

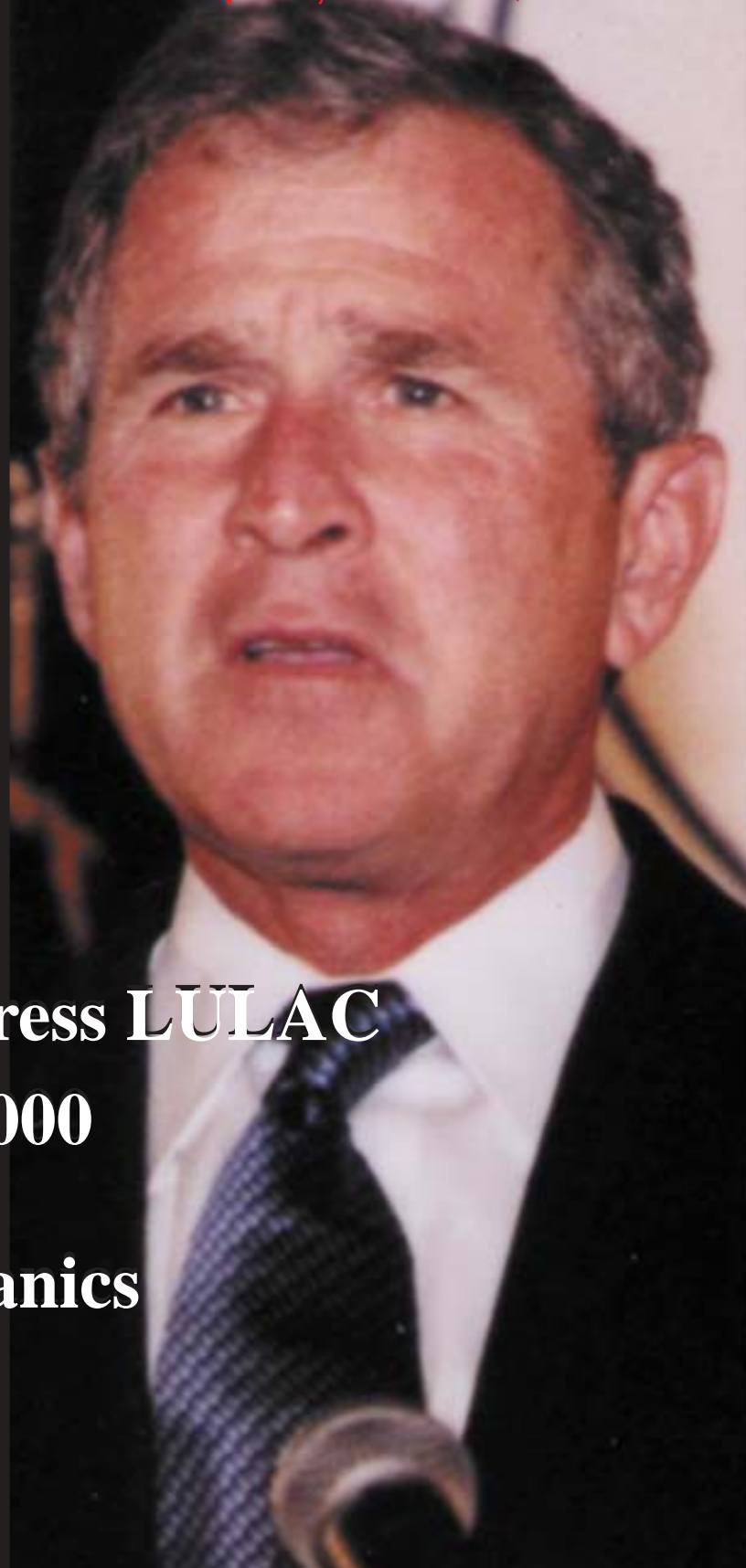
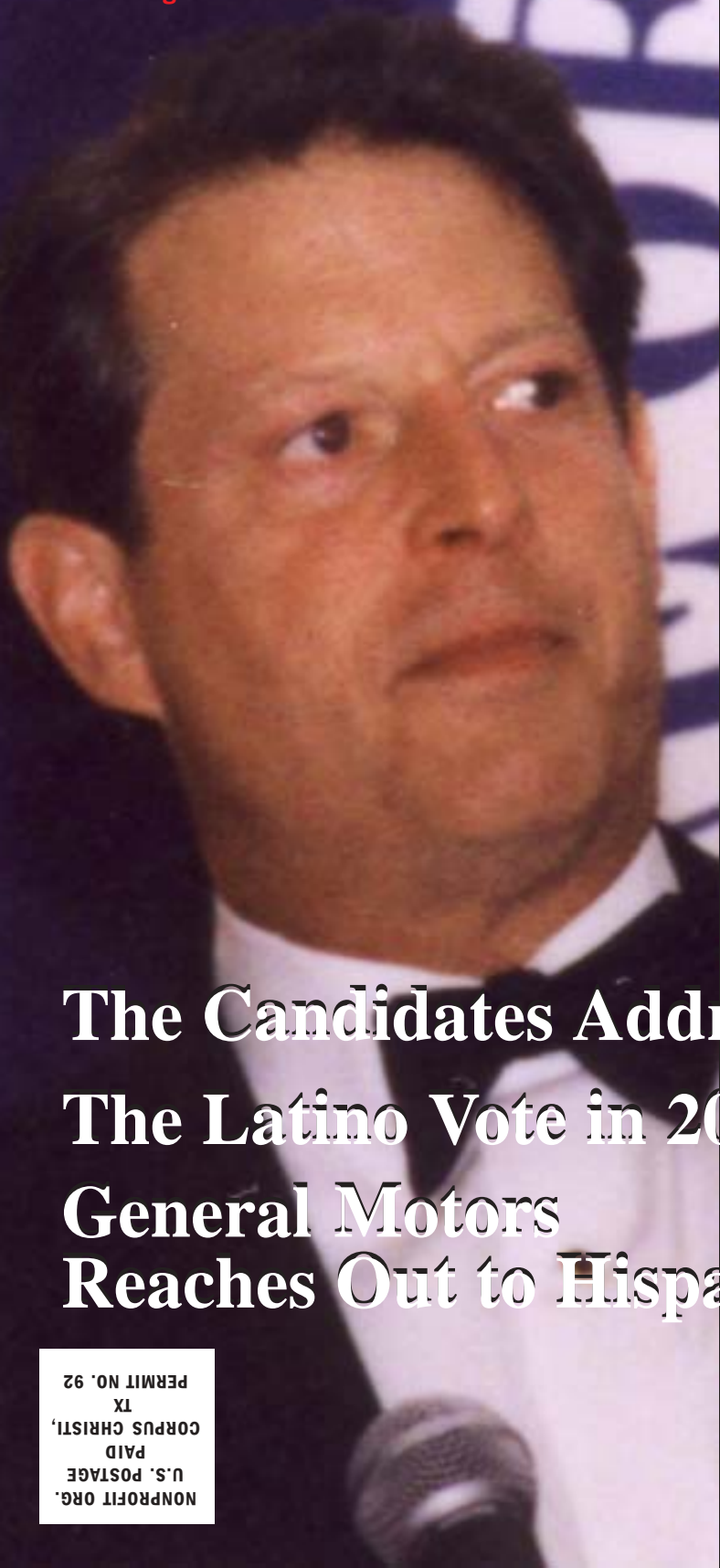
Highlights from the 2000 National Convention

LULAC

League of United Latin American Citizens

NEWS

September/October 2000 \$4.50



The Candidates Address LULAC

The Latino Vote in 2000

**General Motors
Reaches Out to Hispanics**

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President's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LULAC:



First of all, I would like to thank you for choosing me as your leader for another year. I have been blessed with the honor of serving you for the past two years and I look forward to leading LULAC into the next century. I also would like to thank all of the LULAC members who traveled to our nation's capital to participate in our 71st national convention. What a convention it was!

The Latino Vote

Those of you who made it to the convention had the exciting opportunity to hear from presidential candidates George W. Bush and Al Gore. We listened closely as they talked about some of their initiatives and what they plan to do for our community should they be elected president. The reason that Bush and Gore took the time out of their busy campaign schedules to address LULAC is that they both know how important the Latino vote will be this November.

I mention this to you because it is crucial that we register every single eligible Hispanic voter this fall and get out to the polls on Election Day. There is nothing of greater importance this year than demonstrating our political influence and showing all of America that Latinos are here to stay and our voices will be heard. If we expect the future to be brighter and changes to occur that better ourselves and our community, we must speak through the polls and exercise our right and duty as American citizens.

I call on our membership throughout the nation to organize voter registration drives and inform not only your fellow LULAC members, but all members of the Latino community about what is at stake in the upcoming elections and how we all can make a difference. It does not matter whether you vote Republican, Democratic, or for any other party. What matters is that your vote is counted and that you are part of the Democratic process that makes America so great.

Membership

Now that we have concluded the most successful LULAC national convention in the organization's history, it is time to return our focus back to the community we serve.

We are the only Hispanic membership organization with a grassroots base that extends across the land and to the island of Puerto Rico. Now is the time to continue the great work we have started by increasing membership and devoting more time to the programs and community work that help our neighborhoods and people prosper.

In order to continue advocating for Latinos on Capitol Hill, generating enough revenue to adequately run the organization and its programs, and taking positive steps forward in this new century, LULAC must continue to grow its membership. We have many go-getters out in the community who are striving to make LULAC the best and biggest organization we can be. But we can do more.

We are strong in Texas, our birthplace, and in many states like

California, Illinois, Florida, and the island of Puerto Rico. We must continue to reach out in those states to members of the community who are not part of LULAC. But we also need to start looking in places we have not traditionally seen Latino faces.

As I travel the country, I see so many brown faces in places like Tennessee, Maryland, Minnesota, Connecticut, Idaho and many others. Our numbers are growing all over the country. What better time than now to reach out our hands and educate our fellow Latinos about LULAC and the work we do to improve the lives of our people?

We also need to look at the states where LULAC can grow. Places like New York, Nevada, Virginia, Georgia, Colorado, Massachusetts and Indiana. While we have a presence in many areas, there is room to increase council numbers and membership to levels never before seen in our organization.

I will be working with the LULAC National Board of Vice Presidents and State Directors in an attempt to drive all LULACers to go out and start membership drives in their communities. You can use special events such as job fairs, conventions, meetings and other gatherings to hand out membership pamphlets and information. You can also push LULAC membership at the same time you are registering people in your community to vote. The two go hand-in-hand, voting so your voice can be heard and increasing that voice by joining the oldest and largest Latino organization in the nation. Let's work together to increase our council numbers and membership nationwide.

The Future of LULAC

The upcoming year and beyond will either demonstrate the increased power of Latinos or a lost opportunity. As we grow into the largest minority (we are already there if you include Puerto Rico), we must also grow economically.

LULAC has recently entered into an agreement with Mastercard that will help Latinos learn more about saving and investing money. The partnership calls for Mastercard to work with select LULAC councils as a pilot, providing counseling and literature to assist our community in increasing its economic status.

We also will be proceeding with our Empower the Community Through Technology Program. This will develop community centers around the country where Latinos can go to get access to the Internet and receive computer training. It will help many members of the Latino community become computer literate, enabling them to be considered for jobs they otherwise may not qualify for. By doing so, it directly impacts the economic status of a family, and when applied to many families across the country, can have a major impact on the financial well-being of our growing neighborhoods.

Let us not squander the opportunities before us. The future of the Latino community in America is brighter than ever. We must seize the moment as LULACers and increase membership, register more voters, and make our voices heard in November.

Sincerely,



Rick Dovalina
LULAC National President

LULAC Displays Latino Political Power at 71st National Convention

Highlighted by the appearance of two presidential candidates, one former presidential candidate, numerous policy workshops filled to capacity, a 160-booth exhibit area, a job fair, and a week full of exciting events, LULAC's 71st Annual Convention was the most successful convention in LULAC's history.

Working from the theme of "Building Unity for the New Millennium," the convention returned to the nation's capital for the first time in ten years, focusing on critical issues in the Latino community, the importance of the Latino vote in 2000, and a new direction for LULAC in the next century.

The Power of Latinos in 2000

Latinos' ability to affect the outcome of the presidential election this year has been in the national spotlight, particularly with the media. But this phenomenon proved itself true when the Democratic nominee, Vice President Al Gore, and the Republican nominee, Texas Governor George W. Bush, made special points to stop by and address the LULAC membership.

Even Senator John McCain (R-AZ), who strongly challenged Bush in the Republican primaries, made a point of reaching out to Latinos, who could possibly be an even bigger part of the electorate in 2004 should he decide to run again.

Bush kicked off the convention, appearing at the Friends of LULAC Luncheon on Monday afternoon. He was greeted by an enthusiastic LULAC crowd and said that as the Governor of Texas, he was proud of the state's diversity.

"Texas is a better place because of the Hispanic influence," said Bush. "Texas is rich in our diversity and better for it."

He highlighted entrepreneurial growth among Latinos, the positive impact of NAFTA on Mexico and Latin America, and put forth his new initiative to reform the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

"I am going to ask the Congress to create two separate agencies," said Bush, "one for law enforcement, every nation must protect their borders, and we can do so in a humane way."

"But the other half of the INS equation is the service side, the immigration side, where

people ought to be asking, 'How can I help you?', not how long the line will be. We ought to be saying loud and clear to people that the INS is to help families and to help people understand the maze of rules and regulations. The INS needs reform, and that's exactly what I am going to do should I become the president."

Bush went on to say that family members should be able to be reunited with their families while they wait for their applications to be processed. He talked about education, saying that schools should be held more accountable, and that he rejects English Only and supports English Plus.

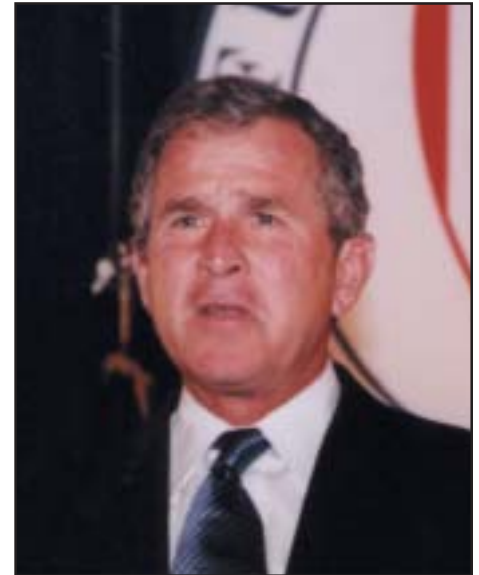
The Republican candidate closed his speech by asking for the vote in November.

"I'm not too bashful to ask for the vote," he said. "I was raised in Texas politics, where it's said, 'if you don't ask, you don't get.' I'm here asking."

Sen. McCain addressed the Unity Luncheon on Thursday. He highlighted his thirteen years as a senator in Arizona and mentioned how proud he was to represent so many Hispanics. He also expressed his strong support for bilingualism.

"I love to hear Spanish spoken on the streets of Phoenix," he said. "Yes, we all need to speak English if we are to succeed in this country. But no one should have to abandon the language of their birth to learn the language of their future."

