


1999 Legislative Friendship Awards Gala

LULAC NEWS

January/February 1999 \$4.50

A photograph of Rick Dovalina, a man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a suit and a striped tie. He is speaking into a microphone. In the background, there is a large American flag and a circular seal.

**New LULAC President
Rick Dovalina Ushers
LULAC into the Next
Millennium**

**LULAC
Celebrates
70th Year**

**1999 Legislative
Platform**

LULAC NEWS

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Contents

- President's Message**
Rick Dovalina ushers LULAC into the new millennium.
- 1998 Convention and Exposition Highlights**4
Hispanic America rises to the challenge in Dallas, Texas.
- Celebrating 70 Years of Success**6
Hispanic American history would forever change as a small group of leaders gathered in Corpus Christi to establish the political presence of our community.
- Our Milestones: Legacy of an American Institution**7
In recognition of LULAC's many distinguished achievements, we celebrate 70 years of a golden legacy.
- LULAC Membership Drive is Underway**9
Successful outreach leads 223 new councils to join the League.
- News from Around the League**10
Young adults go interactive, Irving young readers, Hollister boasts majority Latino council, Florida education lawsuit, and STSU young adults.
- Youth Council Paves the Way to Activism in Boston**11
A multicultural council of young professionals forges a positive role as it initiates a one-on-one mentoring program.
- Self-Determination for Puerto Rico**11
Puerto Ricans voice their opinion in a national plebiscite.
- Memphis LULAC Targets Lack of Police Services**13
Increase in violence plagues a growing Hispanic community.
- LULAC Prepares for Boycott of Boston Herald**13
Don Feder's racist article spurs action.
- 1999 LULAC Legislative Platform**14
Adopted during last summer's annual convention in Dallas.
- Policy Briefs**16
Hispanic education, late amnesty, medical relief fund, LULAC opposes impeachment, Hispanics vote, INS no help to hurricane victims, guest worker bill, and saving social security.
- 1999 Legislative Friendship Awards Gala**17
Our February 23 event will honor three outstanding leaders who have served the Hispanic community well.
- Cover:** New LULAC President Rick Dovalina speaks to LULAC delegates at the 1998 Convention in Dallas, Texas.

One-year subscription price is \$24. Single copies are \$4.50. LULAC members receive a complimentary subscription. The publisher encourages LULAC members to submit articles and photos for inclusion in future issues. Once submitted, articles are property of the LULAC News and may be subject to editing.

Advertising rates for the LULAC NEWS are available by contacting the Washington, D.C. national office.

President's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LULAC:



What an honor it was for me to have been chosen by the assembled delegates of LULAC at our National Convention this past July to lead our great organization. As the newest member of the long and distinguished line of LULAC National Presidents, I pledge to continue LULAC's great tradition of advocacy on

behalf of the Hispanic community at the same time that we move the organization forward into the new millennium.

Celebrating our 70th anniversary this year allows us to rekindle our courage, our vision, and that same desire that our founding fathers had when they established what would become the largest, most widely respected Hispanic organization in the United States. Since our founding we have developed a tremendous track record of success that has enabled the Hispanic community to triumph over discrimination and adversity. While we have largely succeeded in eliminating the most flagrant institutionalized racism of the past, we still have a long way to go before all Hispanic Americans are fully able to partake in the American dream. Even today our historic mission is still very much the same as it was in 1929—to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health, and civil rights of the Hispanic community.

Our history demonstrates that we can successfully overcome prejudices and break through what seem to be impenetrable barriers. These barriers were established to keep Hispanics in "our place," to ensure a lack of mobility and prosperity, and thus, full participation in American society. However, with the courageous action of early members—concerned citizens who acted with passion and commitment—many of these barriers have come down. Our founding fathers always believed that with time, and unceasing pressure, nothing could stand in our way.

And they were right. LULAC has made great strides in building bridges that serve to facilitate a greater understanding and cooperation between the Hispanic community and the rest of American society. The bottom line is we *are* a part of American society. We are as much embedded in it as those red, white, and blue fibers on the American flag. We are as much a part of this nation as anyone and we have the power to change what we see as unjust.

From its inception, LULAC has strived for real change, from desegregating barber shops, restrooms, and white-only restaurants, to winning the basic right to serve on juries, and providing legal representation and academic scholarships to thousands of people. LULAC has always been there, and will continue to be there. Our members reside in nearly every state, from Massachusetts to Texas, California to Puerto Rico, and we are getting stronger and bigger every day.

LULAC's amazing achievements are not only beneficial to Hispanic Americans, but for all Americans as well, because every American benefits when his or her fellow citizen is treated fairly, with the respect and dignity one deserves.

LULAC owes its strength to you—the members of LULAC. Every member is a vital component of the League and our collective actions have the ability to make our families, our community, and our country stronger and better. I call on all LULAC members to rededicate themselves to the principles upon which LULAC was founded and to initiate action that will help others less fortunate than ourselves. Whether through scholarships, leadership programs, civil rights activities, or raising funds to help the victims of natural disasters, I ask that all LULAC members continue to take action to make this country a better place for ourselves and for our children.

Since being elected as your president, I have set forth an aggressive agenda that will enable our organization to move forward utilizing the latest in communications technology and organizing techniques to advance our cause. Expanding our membership, strengthening our advocacy on key issues, and using technology to keep us informed, will strengthen our ties to each other and ensure that LULAC will enter the new millennium more successful than ever. In this spirit, we have greatly expanded our Web site, developed a thousand-member email list, and established a weekly policy report to ensure our members have access to late-breaking policy news. I encourage you to visit our Web site today at www.LULAC.org to take advantage of these new membership services.

