



June 2007

LA VOZ

La Alianza Hispana's Newsletter

La Alianza Hispana's Board of Directors

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Janet Collazo

Executive Director

The Board of Directors of La Alianza Hispana is excited to announce the appointment of Janet Collazo as the organization's next executive director. Janet was selected after serving as the interim executive director since August 2006. During her tenure, she successfully turned around the finance department, dramatically enhanced communication and technology systems, and instituted a performance management system leading to improved program outcomes. Her consistent leadership and vision has fueled a pivotal strategic planning process and increased La Alianza's visibility in the community.

As a community-based organization founded 37 years ago to promote Latino self-determination we have needed to adapt our services to the needs of the growing and changing Latino population. This change requires forging new vision, building strategic partnerships, and recruiting the next generation of emerging leaders who will steward La Alianza Hispana

in positive directions.

In this special issue of *La Voz* we reached out to six Latina executive directors to share their inspirational voice and leadership advice. As we usher in a new era of leadership at

La Alianza (The Alliance), we recognize our collective strength in the nonprofit sector is a critical resource in the community. We thank **María Elena Letona** (Centro Presente), **Gladys Vega** (Chelsea Collaborative) **Alexandra Oliver-Dávila** (Sociedad Latina), **Vanessa Calderón Rosado** (Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción), **Giovanna Negretti** (¿Oíste?), and **Sylvia Saavedra-Keber** (Concilio Hispano). These leaders represent a spectrum of Latino organizational missions: from serving youth and families; to providing workforce development and education; community organizing for immigrant and housing rights; and igniting political advocacy and civic engagement. La Alianza values these sister organizations and the talent and heart of these dynamic Latina leaders. We are all working towards bettering the lives of Boston area Latinos and the surrounding community and we have a greater impact when we do this in partnership.

Abriendo nuevos caminos,

La Alianza's Board of Directors

Latinas Transforming Community

Inspiration and advice from six Latina leaders in Boston

What inspired you to lead a Latino focused organization?

I'm driven by a strong sense of social justice and wanted to serve in the community where I grew up. I developed my leadership skills advocating for Chelsea residents and I wanted to make sure our Latino community was well represented.

Gladys Vega, Chelsea Collaborative

In addition to a desire to serve our community and help find solutions for some of our pressing issues, I have been inspired by the warmth of the smile of a young Latino child, the struggle to succeed of a young Latina mother, the aspirations of young Latinos to better their lives, and the wrinkled touch and wise words of our Latino elders. The beauty, hope and strength among our people drive me to continue to do my work. I hope that I can contribute in paving the way for a more solid future for all of our children, youth, elders and families. ***Vanessa Calderón Rosado, IBA***

I was inspired to join Concilio Hispano because of a strong desire to be an agent of social change. I was working in a state agency and witnessed the many challenges facing the Latino community. I found it difficult to change things at a state level and recognize the importance of deep community involvement to make change happen in meaningful ways.

Sylvia Saavedra-Keber, Concilio Hispano

I discovered Centro Presente in 1995 and I fell in love with the organization, not only because it works directly with my community, primarily a Central American immigrant community, but because of how we do our work, which is so rooted in community organizing, leadership development and political

advocacy. So, for me it was not a conscious decision to lead a Latino focused organization. It is more that a particular organization, Centro Presente, grabbed my heart!

María Elena Letona, Centro Presente

At a very early age my brothers and I were exposed to the many injustices occurring in Central America. My earliest memories with my mother are of attending meetings that included viewing films and hearing from families who had fled their countries to stay alive. This early exposure would forever mark me and instill in me a sense of urgency to search out work where I could stand with others to eradicate injustice. It has always been my passion to work in the Latino community, specifically with young people. I have a million success stories about the youth that I have been fortunate enough to encounter, from a young person moving from homelessness who is celebrating obtaining housing to a young person celebrating their entrance into college. I feel extremely blessed to be able to bear witness and to get paid for doing something so inspiring.