McCain discussed the growing His-

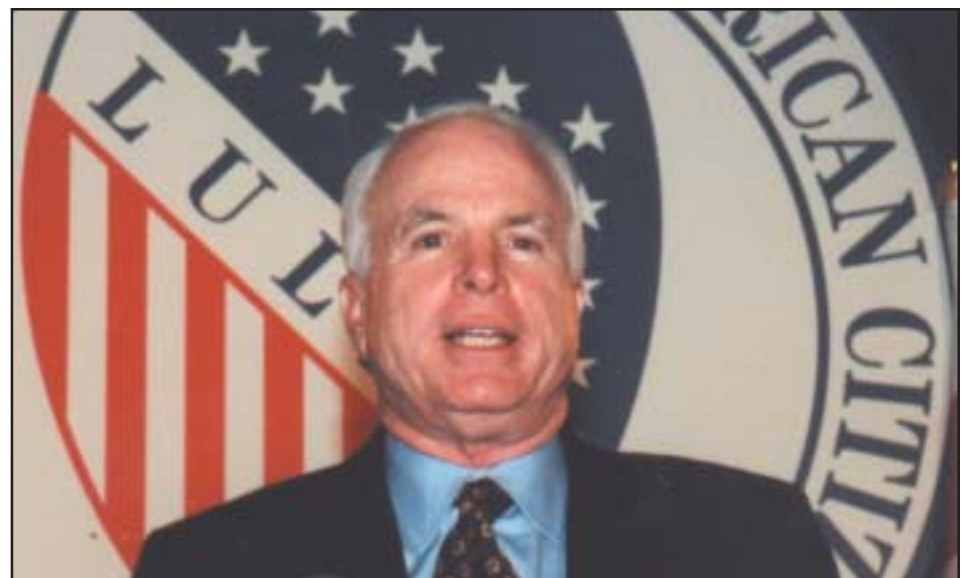


Texas Governor George W. Bush asks for the Latino vote in the upcoming elections. (Luis Nuño)

panic population and the increased buying power and political capabilities that accompany that. He then spent the last five minutes of his speech talking about his former rival Bush and the upcoming election. He strongly advocated for the Texas Governor and asked that everyone support his fellow Republican in November.

"Governor Bush leads my party, and I believe that ours is the party that best rewards work," he added. "He has a well-earned reputation for reaching out to all his constituents in pursuit of a stronger national unity."

Vice President Al Gore arrived at the convention on Friday to keynote the Presidential Banquet. He was introduced by United States Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson, who himself received a standing



Arizona Senator John McCain jokes with the LULAC audience. (Luis Nuño)

ovation for his long-term commitment and work on behalf of the Latino community.

Gore opened on a personal note, mentioning the 30th wedding anniversary he and his wife Tipper had just celebrated. He also said he was excited about his grandson's first birthday soon to come and that you could already hear his first word, "abuelito."

He then went on to more serious issues, talking about the need to improve the nation's schools. He called for the hiring of 100,000 new teachers, higher standards for teachers and smaller class sizes. He also stated that the nation needed to upgrade health care.

"I'll fight for a Patients' Bill of Rights because you should always get the best health care, not just the cheapest," Gore said. "I am committed to bring access to fully affordable health coverage to every child in this nation by the end of the next presidential term."

He mentioned the judicial nomination of Enrique Moreno in Texas and the political game played by Congress in regards to many minority nominees. He also expressed hope about continuing toward the goal of building one America that celebrates and transcends our differences.

He closed by also asking for the vote. "Let's take the White House in November," he stated. "If you believe we can unleash the promise of every brave young Latino in this nation, not just on the fields of battle, but in every field of endeavor, then join with me."

Themes of the Day

Throughout the week, convention participants focused on the most important issues facing the Latino community today. Each day of the convention concentrated on a specific issue or "theme of the day."

On Monday, participants in LULAC's National Training Institute discussed the need to increase Hispanic representation in government. District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams welcomed LULAC to the city. Participants later heard from Janice LaChance, Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and her Deputy Director John Sepulveda. They discussed the lack of Hispanics working in federal government and LULAC members expressed their concern in regards to Hispanics being therefore underserved.

Government and grassroots partnerships was the theme for Tuesday. The day opened with an awards ceremony honoring our nation's top law enforcement officials. Throughout the day, several prominent speak-



Vice President Al Gore at the Presidential Banquet. (Luis Nuño)

ers, including Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, highlighted the need for increased collaboration between the government and the community it serves. There was also a panel discussion on building unity among our nation's diverse communities in order to achieve common goals.

Wednesday focused on economic empowerment as the main issue leading the new civil rights agenda. Issues such as the digital divide, smart money management, Latinos in organized labor, and the growing income gap facing Latinos in the new economy, were addressed throughout the day. Participants heard from Leo Guzman of Guzman and Company, the only Latino to hold a seat on the New York Stock Exchange. They also listened to George Herrera, President of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Congress-

man Joe Baca (D-CA), and George Muñoz, President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

We made an effort to redefine the Latino image on Thursday, with a special emphasis on the negative portrayal of Latinos in the media and the lack of representation in front of and behind the cameras. Other issues covered included new trends in civil rights, Puerto Rico in the new century, diversity and multiculturalism, and immigration. Key speakers included Dr. Carlos Pesquera, 2000 gubernatorial candidate for Puerto Rico, Hon. Carlos Romero Barceló, Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Gloria Tristani, FCC Commissioner, Maria Echaveste, Deputy Chief of Staff at the White House, and Fred Soto, motivational speaker.

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Energy Secretary Bill Richardson receives a tremendous welcome among LULAC friends at the Presidential Banquet. (Luis Nuño)

2000 LULAC National Convention

Photos by Luis Nuño



Conference participants try their luck at Casino Night, sponsored by Council 11041.



National VP for Youth Juan Carlos Lizardi and Youth President Victoria Neave (third & fourth from right) smile with youth awardees.



National President Rick Dovalina discusses Latino issues with Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush.



Dr. Carlos Pesquera, Puerto Rico gubernatorial candidate, addresses members at the Unity Luncheon.



LULAC National Treasurer Hector Flores receives the Ohtli Award from Mexican Ambassador Jesús F. Reyes-Heróles.



Board members Blanca Vargas and Regla González help President Dovalina and his wife Lisa open the exhibit area.



President Dovalina and his wife Lisa relax in the friendly atmosphere of the Phoenix Convention Bureau's booth.



LULAC Women Hall of Fame Award recipients stand together at the Luncheon dedicated in their honor.



USHCC President George Herrera, MasterCard's Catherine Cummings, President Dovalina and Leo Guzman of Guzman and Co. join hands for future Latino economic development.



LULACers enjoy the festivities at Noche de Puerto Rico.



The White House's Mickey Ibarra, Rick Dovalina, and Army Secretary Louis Caldera with David Adame, winner of the Felix Tijerina award for service to the League and LULAC member for 50 years.



President Rick Dovalina with General Motors Vice President Rod Gillum.



President Dovalina presents Rafael Garcia of the Philip Morris Co. with a small token of appreciation.



Overseas Private Investment Corporation President George Muñoz addresses the Washington Gala.



Members of the Puerto Rico panel, including Miriam Ramírez de Ferrer, Jeffrey Farrow of the White House, Dr. Carlos Pesquera of the New Progressive Party, and Puerto Rico Resident Commissioner Carlos Romeró-Barcelo address the media.



Youth from LNES's Young Readers Program make their way through the exhibit area.

Growing Clout

The Power of the Latino Vote

As the November elections loom closer, parties and candidates are reaching out to the Latino community in ever growing numbers. Estimates from the U.S. Census confirming the rapid expansion of the Latino population have created a tidal wave of activities aimed at wooing Hispanic voters across the nation.

Since 1990, 1.5 million Latinos have become naturalized U.S. citizens. There will be close to 7 million registered Latino voters

one's point of origin, length of time in United States, and income levels.

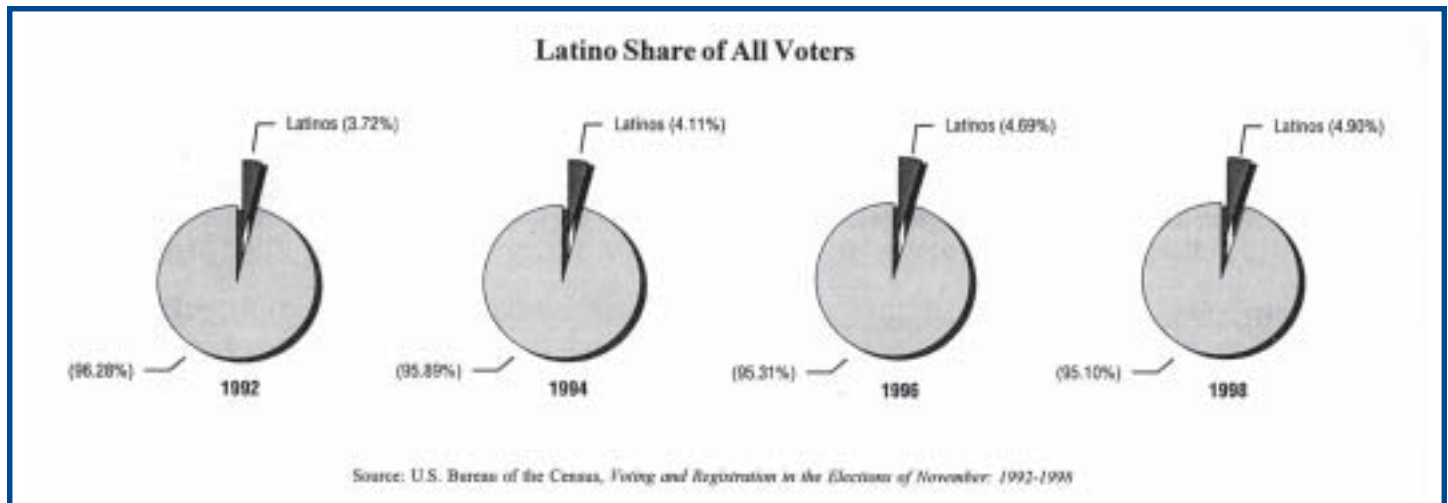
Although Latinos share a common history of Spanish colonialism and similar nation building, they differ in political processes and agendas. Despite having citizenship, Puerto Ricans can vote in a presidential election only if they live on the mainland and establish residency. Cuban-Americans are concentrated in South Florida and tend to be conservative. Mexican-American voting pat-

terns are very issue-oriented, divided according to income levels and generation. And other groups such as Central Americans are just starting to realize that they too have a voice and can play a significant role in the upcoming elections.

According to studies and polls by the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, the Public Broadcast Latino Poll 2000, the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, and the National Hispanic Council on Aging, the hot issues unifying Latinos this election year include education, racism and prejudice, economic empowerment, and English-language acquisition. Moreover, in two of the studies, high numbers of respondents also favored stronger gun control laws, greater access to quality health insurance, and penalties for companies polluting the environment.

As pollsters attempt to predict the Latino vote, Latino voters are assessing the presidential candidates' positions on these very issues. At LULAC's National Convention in Washington, D.C., members converged to discuss the issues most salient to their local communities.

Education, and more specifically, a



across the nation by November. In California, Texas, Florida, Illinois and New York, five key electoral states, Latinos have emerged as powerful allies for candidates seeking office.

Like any voting group, Latinos are not easily categorized and voting patterns neatly generalized. However, several major factors play out as key decision-making variables:

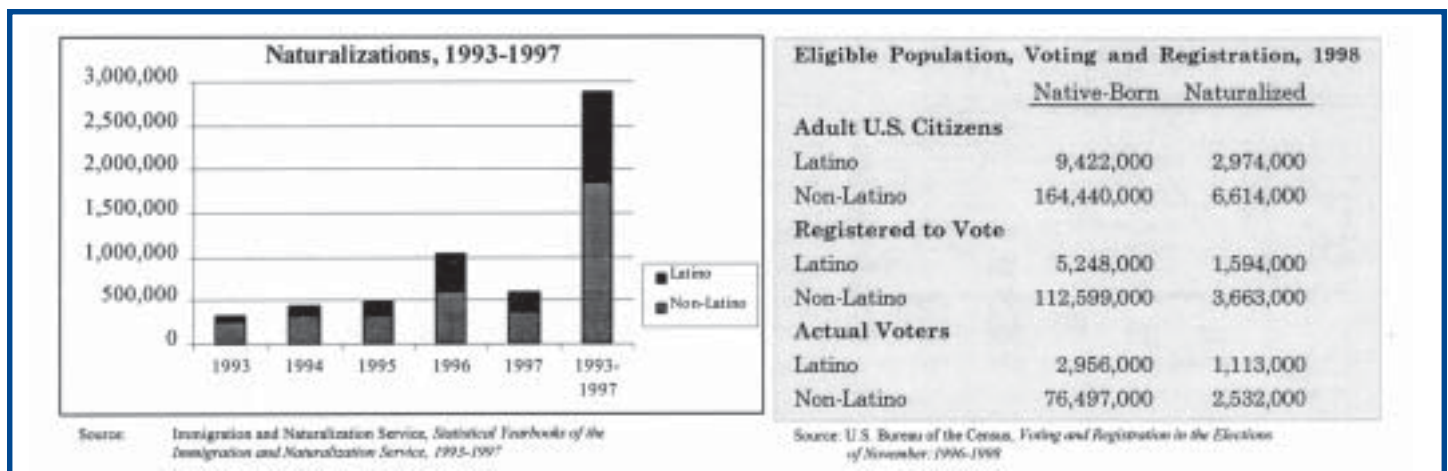
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According to studies and polls by the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, the Public Broadcast Latino Poll

commitment to turn around the school systems serving Latino students across the nation, arose as one of the most vital problems. Other important issues for LULAC members include a laundry list of civil rights issues:

- the fair and humane treatment of foreigners on U.S. soil irrespective of their status of documentation;

(continued on next page)



LULAC Voter 2000

Organizing Your Community

Grassroots organizing is among one of the most difficult, but gratifying civic tasks that LULAC members engage in. The following information will help to facilitate your organizing efforts. The suggestions vary for each situation that presents itself. However, they do provide a common point of departure for the organizer to begin.

There are levels to organizing. It is helpful to create a LULAC Voter 2000 Committee to set voter mobilization goals and strategies that are tailor-made for your community, as well as divide the tasks into doable segments.

Use the internet to engage in the political process. By using the internet, LULAC Voter 2000 Committees can more easily coordinate your grassroots members into initiating advocacy campaigns and voter mobilization. Obtain copies of district maps that show the political districts in your city and county so you can target specific neighborhoods. Ask for e-mail addresses to begin a database to send out reminders that voting day is approaching. Put an announcement on your Council's web-site. Work with your Youth and Young Adults Councils. Help them earn school credit.

Make sure that your community is aware that you are leading a Latino voter crusade. Announce your efforts in the commu-

nity and university newspapers, post signs in specially marked public areas at shopping malls and supermarkets that are frequented by large numbers of the Latino community. Call your local radio stations and ask them to announce your LULAC Voter 2000 drive during their news programs. Select a spokesperson to speak to the media on the importance of the Latino vote and Latino issues. Work with other organizations to spread the word into as many neighborhoods as possible.

Developing Community Interest

Most LULAC members participate in ongoing voter registration. However, because of the importance of this election year, we are examining what can be done to increase the rate of Hispanic voter turnout. One of the most important factors for increasing the Latino vote is voter mobilization by Latino groups, such as LULAC.

Because of our organizational structure, LULAC councils are particularly well suited for this effective means of getting out the vote. The LULAC Vote 2000 Committee is familiar with the neighborhood, local sporting clubs, schools and churches. The community's familiarity with LULAC creates mutual trust. According to the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI), in a state-by-state analysis conducted in California, Texas, and

Florida, community-based voter mobilization played an important role in increasing Hispanic turnout.

Well-designed strategies that target both registered voters and non-registered voters will be important to the engagement of Latinos in the voting process. A focus on groups that are most unlikely to vote could mobilize a substantial and immediate response from native-born and newly naturalized citizens.

Latinos who are encouraged to vote as a result of personal contacts by influential Latinos are far more likely to vote than those not contacted. Therefore, old-fashioned campaigning and field canvassing is important, especially when linked to contact with recognized Latino leaders in the community.

Picking a Registration Site

Voter mobilization campaign strategies reach only small numbers because they are highly labor-intensive. It is important to pick a site that large numbers of people have access to. Call your local election board or the local chapter of the League of Women Voters to ask for information about placing registration stations. Excellent locales include supermarkets, local fairs, fiestas, community events, and public parks.