Our future is upon us. Will we seize it? Or will we let it pass us by? It's in *our* hands. I challenge all LULAC members to be active in our communities and to commit ourselves to changing our communities for the better. With courage in our hearts, faith in the future, pride in our past, and the knowledge of today, we will succeed in ensuring the Hispanic community fully participates in the American dream.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rick Dovalina". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rick Dovalina
LULAC National President

Highlights from Our 1998 Annual Convention

LULAC's 69th annual convention in Dallas made national headlines as the nation's top elected leaders saluted the growing political strength of the Hispanic community.

Last summer, the League of United Latin American Citizens made national headlines as it brought the nation's top political leaders to Dallas during our 69th Annual National Convention & Exposition. The halls of the Hyatt Regency were enlivened with prominent officials, including nationally recognized Hispanic community leaders and activists, as well as corporate executives from throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

In the spirit of the convention's theme, *Hispanic America Rising to the Challenge*, LULAC delegates took on tough issues and formulated positions and strategies to improve the quality of life for Hispanic Americans. Seminars and workshops focused on social security, the 2000 Census, the Mexican dual citizenship law, and the portrayal of Hispanics in the media. "As we approach the next millennium we need to develop an agenda to address these issues," said Belén B. Robles, who served out the last of her tremendously successful four one-year terms as LULAC National President during the convention.

With the growing political and economic influence of the Hispanic community and the reputation of the LULAC National Convention as being the most



House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt and Rev. Jackson confer at the 1998 convention in Dallas.

exciting and one of the largest Hispanic events in the United States, the 1998 convention drew more major corporations and political leaders than any convention in our 69-year history.

Hispanic Vote Highlighted

The convention showcased the battle between political parties to reach out to Hispanic voters. Republicans spoke first highlighting how much their

party has in common with the values of many Hispanic Americans. Texas Governor George W. Bush, departing from many Republican Party leaders, voiced support for bilingual education. "If the bilingual program serves to teach our children English, then we ought to say 'thank you very much,' and leave them in place," Bush said. "In this state we understand that English is the gateway to freedom, so what I've promoted is not English only, but English plus."

Then Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich drew praise for his support of legislation to allow the people of Puerto Rico to choose their own political status. His speech emphasized working together to solve problems. "I believe that if we reach out and work with each other, we can create solutions that will amaze the world...and that young people here will grow up in a country that is healthier and far better and far more united," stated Gingrich.

Democratic leaders Rev. Jesse Jackson and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt of Missouri, on the other hand, contrasted the Democratic party's longstanding support for Hispanic issues with Republican policies they termed anti-Hispanic. "The current leadership of the U.S. Congress has brought



Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R) addresses delegates after receiving the LULAC Award.

to the floor and supported more anti-immigration and more anti-Hispanic legislation than any other leadership in the history of the country," Gephardt said of the GOP's agenda.

In addition, Jackson spoke of a more unified partnership among minorities, instead of seeing each other as rivals for jobs or political clout. "The great challenge for America is for blacks and browns and whites to see each other as assets and not threats," Jackson said.

Many delegates were pleased with the bipartisan showing, emphasizing the growing ability to have their issues heard by both parties. "It's obvious our voting has increased dramatically in the last few years. Republicans have to refrain from anti-immigrant rhetoric with racial and ethnic overtones," said Hector Flores of Dallas, LULAC's National Vice President for the Southwest.

Education and Youth

With the passage of Proposition 227, which eliminates bilingual education in California, and the introduction of Texas legislation backing a school voucher system for public schools, education was a top concern during the convention. The need to show children that they have a viable future and that education is closely tied to success was stressed. "It is a crisis in our community, and it starts early, in kindergarten and first grade," said Austin LULAC member Rene Lara.



Texas Governor George W. Bush at Convention.



Belén B. Robles, Immediate Past National President, appears with President Rick Dovalina.

The annual event also hosted the LULAC Youth Conference, which featured workshops and panel discussions on education, family values, drug and gang prevention, and other issues that are important to Hispanic youth.

Also on hand was Emmy-Award winning actor Jimmy Smits, who has been an outspoken advocate of a positive Hispanic presence in the media. "Image is important. It reflects how the country perceives us and how we perceive ourselves," Smits said. "We are 12 percent of the population, and yet only a handful of Hispanic films were released in recent years."

Exciting Elections

As at previous conventions, excitement built throughout the week as LULAC delegates anticipated the election of new national officers on the final day. Houston attorney Rick Dovalina was elected LULAC National President on a platform of strengthening and expanding LULAC's membership, increasing advocacy, and promoting the use of telecommunication technologies. Dovalina, a partner in the law firm of Dovalina & Euseste L.L.P., was actively involved in Houston civil rights activities and politics in addition to serving as Legal Advisor to LULAC National President Robles. "I will make visiting all LULAC councils around the country one of my priorities and when there is injustice against Hispanics, LULAC will be there at the forefront fighting for justice," said

Dovalina, succeeding Robles who had served the maximum number of four one-year terms as LULAC National President.

Robles, who was the first woman president of the 69-year-old organization, reflected on her tenure. "I feel there is a lot of cohesiveness in the organization that has allowed us to achieve many of our goals, bearing in mind that we have been through a very difficult period," Robles said. "We have had immigrant bashing that started with Proposition 187 in California, movements on English Only, and other strong legislation in Congress." Robles believes her biggest contributions have been the creation of the permanent national headquarters of LULAC in Washington, DC, improving the quality of LULAC's training seminars, increasing membership and corporate sponsorships, and the beginning of a dialogue with both political parties. ♥

Upcoming 1999 Convention

The League of United Latin American Citizens will be celebrating 70 years of service to the Hispanic community with its 70th annual National Conventional & Exposition, *A Future Inspired by a Legacy of Accomplishment*, which will be held at the Bayfront Plaza Convention Center in Corpus Christi, TX, from July 11—17, 1999.