Alexandra Oliver-Davila, Sociedad Latina

A sense of justice and equality is tied to everything I do in my personal and professional life. Now, what inspired me to lead Oiste? is my passion for politics. The political process is an opportunity to change the sad reality that we have little Latino representation in government. ***Giovanna Negretti, ¿Oíste?***

Advice for the next generation of Latinas who aspire to serve in leadership roles in our community:

As Latinas in leadership roles I believe that we have a responsibility to serve as an empowerment model for our consumers of service. It is crucial to continually communicate the message to our community that we are able to help ourselves, and that we have many assets, talents and ideas to contribute. On a personal note, I think that it is important to take time out for yourself and to enjoy quality time with your friends and family. Your task list will never be completed no matter how late you stay at work - don't miss out on moments you can't recapture!

Alexandra Oliver-Dávila, Sociedad Latina

Don't be afraid to ask: Ask for help, ask for support, ask for money, ask for advice, ask for opportunity, ask for opened doors. Someone will listen and take the time to grant your requests! Stay focused on your current goals: It is fine to change tracks across your life and career, but exceed wherever you are at the moment and work hard for it. Be and do your best! Be persistent: Only repeated actions (whether it is asking, questioning, exceeding, providing, supporting) will make you succeed. The key is to never stop! ***Vanessa Calderón Rosado, IBA***

The most beautiful assets any human being can have are: an open heart, a critical mind and a soul very much alive that knows the interconnectedness of our world and of each other. I have discovered that while university degrees and work experience are important, the most valuable aspect of leadership is how well a leader is grounded spiritually. Being clear about your values, the kind of world we want to promote and how we go about making that world happen. In our work, we are asked to make decisions everyday. Often, there are contradictory paths to follow, or the path is foggy and confusing. It is easy to lose one's soul in the process. Therefore, a rich and grounded spiritual life is very important. The most beautiful assets any human being can have are:

an open heart, a critical mind and a live soul that knows the interconnectedness of our world and of each other. Nurture all three!

María Elena Letona, Centro Presente

Be persistent, have faith and believe in your inner capacity to make things happen. I think it's hard for women to stay focused on different projects or even on our own career paths because we are also balancing the roles of being a mother, a sister, a lover, and in many situations, head of household. We are expected to be perfect and present in everything. There are high expectations of women, especially in the Latino culture. It's not easy but I'm convinced that as Latinas, we have a unique perspective and approach to leadership which is impacting the community in a very different and positive way.

Giovanna Negretti, ¿Oíste?

As Latina leaders, stay connected! Demands are high on our time and attention and it is easy to become isolated as an executive director. Our relationship with each other--as nonprofit leaders, and as Latinas--is priceless. Having a sense of solidarity can keep you fueled during the difficult times.

Sylvia Saavedra-Keber, Concilio Hispano

¡Si se puede! Yes we can! Stay focused and keep the faith in what you believe in. I think women have the capacity to assume the role of leadership in today's society and we have to accept this responsibility in our own unique way.

Gladys Vega, Chelsea Collaborative

Pictured above: María Elena Letona (Centro Presente), Gladys Vega (Chelsea Collaborative) Alexandra Oliver-Dávila (Sociedad Latina), Vanessa Calderón Rosado (Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción), Giovanna Negretti (¿Oíste?), and Sylvia Saavedra-Keber (Concilio Hispano) photo not available.

Cinco de Mayo Raised Over \$2,500!

Verónica Robles & her Mariachis donate, capitavte, and motivate!

Lisette Garcia, newest member of La Alianza's Board of Directors, hosted a fundraiser to remember! **Verónica and her Mariachis**, delighted the audience with her amazing voice, her spontaneous wit and her repertoire of traditional Mexican melodies. Surprise guests "**Tierra**" **Folkloric Ballet** mesmerized everyone with their authentic Mexican dance. Gracias a Todos!

