

# Latino Initiative Update



## **Latino Initiative Update Number 3 July, 2007**

Dear Latino Initiative Advisory Group Members:

As the new Senior Manager for the National Campaign's Latino Initiative, I am taking the opportunity to formally introduce myself. As Erika returned home to Northern California to deliver her beautiful baby boy Leo, I moved from Southern California to be with my fiancé Leavy. It is truly an honor to join the Campaign's dedicated and committed team, and I look forward to working together on our Latino Initiative.

I bring to the National Campaign over six years of experience in media relations and public affairs, political and governmental consulting, crisis communications and program development. I have worked with one of the leading Hispanic public relations agencies in California to prevent teen pregnancy throughout California and with a former State Senator as her media relations and educational representative establishing educational and leadership programs, conferences and events impacting Latino youths in California.

Prior to my career in communications, I graduated from Harvard Divinity School with a Masters in Theological Studies and was a voice for social justice at La Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos in Lima, Perú and at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) in Los Angeles. I look forward to drawing on my diverse experiences and background to help take the National Campaign's Latino Initiative to the next level.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to make a difference in our community together, and it is a great joy to be able to reconnect with familiar faces.

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### **CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS**

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#### **General Campaign Update:**

- **Youth Leadership Team Nominations – Deadline Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

We encourage you to nominate dynamic young leaders who are committed to working in the community to prevent teen pregnancy. For more information on the Campaign's Youth Leadership Team please see the details below in our most recent *EGRAM*.

- **Maria Echaveste Joins Our Board of Directors**

The Campaign's Executive Committee enthusiastically elected Maria Echaveste to the Campaign's Board in July. We are thrilled to have her! Maria Echaveste, a Lecturer in Residence at Boalt Hall, University of California at Berkeley, co-founded the Nueva Vista Group. The Nueva Vista Group is a government relations firm in Washington, D.C. that specializes in public policy, advocacy, strategic advice, and outreach. She also served as a senior White House and U.S. Department of Labor official in the Clinton Administration and has worked as both a community leader and a corporate attorney.

## **Latino Initiative Update:**

- **Latino Initiative Advisory Group Welcomes Betty Cortina**

We are pleased to welcome Betty Cortina, Editorial Director of *Latina* magazine, to our Latino Initiative Advisory Group. She has been a wonderful long-time partner with the Campaign including working with us on a poll and a special report on teen pregnancy featured in *Latina* magazine's May 2006 issue. Before joining *Latina*, Betty Cortina was the news editor at *O, The Oprah Magazine*, where she was part of the magazine's successful launch team. Prior to her work with *O*, Betty was the associate editor at *People en Español*, where she was part of the team that founded and launched the magazine, and she held positions at *People Weekly* and *Entertainment Weekly* in both New York and Los Angeles.

- **National Council of La Raza Conference in Miami**

The Campaign co-sponsored a workshop with Latino Initiative Advisory Group member, Liany Arroyo, at the NCLR Annual Conference on July 21. The workshop, *Something to Talk About: Preventing Teen Pregnancy and Unplanned Pregnancy for Latinas of All Ages*, presented the Campaign's Latino teen pregnancy data and information on effective and promising programs. The workshop also highlighted NCLR's focus group findings on the knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs among Latinos related to family planning and contraception.

The engaging questions posed by our moderator, Carlos Ugarte, who is the Senior Health Advisor to the President of NCLR and a Latino Initiative Advisory Group member, opened the door to dialogue and valuable feedback. Latino teens and young adults, providers and community leaders all attended the workshop. We look forward to partnering with the passionate individuals and representatives of the organizations who participated in the workshop, and to our continued work with NCLR and their affiliates.

We greatly appreciate being invited as guests of Latino Initiative Advisory Group member, Octavio Hinojosa, at the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute's reception honoring Raul H. Yzaguirre, Executive Director of the Center for Community Development & Civil Rights at Arizona State University and Former President & CEO of NCLR.

- **Latino Teen Focus Groups in Miami**

The Campaign conducted three focus groups on July 19, as part of our Healthy Relationships project that we're conducting in partnership with the Dibble Institute. Under this grant, we are working to influence the knowledge and attitudes of teens about healthy relationships and marriage through an innovative media campaign that reaches teens "where they are" through entertainment media, the internet, and modern technology. The focus group work is a key part of helping us understand how teens think about these issues as we begin to craft our messages and strategies.

The focus groups were conducted at *Abriendo Puertas*, an NCLR affiliate non-profit organization that provides services to Latino children, youth, and families in the Little Havana community in Miami. Participants were Latino residents of Miami – boys and girls – ranging from 13 to 18 years of age. We quickly built *confianza* with the teens as reflected in their open and honest dialogue about their views on relationships, love, marriage, and sex.

- **Annual Hispanic Symposium, North Carolina**

The Annual Hispanic Symposium sponsored by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina (APPCNC) was a grand success at Chapel Hill on July 26. Kay Phillips, Executive Director of

APPCNC, thanked the Campaign for our pregnancy prevention work in the Latino community during her welcoming remarks. In addition, Carlos Ugarte, Senior Public Health Consultant of UGARCAMP Consultants, highlighted our research and publications during his presentation titled *Latina Teen Pregnancy: Problems and Prevention*.

The participants were impressed with the bilingual tools in our guide for Latino faith leaders, *Faith, Hope and Love*, and with our new bilingual fact sheets. Over the next few weeks, I will follow-up with a number of organizations I met at the symposium such as Advocates for Youth, the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy, and the South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy who expressed interest in creating future partnerships with the Campaign.

- **Charting the Course for Our Children's Future**

On July 25, our Latino Initiative Fellow, Molly Sugrue, and Campaign Staff Members Kristen Tertzakian and Katy Suellentrop, gave a comprehensive presentation at the School Health Interdisciplinary Program (SHIP) Conference, *Charting the Course for Our Children's Future*. The Campaign's staff conducted an interactive workshop on Latino teen pregnancy prevention programs followed by discussions on the obstacles that face nurses and local health departments in their work with the Latino community. Many of the participants work in schools and/or with pregnant and parenting teens in Maryland.

- **Hot Off The Press**

The *Washington Post* covered our Latino survey in their article, *Hispanics Drive Teen Birthrate*, published on July 27. Mariana Minaya reported the following: "The National Campaign survey showed that Latinas were less likely to talk to their parents about sex than other teenage girls. Advocates for curbing teen pregnancy said that more communication among parents and their children is critical." For full story go to: [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/26/AR2007072602263.html?sub=AR](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/26/AR2007072602263.html?sub=AR).

Our new "Science Says" brief on *Effective and Promising Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs for Latino Youth* highlights programs that effectively help Latino youth either delay sex, improve contraceptive use, and/or reduce teen pregnancy. "Science Says #32" is posted on our web site at: [www.teenpregnancy.org/works/sciencesays.asp](http://www.teenpregnancy.org/works/sciencesays.asp).

Our new fact sheet, *A Look at Latinos: Latino Teen Sexual Behavior and Contraceptive Use*, shows that sexually active Latino teens – boys and girls – are less likely than their non-Latino peers to report using contraception. This puts Latino teens at a greater risk of getting pregnant or causing a pregnancy, among other risks (see attached document).

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It has been an invigorating and fulfilling few weeks at the National Campaign. I would love your input and recommendations on any ideas for our Latino Initiative. I'll be in touch and providing details of our meeting in the early fall.

¡Saludos!

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