7-Eleven stores have offered the use of their retail locations to LULAC members for voter registration purposes throughout the month of September. To find out about a store near you, contact: Janey Camacho, 7-Eleven's National Consumer and Latino Affairs Manager at 214/841-6585.

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- the deescalation of race and ethnically-related violence, particularly in the Southwest border region;
- the equal treatment of citizens of Latino origin in the employment place and by government officials;
- representation at all levels of government at a similar rate as that of population growth; and
- better access to technology and tools for financial growth.

One of the biggest challenges we face in our efforts to make change is voter turnout. Although many Hispanics are registered to vote, the mobilization of a large turnout at the polls requires a point of unification that everyone can latch on to.

Even though the number of Latino registered and actual voters has continued

to increase each election for the past decade, we have yet to reach our true potential. In 1998, only 59 percent of Latino registered voters showed up at the polls, compared to 68 percent of non-Latinos.

Another lesser-known fact about Latinos voters is that naturalized Latinos are more likely to vote than native born Latinos. In 1998, almost 70 percent of naturalized Latinos exercised their right to vote, compared to only 56 percent of native born Latinos.

This trend must not continue. As more members of our community become naturalized in the next five to ten years, it is critical that the native born voters turn out at the polls. If the Hispanic community is to achieve equal power and representation in the near future, we must attempt to mobilize all Latino registered voters and make our voices heard like

never before.

LULAC is on the front lines in this election year battle. We have initiated "LULAC Voter 2000" (see above) to help the grassroots efforts in registering more voters and informing Latinos in the community of the importance of voting.

"We are setting up a program where our membership and others can go to our website or contact us directly to get information on organizing," said Gabriela Lemus, LULAC Director of Policy and Legislation. "We plan on assisting over 50,000 Hispanics to register this year and we are dedicated to ensuring that the growing Latino presence makes itself known in November and the years beyond."

(Charts from the 2000 Latino Election Handbook, published by the NALEO Educational Fund.)

The Candidates on the Issues



Republican Nominee
Texas Governor George W. Bush



Democratic Nominee
Vice President Al Gore

Favors some privatization of Social Security. Proposes younger workers have the option to put part of their payroll taxes into investment accounts.

Social Security

Opposes any privatization of Social Security, calling it “risky.” However, he favors new tax-free investments in order to supplement Social Security.

Proposes vouchers for parents who want to send their children to private schools if the students are in public schools that don’t meet state standards. Favors the creation of charter schools.

Education

Opposes school vouchers or any plan that will take away money from public schools. Supports universal preschool coverage, more funding for student loans, and decreasing class size.

Proposes giving low-income Americans tax credits to buy private health insurance. Wants to strengthen tax incentives to small businesses that provide health care to employees. Promises to make prescription drugs available and affordable for every senior citizen.

Health Care

Promises to move toward universal health coverage. Wants to have all children covered by 2004. Promises to fight for “a real and enforceable patients’ bill of rights.” Promises to fight for free prescription drugs for seniors under Medicare.

Proposes to reduce tax rates for everyone. Promises to abolish the death tax so families can pass on property to their loved ones.

Taxes

Proposes a targeted tax cut aimed at the middle and lower classes.

Bush has said that “he supports the spirit of no quotas, no preferences.” Supports a Texas law requiring public universities to admit the top 10 percent of every high school’s graduating class.

Affirmative Action

Promises to honor the ideal of equality by “standing up for civil rights and defending affirmative action.”

Supports the language in the Republican platform calling for a constitutional amendment to ban abortion procedures. Favors adoption and parental notification. Promises to fight for a ban on so-called “partial birth abortions.”

Abortion

Promises to protect and defend a woman’s right to choose. “The last thing this country needs is a Supreme Court that overturns *Roe v. Wade*,” said Gore in his acceptance speech.

Favors splitting the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) into two agencies — one to handle enforcement, the other to deal with immigration services. Favors increasing visas for highly-skilled workers. Has supported expansion of a program that allows temporary workers to come in and fill the demand for farm labor. Supports the change of registry date.

Immigration

Favors bilingual education and allowing immigrants to qualify for federal benefits. Supports the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), the change of registry date, and late amnesty for immigrants. Supports 245(i), which allows families to stay together while awaiting their papers. Opposes the division of the INS.

(Content provided by Latino.com)



LULAC Gives Donation To Go to Scholarships

LULAC National Vice President for the Northeast Regla González presented the Chelsea's Commission on Hispanic Affairs a check of \$19,848 at a press conference June 13, 2000. The Commission will use the money to administer scholarships for higher education.

The donation is part of a \$1.8 million settlement awarded to LULAC after filing suit against Trinity Broadcasting in 1991. Trinity misrepresented itself, going against federal regulations to create more minority-owned stations, in order to obtain licenses for their TV ministry program. LULAC has donated the money to over 48 minority organizations working to improve conditions for Latinos in this country.

At the same press conference, the Commission presented Claudia Garzon with their scholarship for the year 2000.

LULAC Gives the Scholarships Too

LULAC Council 12113 held its annual scholarship ceremony this past month in the Great Hall of the Massachusetts State House. Six Latino youth received money toward their expenses at the university of their choice.



(l-r) Joselyn Chico, LULAC Council 12119 President; Daniel Viggiani, VP of the Commission Board; Sara Barrientos, Mass. State Director; Cesar Martinez, Mass. State Treasurer; Regla González, National VP for the Northeast; Claudia Garzon, Scholarship Recipient; Eugene O'Flaherty, Mass. State Representative; Guy Santagate, City Manager; Guillermo Quinteros, Acting Director of the Commission; and other leaders.

Hon. Thomas Birmingham, President of the Massachusetts State Senate was in attendance and he offered a few words.

"Education, especially higher education, has the wonderful capacity to transform your life as it did mine," he said. "You have a bright future ahead of you and I wish you the best of luck in your new endeavors."

"I would also like to commend LULAC for its commitment to broadening educational opportunities for young Latinos."

Arizona Council Holds Latina Heritage Awards

Arizona LULAC Council 1083 of North Phoenix held their first ever Latina Heritage Awards recognition banquet on June 17, 2000. The event was held at Heritage Square in Phoenix.

Four outstanding Latinas received the prestigious awards, distinguishing themselves by their extraordinary contributions toward the betterment of Latinas in the state of Arizona. The recipients were:

- Cecilia Burgos-Chavez, Law Enforcement, City of Phoenix;
- Teri Cruz, Pioneer Community Services and Phoenix SER, Chicanos por la Causa;
- Maria Isabel Salas, Bilingual Education Teacher of the Year; and
- Mary Fimbres, Educational Leadership.

Young Adult Council Holds Leadership Conference

St. Mary's University Young Adult Council held their Third Annual Leadership Conference this past April in San Antonio. Entitled "Liberation Through Education," the event attracted over 200 high school students.

Participants took part in workshops facilitated by professors focusing on obtaining goals and becoming a leader in the community and school environment.



(l-r) Nayda Martínez, LULAC Council 12113 President; Sara Barrientos, Mass. State Director; scholarship recipients Ariel Sosa, Jennifer Savage, Alexander Reyes, and Margaret Pimentel; Thomas Birmingham, President of the Mass. State Senate; scholarship recipients Manuel Díaz and Roberto Ortíz; and Regla González, National VP for the Northeast.

Texas State Convention Highlights Education Issues

This year in the state where LULAC was first conceived and established in 1929, Texas LULAC hosted its 71st Annual State Convention to address the issues of representation and discrimination in the 21st century.

“As we entered the new millennium, we were confronted with a fresh onslaught of racial profiling, immigrant bashing, and public stereotyping,” said Roman Palomares, Texas LULAC State Director. “Seventy one years after the inception of our organization, LULAC is as necessary and vital to the advancement of Hispanics as ever.”

The convention, held in Lubbock, TX, from June 1-3, 2000, brought together members from across Texas for educational workshops, election of state officers, and discussion of the issues that most impact the economic prosperity of Latinos in Texas.

Hot topics included administration of justice, education, and health issues. In addition, the conference featured advanced leadership training for district directors and local council presidents to empower them to deal with these issues at the local level.

“Along the border, Hispanics are hunted by vigilantes for sport; our educational system is failing our youth; and we are still underrepresented in the three branches of government,” said Palomares. “These are issues that we must take in hand immediately. We cannot afford another century of civil rights struggles.”

Texas LULAC, which has long claimed education as its top priority, unveiled a 14-point plan to improve public school instruction for Texas Hispanic children at the convention. The Texas LULAC Education Initiative lists over 30 recommendations that would drastically change the way school districts provide instruction to students.

“Our education system is failing our youth,” said Palomares. “Our children go into the system with the same expectations and potential for success as any other child in



The Texas LULAC Education Committee (l to r) René Lara, Texas Education Co-Chair; Roman Palomares, Texas State Director; Gloria González, National Education Chair; Robert Gamboa, Texas Education Co-Chair; and Adrian Rodríguez, District 3 Director.

Texas, but we continue to suffer a higher dropout rate, lower scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, and fewer students entering post-secondary education. This is an intolerable situation and we must take immediate action to reverse these trends. As the Texas education system appears to be unwilling or unable to address these issues, Texas LULAC is committed to advancing an education agenda that holds the system accountable for meeting the educational needs of Texas’ Hispanic children.”

LULAC’s plan calls not only for preserving bilingual education but goes a step further to recommend that all children in Texas should have the option of learning both English and Spanish in elementary school

upon parental request.

“Texas children should have the opportunity to learn both English and Spanish in order to fully function in Texas’ rapidly growing economy,” said Rene Lara, Texas LULAC Education Committee Co-Chair. “With the advent of NAFTA and the realization that we live in a global economy, it is increasingly important that all children develop their language and communication skills.”

Addressing the needs of Hispanic students is more critical than ever as Hispanic children have in recent years become the majority of students enrolled in Texas public schools. By 2005, Hispanics will also dominate the Texas workforce.

(continued on page 23)



Texas State Director Roman Palomares with the Hispanic Journal’s President/CEO Denise Nuño, Vice President/COO Luis Nuño, and their award for Media of the Year.

San Antonio District Officials Garner Top State Awards

At the recent League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) State Convention held in Lubbock, two local officials of LULAC District XV garnered top honors for their tireless work and efforts on behalf of the Hispanic community.

District XV includes all of the San Antonio area and represents over 1,000 members. District Director Henry Rodriguez, who was unanimously re-elected to the post in April, was honored as the "District Director of the Year."

Over the past year and a half, Rodriguez has been instrumental in leading the way on various key initiatives. Immediately upon having won his position in April 1999, he quickly set out to secure and establish an office for the district. One of his many goals was to make sure that the district's members were kept informed of all activities so that they could be better served. He has made a commitment to achieve an excellent attendance record at all state meetings and his hands-on-approach to dealing with issues includes personally handling all correspondence that comes into the district office.

Shortly after having established the district office, Rodriguez set up an office for a civil rights director and later co-organized and conducted the first successful statewide Civil Rights Symposium along with District XV officials, Ms. Lourdes Rodriguez and Sam Alvarado. The event was a great success and is now being considered by the state director as an annual event.

In addition, Rodriguez has participated in numerous Cesar Chavez efforts and has led the way for additional participants to become more aware of the plight of the valiant farm worker leader. He has also taken under his wing other important issues affecting Hispanics by forming instrumental alliances with key organizations in the areas of health, housing and education.

Through these alliances, he is responsible for a recent partnership formed with the Free Diabetes Clinic that provides diabetes medical services at no charge. Rodriguez has also worked to rebuild solid relationships with corporate America and community leaders as well as creating more unity and harmony within the district.

"His success is due not only to his dedi-

cation and commitment to the people of this community, but to the fact that he's there when needed, achieves results and is always proactive when it comes to issues that impact those less fortunate," said Elia Mendoza, LULAC District Director for Women.

Mr. Sam Alvarado was also honored, as he was awarded the "Civil Rights Director of the Year." He serves as the district civil rights director as well as chairman of Texas Civil Rights Committee. Under the helm of Rodriguez and Alvarado, the local district office has worked to develop and maintain an organization built on integrity and justice, while helping hundreds of people.

"It's no accident that these two gentlemen have accomplished great things within the district because they share the same vision of attaining equal opportunity, access and justice for the people," said Mary Espiritu, community leader and LULAC member.

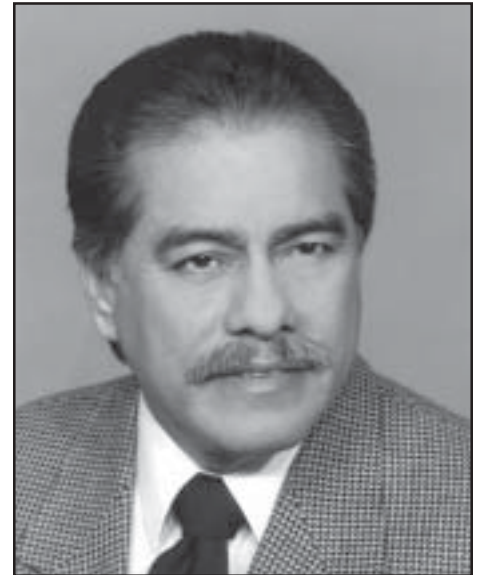
"Both men are highly respected citizens who have worked in the San Antonio community for many years and have unselfishly fought for and have taken on meaningful issues that impact the lives of many people. They are well deserving of these awards because of their positive contributions to LULAC and to this community by making it a better place for all of us to live in."

Sam Alvarado has been referred to as a "dynamic force in Texas" who has carried the banner for equality and justice for over three decades. Over the years, he has championed on behalf of hundreds of people, issues that pertain to fair wages, benefits, legal rights, and even the basic right of free speech.

His valuable community work and expertise in the field of labor has earned him the respect of numerous groups including the Texas State Legislature, when in 1984 he was cited for his major contribution to the working people of San Antonio and for his superb labor-management skills.

In his position as District XV Civil Rights Director, Alvarado has continued to fight injustices of all types and most recently led the initiative to assist Mr. Tony Limon, a young high school athlete who had been given a harsh five year prison sentence by a San Antonio judge for an altercation at a high school basketball game.

Alvarado's efforts in speaking on be-



Mr. Henry Rodriguez, Texas District Director of the Year 2000.

half of Tony Limon did not go unheard and were instrumental in having the young man's case reevaluated. He has labored tirelessly within the district assisting others in need and as chairman of the Texas Civil Rights Committee, has traveled extensively throughout Texas handling statewide situations as well.

Most recently as state chairman, Alvarado co-organized and conducted the state's first Civil Rights Symposium that was widely attended by numerous key officials. The attendees included state lawmakers, national representatives, and numerous groups and organizations from throughout the state.

"Mr. Alvarado is a relentless and tireless advocate of civil rights issues and is an asset to our district and the state LULAC organization," said Lourdes Rodriguez, District XV Deputy Director. "He is thorough, always prepared and is methodical in his presentations and always displays a strong logical sense of handling very delicate civil rights matters."

"His real strengths lie in that he genuinely cares about people and is very perceptive of his own ability to reason with those on the opposite side of the bargaining or arbitration table," she continued.

Rodriguez and Alvarado both received their prestigious awards in front of hundreds of delegates at the main event during the statewide conference.

For civil rights issues in the San Antonio area, or for information on LULAC and councils in the area, the District XV San Antonio office can be reached at (210) 737-3808 or by facsimile (210) 737-9399.

California LULAC Heads in New Direction

Mickie Luna of San Jose Elected State Director

The California League of United Latin American Citizens held their 53rd Annual State Convention and youth summit May 19-21, 2000, in San Jose, bringing together LULAC members from throughout California. This year's convention was sponsored by LULAC District 12, which covers Santa Clara County, San Benito, Santa Cruz and Monterey County.

The convention drew top latino leaders in government and business from around the area. Special guests included San Jose Mayor



California State Director Mickie Luna and San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzalez.