Many thanks to the following donors:

- The Milky Way Lounge and Lanes & Bella Luna
- Atlantic Travel
- Top of the Hub Restaurant
- The Sheraton Hotel/Boston
- Boston Harbor Excursions
- Hispanic Restaurant Association
- Monpiz Karaoke



Janet Collazo, General Consul of Mexico, Porfirio Thierry Muñoz Ledo and invitees.



Victoria Robles and her mariachi



Andrés Molina and Melissa Paz from Ballet Tierra

- Avanti Salon
- Casa Romero
- Belkys Salon
- Norma's Hair Style
- Mike's Fitness
- El Jolgorio de Massachusetts
- Indigo Energy
- Border Café
- MacDonalds
- Shaw's Supermarket
- Stop & Shop
- Hilo Foods
- Willie Rodriguez
- Yesenia Milan, Graphic Designer

"There is no doubt this fundraising was for a good cause. La Alianza Hispana is crucial and a great asset to the Latino community. It was nice to bring the community, peers, and constituents together to network with each other," mentioned Jenny Cintrón, Director of The Boston Latino Center, for ABCD.

The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy (UMass/ Boston) and The Institute on Urban Health Research at Northeastern University generously underwrote this event. Also, we would

like to share a special thanks to the 100 attendees who sang karaoke and tried their luck at Mexican loteria!

"We are proud that La Alianza selected the "fifth of May" to raise collaborations and alliances to support the important work they do in our community," explained Porfirio Thierry Muñoz Ledo, general Mexican consul in Boston.

Celebra la Vida con Salud Y Trova on July 15th

Featuring Celebra La Vida con Salud, NikeGo and new sponsors!

Celebra la Vida Con Salud y Trova Honorary Committee

Honorary Chairperson

Mayor Thomas M. Menino
City of Boston

Honorary Committee

Hortensia Amaro, Ph.D., Director
Institute on Urban Health Research Northeastern University

Argel H. Bernudez, Senior Director
Grant Making and Special Projects, The Boston Foundation

Josefina Bonilla-Ruiz, Editor-in-Chief
Entre Amigos

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
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Office of Governor Patrick

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Health Care for All

Ama C. Ortiz, Ph.D., Director
Child and Family Counseling Center, The Home for Little Wanderers

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

Katherine Tucker L., Ph.D., Director
Epidemiology and Dietary Assessment Research Program, Tufts University

Jerry Villacrés, Director/Editor
El Planeta Newspaper

CELEBRA LA VIDA CON SALUD Y TROVA



FREE ADMISSION

Sunday, July 15, 2007

1:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Boston City Hall Plaza

One City Hall Plaza, Boston, MA 02201

We invite you to participate in the largest Hispanic Health Fair in Boston. **La Alianza Hispana, El Jolgorio de Massachusetts, Celebra la Vida con Salud**, a national health education initiative, 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 Celebra la Vida con Salud y Trova: Celebrate your Life with Health and Trova (typical folk music) Festival.

El Jolgorio Arts & Culture Stage

- Grammy-nominated artists Ecos de Borinquen, led by master Jíbaro and music trovador
- Karol Aurora de Jesús Reyes
- El Grupo Rumba Caribe, led by cuatrística and trovador Ricardo Villanueva Serrano
- Cultural arts exhibit

Youth Activities

- NikeGo Kid's Fitness Zone (Nike gear give-away)
- Museum of Science
- New England Aquarium
- Fire Safety House
- Dance troupes
- Local merengue and reggaeton bands

Free Medical Screenings

- Blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Body mass index
- Cholesterol
- HIV testing
- Prostate cancer
- Mammography
- Visual and eye care
- Dental (children and adults)
- HPV and cervical cancer

Sponsors:



Deloitte's Impact Day Benefits La Alianza

60 Deloitte staff give La Casita Counseling Center a face lift

Tens of thousands of employees of Deloitte & Touche USA LLP (Deloitte) set aside their regular work and made their communities their client on Friday June 8th for the organization's 8th annual IMPACT Day, a one-day example of its year-round



commitment to volunteer service. Deloitte's nearly 40,000 employees were encouraged to engage in a variety of projects, many of which involved the contribution of their business knowledge and experience to help nonprofits deal with strategic, operational and financial business challenges.

