

Latino Initiative Update



Latino Initiative Update Number 9 July 21, 2008

Dear Latino Initiative Advisory Group Members,

It has been a busy, productive summer at the National Campaign as we prepare for an even busier fall. Thank you for your prompt responses to our inquiry about the next LIAG meeting, which we have decided to schedule for **October 16th in Washington, D.C.** based on your feedback. Our apologies to anyone who preferred one of the other dates—we did our best to accommodate the greatest number of members and we regret not being able to accommodate everyone. For those of you who will be able to make it to the meeting, we're excited to see you and hear your thoughts on what we've done so far and your ideas for 2009. So please mark you calendars, and stay tuned for more details.

Before we share with you our activities from the first part of the summer, we would like to extend a **warm welcome to Reverend Samuel Rodriguez**, President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), as our newest LIAG member. Reverend Rodriguez was named one of the Top 12 People to Look For in 2008 by *Newsweek* magazine. His organization, as some of you might know, serves 15 million Hispanic Christians and advocates for 40 million Hispanics on issues related to family, political, spiritual, and socio-economic empowerment. Reverend Rodriguez was kind enough to feature our National Day Quiz on his Web site (see attached document to view a screen of NHCLC's May homepage). We look forward to collaborating further with Reverend Rodriguez in the future.

LATINO INITIATIVE NEWS

I. Press

We are pleased to report that the Latino Initiative has been featured in several national and local media outlets since our last update.

- **Telemundo**—The National Campaign's Latino Initiative was featured on Telemundo's *Línea Directa*—an award-winning Spanish-language television series that provides Latino families in the Washington metropolitan area with important information on health, legal, education and social service issues. Ruthie Flores joined Soraya Galeas of Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington DC, Inc. and Estephany Brito of Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) to discuss the causes and consequences of teen pregnancy in the Latino community, and solutions to reduce the high rates of Latina teen pregnancy and childbirth. The interview, which took place on June 16, 2008, aired on Telemundo Washington on Saturday, July 19, at 6 p.m.
- **The Washington Hispanic**—On May 23, 2008 the *Washington Hispanic*—the largest Hispanic newspaper serving Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia—published an interview with Ruthie Flores entitled "Jóvenes latinas usan menos protección en el sexo." Reporter Felipe Lagos asked Ruthie what's at the root of the high rates of Latina teen pregnancy. Ruthie explains that acculturation plays an important role—the transition for a newly arrived family, becoming

familiar with the American culture and understanding the infrastructure of schools and clinics is very complex. She also explains that Latinas are less likely to use contraception and more likely to date older men, two important trends that influence pregnancy and birth rates in the Latino community. View the article here:

http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/media/PDF/2008/Washington_Hispanic_5_23_08.pdf

- ***Epicentro Político***—On June 20, 2008, Youth Leadership Team member Lorena Granados and Ruthie Flores were guests on this groundbreaking national weekly Spanish-language radio program, which focuses on news analysis and political debate and features interviews with Latino members of Congress, roundtable discussions with prominent journalists and commentators, on-location reports from correspondents based in major U.S. cities, and in-depth conversations with Latino writers, actors, and musicians. Lorena and Ruthie discussed national statistics about Latina teen pregnancy and strategies to improve communication between parents and teens—Lorena offering the voice and perspective of a Latina teen on the issue.
- ***KUT Radio, NPR from Austin, Texas***— On May 27 and 28, this popular news and music radio station, which serves Central Texas and attracts 200,000 listeners every week, conducted a series of interviews and reports on teen pregnancy in Texas. Ruthie Flores was featured several times throughout the series. To listen to the radio clips, go to <http://kut.org/items/tag/pregnancy>.
- ***Chica Girl Magazine***—Youth Leadership Team Member Lorena Granados wrote an article for *Chica Girl Magazine* titled, “Why Latina Teen Pregnancy Matters to Me,” which was published in Issue Four of the magazine, released in June of 2008. In the article, Lorena describes the ways that teen pregnancy has touched her life, and tells of her efforts to make a difference in her community through education and community service. She notes, “Community service has not only distracted me from peer pressure and negative influences that could cost me my future, but it’s really worthwhile, rewarding, and fun.” To read the article, go to *Chica Girl Magazine’s* website at <http://www.chicagirlmagazine.com/> or see it on our media page.

All of this coverage—and more—can be accessed on our website at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/espanol/media.aspx#esp>

II. Presentations and Events

National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Conference, San Diego, CA

On July 13, 2008, LIAG Member Vincent Guilamo-Ramos, Natalie D. Hernández of NCLR, and Ruthie Flores presented a workshop on innovative strategies to prevent teen and unplanned pregnancies, and addressed the fact that Latinas now have the highest teen birth and pregnancy rates among all racial and ethnic groups. The workshop, “Let’s Talk About Sex: Strategies for Preventing Teen and Unplanned Pregnancies,” was a standing-room-only event attracting educators, community leaders, and youth.