Celebrating Seventy Years of Success

LULAC commemorates a golden legacy marked with historic achievements.

On a cold and rainy night in 1929, a small group of Mexican-American leaders met in Corpus Christi and brought forth a new organization, marking an important moment in Hispanic American history. This new organization urged a new way of life and a new citizenship to succeed in a land that had become hostile to Mexican Americans.

After the U.S. annexed nearly one-half of Mexico, including Texas, approximately 77,000 Mexican citizens lived in the conquered lands. Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo said these people were citizens, their conquerors never accepted that reality, and had difficulty in viewing the Mexican American as an equal. In fact, the ink was hardly dry on the treaty when Mexican Americans were being denied basic rights as citizens. Their lands were taken away and they were stripped of political power and isolated from the larger American community. Lynchings were common, injustice by elected officials and juries widespread, and signs such as "No Mexicans Allowed," or "No Mexicans Served Here," were posted to make sure these second-class citizens would not assimilate. By claiming a stake in full citizenship for all Mexican-American people, the founders of LULAC proclaimed that Hispanics be accorded all the same rights and privileges as other U.S. citizens.

During this very dark history, courageous Mexican-Americans began forming small organizations and took defensive measures against such inhumane treatment. The Order of the Sons of America, the Knights of America, and the League of Latin American Citizens were among the organizations established. Under the leadership of Ben Garza, the Order of the Sons of America in Corpus Christi became the driving force to unite all Mexican American organizations under one title, one set of objectives, and one constitution. Delegates of the Order of the Sons of America, the Knights of America, and other similar organizations traveled to Harlingen, Texas, in 1927, to the attend



Members attending the first LULAC Convention held May 18, 1929.

the formal installation of the League of Latin American Citizens. There, the various organizations adopted a resolution to begin the process of merging.

Disagreements between the leaders of the League of Latin American Citizens and the President General of the Order of the Sons of America, from San Antonio, had raised serious doubts about the possibility of a merger. A breakthrough was finally reached on February 17, 1929, when a uniting committee comprised of two delegates from each of the three organizations agreed upon the name "League of United Latin American Citizens." This paved the way

for the first convention to be called to order on May 18, 1929, where a single constitution was adopted. The delegates were so pleased with Ben Garza's merging efforts that he was elected as the first President General. LULAC grew quickly and today represents Hispanics in most of the U.S., including Puerto Rico and Guam. LULAC's membership has expanded to include and involve all men and women of Hispanic origin. ♥

The LULAC News welcomes any historical articles or photos from members.



Members dining at the National Convention held in 1951 in Laredo, TX.

Our Milestones: Legacy of an American Institution

Over the last 70 years, LULAC members have established a tremendous record of accomplishments that benefit the Hispanic American community to this day.

1930 - Desegregated hundreds of public places throughout Texas such as barber and beauty shops, swimming pools, restrooms, water fountains, public dining places, and hotels.

1931 - Provided the organization and financial base for the *Salvatierra vs. Del Rio Independent School District* case, the first class-action lawsuit against segregated schools in Texas.

1933 - Established a committee in San Antonio which led to the formation of the Liga Defensa Pro-Escolar, later known as the School Improvement League, which fought for better schools and better education.

1936 - Pressured the U.S. Census Bureau to reclassify persons of Mexican descent from the designation of "Mexican" to "White." The 1940 census count reflected the change.

1940 - Played a major role in filing discrimination cases for the Federal Employment Practices Commission, the first federal civil rights agency.

1945 - Successfully sued to integrate the Orange County school system, which had been segregated on the grounds that Mexican children were "more poorly clothed and mentally inferior to white children."

1946 - In Santa Ana, CA, filed *Mendez vs. Westminster Lawsuit* which ended 100 years of segregation in California's public schools.

1947 - Successfully protested the Arlington National Cemetery's refusal to bury veteran Felix Longoria of Three Rivers, TX, and assisted in his burial.

1947 - LULAC Council 1 in Corpus Christi and its Veterans Committee facilitated the formation of the American G.I. Forum organization for Mexican American veterans.

1948 - LULAC attorneys filed *Delgado vs. Bastrop I.S.D.* which ended the segregation of Hispanic American children.

1950 - LULAC and the American G.I. Forum filed 15 school desegregation lawsuits in Texas.

1954 - LULAC attorneys took *Hernandez vs. The State of Texas* to the Supreme Court, winning the right for Hispanics to serve on juries.

1957 - Piloted the "Little School of the 400" project, a preschool program dedicated to teaching 400 basic English words to Spanish-speaking preschool children.

1960 - Worked to transform the Little School of the 400 to "Project Headstart" under the Lyndon B. Johnson administration.

1966 - LULAC and the American G.I. Forum joined forces to organize SER - Jobs for Progress, now the largest and the most successful job training program in the nation.

1968 - Created the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the legal arm of the Latino community.

1969 - LULAC creates more than 2,000 low-income housing units in the Southwest.

1970 - LULAC Council 1 of Corpus Christi, TX, took a part in *Cisneros vs. Corpus School District*, which defined Mexican Americans as minorities for the first time.

1973 - Formed the LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc., modeled after a successful LULAC pilot program in San Francisco, CA.

1975 - Formed the "National Scholarship Fund" in order to centralize the LULAC scholarship program which dates back to 1932.

1980 - Filed numerous lawsuits with MALDEF and the Southwest Voter Education Project calling for single-member districts.