Ron Gonzales, Supervisor Blanca Alvarado, City Councilwoman Cindy Chavez, and the Honorable Gloria Molina, Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, who represented Vice President Al Gore at the LULAC Banquet.

The convention was an exciting, history making event, bringing together delegations from throughout the state to discuss issues, set policies and elect the organization's state leaders. Representatives determined the positions and strategies of the organization in dealing with the critical issues pertaining to Latinos across the state.

This year's convention also focused on youth and their future. It held a youth summit at the National Hispanic University, bringing together students to discuss the high Latino dropout rate, higher education, and how to make a difference.

A special tribute was paid to Mario Obledo, LULAC Past National President and recipient of the highest civilian medal of honor, for his ongoing work in assuring Latinos equality and justice. Latino elected

officials were also honored by Simon Salinas, member of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and candidate for the 28th Assembly district. Sgt. Major Richard Martinez of the East Valley Chapter of the American GI Forum, conducted a dedication to Veterans, who were presented with American flags.

The 53rd annual convention ended with the election of officers to represent California LULAC members at the state and national levels for the next year. Heading the state officers is Mrs. Mickie Luna, new State Director, from Hollister, CA.

Mrs. Luna is well versed on the LULAC organizational structure and issues, as she has held several local, district and state level positions. She was recently the District 12 Director and served as this year's convention chair. She is involved in several Latino organizations and in the past has represented California LULAC in Washington, D.C.

In the 53 years of LULAC's presence in California, Mrs. Luna is the first woman elected to the state directorship from the Central Coast, and including Northern California. She took the oath of office on July 1, 2000, in Washington, DC, along with other state directors from throughout the nation. She will oversee 67 councils, 1500 members,



New California State Director Mickie Luna with Jessica Aguirre, news anchor for KGO-TV in San Francisco.

and several district directors, while representing California LULAC at all national LULAC board meetings and events.

Also elected were Jessica Castro of Anaheim as Deputy State Director; Ed Delgado of Gilroy as State Treasurer; Rose Jurado of Anaheim as Deputy State Director for Women; Manny Marroquin of Mission Viejo as Deputy State Director for Young Adults; and Zeke Hernandez as Deputy State Director for Youth.

The youth also elected their new leadership. Elected were Leslie Vega, State Youth President; Marcy Serrano, 1st Vice President; Maribel De Alba, 2nd Vice President; James Conway, Treasurer; Teresita Rios, Secretary; and Lupita Solis, Sergeant-at-Arms.



California State Chaplain Sal Alvarez smiles with Gloria Molina, Los Angeles County Supervisor, during the California LULAC State Convention 2000.

Arizona 49th Annual State Convention

On May 26- 28, 2000, Arizona LULAC held their 49th Annual State Convention at the Fiesta Inn in Tempe, AZ. Past State Director Frank Carrillo and Councils 361, 284 and 1057 did an outstanding job of coordinating the event. This year's convention brought together members and friends from all backgrounds and ages, including business and community leaders, and public officials.

Arizona LULAC is historically known for its leadership on educational issues and advocacy. This was again evident by the national recognition Council 1057 received from the White House and National Latino Children's Institute regarding their annual Youth Leadership Conference.

The Arizona state assembly passed three very important resolutions during the convention. The first was opposing the Arizona initiative, "English Language Education for Children in Public Schools." The second was opposing the escalation of vigilantism on the Arizona border, and the third referred to creating a national children's holiday, "El Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans."

Important workshops dealing with issues impacting our communities were also held during this very important week. The conference concluded with the election of officers. LULAC is proud to announce the following newly-elected Arizona State Officers:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Mary L. Fimbres, Tucson | State Director |
| Armando Gaytan, Scottsdale | State Deputy Director |
| Teri Martinez, Tucson | Deputy State Director for Women |
| Alberto Soto, Tucson | Deputy State Director for Young Adults |
| Annabelle Nuñez, Tucson | Deputy State Director for Youth |
| Mary Leonardi Portilla, Tucson | State Secretary |
| Javier Herrera, Tucson | State Treasurer |
| Jade Stokes, Tucson | State Chaplain |
| John Martinez, Mesa | State Parliamentarian |
| Mary Lou Ortega, Phoenix | District One Director |
| Melinda Jacobs, Tucson | District Three Director |
| Dr. Hank Oyama, Tucson | Special Advisor to the Director |
| Steve Zozaya, Phoenix | Special Advisor to the Director |
| Raul Lopez, Yuma | Special Advisor to the Director |
| Frank Q. Carrillo | Immediate Past State Director |



Vice President Al Gore shares a moment with LULAC VP for the Far West Richard Fimbres, his wife and new Arizona State Director Mary Fimbres, and their son Joseph.

Arizona LULAC Pushes Self-Determination for Puerto Rico

Lead by National Vice President for the Far West Richard Fimbres, Arizona LULAC is strongly advocating for the process of self-determination for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico. They are currently a commonwealth of the United States with no rights to vote for President and no voting representation in Congress.

In conjunction with the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA), a town hall meeting was held on August 22, 2000, in Tucson, AZ. The event was attended by over 60 people who listened to Alfonso Aguilar, executive director of PRFAA, Tommy Ortiz, Director of PRFAA's regional office in Texas, and LULAC representatives explain why it is so important for Puerto Rico to have the right of self-determination.

They specifically called on Congress to appropriate \$2.5 million for an educational campaign in Puerto Rico that would educate island residents on the legality and constitutional viability of their options.

"The people of Puerto Rico have waited long enough for the right to determine their own future," said Fimbres. "LULAC will continue to fight and urge Congress to appropriate the money for an educational campaign."

Aside from the town hall meeting, Arizona LULAC has collected signatures, met with local and national elected officials, including Congressmen Ed Pastor, and addressed the issue before the media.

Annual Awards Luncheon

Arizona LULAC held their annual awards luncheon on September 1, 2000, at the Inn Suites Hotel in downtown Tucson. The event recognizes outstanding citizens of the state who work hard to improve quality of life for all people.

This year's keynote speaker was Guadalupe Gonzalez, FBI Special Agent-In-Charge for the State of Arizona. She presented over 30 FBI Community Service Awards to LULAC members and others who help the community.

LULAC also took the opportunity to thank their corporate sponsors for their support of educational programs.

Puerto Rico Celebrates Eleven Years of LULAC

LULAC members from all over the island gathered in record numbers at the San Juan Hotel and Casino to celebrate their eleventh year as proud LULAC members. The convention was widely covered by the local media, making the headlines in every major newspaper. Participants enjoyed three fun-filled days packed with extraordinary energy, dramatic speeches, and top-notch entertainment.

Founded 11 years ago by Carlos Romero Barceló and a group of visionaries, LULAC Puerto Rico has developed into one of the most active memberships with over 260 councils and close to 4,000 members.

Elsie Valdés, elected to her fourth and final term as Puerto Rico State Director during the convention, is mostly responsible for this unprecedented growth. Ms. Valdés, whose lifetime vocation is teaching, decided to join LULAC as a way of promoting equal rights for the people of Puerto Rico.

“When I first learned of LULAC, I immediately thought about the struggles that we Latinos have in common,” said Valdés. “What LULAC has done and what LULAC has accomplished is remarkable. That is why I joined LULAC, to help and to serve my fellow Latinos in the United States. And to also let them know about the 3.8 million American citizens in Puerto Rico living disenfranchised from the rest of the nation.”

The convention featured a trail of prominent speakers. During the opening ceremony on Friday night, Michael Teldon addressed the crowd on behalf of Energy Secretary Bill Richardson. Teldon, born in Cuba, is the Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Energy. As part of his presentation, he read a letter from Secretary Richardson in which he congratulated Valdés for her efforts and commended LULAC Puerto Rico for its activism.

In his speech, Mr. Teldon highlighted the importance of Latinos working together and the prominent roles that Latinos have taken as part of the Clinton administration.

The convention also included the annual Awards Ceremony. Recipients received their awards from the hands of LULAC National President Rick Dovalina and his wife Lisa. Among the recipients were: Francisco “Pompi” Gonzalez, Civil Rights; State Sena-

tor Lucy Arce, Women of the Year; José Bravo Gumá, Member of the Year; Anatlilde Méndez, Golden Years; and Haydée Rivera, Service to the League.

Among other special recognitions, the program El Nuevo Día Educador, established by El Nuevo Día newspaper, received the Educational Leadership Award. The project, established in 1981, seeks to strengthen classroom learning skills, provide the necessary skills to improve the quality of life, and help students become an integral part of society.

On Saturday morning, LULAC Youth members had the opportunity to hear from Congressional candidate Carlos Nolla of Wichita, KS. Born in Glendale, AZ, he grew up in a military family with his parents and five siblings. The young attorney has devoted his life to helping others and gave up his private practice to run for office.

“The President of the United States has never visited Puerto Rico because he has nothing to gain by it.”

- Dr. Carlos Pesquera
Puerto Rico gubernatorial candidate in 2000.

But the young attorney and rising star in Kansas politics is not new to public affairs. He served as a congressional aide to former U.S. Representative Dan Glickman in the 4th District from 1988 to 1990, providing constituent services in the areas of veterans, military, business and immigration. He was also appointed to the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission, which is the oversight and enforcement agency on ethics, campaign finance and lobbying.

During lunch, participants were entertained by representatives from the local LNEC Center. This group, consisting of children and teenagers, offered a delightful show, that included music, dancing, modeling, folklore, and a tremendous display of talent. Their efforts prompted a standing ovation for a job well done. Have no doubts that some of them will be the Jennifer López and Ricky Martins of the future.

The Puerto Rico Assembly gathered on Sunday to conduct business. They also heard from several prominent speakers.

In a room full of reporters, LULAC National President Rick Dovalina spoke to his Puerto Rican membership. He highlighted the importance of Latinos working together as a cohesive group.

“LULAC has served as a unifying force for all groups and we need to keep working together,” said President Dovalina. “Our organization provides a voice for every group; Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Central Americans and all the other nationalities represented in LULAC.”

Next to speak was Resident Commissioner Carlos Romero-Barceló, Puerto Rico’s sole representative in the U.S. Congress, although with no right to vote on the House floor. He has been a leading voice when it comes to demanding a fair share of federal funds and advocating for the island’s undeniable right to self-determination. Don Carlos, as most people know him, has characterized himself as being an active Member of Congress, who despite his lack of voting rights will always go the extra mile to take care of his constituents’ needs.

The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Carlos I. Pesquera, former Secretary of Transportation for Puerto Rico. Dr. Pesquera, who holds a Ph.D. in structural engineering from Cornell University, is the New Progressive Party’s candidate for governor in the November elections.

He was recognized by LULAC Puerto Rico for his outstanding record of achievement and his work in developing the island’s infrastructure. During his speech, he made it clear that political power is undeniably linked to voting rights.

“The President of the United States has never visited Puerto Rico because he has nothing to gain by it,” said Pesquera. “We cannot be half-citizens of this nation. We ought to be equals among equals.” If elected, Pesquera will be the first LULAC member to become governor.

The convention reached its climax when Jeffrey Farrow, Co-Chair of the White House Interagency Working Group on Puerto Rico, announced President Clinton’s new plan to address the status issue. According to Farrow, the first step is to clarify the options.

“We are going to consider all the ideas and mechanisms to determine which is the best way to proceed,” said Farrow.

Many LULAC members saw Farrow’s visit as a clear message that something may finally happen. Puerto Rico has been a U.S. possession since the Spanish American War of 1898.

Council 1 Raises Money for Scholarships at 41st Annual Feria de las Flores

On a warm, breezy summer day, LULAC Council 1, the founding council of the League of United Latin American Citizens, celebrated its 41st Annual Feria de las Flores Scholarship Fundraising Fiesta and Dance in the sparkling city by the sea, Corpus Christi, TX. As if to renew the city's cultural and political fabric, LULAC packed the world-renowned Selena Auditorium at the Bayfront Convention Center on Saturday, August 12, 2000.

Howls and cheers from cheerleading squads comprised of family, friends and schoolmates rang throughout the auditorium as they supported the Feria de las Flores contestants from Corpus Christi, San Diego, and surrounding communities. The Feria Queen pageant annually draws crowds and personalities from all over Texas and this year was no exception.

Present in the audience were the Mexican General Counsel, Lic. Maria Eugenia Lopez de Roux and her staff. Various other leaders and elected officials were also present along with numerous LULAC officials and members representing local, state and national offices.

The crowd was dressed in their Sunday best as the event was taped for radio and tele-



One of the six contestants shows off her beautiful native dress in the 41st Annual Feria de las Flores.

vision broadcast. Legendary radio personality Victor Ortegon and Mrs. Ortegon were present to extend the official "bienvenida" to the public. LULAC Council 1 President, Ms. Mary Helen Salazar and Feria Chairperson, Mr. Ramiro "Gamby" Gamboa, also welcomed the crowd and contestants and thanked the audience for their support.

Former District Director Henry Gorham and Leticia Mendragon emceed the Feria competition. The mariachi group Los Kinenos entertained and provided background music for the dancers and the enjoyment of all present.

The judges for the event were selected from various corporations, including Southwestern Bell Telephone, American Airlines, and other companies. All the judges expressed their difficulty in selecting the Queen amongst so much talent.

Six beautiful and talented Latinas demonstrated folklorico dances typifying the regional cultures of the Mexican states of Coahuila, San Luis Potosí, Aguascalientes, Chiapas, Tamaulipas and Guerrero. All six beauties dressed in the finest native costumes of their representative states. They battled each other for the right to win \$5,000 and represent LULAC Council 1 as Feria Queen for the upcoming year.

The six contestants were: Amanda Amaro, dancing Las Tres Huastecas; Priscilla Tapia, dancing Las Chiapanecas; Jessica Garza, dancing Las Perlititas; Mariana Garza, dancing El Quereque; Karisa Gonzalez, dancing La Iguana; and Frances de la Garza, dancing Pelea de Gallos.

By 9:30 pm the judges had made their decision and Ms. Mariana Garza was announced the new Feria Queen.

Many of the contestants had invited their families and friends and all joined the contestants on stage to congratulate the winner and runners-up. It was clear on this night that there were no losers.

Each one of the contestants has goals to pursue a college education or a degree. And while there may only be one Feria Queen representing LULAC Council 1 this year, everybody agreed that each contestant was a



New Feria de las Flores Queen Mariana Garza displays her flowers, award and hard-earned crown for a cheering crowd.

winner in their own right.

After forty-one years of hosting the Feria de las Flores, LULAC Council 1 deserves to be commended and applauded for conserving this great cultural tradition and for providing the necessary financial support for Latinas to pursue their dreams. The continuing effort by LULAC volunteers demonstrates the ongoing commitment LULAC has to serving the community and providing money for our youth to pursue higher education.

Immediately after the Feria de las Flores ended, LULAC Council 1 invited the audience to the convention center for the Dance and Banquet. Mr. Pete Astudillo, former member of the group, Selena and the Dinos, entertained the crowd with electrifying Tejano music, including polkas, cumbias, boleros and other music everyone could dance to.

As if this was not enough, there was tasty menudo, tamales, a salad bar and other Mexican delicacies to help everyone in attendance make it through the rest of the night without starving. It was a memorable night for all those in attendance.

Sunday morning, members of LULAC Council 1 got up bright and early to tear down the stage and other set-ups at the Convention Center to get ready for the next project, providing more scholarships for young people.

"I personally prefer that every penny we make go to scholarships for young people," said Ramiro "Gamby" Gamboa, Feria Chairperson. "What matters most to me is helping these young people reach their dreams. Today was just one event on a calendar that we work at all year to raise money for education."

General Motors and The Hispanic Community

As the world's largest manufacturer of automobiles and trucks, we see diversity as a source of the innovation and creativity essential to our success. Our customers in over 190 countries represent a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles with multiple product and service requirements. To meet our customers needs and expectations, we must have a skilled, capable and committed workforce with a wide range of backgrounds, views and experiences.