Interagency Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy (ICAP), Montgomery County, MD

ICAP hosted a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Stakeholders Summit on June 11, 2008. Ruthie Flores and the Campaign’s Senior Manager for Research and Evaluation, Katy Suellentrop, presented on the National Campaign’s research about “best practices” in teen pregnancy prevention programs, with a special focus on multifaceted, evidence-based, and culturally competent strategies. The event attracted over 65 community leaders and practitioners, and inspired attendees to become more involved. The organizers were thrilled by the enthusiastic response of the attendees, one of whom said: “This was a first class summit, one of the best I’ve ever been to.”

Hispanic Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Steering Committee, Austin, TX

Ruthie Flores accepted a place on the Steering Committee, which convened for the first time in Austin on May 30, 2008. The committee, convened by the Texas State Department of Health Services, consists of parenting teens and organizations, external partners, and NCLR's San Antonio office. It was formed as a direct result of last year's Hispanic Teen Pregnancy Prevention Summit to address teen pregnancy in the Latino community of Texas. The Committee members, who are expected to provide guidance and structure to Texas teen pregnancy prevention efforts, offered valuable feedback on a proposal for a state-wide survey and focus group initiative, among other things.

Capitol Hill Briefing

In conjunction with a visit from our Youth Leadership Team (YLT), the National Campaign hosted a briefing on Capitol Hill on July 10, 2008, to inform Hill staff and others about racial and ethnic disparities in teen pregnancy. The event featured speakers Rep. Danny K. Davis (IL-7), Del. Donna M. Christensen (USVI), and Campaign CEO Sarah S. Brown, and a panel with three of our YLT members and LIAG Member Alvaro Simmons. It was skillfully moderated by Board and LIAG Member María Echaveste. In the words of Sarah S. Brown, the briefing was a "packed, standing-room-only session that ran smoothly and offered both real substance and many compelling personal stories...". Read more about the briefing and view a new policy brief on racial and ethnic disparities in teen pregnancy at http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/policymakers/briefing_7.10.08.aspx

For coverage of the briefing, click on the link below:

<http://talkradionews.com/2008/07/teen-pregnancy-prevention-campaign-shocked-by-striking-numbers/>

III. Publications

Fast Facts—The National Campaign recently compiled fact sheets in preparation for our July 10th Capitol Hill briefing (details above), which show state-by-state birthrates in 2005 for four different minority groups, namely Latinas, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. See http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/FastFacts_MinorityBirthRatesState_2005.pdf

IV. Funding

We are pursuing several potential funding opportunities, including requesting continued funding from the Abbott Fund and submitting a letter of intent to California Wellness. We greatly appreciate several leads provided by LIAG Members Maria Echaveste and Michelle Minguez Moore.

V. Youth Leadership Team (YLT)

Our YLT teens had a productive and fun visit to Washington, DC, two weeks ago. The 14 high school students flew in from all over the country to spend three days meeting with legislators and working with Campaign staff and one another to advance their mission to raise awareness about teen pregnancy in their respective communities. Our Latina YLT members Lorena Granados, Staphany Suarez, and Laurisa Rodriguez all visited their congressional offices, and Staphany was one of the three teen panelists at our policy forum on racial and ethnic disparities.

VI. Policy

In January of 2007, Representative Hilda Solis introduced The Communities of Color Teen Pregnancy Prevention Act of 2007 (H.R. 468) in the House of Representatives to address the high rates of teen

pregnancy in communities of color. Senator Barack Obama introduced the companion bill in the Senate (S. 1790). This bill was highlighted at our policy briefing on July 10th and would go a long way to provide additional support to communities where the rates are highest.

The legislation takes a three-part approach to address teen pregnancy in communities of color, supporting community-based intervention programs, schools, and multimedia education campaigns to promote and strengthen communications regarding teen pregnancy. This bill also establishes a national clearinghouse to provide information and assistance to develop content and messages for teen pregnancy prevention targeting communities of color as well as funds to support research that examines the incidence and prevalence of teen pregnancy in such communities. To learn more about the Communities of Color bill and other related bills, see http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/policymakers/PDF/pending_leg_12.13.07.pdf

We have been undergoing database conversions, which means you are all signed up for our biweekly e-gram, which we see as a way to stay in touch with our work in a "real time" way. If you prefer not to receive the e-gram, please let me know and I will unsubscribe you from the mailing list.

As always, please feel free to contact me or Ruthie Flores (202.478.8504 or rflores@thenc.org) if you have any questions, comments, or news you would like to be included in the next update, or if you would like to request additional information.

¡Gracias y saludos!

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