, The Home for Little Wanderers

**Dr. Francisco Trilla**  
*Director and Professor*, Atreva Clinic & Harvard School of Medicine

### **La Alianza Seeks Your Support with Salud Y Trova!**

If your company is interested in supporting Salud Y Trova, please contact La Alianza Board Member Johanna Richwagen at johannarichwagen@gmail.com or (617) 427-7175 ext. 230. All sponsorships will directly support La Alianza's services in the community.

For information regarding table sales for vendors and nonprofits, please contact Community Relations and Marketing Coordinator Josiane Martinez at martinez.josiane@gmail.com or (617) 427-7175 ext. 230.

### **About El Jolgorio de Massachusetts, Inc.**

El Jolgorio is a strong supporter of community-based activities that promote educational advancement of Latino youth. El Jolgorio de Massachusetts, Inc. strives to foster leadership, civic engagement and educational attainment among Latino youth; promote the awareness and quality of artistic and cultural expression among Latino youth, and enhance investments in Puerto Rican and Latino education, arts and humanities as a means of stimulating cultural exchange and educational growth. [www.eljolgorio.org](http://www.eljolgorio.org)

# La Alianza's Cinco de Mayo Mexican Fiesta

*A friend raiser for La Alianza on May 4th @ the Milky Way/JP*



La Alianza Hispana presents Cinco de Mayo Mexican Fiesta, a night of Mexican Loteria (Mexican Bingo), Veronica Robles (La Mera, Mera) and her Mariachi, Karaoke, including the most common Spanish songs, costume contest and a raffle at the Milky Way Lounge and Lanes on Friday, May 4th. Doors will open at 9 p.m. for those who want to try luck at the Mexican Lotería or pick your song in order to impress your amigos.



Veronica Robles, *La Mera, Mera*

## Some details about la Noche!

- The \$10 cover will get you into the fiesta activities
- With \$20, you can play a round of Mexican Loteria and find your chance at winning some great prizes
- \$10 raffle ticket gets you a chance at winning the grand prize
- Coming out to support your community
- All funds raised go to support vital programs at La Alianza Hispana

## About La Mera, Mera

Well known as La Mera, Mera (The Real One), singer Veronica Robles is the ambassador of Mexican music and culture in the U.S. With a recording career that spans the past 10 years, five albums, and over 14 years performing in venues including The Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, as well as producing, singing for, and hosting TV programs within Mexico and the U.S. for the major Spanish TV networks such as Azteca, Televisa, Telemundo, Univisión and WGBH. For more information visit her website: [Veronica Robles](#)

Listen to her music! [La canoa de Don Guillermo](#)



Veronica Robles and her Mariachi

Thank you for considering making a gift to La Alianza. You can send your tax deductible donation directly to La Alianza Hispana, Inc. at 409 Dudley Street, Roxbury, MA 02119. We will also be able to collecting cash or checks donations at the door.

## Save the Date!

### *Latino Family Counseling Center's Professional Development Lecture Series*

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**Dr. David Lisak Ph.D.**

Lecture: Trauma and Sex Offenders

May 24, 2007 @ 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

La Alianza Hispana

409 Dudley St

Roxbury, MA 02119

**Dr. Mary Guilfus**

Lecture: Domestic Violence and Risk Assessment

May 31, 2007 @ 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

La Alianza Hispana

409 Dudley St

Roxbury, MA 02119

Space is limited. For more information or to RSVP for this event, please contact Ellie Zambrano, La Alianza's Clinical Director, at [ezambrano@laalianza.org](mailto:ezambrano@laalianza.org)

## **Puerto Rico's Plena Libre with Angel Luis Torruellas y los Pleneros del Coco**

***In Boston on April 28!***

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Wr Consulting and Associates in conjunction with [El Jolgorio](#) de Massachusetts and La Alianza Hispana, Inc. presents: Four time Grammy Nominee ***Plena Libre*** this **Saturday, April 28th beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Annuciation Auditorium, 7 VFW Parkway in Roslindale.**

Proceeds from this event will support the establishment of the David Santiago Publishing House for Hispanic writers. It would be the first publishing house of its kind in New England.

For more information on Hispanic Writers Week and the bomba plena event Please visit: [El Jolgorio](#) or call William Rodriguez @ 781-929-9838. For ticket purchases please call 617-427-7175 ext. 299

**Tickets can also be purchased at the following locations:**

- La Alianza Hispana, 409 Dudley Street, Roxbury, Ma (617)427-7175 ext. 279 (Rosa Bastian).
- The Boston Metro Bi-Lingual Veteran's Outreach Center, 719 Tremont Street, Boston, Ma (Carmen Colombani or Jorge Pagan) 617-778-1310.



## La Alianza's recent media coverage

[El Mundo](#), Meet Janet Collazo Leading La Alianza

[Hispana](#)

[El Planeta](#): JAMAICA PLAIN: Un éxito las sesiones informativas de La Alianza Hispana



[Boston Puerto Rican Center for Population Health and Health Disparities website](#)

[Boston Globe: Depression engulfs area's Puerto Ricans, Researchers cite poverty, isolation](#)

[Siglo 21: La Alianza Hispana Reune a Latinos sobre nuevo plan de salud](#)

## La Alianza Hispana's Mission Statement

La Alianza Hispana is a community based non profit organization serving the Latino community and all residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. The goal is to empower individuals and families, strengthen communities and develop leaders through high-quality education and social services, advocacy and community organizing. Our Services are culturally and linguistically appropriate, integrated and community centered. La Alianza believes in social justice as a means of creating a more egalitarian, participatory and peaceful society in which all members can realize their fullest potential.

*\*La Alianza Hispana, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt community based organization. All contributions to La Alianza Hispana, Inc. are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.*

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phone: 617-427-7175 ext. 230  
web: <http://laalianza.org>



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