At General Motors, we have focused our diversity efforts on six strategic areas of our business: human resources, community relations, marketing, education, and economic empowerment issues like supplier and dealer development.

Employment

Nearly 7,000 of GM's employees in the United States are Hispanic. Approximately 12 percent of GM's executives and senior management group are minorities, with 36 of these positions being held by Hispanics. Although the total number of GM employees decreased from 1995 to 2000, minorities as a percentage of the salaried workforce actually increased. GM has been recognized by *Latina Style Magazine*, *Hispanic Magazine*, and *Hispanic Business Magazine* for excellence in providing opportunities for Hispanics and for recruitment programs.

Marketing

Recognizing the growing importance of the Hispanic market, GM has significantly increased its spending and participation in Hispanic markets and events. Not only are we targeting more of our advertis-

ing, we are proudly participating in more Hispanic events than ever. Some of our initiatives include: The National Council of La Raza American Latino Media Arts (ALMA) awards; Latino Grammy Awards; Hispanic Heritage month all over the country; Hispanic Heritage Awards; Vincente Fernandez 2000 concert tour sponsorship; and a Buick Century Spanish language web site. In addition, GM's full-line catalogs are now printed in Spanish and GMAC and GMAC mortgage have introduced products and services aimed at Hispanics.

Supplier Diversity

In 1999, GM purchased \$2.2 billion from minority suppliers in the United States. In 1996, GM purchases from Hispanic vendors totaled \$195 million and three years later, in 1999, that figure increased to \$308 million, a 58 percent increase. GM mentors 12 Hispanic suppliers, three of whom were recognized as GM Suppliers of the Year in 1999. GM requires its direct suppliers to buy 5.5% of their GM business volume from minority suppliers. In 1999, this initiative generated an additional \$1.1 billion in GM-related business to minority suppliers. This is more than double the amount generated in 1998.

Dealer Development

GM was the first domestic automaker to institute a Minority Dealer Development Plan. Currently 326 GM dealerships are minority-owned. Hispanics own 115 dealerships, or 35% of the minority dealerships. At the end of 1999, minority dealers generated a total of more than \$9.5 billion in sales. Hispanic dealers alone generated sales of almost \$3.2 billion. At the

end of 1999, 53 minority dealerships had each generated a net profit before bonuses and taxes of \$1 million or more. Thirty percent of these are Hispanic-owned. Since 1992, the total GM dealer body has decreased by almost 9 percent, while in the same period the number of Hispanic dealerships increased by 60 percent.

Education

In 1999, GM and its marketing divisions gave \$350,000 to the Hispanic Scholarship Fund. In addition, GM gave \$1.7 million in scholarships to more than 900 students either directly or through grant funding to university engineering and graduate business schools. Ninety-one percent of these scholarships were awarded to minorities with Hispanic students receiving thirty-two percent.

Philanthropy

GM supports many national and regional Hispanic organizations, both financially and intellectually with GM executives serving on corporate boards. Among them: National Council of La Raza, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, League of United Latin American Citizens, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Latino Family Services, the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute and many more.

In 1999, GM contributions to Hispanic activities and organizations totaled \$2.6 million, up almost 22 percent from 1997. Contributions to Hispanic organizations and events increased by 676 percent between 1996 and 1999.



General Motors Reaffirms Commitment To Affirmative Action and Diversity

Affirmative action is garnering national attention again, this time at the University of Michigan. General Motors, the number one Fortune 500 company, is leading the way in support of the policy.

GM reaffirmed its position on the side of the debate that ensures diversity when the company filed a legal brief in support of the University of Michigan's affirmative action policies in admissions, which have recently come under fire. The validity of the affirmative action policy of the University of Michigan is being contested in two lawsuits that have been filed by students who claim that the policy is unconstitutional by considering race as a factor for admission.

The brief, filed in the United States District Court, asserts that General Motors stands behind the university's efforts to ensure that they maintain a diverse student body that is truly reflective of the nation and the world at large, and is inclusive rather than exclusive.

"In General Motors' view, only a well-educated, highly diverse workforce, comprised of people who have learned to work

productively and creatively with individuals from a multitude of races and ethnic, religious, and cultural histories, can maintain America's global competitiveness in the increasingly diverse and interconnected world economy," they stated in the brief.

LULAC, which has long supported affirmative action as a method of ensuring civil rights for Latinos and other minority and ethnic groups, applauds General Motors for its corporate activism.

"General Motors is a strong supporter of equal rights and diversity, as shown by its partnership with LULAC and its support of the University of Michigan," said Rick Dovalina, LULAC National President. "We will continue to work side-by-side with GM to ensure that policies helping minority students remain in place."

In a letter to Dovalina, General Motors Vice President Roderick Gillum wrote, "By taking this step, GM recognizes that the business community, which is the recipient of future leaders from such selective institutions, must not be silent during the debate on the

tools necessary to maintain diverse student bodies. The interest of American business is substantial."

The case in Michigan is not the first involving affirmative action in college admission practices. In the last several years, laws passed in California, Texas, and Florida that included regulations to abolish affirmative action or the consideration of race and ethnicity as a factor in college admissions. It has been shown in California that after the law passed disallowing race and ethnicity in college admissions considerations, the minority population in some of the state's most prestigious programs fell drastically.

"The future of the United States depends on a qualified work force that is ethnically diverse and promotes better cooperation and achievement among people of different backgrounds," said Dovalina. "This diversity begins at the college and university level, where the future workforce learns its skills, and affirmative action is a key policy in ensuring the diversity and quality of the United States workers."

(continued from page 7)

The conference wrapped up on Friday, focusing on the most important issue Latinos face, ending the crisis in education. The capacity crowd listened to panelists that included representatives from the White House and the Department of Education. They discussed strategies to alleviate the high dropout rate in the Latino community and the need for more parental involvement. Manuel Isquierdo, Principal of East Morton High School in Cicero, IL, also was on hand to describe how he transformed a low performing, majority Latino school, into one of the best high schools in the state.

Other issues addressed on Friday included the growing strength of Latinas and leadership development. Small Business Administrator Aida Alvarez keynoted the Women's Hall of Fame Luncheon as she highlighted the dramatic growth of Latinas as the fastest growing segment of small business owners in the country. Participants also heard from Janet Murguia, Deputy Campaign Manager for Gore 2000, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) of Houston.

Election of the Board

On Saturday the LULAC National Assembly convened to elect its slate of national officers and set the national agenda for the 2000-2001 term. LULAC National President Rick Dovalina was reelected for a third term.

Newly elected were Frank Ortiz for



Young convention participant Sevestino Ramirez with Vice President Al Gore.

Vice President of the Southwest, Rosa Rosales for Vice President for Women, and former VP for Southwest Hector Flores as Treasurer. Officers reelected were Victoria Neave, National Youth President; Juan Carlos Lizardi, Vice President for Youth; Maria Pizaña, Vice President for Young Adults; Damaris Sifuentes, Vice President for the Elderly; Regla González, Vice President for the Northeast; Carlos López Nieves, Vice President for Southeast; Richard Fimbres, Vice President for the Far West; and Augustin Sanchez, Vice President for the Midwest.

The delegates also voted to have the 2003 LULAC National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

Mi Casa Es Tu Casa

LULAC will hold its 72nd annual convention on the beautiful island of Puerto Rico in San Juan. With the theme, "Reaching New Frontiers: Expanding the Latino Agenda," LULAC will once again conduct the most exciting weeklong event in the Latino community. We hope to see all LULAC members there in 2001!

National Assembly Passes Resolution Supporting Energy Secretary Bill Richardson



BE IT RESOLVED, that the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the nation's oldest Hispanic civil rights organization, expresses its great admiration, respect and strong support for Secretary Bill Richardson for his exemplary record of public service and his contributions to our nation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC recognizes that throughout his public career, Secretary Richardson has utilized his positions of influence to champion causes of importance to the Latino community. That as the most senior Latino in President Clinton's Cabinet, he has promoted Hispanic outreach efforts to engage the Latino community in energy, community, and business development, the rights of immigrants, health care legislation for Latinos and educational opportunities for Latino students;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC applauds Secretary Richardson's ambitious, productive and successful service as the nation's energy secretary, and notes in particular that he has urged oil producing nations to increase oil production in an effort to reduce gas prices, he has developed electricity restructuring legislation to help save consumers billions of dollars, he has reversed a decades old government practice of opposing nuclear weapons health claims, he has accelerated the cleanup of contaminated Department of Energy sites, he has set aside nearly 200,000 acres of department land for wildlife preservation, he has improved morale in the department's workforce by making a series of workplace improvements, he has been a leader in workplace diversity as two-thirds of his appointments have gone to women and minorities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that despite the political mudslinging of the past several weeks, LULAC wishes to note in particular that Secretary Richardson during his tenure as energy secretary has lead an aggressive effort to protect the nation's nuclear secrets by implementing dozens of major initiatives to improve security and counterintelligence throughout the department;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC understands that a career FBI agent in charge of counterintelligence at the Department of Energy, and a retired four star Air Force General in charge of security at the Department of Energy - neither of whom have a political agenda - have both told Congress that in the past two years, Secretary Richardson has approved every security and counterintelligence proposal that they have put forward, and they have said that Secretary Richardson has done more to improve security and counterintelligence at the Department of Energy than any previous Secretary in the past 10 years;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC urges the U.S. Senate to act prudently and judiciously in its investigation of nuclear information security concerns at the Department of Energy's Los Alamos National Laboratory;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States Congress be judicious, take the time to learn the facts and await the results of an ongoing FBI criminal investigation before deciding who should be held accountable for the Los Alamos security breach;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC expresses its disappointment with the actions of those in the U.S. Senate who have prematurely and irresponsibly rushed to judgment;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that LULAC is concerned that some members of the U.S. Senate may have more interest in tarnishing the image of the nation's most prominent Latino appointed official than they do in addressing national security concerns;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States Congress should be on notice that LULAC will not tolerate the unfair, unjust, and unwarranted political lynching of Secretary Bill Richardson;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the LULAC National Assembly at its 71st annual convention held in Washington, D.C., hereby steadfastly supports Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson.

LULAC Loses One of Its Finest Leaders

Texas District III Deputy Director Alfredo Carrizalez passed away on September 12, 2000, after complications from heart surgery. A tireless worker for the Latino community, he left us at only 48 years of age.

Carrizalez will be truly missed by LULAC and those who knew him. He leaves behind a loving wife Rosa; two children, Gabriel and Veronica; his mother Martha Galvan; and a sister, Beatrice Gonzalez.

(Texas State Convention, continued from page 14)

Given low levels of educational achievement and high levels of underemployment in the Hispanic community, many Hispanic youth are under pressure to make employment a priority over education.

"LULAC wants to reduce the Hispanic dropout numbers by requiring high schools to provide evening and weekend instruction, as well as internet instruction, to students who must enter the workforce at an early age," said Dr. Gloria Gonzalez, LULAC National Education Committee Chair. "Our schools need to adjust the educational paradigm to accommodate these students so that their current economic situation does not become a barrier to reaching their economic potential."

"We will also fight efforts to steer Hispanic students into GED programs," said Robert Gamboa. "Many charter schools and alternative education programs popping up now are nothing but GED mills with low standards, which shortchange the future of our Hispanic kids."

LULAC will urge state lawmakers and local school officials to adopt the Hispanic education agenda.

At the General Assembly, Texas LULAC also passed a number of resolutions aimed at supporting the appointment of Latinos to the Judiciary, forwarding Texas LULAC's 6-point Health Agenda, seeking federal legislation to allow automatic citizenship to any student obtaining a high school diploma in the United States, and ensuring equal access to credit-building opportunities for women. Roman Palomares was unanimously re-elected Texas LULAC State Director and Margaret Moran was re-elected Deputy State Director.

2001 LULAC Legislative Platform

Adopted by the LULAC National Assembly on June 30, 2000,
at the 71st LULAC National Convention in Washington, DC.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

LULAC supports equal opportunity for employment, promotion, and contracting, and opposes discrimination of any form in the workplace. We support affirmative action as a set of positive steps that employers use to promote equal employment opportunities.

LULAC vows to remain active in the judicial struggle to get rid of decisions that have overturned affirmative action programs across the country, such as the Hopwood decision in Texas.

CENSUS 2000

LULAC strongly supports the use of statistical sampling in the 2000 Census to get the most accurate count possible and to prevent another large undercount of Hispanics. LULAC supports the use of adjusted census figures for redistricting within the states and for the distribution of federal funds.

LULAC urges the Census Bureau to hire enumerators and managers of Hispanic descent to work in their own communities in order to further alleviate the potential undercount.

We also call on the Census Bureau to include the residents of Puerto Rico in population reports for the United States and the total count of Hispanics.

CITIZENSHIP AND VOTING

LULAC actively encourages eligible Hispanics to fully participate in the democratic process and register to vote. We also encourage those who are eligible to become citizens. To this end, LULAC conducts voter registration and citizenship projects in Hispanic communities throughout the United States.

LULAC demands that the Immigration and Naturalization Service expedite the processing of two million citizenship applications pending in a backlog of up to two years in some states.

Take Action: We encourage our members to use this platform when communicating with elected officials.

DISCRIMINATION

LULAC works to prevent acts of discrimination against Latinos, including slander by actions or words. We seek to bring issues and instances of discrimination to the attention of all people living in the United States. By exposing discrimination, LULAC encourages a public discourse and educates the public on issues relating to Latinos. We denounce any form of sexual harassment in the workforce.

LULAC urges Congress to pass laws that provide stronger sentencing and more aggressive prosecution for hate crimes, the worst form of racial discrimination.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Empowerment Zones Along the Border: Due to extremely high unemployment rates along the U.S./Mexican border of close to 25%, LULAC supports an expansion of American empowerment and enterprise zones in communities along the border in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

Employment: Affirmative action policies in hiring should be retained and widely used to ensure diversity in all workplaces. Congress, the President, businesses, and labor unions should join forces to ensure safe, fair, and equitable labor practices as an established norm.

Business: LULAC believes Latino entrepreneurship should be greatly encouraged. Incentives for small business owners and investment in Latino-owned businesses should be a priority. Affirmative action policies in hiring should be retained and widely used to ensure diversity in all workplaces.

EDUCATION

LULAC supports legislation that works to decrease the Hispanic dropout rate, which is currently over 30%. LULAC urges Congress to implement targeted programs that encourage Hispanic students to stay in school and provide alternative schools and programs to address the specific needs of our communities.

Federal funding for programs such as Headstart and Women, Infants and Children should be increased to ensure access and high participation. LULAC believes that all Latinos should have access to safe, quality, unsegregated public education and we oppose school vouchers. All Latino students should have adequate support and rigorous coursework with access to computers and the internet.

LULAC supports bilingual education to ensure English proficiency while encouraging students to retain proficiency in their native language. In addition, LULAC supports education for all children, including immigrant children.

We believe that education is the basis for lifelong success, and we strongly oppose any measures that deny education as a fundamental right. LULAC believes that all textbooks should reflect the Hispanic community in a positive way and should be language appropriate and culturally sensitive.

LULAC will work to guarantee the continued federal funding of existing LULAC National Educational Service Centers and will push for new funds to operate in areas not currently being served by LNES.

ENGLISH ONLY/ENGLISH PLUS

LULAC strongly opposes all legislation that designates English as the official language of the United States. We recognize the value and utility of English proficiency, and promote bilingualism and multilingualism as assets to be valued and preserved.

LULAC advocates English Plus as a way to promote the learning of English without forfeiting one's native language.

HISPANIC REPRESENTATION

LULAC seeks to increase the number of Hispanics serving in appointed and career positions within the federal government at all levels. We urge the President to appoint more Hispanics to his administration and to recruit more Hispanics into the civil service.