1980 - Fought to get better coverage of Latinos in the media.

1986 - Took the lead in defining a Hispanic position the Immigration and Reform Act of 1986.

1987 - Filed the *LULAC vs. INS* class action suit to force the INS to process eligible amnesty class applicants.

1989 - Filed *LULAC vs. Mattox* which challenged the selection of judges throughout urban Texas.

1990 - Filed *LULAC vs. Clements* which challenged the allocation of funds to Texas colleges.

1994 - Belén. B. Robles elected as the first woman president of LULAC.

1995 - Established the Commitment with America to better serve Hispanic communities.

1997 - Established permanent national headquarters in Washington, DC.

1998 - Filed brief in support of sampling techniques for the 2000 census.

Help Us Celebrate our History

As we prepare for the next century, it is important to reflect upon and draw energy from past achievements which continue to better the lives of millions of Hispanics throughout the country. The LULAC News will feature an article in every issue this year celebrating 70 years of history. Submissions are welcome. Please send them to our National Office in Washington, D.C.



Whoever has dreams,
can attain them.

Whoever sets goals
can reach them.

And whoever creates ideas,
grows.

At GTE, we want to know about your dreams,
your goals and especially your ideas.

We have committed ourselves to your community,
offering opportunities for Latinos.

After all, every new idea that's discovered is a force
that can keep our community moving forward.

If you are interested in working for GTE, please send your
resume and cover letter to us. You may e-mail us at
gte.jobs@telops.gte.com or write to us at: GTE Corporation,
MCHQWOBA59 Irving, Texas 75015-2092.

GTE

PEOPLE
MOVING
IDEAS™

LULAC Membership Rose Sharply in '98

Record-setting pace expected to continue into the new century.

1998 was a remarkable year for LULAC! Not only did membership increase by 30 percent, but we also secured two new councils in states where LULAC had not been represented: Delaware and Wisconsin. The associate membership program also increased our numbers and sparked interest among the associates to form new councils. We would like to congratulate the 223 new councils that joined the LULAC family in 1998. The members of these councils are energized and dedicated to advancing the mission of LULAC in their local communities. We encourage you to continue building your communities and recruiting new members so that we can continue to serve more people each year. This is *your* LULAC! You are the force by which we move and you influence the world in which we live. It is in our mission to empower the Hispanic community through education, political activism, and social awareness. Go out and establish councils on that premise. Seek individuals who need our assistance and help them organize. Create partnerships with businesses and neighborhood organizations to ensure lasting relationships. And most important, educate yourselves on Hispanic issues, keep in contact with the National Office about these issues, and use that information to move us forward.

Re-Charter Applications Due!

It's that time of the year again to send in your annual re-charter application. Completed applications were due into the National Office on January 1, 1999. However, you have until March 31 (postdate marked) to send them in. The sooner you mail in your completed application with dues, the sooner we will be able to send you your recharter certificate, membership card, and guarantee your participation in the national convention this summer.



Shell Oil Company presents \$20,000 to LNESEC. From left to right: National President, Rick Dovalina, Shell Oil representative Norma Williams, LNESEC Executive Director Richard Roybal, Houston LNESEC Director Rose Ann Blanco, and Vice President for Southwest Hector Flores.

Membership Drive Is Underway!

LULAC has made significant changes to our membership department that promise to help keep the organization growing and informed. Our Web site has been upgraded to allow members access to late-breaking policy information and we are producing a weekly policy update that can be e-mailed directly to each member with an e-mail address. You can get step-by-step instructions for joining LULAC and organizing a new LULAC Council through the membership section of our Web site. You can even download a copy of the LULAC Constitution. In the near future, we plan to add a chat area and a list serve for members to communicate with each other and discuss policy over the Internet. We are also looking at adding a Congressional Directory that can be searched by name or zip code and issue oriented letter templates that can be used to automatically generate a letter to your members of Congress. For more information visit our Web site at www.LULAC.org.

We are also producing new membership materials for 1999 including our much-anticipated civil rights handbook. This one-of-a-kind handbook will provide advice and suggestions for LULAC members handling allegations of civil rights abuses within their communities and other delicate situations. In addition, we have unveiled a new membership poster this year to help with recruiting members to your council and we will

once again be issuing our new computerized membership cards to identify you as a card-carrying member of LULAC.

By increasing our membership, LULAC is able to better the lives of more and more Hispanics every year and we are able to strengthen our voice at all levels of government. If you are not already a member, consider joining today and if you are already a member, be sure to sign up your friends and associates. Together we can make a difference. ♥

Victory at Sierra Blanca

On October 22, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) denied a license for a nuclear dump in Sierra Blanca, Hudspeth County, TX. The license would have permitted the construction of a dump authorized by the Texas/Maine/Vermont "Low-Level" Radioactive Waste Compact that was signed into law by President Clinton in September. A diverse coalition of local and national organizations as well as Mexican nationals have demonstrated their opposition to the dump, citing environmental racism. The battle may not be over. The radioactive dump may be moved to Andrews County, another area with a large Hispanic population. On the eve of TNRCC's decision, Texas LULAC and the Sierra Blanca Legal Defense Fund held a statewide day of action against the dump. ♥



News From Around the League



Young Adults Go Interactive

February 26th will mark LULAC's first National Interactive Video Conference of LULAC Young Adults, *The Alternative to the New Millennium*. This new and exciting electronic venture will occur from 1:00—4:30 p.m. at the Bayamón Campus of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico. The event will provide young adults attending post-secondary institutions in the continental United States and Puerto Rico with a forum to facilitate discussion on issues and obstacles that concern them. For further information, please contact Dámaris Sifuentes, National Vice President for Young Adults, at (787) 724-4715, or LNESc Executive Director Richard Roybal at (202) 408-0060.