Deloitte IMPACT Day Team Leaders **Walter Gomez** and **Monica Doo** (pictured) spent months working with La Alianza's volunteer **Dori Chouhad** to coordinate a much needed facilities improvement project at *La Casita*: La Alianza's Family Counseling Center. Bright and early on Friday morning, 60 ambitious Deloitte staff transformed the space with warm and inviting colors of paint and other improvement projects. By the day's end, our center had a face lift, our staff and program participants were thrilled to see their new and improved center, and Deloitte staff could see this project will have a long term impact because the 127 families we serve each year will now have safe and inviting space.



"We are so grateful to the Boston Deloitte team for their generous day of service. The *La Casita* face lift brings great dignity and pride to our counseling center. It's a project we couldn't have done without the help from Deloitte" explained Ellie Zambrano, La Alianza's Clinical Director. "Not only is it a great transformation of our space-it was a wonderful opportunity to get to know the Deloitte team members and see their corporate values of community service in action!"



Save the Date! Professional Development Lecture Series

Services for Homicide Survivor on Thursday, June 21st at 10:00 am

Our Professional Development Lecture Series is a free offering to health and human services workers in the community. These education and training seminars offer high quality trainings and networking opportunities to help strengthen our collective efforts to support our community. Please join us!

The clinical staff at the **Center for Homicide Bereavement** and the **Community Crisis Response Team at the Cambridge Health Alliance's Victims of Violence (VOV) Program** present:

Individual, Group and Community Services for Homicide Survivor

June 21, 2007 @ 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
La Alianza Hispana
409 Dudley St.
Roxbury, MA 02119

About the presenters:

Lynda Bolduc-Hicks, LMHC, Psy.D. has been at the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) VOV Program since 2000. She provides outpatient therapy and coordinates the VOV First Responder Wellness Program, providing services to bereaved families of 9/11/01.

Elio Carretta, LICSW has been working for 17 years as a psychotherapist for the Latino Mental Health Program of the CHA Department of Psychiatry as a bi-lingual clinician and Program Director.

Liliana Mantilla Psy.D. is a bilingual clinician who has extensive experience in a variety of community settings providing outpatient and home-based services to the Latino community and other underserved populations.

Anne Mondesir, M.S.W., L.I.C.S.W. is the Coordinator of the Community Crisis Response Team of the VOV Program in the Department of Psychiatry at the CHA. She works with high-risk, police-referred youth and their families via the Youth Service Providers Network of the City of Boston, an agency that bases social workers in area police stations.

Space is limited. Please R.S.V.P. by Monday, June 18th for this event. Contact Ellie Zambrano, La Alianza's Clinical Director, at (617) 427-7175 Ext. 204 or ezambrano@laalianza.org

Volunteer with La Alianza this Summer

Seeking fundraising, finance and Celebra la Vida Con Salud Y Trova volunteers



La Alianza has a long history of activism and volunteer leadership. Our Founding Director, **Frieda Garcia** (pictured with current Board Members Lisette Garcia and Johanna Richwagen) set the tone 37 years ago when she inspired many members of the community to invest their time and talent in La Alianza.

Recruiting volunteers in the following areas:

- Celebra la Vida Con Salud Y Trova Event Committee
- Health educators for Celebra la Vida Con Salud Y Trova event on July 15th
- Fundraising Committee
- Finance Committee
- Aliancianos Unidos Elders Program volunteers
- Tutors for English and Technology
- Marketing volunteers

For more information, please contact Johanna Richwagen at jrichwagen@laalianza.org

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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