LULAC demands that the U.S. Senate move to confirm Hispanic judges waiting for confirmation. We strongly advocate that the next justice appointed to the Supreme Court be Hispanic.

HOUSING

LULAC supports the expansion of affordable housing and increased funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We oppose discriminatory lending practices and support the strengthening of fair housing legislation.

ENVIRONMENT

LULAC opposes the practice of locating environmentally damaging or dangerous sites in Hispanic and other disadvantaged communities. We oppose the disposal of nuclear waste near Hispanic communities and we support a border buffer to prevent the creation of hazardous waste sites on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. We urge the cleanup of additional brown fields in Hispanic neighborhoods.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

LULAC promotes the inclusion of Latinos in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy and we encourage Latinos to become more involved in international issues. LULAC calls upon the Administration to appoint more Latinos to key positions in the State Department, Foreign Service, and the United Nations and we urge a strengthening of our partnerships with Latin American countries.

HEALTH CARE

Universal access to health care continues to be a priority for Latinos. LULAC supports an increase in affordable and accessible primary and preventative health care that is culturally appropriate for the Latino community. LULAC also supports prenatal care and immunizations for children, and AIDS and substance abuse education.

LULAC is seeking a reduction in the price of costly prescription drugs and the expansion of Medicare to cover the cost of prescriptions. We support an expansion of insurance coverage for children in poverty. We call for increased funding of programs to prevent teenage pregnancy.

IMMIGRATION

LULAC opposes any legislation threatening the rights of legal immigrants, including measures limiting legal immigration. We stand against legislation that denies legal residents and naturalized

citizens the same benefits due to native-born citizens, against any efforts to deny public education to the children of undocumented immigrants, and against harsh regulations that toughen the requirements for citizenship and expand the stipulations that bar admissibility to immigrants. Immigrant visas should not be unreasonably withheld.

We oppose the militarization of the border and vigilante attacks on immigrants in the border area. We hold that the Immigration and Naturalization Service should concentrate its efforts on naturalization, citizenship promotion, and the training of Border Patrol agents. We oppose the expansion of guestworker programs.

LULAC supports a general amnesty program to legalize long-term immigrants in the US. LULAC also supports the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act which:

- Updates the Date of Registry from 1972 to 1986 allowing long-term immigrants to regularize their status.
- Provides parity in the treatment of Central Americans and Haitians.
- Re-instates Section 245(i) that allows immigrants to remain with their families while their applications are processed.

LULAC urges Congress to reject attempts to cut legal immigration and we oppose the mistreatment of immigrants in the US regardless of their status.

MEDIA

LULAC strongly advocates for the increase of Hispanic-oriented programming in all facets of the media and we demand that more high-level decision-making positions are made available to Hispanics at major media companies and networks. LULAC further asserts that programs targeted to or including Hispanics provide a positive portrayal of Hispanics and their culture. We encourage the FCC to require broadcasters to provide better programming for Latinos as part of their public service obligations.

OIL WORKER STABILITY

LULAC is concerned about the

volatility of oil prices and its impact on oil workers, many of whom are Hispanic. We support state and federal efforts to stabilize the price of oil and put the Hispanic oil field worker back to work. Specifically, we support training programs for oil workers and tax credits to oil producers to encourage an increase in the domestic production of oil and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

PUERTO RICO

LULAC reaffirms its strong support of legislation which provides a congressionally recognized framework for the four million U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico to freely express their wishes regarding their options for *full* self government for the first time in a century of U.S. administration.

LULAC fully supports President Clinton's directives on Vieques and demands that Congress act immediately to ensure that the letter of the agreement is upheld.

SOCIAL SECURITY

LULAC opposes the privatization of Social Security and any tax cut plan that would compromise its future stability. Individual accounts and tax cuts should not be substituted for Social Security's currently defined system.

LULAC supports changes in the Social Security system that would provide stronger benefits to lower income groups, women and the disabled.

WELFARE REFORM

LULAC supports reducing welfare dependency, but we believe that welfare should act as a safety net for those who need assistance for valid reasons. It should encompass improved bilingual job training, funding for child care, an increased minimum wage and job opportunities to best meet the needs of urban and rural welfare recipients. We oppose time limits on welfare and we prefer that each case is reviewed with discretion. Welfare reform efforts should be closely monitored to ensure they do not increase poverty.

LULAC opposes benefit cuts previously afforded to legal immigrants, and we strongly advocate remedies that restore benefits to legal immigrants and their children.

Native American and Hispanic Communities Join Forces

What does the Native American community have in common with the Hispanic community? If you are thinking that they have as much in common as a tamal and a hot dog, think again. As a matter of fact, a significant portion of the Native-American community is of Hispanic descent, have Hispanic names, speaks Spanish fluently, and is heavily influenced by Hispanic culture.

But most people do not know these facts. That ought to change and some organizations in Washington, D.C. are working to bring Native Americans and Hispanics closer together.

The National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) is a non-profit organization based in Washington, that advocates for the social, political and economic empowerment of 168 Indian nations that utilize gaming to meet their governmental responsibilities.

NIGA, concerned about the approximately 400,000 Native-American Hispanics that it represents, took the initiative of building a relationship with Hispanic organiza-

tions such as LULAC, to mutually support each other on common issues and legislative policy in order to close the gap between our communities and the rest of the population.

As minorities, both communities face several problems that are very well known to all of us. Issues like the Census, education, health, labor and economic development are ones that we face on a daily basis, whether on an Indian reservation or in the barrio. The problems are formidable and in order to fix them, the two communities ought to work together and support each other.

"Many of the issues confronting the Hispanic community are the same issues Indian tribes face," said Jacob Coin, NIGA Executive Director. "We suffer from high unemployment, lack of adequate educational opportunities, poor health facilities and housing shortages. We would love to work together with the Hispanic community to see that these common issues receive the proper attention."

The link between the two communities is an historical one. Much of America's southwest and western territory once belonged to Mexico. It is unknown the level of interaction between Mexicans and Indians. However, geographical data suggest that many Indian tribes were based in Mexican territory until 1846 when the U.S. incorporated California and Texas into the Union. It is logical to deduce that neighboring tribes and Mexican communities influenced each other.

Last month, at LULAC's national convention, Mr. Coin and John Tahsuda, Counsel for NIGA, met with LULAC National President Rick Dovalina for the first time. President Dovalina welcomed NIGA's initiative and pledged to support and work shoulder-to-shoulder with the Native American community to promote common interests.

"We welcome their ideas and look forward to working with the Native American community," said Dovalina. "Our voices can be heard much louder when we unite and stand together."

NIGA, which also pledged to support LULAC's efforts, said the partnership is a perfect match since both organizations represent many people of Native American and Hispanic heritage and are fighting for the same issues.

"We have been working to build coalitions with other associations, groups and caucuses whose voices traditionally have not been heard in the American political process," said Richard G. Hill, NIGA Chairman. "The Hispanic community is a natural partner for Indian tribes. Many tribes share a common history and ancestry with much of the Hispanic community. Because we share a common social and cultural identity, we share common beliefs about the importance of family and community."

"It was a pleasure to meet with the President of LULAC, and we are very appreciative of his warm reception," said Coin.

Hispanic Scholarship Fund Offering Financial Aid to College Students

The prestigious Hispanic Scholarship Fund, which has provided financial aid to outstanding Hispanic American students pursuing college degrees for almost a quarter of a century, is currently accepting applications from college students for its College Retention program.

Applications for scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 will be available on the HSF website at www.hsf.net, from August 3 through October 13, 2000. Forms also are available at College Financial Aid Offices or by mailing a stamped, self-addressed, business envelope (nine by four inches) to:

General Scholarship Program, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, One Sansome St., Suite 1000, San Francisco, CA 94104. The deadline to apply is October 15.

HSF provides scholarships based on merit, with consideration of financial need, to Hispanic Americans of all races and ethnicities. Qualified applicants are of background that is at least half Hispanic (one parent fully Hispanic or both parents half Hispanic), are a United States citizen or permanent resident, and have already earned at least 15 undergraduate credits at a two-year or four year accredited college or university in the U.S. or Puerto Rico.

Applicants must be enrolled on a full-time basis, again at accredited schools, for the upcoming academic year from this fall through spring 2001. Undergraduates must take minimum course loads of 24 credits per academic year; graduate students must have at least 12 credits per the academic year. All

students must have a minimum GPA of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale (3.7 on a 5 point scale).

Both undergraduate and graduate students of all majors are encouraged to apply. In many cases, there are specific programs that will apply to certain majors. HSF has collaborative programs with more than 200 corporate sponsors with specialized programs in business, engineering or computer science. Students with these majors and a GPA of 3.0 or higher will be considered for these specific scholarships when they submit their HSF General application packages. All applicants will be considered for funding, whether there are specific programs or not, in their majors.

Last year's HSF Scholars, who ranged from teenagers to retirees, received more than \$9.3 million in grants. A record number of 4,224 students from all 50 states and Puerto Rico were honored as HSF Scholars, more than doubling the number of just

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Digital Politics: Latinos Vs. High-Tech Titans

Once again, we have entered the stretch of the presidential elections. Democrats and Republicans are vying for the Latino vote. The presidential hopefuls have traveled cross-country to address Latino conventions and court the six million Latino voters that populate states encompassing approximately 76 percent of the total electoral vote needed to win the presidency.

The candidates praise our communities for the many valuable contributions they have made to U.S. progress through their enterprising spirit and hard work. The candidates speak Spanish to us. They proudly display their Hispanic family members as a testimony that they like us, that we are a part of them. Yet, it remains clear that immigrants are still perceived as unwelcome in a country forged on the backs of immigrant labor.

Pending immigration legislation on the floor of both the House and Senate questions whether more foreign workers should be allowed into the United States and under what conditions. The current language proposes an increase in the number of H-1B temporary worker visas for highly skilled workers in the technology industry over the next three years.

In addition, there are "Plus" provisions affecting immigrants already here. These include amendments that would address the most onerous provisions of the 1996 Immigration Reform Act. They include an adjustment of the Registry Date that allows for individuals who have been in the country since before 1986 to apply for residence; Central American and Haitian Parity for those immigrants allowed into the United States to escape repression in their countries; the reinstatement of Section 245(i) permitting immigrants to remain in the U.S. while they await the settlement of their immigrant status without separating families.

But what is the H1B plus debate really about?

There are several levels to the argument. When viewed from a dispassionate distance, it appears that we want to rent workers from foreign countries. Long-term labor problems are being addressed with short-term solutions. Nevertheless, it is undeniable there is a need to fill jobs. Yet, it is also undeniable that the Republican majority could move the H-1B legislation to the floor for a vote at any time. Why hasn't this happened?

Politics are clearly involved. Campaign contributions, too. And, there are short-term vs. long-term priorities.

As has been expressed on more than one occasion, Latinos are victims of a "Digital Divide," or no access to technology. We would like access to that technology and the education necessary to use it. Stabilizing status issues with legislation that affects those immigrants who have been in this country for many years greatly

increases the possibility of achieving that. They could then have access to the education that they need to be able to apply for those jobs that are open – a long-term solution

Large high-tech corporations need workers immediately. Yet, they are being informed they cannot have them. Hi-tech interests are being told that the attachment of the proposed amendments to their H-1B legislation endangers its passage. Latinos vs. Techies. Now, the political parties must choose between us. Voters vs. dollars. Who wins? Nobody. Who loses? All immigrants and U.S. economic progress.

Why not be honest? The United States needs foreign labor in the short-term to maintain current levels of economic growth and needs better-trained workers for the long-term. More H-1B workers mean more would-be permanent immigrants with temporary visas, millions of whom are already in legal limbo. But, Congress also needs to respect the workers who are already here – not just the ones writing software but, the ones pouring concrete and maintaining our roads – or, there will be political consequences. By alleviating some of the hardships created by the mistakes made by Congress and the INS and by regularizing the status of a significant number of people that were negatively affected, the possibility for the thousands currently present to then be trained and fill the gaps to rise above their current socio-economic trap increases exponentially. Not including the proposed amendments means leaving thousands of families in legal limbo and potential workers outside of the economic boom.

Passing the bill with the amendments is a "win-win" situation for all parties. Businesses would have a readily accessible pool of workers, tax revenues would increase, families could stay together, and not one American would be harmed by their passage.

The immigration question is one of the key issues for Latinos as we consider how we will vote in the upcoming elections and we are the swing vote in nine key states. If the candidates won't speak up for welcoming Latino immigrants into America's new economy as part of the high-tech industry's lobbying push, Latinos will remember.

In sum, if the presidential hopefuls really care about our communities then candidates should use their influence to rally Congress to address these issues and to discontinue pitting the interests of two important constituencies against one another. To do so would be a significant first step in proving that they are serious about doing something substantive for Latinos and for the future of economic progress of the United States.

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two years ago and reflecting increased interest and support for HSF. Both the number of winners and the cumulative amount disbursed were organizational records.

HSF's stated mission is to strengthen America by advancing the college education of Hispanic Americans. Four years ago, HSF's Board of Directors established the goal to double the current rate of Hispanics earn-

ing a college degree to 18 percent by 2006.

"As Hispanics continue to grow in number, influence and civic responsibility, the need to support and increase the number of Hispanics earning college degrees becomes a critical necessity to America's future," said Sara Martinez Tucker, HSF President and CEO.

"By increasing the number and level of college degrees among Hispanic Americans,

we are not only providing tremendous benefit to our communities today, but we are also making a positive impact on America's leaders of tomorrow."

The first year HSF awarded scholarships to 115 students for a total of \$30,000. Since then, HSF has distributed nearly \$48 million. A recent independent study found that an astounding 97 percent of all HSF scholars attain their college degrees.

Consumers See Changes in Their Phone Bills, Should Compare Rates to Lower Costs

Recently, you may have noticed some changes on your local and long distance telephone bills. The changes are the result of a pricing reform proposal developed by a consortium of telecommunication companies and with input from nonprofit groups, including LULAC. The reforms are in response to demands for less complex statements, fairer rate structures and to promote more market competition in the telecommunications industry. The changes were approved by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on May 31 and became effective on July 1.

As a result, some phone charges disappeared, some moved from your long distance bill to your local service bill, and others have been updated. One significant change is the \$2.1 billion reduction of access charge fees—money long-distance carriers pay to local phone companies for use of their lines—with the savings passed on to telephone users.

Long-distance companies have stopped charging you a National Access Fee (also known as the Presubscribed Interexchange Carrier Charge). And, for those consumers who make few long distance calls, or none at all, more companies are offering plans that require no minimum service fee.

On your local phone bill, there was a small increase in your Federal Subscriber Line Charge and a small new charge for the Federal Universal Service Fund. This fund helps keep local phone service affordable in rural communities or high cost areas as well as providing telecommunications discounts to schools, libraries and low-income families.

The bottom line is that nearly all consumers are now paying less when their local and long distance bills are added together.

To help you “get the most for your money,” the Telecommunications Research and Action Center (TRAC), which also supported the FCC reforms, suggests consumers take these steps:

- Shop around and get the best plan for your needs. Think about how you use the phone: what days? what times of day? how long are most of your calls? where do you call most often?

- In comparing rates, note that companies may use different terms to describe similar services, and combinations of services may differ. Make sure you’re comparing “apples to apples.” Don’t just look at the low per-minute rate advertised. You need to also factor in minimum charges or monthly fees.

- A package deal may sound great, but do you really want all the services included?

For more help on comparing telephone rates, visit the TRAC web site on the Internet at www.trac.org. Another good source of information on choosing the best long-distance carrier and plan is the National Consumer League’s web site at www.ncl.org.

Questions regarding the new changes about your telephone bill can also be answered by contacting your local or long distance telephone company or by visiting www.phonebillcentral.org. If you don’t have a home computer, your local library, senior center, or community center should have one available for public use.

You may also get printed information by writing to S. James, Consumer Information Center, P.O. Box 100, Puebla, CO 81002, and asking for the brochure, “A Smart Consumer’s Guide to Telephone Service.”