Irving Young Readers Program

LULAC Council 4580 joined together with the Irving School District in Texas, to kick off a new reading program that tutors first, second, and third-graders. Funded by LNESc (LULAC National Educational Service Centers) and GTE, the reading program is designed to help children at these grade levels to improve their reading skills.

David Gutierrez, the Council's President, said the program has started off with high energy and enthusiasm. Since December 5, 1998, about 30 students have taken advantage of the tutorial and more are expected as the program develops. LNESc was the recipient of a \$100,000 grant from the GTE Foundation last August to fund 10 Young Readers programs across the country.

On January 23, Plano, TX, Council 4537 will also launch their reading program. "We have an opportunity to reach that part of the Latino population that nobody knows exists," said Ray De Los Santos, LNESc Dallas Director. "There are a lot of successes in Plano but there is also a definite need that this program addresses."

Hollister Boasts Latino Council

Peggy Corrales of San Benito County, CA, Council 2890, was elected to the Hollister City Council. Her elec-

tion creates the first Latino majority on the city council. Joaquin Avila, voter rights attorney, with the backing of the LULAC council in 1991, introduced district elections to the city council. They fought until the voters spoke and districts were created. Currently, former LULAC President Ken Duran serves as mayor. This a true victory for the people of Hollister and LULAC.

Florida Education Lawsuit

Joining a coalition of other civil rights groups, LULAC and the NAACP filed a lawsuit in Florida this January, charging the state for violating the rights of tens of thousands of school children by failing to provide them with an adequate education. The suit identifies 19 students, all members of minorities from poor schools where a large percentage of students have failed the state's own minimal standards. Similar lawsuits have been filed in other states, but what makes this lawsuit unique is that its focus primarily rests with educational adequacy, rather than racial inequality.

Young Community Leaders

Where better to educate LULAC members and potential community leaders than at a university conference? Young adult LULAC council 4512, Concilio César E. Chávez at Southwest Texas State University, hosted its annual Young Adult Collegiate Summit on November 14th. This year's theme, *Nuestro Tiempo*, focused on the role of university students within LULAC, the community, and on the college campus. Sessions were facilitated by members, national officers and LULAC staff.

Among the presenters were Dario Chapa, president of Council 612 LULAC Del Barrio, who gave a lively and informative history of LULAC's 70 years; Rosa Rosales, Texas LULAC civil rights chair, who presented a personal and impassioned talk on activism; and LULAC Membership Director Ingrid Sánchez, who facilitated a workshop on how to create and maintain a young adult council. Special kudos go to Al Maldonado, National Parliamentarian and District 3

Director, who drove in and out of Houston's deluge to give an interactive workshop on parliamentary procedure and the LULAC constitution. We congratulate Council 4512 for a successful conference!

✓ Mark Your Calendar

Celebrating its second Legislative Friendship Awards Gala on February 23, 1999, LULAC will highlight critical legislative issues affecting Hispanic Americans and recognize key leaders who have served the Hispanic community. The black-tie event will be held at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., beginning at 6:30 p.m. For more information, please contact the National Office at (202) 408-0060.

The 1999 LULAC National Women's Conference will be held on March 18-20 at Pima Community College in Tucson, AZ. For more information, please contact Ana Valenzuela Estrada, LULAC Vice President For Women, at (520) 206-6790, or you can e-mail her at astrada@pimacc.pima.edu.

On March 18, 1999, LULAC will host its 10th Annual Educators Banquet at the Tucson Convention Center. For more information, please contact the National Office.

The 70th annual LULAC National Convention & Exposition, *A Future Inspired by a Legacy of Accomplishment*, will be held in Corpus Christi, Texas from July 11—17, 1999. Call Azabel Gutierrez at (202) 408-0060 for more information.

The *LULAC News* encourages all Councils to submit articles, press releases, and updates of activities to the National Office. For more information, please contact Edward Acevedo, editor.

Young Professionals Paving the Way in Boston



New young adult council is paving the way for Hispanic professionals in Boston, MA.

When the Boston Young Professionals Council 12118 was chartered in October, 1998, with 12 members, they never anticipated the amount of expertise and planning that would be required to put together a fund raising event while cultivating new members and establishing a mission for the group. With the help of Regla González, Vice President for Northeast, and other Boston area councils, this group is learning how to work together to serve their community and be a forceful presence in LULAC.

In only three months of existence, the Boston Young Professionals council has initiated a one-on-one mentoring program that provides counseling to college students on issues ranging from academic course selection to job application techniques. Another extraordinary characteristic of this council is the cultural and professional diversity of its members, which, according to council president Mauricio Fernholz, provides a vital resource to the LULAC mentoring program participants. Today, the council's 18 members are represented by six cultural backgrounds (from recent Colombian immigrants to first-generation Chinese-Americans) and five professional disciplines ranging from mutual fund analysts to medical students. In addition to the mentoring program, Council 12118 is spearheading an aggressive job placement program by actively networking with other profes-

sional organizations, such as Crimson and Brown, Inroads, and the Latino Professional Network. The results have been impressive: three of our newest chapter members have found full-time jobs through our efforts.

Council 12118 has also worked with other LULAC Massachusetts chapters in joint fundraising events. Last June, they had a successful fundraising picnic at Milton Academy. The fundraiser was attended by corporate sponsors (including Bank of Boston and Bell Atlantic), political figures, and many friends of the LULAC Massachusetts family. All the funds raised were do-

nated to the 1998 Scholarship Fund. The event also proved to be a great venue for Regla González to preside over the swearing-in ceremony of Council 12118's officers. A new era is dawning as the LULAC family in Massachusetts moves into 21st century. ♥

Puerto Rico Plebiscite

Almost one-half of Puerto Rican voters support making their island the 51st U.S. state while a slight majority are not yet convinced, according to the results of last December's status plebiscite. Approximately 47 percent of voters backed the move to statehood, while about 50.2 percent voted for "none of the above," the option favored by supporters of the current commonwealth status.

Of those voters who indicated a clear preference, 98% favored statehood. "In the best traditions of American democracy, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico exercised their right to self-determination and voted to begin a process that could lead to statehood for Puerto Rico," said LULAC President Rick Dovalina. Congressional action is needed to clarify possible status options for Puerto Rico to take the next step.



Jason Arce, current National Youth President, and Alejandro Meraz, Immediate Past National Youth President, at the 1998 National Convention in Dallas.

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Memphis LULAC Targets Lack of Police Services

In the past two months, over 40 robberies and four homicides have occurred in the Hispanic community of Memphis, TN. It is estimated that in the past four years the Hispanic population there has grown from 7,000 to 80,000. With only two Hispanic police officers, no bilingual 911 operators, and a serious lack of police patrol in Hispanic neighborhoods, Memphis Hispanics feel underserved by their government. The local problems range from being targets for robberies to an increasing homicide rate in the community. On January 9, LULAC Council President Dilka Romero-Bennett organized a town hall meeting in Memphis drawing over 800 local Hispanics. Participants in the meeting included a representative from the local U.S. Attorney's office, several members of the Memphis police department, Councilman Myron Lowry, staff from the mayor's office, as well as representatives from several local advocacy groups. Concerned about the situation in Memphis, LULAC National President Rick Dovalina sent LULAC Director of Policy and Communications Selena Walsh to Memphis where she was later asked by the Council to facilitate the town hall meeting.

The meeting resulted in the police department's hiring of AT&T translating services for 911 calls, a promise of Hispanic recruitment to the police force, the organization of a neighborhood watch, and the doubling of police patrols in the community. "While there is still much work to be done for the Hispanic community in Memphis, this was a good beginning. The community slept well Saturday night," said Romero-Bennett. LULAC is planning additional visits to Memphis to monitor the progress. Dovalina plans to meet with the mayor, chief of police and other officials to urge increased protection for the community and increased Hispanic representation in the city workforce. ♥



Actor and activist Jimmy Smits with LULAC National Executive Director Brent Wilkes.



VP for Southeast Carlos Lopez Nieves and future LULAC members at the national convention.

LULAC Prepares for National Boycott of Boston Herald

In December, 1998, the LULAC Executive Committee passed a resolution calling for a national boycott of the Boston Herald due to the racially charged language of Don Feder in his article entitled "Caribbean Dogpatch." Printed on November 30, Feder stated that "We need more non-English speakers in this country like we need more welfare recipients, higher crime rates and an alien culture...". Although the article was supposedly about the Puerto Rico status referendum, Feder's piece was really a slanderous attack against Hispanics throughout

the nation. The LULAC Executive Committee demanded a formal apology by Mr. Feder. It also established a Hispanic Advisory Committee to monitor the paper's involvement with the Hispanic community with respect to employment, governance, contracting, and journalism, and called for an internship program to recruit young Latino journalists. According to the resolution, if the conservative paper does not comply with each of the above conditions by February 27, 1999, LULAC will launch a national boycott against it. ♥

1999 LULAC Legislative Platform

Adopted by the National Assembly on July 3, 1998, in Dallas, TX, at the 69th LULAC National Convention.

EDUCATION

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 public education. The tracking of Latinos into low-level academic programs must end. All Latino students should have adequate support and rigorous coursework to meet their academic needs. 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 the children of immigrants. We believe that education is the basis for lifelong success, and we strongly oppose any measures that deny education as a

Take Action on LULAC's Platform

As a member of the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the United States, you have the opportunity to help shape and impact government laws affecting our community by becoming directly involved in the legislative process. It is extremely important that all members of LULAC regularly communicate their viewpoints with their elected representatives. LULAC councils should encourage their members to schedule meetings, send letters and make phone calls to their elected leaders on a regular basis and above all to vote during elections.

Use LULAC's legislative platform as the basis for talking with your representatives on issues important to the Hispanic community. You can also assess how well they voted by browsing the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda's Congressional Scorecard on LULAC's Web site at www.LULAC.org.

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 lobby for new funds to operate in areas not currently being served by LNES.

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 border 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.

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. We oppose the militarization of the border and hold that the Immigration and Naturalization

Service should concentrate its efforts on naturalization, citizenship promotion, and the training of Border Patrol agents.

CENSUS 2000

LULAC strongly supports the use of statistical sampling in the 2000 Census to get the most accurate count possible and to prevent an undercount of Hispanics. We support placing the Hispanic Origin question ahead of the race question in the census form because it results in a more accurate count of Hispanics without compromising the accuracy of the race question. We call on the Census Bureau to include the residents of Puerto Rico in population reports for the U.S. We also support allowing respondents to check more than one race to accommodate those who consider themselves multiracial.

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.

WELFARE REFORM

LULAC supports reducing welfare dependency, but we believe that welfare should act as a safety net for those who for valid reasons need assistance. It should encompass job training, funding for child care, an increased minimum wage, and job opportunities to best meet the needs of urban and rural welfare recipients. LULAC vehemently opposes cuts to benefits previously afforded to legal immigrants, and we strongly advocate remedies that restore benefits to legal immigrants and their children.