Lifeline Offers Smart Savings for Low Income Telephone Consumers

Did you know that you or someone you know may qualify for *Lifeline*?

Lifeline is a program that helps make telephone service more affordable for low-income consumers by waiving certain charges. If you are on *Lifeline*, you may save at least \$5.50 a month on your local phone bill!

Lifeline is operated by each state, and each state has different eligibility requirements. You may qualify for *Lifeline* if you receive Supplemental Security Income or Food Stamps.

Eligible consumers will have their Subscriber Line Charges and Federal Local Universal Service Fund charges waived. Under a new price reform plan approved by the Federal Communications Commission, *Lifeline* subscribers will also receive the benefit of lower overall phone bills.

There is also a program to help you get a telephone installed, called *Link-Up*. If you don’t have a phone line, this program may help you. Some long distance companies offer special *Lifeline* programs with additional savings for consumers that qualify.

For more information on *Lifeline* and *Link-Up*, call your state Public Service Commission or contact your local or long distance telephone company. You can also call your local library, senior center, community center or church, look at the consumer information pages in your telephone book, or go online at www.lifelinesupport.org.

For “A Smart Consumer’s Guide to Telephone Service,” write to S. James, Consumer Information Center, P.O. Box 100, Pueblo, CO 81002.

Group Releases Report on U.S. Military Policy in Latin America and the Caribbean

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has recently issued a report, *Still Pulling Strings*, that provides a comprehensive overview of U.S. military policy and practice in Central America and the Caribbean post-Cold War.

The report also includes three case

studies on Mexico, Colombia and Puerto Rico. *Still Pulling Strings* is particularly timely due to growing criticism of the war on drugs, media attention on the Navy bombing in Vieques, and recent U.S. legislative action on the School of the Americas and military aid to Colombia.

The report can be found on the AFSC’s website at www.afsc.org/lac or you can order the reports through the mail.

The overview is available for \$3.00 and the case studies are available for \$1.50 each. Please send your orders to:

Literature Resources
American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1479

When Latinas Cry for Help, Where Is the Justice?

Back in March, America's eyes were focused on Miami, Florida, and the case involving young Cuban boy Elián González. Many people around the country, especially Latinos, felt that justice may not have prevailed. But while the country focused on one riveting story in Miami, another horrible situation was taking place unnoticed.

A young Puerto Rican mother named Maria Eugenia Pereira faced the loss of her only son, Khalil Shanti.

Pereira first moved to Florida from her native Puerto Rico in the early 1990's to pursue a college degree in architecture. Shortly thereafter, she met and married a Palestinian man named Ibrahim Shanti. They moved to his native land of Jordan, where Khalil was born. He was registered as a United States citizen, like herself, at the U.S. Embassy.

However, the situation took a turn for the worse when Shanti filed for divorce on December 4, 1999 in a Muslim court in Jordan. Unfortunately, Pereira was not even aware of this until afterwards and the male-dominated culture in the Middle East did not allow her any realistic course of action.

So she fled. She brought Khalil back to south Florida to escape a hopeless situation. Little did she know that the justice system awaiting her in the United States would resemble that of Jordan's.

Ibrahim Shanti followed her back to the United States and filed for custody in a Florida court. He won.

The judge declared himself without jurisdiction over Pereira's claim to custody and ruled that the custody granted to Shanti by the Jordan court, which would always favor a man, stood.

Even worse, the child was removed from Pereira's home in a police operation that would normally be reserved for high profile criminals. But the country and the media were too busy focusing their attention in another direction. While the story of a foreigner dominated the airwaves, the plight of a United States citizen, a Latina, and her son simply passed into the night.

This young woman who is still in her twenties now faces the rest of her life without the child she bore and raised for almost three years. Where was the support of the

community for Pereira? And why would our judicial system allow something like this to happen to one of our own citizens? Isn't a citizen residing in the state of Florida under the jurisdiction of a Florida court?

These are questions that defy logic. But what realistic options are left for Maria Eugenia Pereira? Can she go back to Jordan and fight for her son in a political system that perceives women as unequal to men? Many believe that her life would be in danger if she attempted to return to the Middle East. The question is how much support would she get from U.S. authorities?

Even more troublesome than the tale of Maria Eugenia Pereira, is that stories like this are not as uncommon as some people may think. As incredible as it may sound, Pereira's

Maria Eugenia Pereira and Betzaida Velázquez were victims of the system, a system that is supposed to work for us, not against us.

story is nothing new. There are multiple other cases of American women who have faced or are facing even worse consequences, many of them Latinas.

One such case is that of Betzaida Velázquez. A Puerto Rican living in New York City, she married a Pakistani man five years ago and had a little girl named Fatima. According to her family living in Puerto Rico, she lived with constant verbal and physical abuse from her husband.

When he ordered her to go to Pakistan to attend a wedding, she went reluctantly, accompanied by her brother-in-law, along with Fatima. Two weeks later Velázquez was murdered. According to sources, her husband never even left the United States for Pakistan.

As of today, the family still awaits a final answer from the U.S. government regarding this tragedy. To make matters worse, they have had no contact with the little girl since 1999, when Puerto Rico's former Secretary of State Norma Burgos intervened. She urged representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan to pay a visit to the girl. They did so and then wrote the family a letter informing them of her health condition and her where-



Maria Eugenia Pereira still weeps for her son Khalil. (Vea Magazine)

abouts. That is the last they have ever heard.

Many of our people, especially Hispanic women, feel helpless against the justice system and it is our job as members of the community to speak out against it when it victimizes the victims. One way we can start this process is by getting more Latinos nominated and elected to judicial positions around the country. While our percentages have grown significantly, we can improve.

It is of paramount importance that communities of color stand united in support of our mothers, sisters, and daughters. A court of law should not be a battlefield for Latinas and women of color. "Equal justice under the law" for Latinas and all women must be the cornerstone of our democracy.

We must hold our federal agencies and judicial system more accountable for the acts that are being committed against our own U.S. citizens by people from other lands, especially when they are Latinos. We need to take additional actions to end the suffering of these women, whose hopes and dreams have vanished. We must urge the Administration and Members of Congress to take a serious look into these matters and take the necessary steps to prevent them in the future.

Our country prides itself in promoting a foreign policy that emphasizes women's rights and working with like-minded countries and NGO's to advance these efforts. However, there is more that needs to be done.

Maria Eugenia Pereira and Betzaida Velázquez were victims of the system, a system that is supposed to work for us, not against us. They were women of color. They were Latinas.

Migrant Song Revisited: One Young Learner's Beginnings

Guest Article by R. Joseph Rodríguez

“Writing is a struggle against silence.”

-Carlos Fuentes

“There is no such thing as coincidence,” declares Latina writer Sandra Cisneros in the opening page of her third volume of poetry. For many of us, blessings fall from the sky, and our lives are rearranged forever. Certainly, this proved true in the Fall of 1992 while I was a senior student in high school.

I visited the local LULAC National Educational Service Center (LNEC) located at 2220 Broadway in Houston, Texas. Riding the MTA Harrisburg line bus allowed me to look out of the window, and I saw the center nestled in a church area with wild grass and weeds growing. A sign, having suffered from vandalism, announced the educational center's home. I knocked on the door. My knock brought a warm voice to the door, and a woman named Consuelo welcomed me. To my surprise, I belonged to the *nouveau riche* upon my entrance: a wealth of information to pursue higher education as well as financing my dream of academic success was displayed before my gaze in my search.

The year 1992 brought many surprises and joys for me. Discovering the LNEC office led to more treasures and successes. Since then, I have studied at numerous universities throughout the United States, including Texas, New York, Ohio, and Connecticut. My counselor and mentor, Roseann Blanco, guided me in my pursuit of academic success. Moreover, she assisted me with financial aid forms and scholarships. Her steady support and blessing became a familiar quilt in my life every academic year.

I joined the Talent Search program; I witnessed the fostering of one's talents and gifts in the company of Mrs. Blanco and her singing staff. Indeed, young student learners are gifted and full of potential and opportunity. However, positive guidance, discipline, and leadership are essential for achievement. In the presence of soul models such as Mrs. Blanco, I recognized the value of my own sense of self in my pursuit of higher education. I knew I was not alone in my intellectual journey.

Although I had a few counselors in my public schooling, they rarely expressed any interest in my academic future. They believed

I would become a good manual laborer or perhaps someone's assistant or secretary. My counselors hardly had any time for me, even though I was a student with goals and ambition. In addition, most of my public school teachers trained me through the banking system—a model of instruction that involves regurgitating information as knowledge. Every week, I read passages from texts and answered the questions or problems that followed. Obedience to such assignments was applauded and rewarded every grading period. In opposition to learning by rote, I challenged this curricula and instruction, and I found *my* voice. I refused to be silenced through lifeless curricula and instruction.

I spoke from my space and asserted my sense of self and place, even if this meant encountering moments of both danger and possibility. LNEC saved and blessed me with the active counselors I hoped to finally find one day, but rarely encountered in my schooling experience. Indeed, I was a migrant student learner in search of a harvest. My high school counselors only dedicated their time to course scheduling, so they failed to meet with me during the semester other than to put me in someone else's classroom. And all I wanted, all *I* wanted was to be heard and guided. With whom could I speak to share my goals, my longing, my life? And, above all, who cared? I wondered.

If my public school counselors or teachers knew that I found my way to University Avenue, I am not too sure what they would say. Perhaps a few would weep. Maybe most of them would sigh and offer a slight swaggering of the hand or maybe they would raise an eyebrow, but I am still not too sure. Who's to know? I am the boy who earned Cs and Ds on his high school report cards and eventually graduated in 1993 with a 2.89 grade point average. In 1991, I failed the writing section of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and finally passed the following year on my second trial.

To make matters even more unsettling, I received the lowest scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) on two separate occasions. In contrast, I do not remember being as stupid as these measurement systems pronounced to educators and university ad-

missions officers across the country. There had to be another way to succeed, and I hoped to one day find it. Surprisingly, I did. I survived: I am a survivor. In my journey, I have managed to overcome many challenges of which I did not think I was capable and of which many others did not think me capable either. This is especially true because I am young and from a family of manual laborers.

Peers and colleagues speak of financial successes in their careers, while I have the privilege to name the people who believed in me, including Mami and Papi. At the same time, my public schooling brought many moments of aloneness. Yet, I do not remember being lonely. Aloneness was necessary for a young learner, thinker, and writer yearning to break loose. At times, I felt like a common weed in the city's sidewalk cracks, hoping to one day make a way out of no way.

When I am invited to speak in public schools, I bring more questions than answers. I often share a question that tugs my psyche at the moment of my visit. Although my public schooling began nearly twenty years ago, I remember my earliest peers and friends. There is one question that keeps haunting me from my schooling experience. Perhaps this is due to the psychic violence and withdrawal I endured in my schooling. I ask myself, What happened to Bernardo, Orfa, Charles, Cynthia, Alejandro, Mónica, Demitrius, Luis, Ruby, Antonio, and Wanda? I know that schooling failed many of them. However, I hope that they found their voice. I believe they are sharing their gifts and what is yearning deep within their hearts.

As a young migrant learner in pursuit of academic success, I found myself in the presence of caring believers—Mrs. Blanco and her staff of advisers. The spring season is a time of rebirth, renewal, and hope, too. Nevertheless, the fall season reminds me of my treasure—the LULAC National Educational Service Center in Houston, Texas. Even today, more than eight years later, I remember the center as the blessing on Broadway Boulevard.

The son of a Mexican mother and a Mexican American father, R. Joseph Rodríguez was born and raised in Houston, TX. He received a bachelor's degree from Kenyon College, in Ohio, a master's at the University of Texas, Austin, and is presently, pursuing a Ph.D. in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. His work has appeared in The Texas Observer and Hispanic Magazine.

Army Officer Becomes a Citizen Through Service

“Freedom isn’t free,” said Army Lt. Col. Ray Mejia. “I know that sounds like an advertisement, but I want people to know how I feel about our country and about serving our country.”

Mejia was an immigrant from Mexico when he came to the United States as a 14-year-old. After high school, he enlisted in the Army, later went to Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He became a naturalized American citizen while he was a first lieutenant. Now, after 24 years of Army service, he wants to be a mentor and tell others what his Army experience has given him.

“I earned my citizenship through my military service, but I also believe that if a person has come to this country and decides to stay in this country, then that person also owes something back to this country. I could give back to the United States some of what I had received through my military service,” continued Mejia.

“This is the land of opportunity,” he declared. “Take advantage of everything that means by becoming a citizen. Voting in free elections is the greatest right a thinking person can have. Many people take that for granted in the U.S., but believe me, the naturalized citizen does not take the right to vote for granted.”

Mejia thinks those who come to the United States to work but don’t become citi-

zens are missing out on what America really means. For him, becoming a citizen was as much something he did for his children and future generations as he did for himself. His children were born citizens and that, he said, is something no one can ever take from them.

“Being an American means something around the world, no matter where you go. I’ll always be Mexican – I can stay loyal to my heritage. That’s never going to change; my roots don’t go away. But I am and think of myself as an American citizen. I believe that immigrants who live in America are selling themselves short if they don’t become citizens. They are not being all they can be. They are not participating in this wonderful system that allows you to change things if you want, with your vote.”

The naturalization process is accelerated and facilitated by the Army. Instead of requiring five years of residence in the United States, members of the Armed Forces can apply for citizenship after three years, and even overseas service in the Army counts toward that time. Personnel Services Battalions and Military Personnel Divisions assist soldiers and family members through the application process and forward the application packets to the U.S. Army Central Personnel Security Clearance Facility (CCF), where the documents are screened and forwarded directly to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

the Army for three years can go to their personnel services office and get assistance with filing the proper paperwork.

Time a soldier spends outside the United States on active duty overseas service counts toward the residency requirement. Soldiers fill out the required forms and their Army personnel services offices assist in filling out the consent for a records review, which will document the three years of service required. A full application must be forwarded to the INS to begin the naturalization process.

A full application includes: INS forms N-400, N-426, and G-325b; consent form for records release; money order or cashier’s check for \$225.00; photocopy of the soldier’s permanent resident card (INS I-551); two color photographs; copy of appointment letter for fingerprinting; and cover letter that



Army Lt. Col. Ray Mejia.

This saves considerable time, and Personnel Command officials estimate the waiting period to be only 120 days from the time the CCF forwards the application packet until the soldier hears from the INS.

“The Army is a great start for a young person trying to find him or herself; it was for me,” Mejia said. “What other job would provide the opportunities that the Army has?”

“The Army gave me the opportunity for training and education that helped me get where I am today,” he said. “Everything that I am today, my ability to deal with people, problems, and issues, my sincerity, my values, I acquired all those things in the Army.”

“I want my son to serve, so that he can learn what this freedom is all about. He’ll benefit from his service in many ways, but also, for him to truly understand American citizenship, he needs to serve.”

Accelerated Naturalization Process For Army Soldiers

Do you know you can become an American citizen with only three years of residency as a member of the United States Army? The normal residency requirement of five years is waived down to three years for Army soldiers, and the Army will help you process the paperwork!

Those resident aliens holding a valid INS I-551 “green card” may be eligible to enlist, pending a full determination of their qualifications. Soldiers who have been in

specifies periods of member unavailability and geographic preference for the INS interview. [* These forms may be obtained from the Internet at www.ins.usdoj.gov or by calling 1-800-870-3676.]

The Army personnel services offices put the packets together and forwards them to the U.S. Army Central Personnel Security Clearance Facility, which will complete the screen and forward all associated documents directly to the INS. Army officials at the Personnel Command have reported that screened military applications may be processed in as quickly as 120 days.

For information, see The INS Guide to Naturalization, available at INS offices, at Army Community Services, or online at <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/services/natz/insfnl.pdf>.