Weekly Policy Updates

LULAC provides weekly policy briefs via fax, email, or the Internet to keep you informed of the latest issues affecting Hispanics. Log onto our Web site at www.LULAC.org and click on "Weekly Policy Updates" to browse the updates or "eMail List Signup" to have the updates automatically sent to you.

HEALTH CARE

Universal access to health care must 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 strongly opposes the common practice in this country of neglecting our senior citizens. We reaffirm our commitment to our elders and to their well-being. We will adamantly advocate for senior health benefits and will fight against any abuses.

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 INS expedite processing of two million citizenship applications pending in a backlog of up to two years in some states.

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.

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,

National President's Office Opens in Houston

LULAC National President Rick Dovalina is pleased to announce the opening of the President's Office in Houston, TX, on February 3, 1999.

The contact information for the new office is 7125 Gulf Freeway, Houston, TX, 77087. LULAC would like to thank Chase Manhattan Bank for donating the space, Southwestern Bell Telephone for donating the telephone system, and IBM for donating the computer workstation for the new office.

such as the Hopwood decision in Texas. We also vow to prevent California Proposition 209 from taking effect.

ENGLISH ONLY

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.

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 denounces any form of sexual harassment in the workforce.

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Policy Briefs

Hispanic Education Wins Big

To the credit of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, LULAC, and members of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda and the Hispanic Education Coalition, the Latino student came out ahead in the 105th Congress. A total of \$524 million was passed for President Clinton's Hispanic Education Action plan. Included was a \$70 million increase for the TRIO programs, which are the major source of funding for the LULAC National Education Services Centers, LULAC's educational arm. In addition, the plan calls for \$28 million for Hispanic serving institutions, up from \$16 million. Bilingual education also benefited, rising \$25 million to \$224 million. Adult education rose from \$24 million to \$384 million; migrant education also rose to \$347 million.

On October 2, 1998, LULAC held a press conference on the U.S. Capitol grounds calling for fairness in funding for educational programs. LULAC President Rick Dovalina set the tone for the news conference, stating, "Hispanic educational attainment is currently the lowest of any major population group in our country, yet the federal government targets much less spending to our community than fairness and equity would dictate." The bipartisan event included Senators Bingaman (D-NM), and Hutchison (R-TX), and representa-



Mr. Dovalina meets with Texas Governor George Bush to discuss education & immigration issues.

tives Becerra (D-CA), Hinojosa (D-TX), Torres (D-CA), Green (D-TX), Filner (D-CA), Redmond (R-NM), and Pelosi (D-CA). All speakers expressed their desire to find a solution to the crisis in education for Hispanics. The Higher Education Act, which makes post-secondary education more accessible to low-income students, passed with strong bipartisan support and was signed by the President on October 7.

Late Amnesty on LULAC's Agenda

In an effort to continue its pressure on the Clinton administration, LULAC held a rally in front of the White House in October, 1998, calling for the President to send an Executive Order

to the INS to start processing late amnesty cases. Over 100 amnesty applicants from all over the nation urged the White House to process amnesty applications wrongfully denied nearly a decade ago. In addition, members of Congress and national Hispanic organizations attended the LULAC press conference at the Capitol in support of a just resolution. LULAC National Executive Director Brent Wilkes led the charge, calling on the President to end this injustice by simply exercising his authority. "After nearly 16 years of investing in this country, paying taxes, buying homes, and raising their children, the class members have been stripped of their work permits, reverted to undocumented status, and are currently being deported," said Wilkes.

In our attempt to draw greater attention to the severity of the issue, members of the late amnesty class launched a national fasting campaign. The first 24-hour fast for justice was held in Los Angeles on November 9, 1998. On Thanksgiving, over 1,000 class members fasted in Las Vegas, again calling on the White House and Department of Justice to direct the INS to process their applications. Children were seated around an empty table, symbolically portraying that this American dream will no longer belong to them. As a backdrop, a portrait of a weeping Statue of Liberty signified a betrayal of freedom and prosperity. The parents of these children represent the 18,000 Las Vegas residents
(continued on page 19)

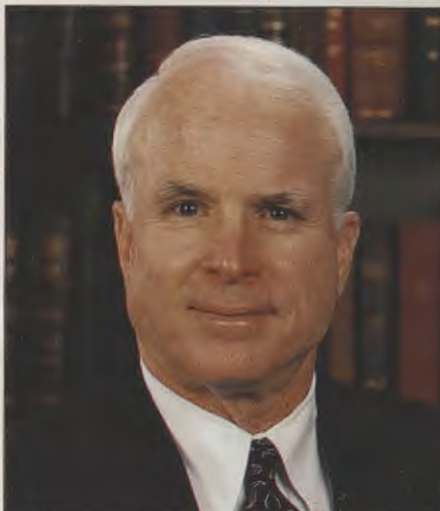


Representatives Luis Gutierrez, Xavier Becerra and Lucille Roybal-Allard speak at LULAC rally at the U.S Capitol for "Late Amnesty" applicants.

1999 Legislative Friendship Awards Recipients



Hon. Vice President Al Gore



Hon. Arizona Senator John McCain



Hon. Energy Secretary Bill Richardson

The 1999 *Legislative Friendship Awards Gala*, celebrating our 70th anniversary, will present awards on February 23, 1999 to three of America's outstanding national leaders who have served the Hispanic American community. Friendship Awards will be presented to Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson and Arizona Senator John McCain. The LULAC President's Award will be presented to Vice President Al Gore. All three will speak during the event.