Mexico's President-elect Vicente Fox

Fox Faces Challenges with Optimism and Strategy

On August 24, Mexico's President-elect Vicente Fox met with U.S. officials. The rounds of talks began with President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeline Albright, and National Security Advisor Sandy Berger. Fox also met with presidential hopefuls, Vice President Al Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush, to discuss the future of U.S.-Mexico relations.

Fox will be sworn in on December 1, 2000, and has ventured a series of proposals to improve U.S.-Mexico bilateral relations that range from Mexico's internal restructuring and rooting out of corruption, to the equalization of economic development and the reduction of migration. The president-elect is seeking a shift from unilateral policies that counter the spirit of partnership created by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) towards a multilateral mechanism and strategy by which the United States, Canada, and Mexico can work on common problems with the same objective.

In his efforts to connect with the outside world, Fox also has engaged with government officials throughout Latin America and Europe, particularly with those countries that Mexico shares intense trade associations. In addition to Mexico's NAFTA partners and Brussels, Belgium, he has focused particularly on Mercosur countries of the Southern Cone, as well as Central American countries like Belize and Guatemala.

Economic growth is a key element to the success of his plans for Mexico. Fox admits that in order to reduce current rates of labor migration, opportunities need to be created in Mexico so that children will not have to look elsewhere for work.

Fox's ultimate challenge will be to increase Mexico's economic growth by seven percent per annum. He concedes that these projects are ambitious and will not occur overnight. Fox envisions a series of investment efforts that include a micro-credit lending system, such as the one he started in Guanajuato, the state in which he was governor. Using Northern Italy as a model, Fox hopes to assist small-and medium-size companies grow throughout Mexico. His business plan also includes the creation of an institu-

tion similar to the Small Business Administration (SBA) to administer loans.

Fox proposes that as economic convergence grows between Mexico, the United States, and Canada, a holistic view of problems will narrow divisions. In that spirit, Fox has begun the *Mesa de Chapultepec*, a gathering of teams of experts from government, non-governmental organizations, and academia to create a long-term vision of where Mexico needs to go in the next 25 years.

The expected outcome is a collection of ideas from around the country, but also basic consensus building and alliance creation among the diverse political and social organizations in Mexico and outside to ensure governability and to further the development of the nation.

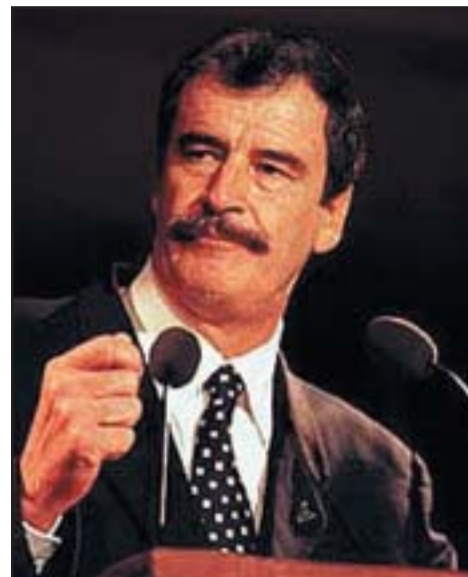
Fox expressed his great hopes for Mexico and lauded Mexicans' ability to create a democratic change. "It was not only a change of government or of a party, but a change from within. There is a spirit of hope, joy, and happiness, as well as responsibility," stated Fox. One bonus, Fox also mentioned, was the change in Mexico's image in the international community and the positive energy that can serve as a trampoline into real change.

Fox noted, "in 24 hours, Mexico passed from a single party regime, from an authoritarian regime into a democracy with stability." He credits President Ernesto Zedillo for the peaceful transition. Now, the President-elect must respond to the heightened expectations of the Mexican people, the United States, and the world.

Over the next few months, until he is sworn in as President, Fox and his team of experts will concentrate their efforts on a series of outreach projects that begin with finishing in detail restructuring programs for 359 sectors of government. Zedillo and his cabinet are actively assisting in the transition.

Fox is preparing Mexico's budget and six-year plan, the economic strategy that will serve as a guideline for his term in office. Mexican Presidents can only run for office once and their terms last six years. The six-year plan will be unveiled on December 31.

As part of the plan, Fox seeks to re-



Mexico President-elect Vicente Fox.

duce government costs through a general overhaul, while increasing government revenues. One expected outcome is that government restructuring will also include a change in implementation standards, and thus a reduction of corrupt practices.

He also promised to remove some of the legal immunities from legal authorities to ensure immediate judgment and punishment. Mexican government officials are often immune from legal reprisals for bad practices. "We need to create an atmosphere of transparency and honesty. Government must be efficient, of high quality, and accountable. We must fight corruption from within," Fox added.

All these plans and strategies carry with them great expectations. The most important issues for LULAC include the improvement of public safety along the U.S.-Mexico border, new investment opportunities, and increased communication between Mexican government officials and LULAC members. The positive impact of their success could serve to lower perceptual fallout in the United States against Mexican nationals and other Latinos.

Fox acknowledges that the situation will not change immediately. He is especially interested in preventing further abuses along the border and will work to ensure that human rights are respected regardless of legal status.

He also advocates a law that would allow Mexicans in the United States to vote in Mexican elections. This proposal supports Fox's view that Mexicans in the U.S. are still his fellow countrymen and he hopes to see them return to Mexican soil in the future.

LULAC Addresses Border Issue, Pushes for Dialogue Between Groups

For the past year, LULAC councils across the country have actively fought against prejudice and are fostering the creation of dialogue in their communities. In an effort to prevent further confrontation between extreme groups, members in California and Arizona have been actively engaged in sponsoring peace rallies and border summits to create awareness of the tensions in their communities, particularly the volatile situation with Arizona ranchers apprehending undocumented workers and the recent attacks on migrant workers in San Diego.

On July 26th, members of LULAC attended a meeting at the Garden Grove Women's Civic Club where anti-immigrant groups like the California Coalition for Immigration Reform (CCIR) and the Voices of Citizens Together (VCT) gathered to discuss keeping immigrants, particularly Mexicans, out of the country. In an article by Nick Schou in the OC Weekly News, LULAC members were accused of having no interest in fighting "illegals" because they were only concerned with establishing little Tijuana and South Americas up and down California.

Because of our activism, VCT and CCIR have accused LULAC members of being anti-American. Upon finding out about a rally held by LULAC on July 29, 2000, members of these two organizations issued a webcast entitled, "Join Us at the Border," calling together "patriots" to protest LULAC's rally at Border Field Park.

The memo clearly stated its goal: to ensure LULAC attendees and the media see our "BIG" signs and issue "Tools of Defense" to "counteract the pro-illegal alien lies and propaganda." The level of anti-immigrant rhetoric is high and tensions are mounting.

Yet, there are rays of hope. LULAC members through their kind hearts and diligent practices have forged a path against injustice and made their impact felt. While at the June 2000 Convention, the Arizona Delegation, led by Richard Fimbres, National Vice President for the Far West, held a summit with the U.S. District Attorney for Arizona, José de Jesús Rivera, Ron Wong from the Community Relations Service (CRS), and representatives from the U.S. Department of Justice, the Mexican Embassy, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, and other border groups concerned about the Arizona

ranchers' actions. Other important members of the LULAC delegation included Ray Velarde, National Legal Counsel, Ana Valenzuela Estrada, Immediate Past National Vice President for Women, and Mary Fimbres, Arizona State Director.

In addition, the LULAC delegation met with Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressman Ed Pastor (D-AZ); Charlie Gonzalez (D-TX); Luis Gutierrez (D-IL); and Joe Baca (D-CA).

The congressional members expressed their concerns and subsequently held meetings with Doris Meissner, Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service; Gus de la Viña, Chief of the Border Patrol; and David Aguilar, Tucson Sector Chief of the Border Patrol.

"The Congressional Hispanic Caucus is closely monitoring events in Arizona," said Congresswoman Roybal-Allard. "We applaud the Arizonans who are seeking positive solutions, and we wish to work with them towards addressing this problem. We have concerns about a small minority of Arizona residents who advocate vigilante justice."

Congressman Pastor has also taken the lead and facilitated discussion with local and national leaders and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Pastor is working with the CHC Task Forces on Immigration and Civil Rights, chaired by Congressmen Gutierrez and Gonzalez respectively, to develop recommendations that can positively influence the situation in Arizona.

As part of the Interagency Task Force for the *UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance* led by the White House, LULAC National Director of Policy and Legislation Gabriela Lemus brought these issues to the attention of the forum. LULAC was invited to participate in the conference and its organizational structure was proposed as a grassroots model for other countries to replicate as a way to decrease racism and increase dialogue among diverse communities.

"Organizations like LULAC present a positive role model for communities to follow," said Tim Johnson of the CRS. "They help to create the environment to reduce tensions by promoting awareness and opening lines of communication."

Department of Education Invites LULAC Members To Regional Conferences

LULAC members are invited to attend the U.S. Department of Education's *Improving America's Schools* Regional Conferences. The conferences will provide a unique opportunity to learn more about the Department's education programs and priorities.

A special focus will be placed on how LULAC members and the Latino community can work together with the Department of Education to promote equity and excellence in our schools. The next event will be held from October 2-4, 2000, in Louisville, KY, followed by a conference in Washington, D.C., from December 13-15, 2000. For more information, go to www.ncbe.gwu.edu/iasconferences on the Internet.

Puerto Rico de Luto Fallece Sor Isolina

LULAC expresó su pesar ante el fallecimiento de Sor Isolina Ferré.

"Nosotros en LULAC estamos muy apenados por el reciente fallecimiento de Sor Isolina," dijo Rick Dovalina, Presidente Nacional de LULAC. "Ella nos deja un legado de seis décadas de trabajo dedicado a los pobres. Ella impactó cientos de vidas con su sabiduría y su amigable forma de ser. Todos la vamos a extrañar. Su legado vivirá en nuestros corazones por siempre."

Por su dedicación al servicio comunitario el Presidente Bill Clinton le otorgó la Medalla de la Libertad. Este es el más alto galardón que los Estados Unidos le puede otorgar a un civil. Por los pasados 30 años, Sor Isolina, estuvo al frente de los Centros Sor Isolina Ferré. Estos centros comunitarios están dedicados a ayudar a comunidades pobres en Puerto Rico y en Nueva York.

"Ella siempre se comportó como una humilde sierva del señor cuyo deseo era ayudar a aquellos que así lo necesitaran. Nuestras oraciones en LULAC están con su familia y con el pueblo de Puerto Rico," añadió Dovalina.

A Sor Isolina le sobreviven su hermano Luis A. Ferré, ex-gobernador de Puerto Rico y fundador del Partido Nuevo Progresista.

Book Review

Roberto Calderón remembers growing up on the Texas-Coahuila border and feeling the absence of books to explain the region's history – especially its well-known coal mining industry. In *Mexican Coal Mining Labor in Texas and Coahuila, 1880-1930*, he fills this long-time void by looking at the world of the long-overlooked immigrants who worked the mines.

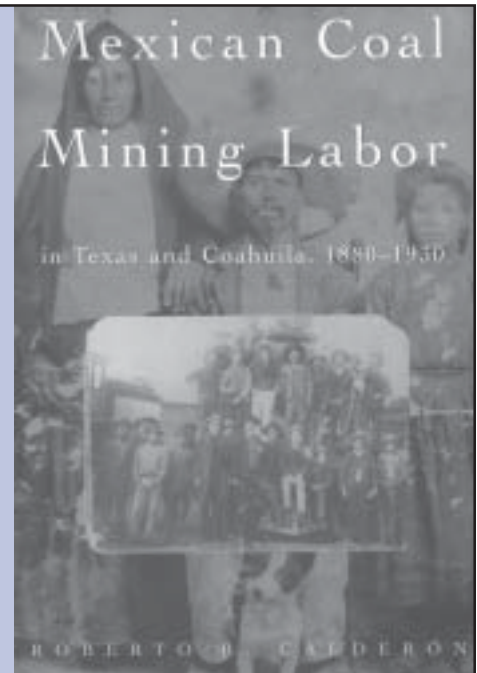
“Raised on the Texas-Coahuila border, I grew up feeling the absence of this book, personally and intellectually,” Calderón writes. “Curiosity about the border's history led me to the public library at a young age. There I read what was available only to find no material on the immediate history I sought to understand.”

The years 1880 to 1930 mark the period in time in Texas' coal mining history known as the handloading era, during which the system of mining for coal by hand was both established and eliminated, giving way to advancing technologies and methods used on both sides of the Texas-Mexico border. At this time, Mexican coal miners were a majority of the industry's workforce in Texas, actively recruited by the coal companies through labor contracts.

Departing from the standard studies of Texas or Mexican mining which remain lodged within the nation-state, *Mexican Coal Mining Labor in Texas and Coahuila* presents a comparative framework for understanding mining, investment capital, labor markets, railroad construction, and racial ideology in Texas and Mexico during a period of economic growth and social disruption on both sides of the border.

Placing industry within the political economy of both Mexico and the western United States, Calderón discusses the establishment of the mines, the industrial and urban markets, and the life and work of workers and their response to changing conditions. In doing so, he revises the view that Mexican workers were careless and difficult to work with and documents their struggle for recognition and union organization.

Using a rich array of archival, statistical, government, and periodical material, as well as personal accounts from those who lived the experience, Calderón brings a new approach to a subject usually only studied in terms of geology. He also provides a specific demographic analysis of two important Texas border counties in coal production, Webb and Maverick, examining the influence of the immigrant labor population on education, naturalization, literacy, and housing patterns.



Mexican Coal Mining Labor is an original contribution to the fields of Chicano and Borderlands history, Texas history, and labor history.

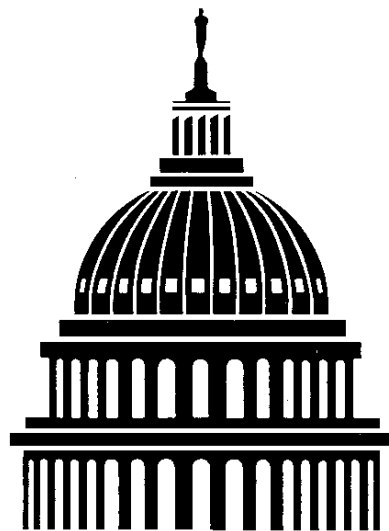
Roberto R. Calderón is an assistant professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California-Riverside. *Mexican Coal Mining Labor* is available at stores or directly from Texas A&M University Press at (800) 826-8911.

LULAC Washington Youth Leadership Seminar

The LULAC Washington Youth Leadership Seminar is a program of the LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc. The seminar is sponsored by the local LULAC Councils and corporate supporters.

Each year, 45 outstanding Hispanic high school juniors and seniors are selected and sponsored by a local LULAC Council to attend a three-day educational seminar in Washington, D.C. during the second week of October. The LULAC Washington Youth Leadership Seminar is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to witness firsthand how our national government works and to explore current issues we face as a nation.

The seminar includes meetings with senators and congressional representatives, White House officials, corporate executives, think tank representatives, community leaders, and other Washington professionals. Students tour the White House, the Capitol, the Pentagon, Arlington Cemetery, and George Washington University. The seminar con-



Dates: October 11-15, 2000
Deadline to apply: September 15, 2000
For more information contact: Linda M. Ayala, LNEC Program Manager at (202) 835-9646.

cludes with a banquet dinner where the students receive program certificates.

This seminar has generated enthusiasm within the Hispanic community because it is the first program of its kind to address the particular needs of young Hispanic men and women. It also has received considerable praise from Hispanic officials and other national leaders who believe this type of program for young people is needed to motivate them to actively participate in our government, both on the national and local levels.

The LULAC Washington Youth Leadership Seminar provides students with an understanding of how our government works and gives them the opportunity to explore various issues we face as a nation. The students are exposed to education reform efforts currently being debated in Congress. More important, the students voice their opinions to national leaders who are key players in the education debate regarding education reform and its impact on Hispanic youth.