In addition, actor and activist Edward James Olmos will serve as Master of Ceremonies for this historic event commemorating LULAC's 70-year legacy of service. Tick-

ets are available for \$250 per person (\$100 for LULAC members in good standing) with all proceeds from the event going to support LULAC's award-winning programs. The black tie event will take place at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Ave, NW, in Washington, D.C. The reception begins at 6:30 pm and the dinner begins at 7:30 pm. For tickets or additional information, please contact the National Office at (202) 408-0060.

LULAC initiated the Legislative Friendship Awards Gala last year to highlight critical legislative issues affecting Hispanic Americans and to recognize key leaders.

1999 Friendship Awards Gala Sponsorship Agreement

Come celebrate our 70th anniversary in Washington, D.C. and pay tribute to three outstanding American leaders.

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(Continued from page 16)

who have been denied renewed work permits by the INS.

On December 11, 1998, LULAC leaders joined members of the late amnesty class on their third fasting campaign in Houston, TX. Over 100 people slept in 30-degree weather at Plaza Guadalupe. "We remain hopeful that the White House will finally do the right thing and allow these class members to finally apply for amnesty. LULAC will stand behind the applicants until a resolution to this issue is found," said LULAC National President Rick Dovalina.

Central American Medical Relief

LULAC President Rick Dovalina announced the creation of the LULAC Central American Relief Fund last November. LULAC has sent nearly 80 doctors and nurses to Honduras and surrounding regions, according to LULAC member Susan Reyes. Donations have paid for travel expenses of medical personnel who are providing aid to survivors in desolate regions of Central America hit hard by Hurricane Mitch. Reyes and other medical workers went to Honduras in January and treated nearly 1,000 individuals during their nine-day trip. Relief workers have transported medical and hospital supplies via the Louisiana National Guard, but are still in dire need of medications for bacterial, parasite, and fungal infections. Those who wish to contribute to the fund can make their donations to the LULAC Central American Medical Relief Fund and mail them to the LULAC National Office in Washington, D.C.

LULAC Opposes Impeachment

On December 13, 1998, the LULAC Executive Committee met and passed a resolution calling for a strong letter opposing the impeachment of President Clinton to be written and sent to every member of Congress. On December 17, National Executive Director Brent Wilkes represented the only Hispanic organization at the Rainbow Push rally calling on Congress not to impeach the President. Led by Rev. Jesse Jackson, hundreds of participants called on Congress to censure, not impeach, the President. At the rally, Wilkes urged Congress to stop the injustice and to move on and

get back to doing the work the American people elected Congress to do. On January 7, 1999, LULAC sent letters to each U.S. senator encouraging a speedy and bipartisan resolution.

Hispanics Flex Voting Muscle

As anticipated, last November's elections proved to be the strongest display of Hispanic voting power ever. Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in the U.S. It has been estimated that Hispanic voters accounted for 5 percent of the national vote in the November election, providing the margin of victory in key races across the country. In California, Hispanic voters flexed their political muscle by overwhelmingly electing Gray Davis as governor with 78 percent of the Hispanic vote; Cruz Bustamante was elected lieutenant governor, making him the first Hispanic to hold statewide office in over 100 years; and Lee Baca won his race for Los Angeles County sheriff. Hispanic voters also backed Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D) giving her a sound victory over Bob Dornan, despite his campaign efforts touting himself as the "real Latino." Ron Gonzalez of San Jose became the first Latino to capture the mayor's office in a major California city since statehood.

In New York, Rep. Charles Schumer (D) could not have beaten Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R) in their U.S. Senate race without the help of 86 percent of the Hispanic vote. Hispanic voters also demonstrated that they will vote for Republican candidates who embrace their concerns by showing strong support for Jeb Bush as Florida governor and George W. Bush as Texas governor.

In the 2000 elections Hispanics will have the ability to affect the outcome in three states accounting for 214 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the White House, confirming the growing power of the Latino vote.

INS No Help to Hurricane Victims

On November 30, 1998, the INS issued a release stating that for humanitarian reasons they would hold off on deporting individuals to hurricane-ravaged Central American nations, for a mere 38 days. This response came after LULAC and other Hispanic organizations wrote to President Clinton asking

for an extension of 18 months. The Temporary Protected Status (TPS) expired on January 7, 1999. LULAC believes this to be unsatisfactory and has been steadfast in continuing its negotiations with Congressional leaders and the White House. The talks paid off. On December 30, 1998, the Clinton administration announced the extension of TPS for an 18-month period for Honduran and Nicaraguan nationals. Only a 60-day extension was also granted to Salvadorians and Guatemalans, due to less hurricane damage in those regions. LULAC continues its negotiations with the Clinton administration in search of a more equitable solution.

Opposing the Guest Worker Bill

LULAC President Rick Dovalina sent a letter to President Clinton urging him to remain firm in his opposition to the guest worker program. Sponsored by Rep. Smith (R-OR), H.R. 3410 reinstates the Bracero program to provide cheap labor for agribusiness in the U.S. LULAC sent Congress and the White House a clear message of opposition to the guest worker language which would increase underemployment of U.S. farm workers and allow employers to impose lower wages and poor working conditions for guest workers without providing housing. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman called for a veto of the legislation. Although the bill did not become law LULAC expects it to reappear in the 106th Congress. "LULAC will continue to support farm workers by opposing the reinstatement of a program which would result in substandard wages and labor conditions for thousands of U.S. farm workers," said Dovalina.

Saving Social Security

On December 3, 1998, LULAC National Executive Director Brent Wilkes spoke at a press conference supporting a set of principles developed by the New Century Alliance to be included in any social security reform plan. Currently, social security provides 85 percent of Latino's retirement income, and 23 percent of retired couples of Latino descent rely on social security for their entire income. Other featured speakers included Rev. Jesse Jackson and NAACP Director Kweisi Mfume.

