

EL Pulso



prlacc's newsletter

Director's Desk

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We would like to extend a warm welcome to all students, staff, and faculty, as well as welcome you to the first edition of *El Pulso (The Pulse)*. As many of you may already know, the Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC) was established in 1972 and has a rich history at UConn. We are open to all students, faculty, staff, and community members interested in increasing awareness and understanding of Latino issues.



This is an exciting year for us! We are happy to announce that we have moved to the new wing of the Student Union. PRLACC is now located on the fourth floor next to the Asian American Cultural Center. In addition to our administrative offices, the new space has a computer room, program room, conference room, resource lounge, and kitchen.

We are also delighted to have two new positions at PRLACC. Fany Velásquez, a first year Higher Education student at the Neag School of Education, is our new graduate assistant. She joins us full-time and will assist with programming and research. We also have Jackie Guzmán as our new M.E.T.A.S. Program Coordinator. Jackie is a third year Business student, who will be assisting with all aspects of the growing mentoring program.

All of us at PRLACC would also like to extend a warm welcome to the new director of the Institute of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies, Dr. Guillermo Irizarry. We are looking forward to continuing our collaboration with the institute and strengthening the Latino presence at UConn.

At PRLACC believe in being an advocate and support network for students, staff, faculty, and the community. In order to better serve you, we appreciate your feedback on our programs, services, and newsletter. Please send suggestions to prlacc@uconn.edu. We hope that you stop by for a visit and find out a bit more about us! ALL are welcome!

Positions Available

We are seeking work-study students to work days and/or evenings. These positions are flexible and are a great way to meet new friends and get involved. For more information, contact Cindy Schaefer at 486-1135 or cindy.schaefer@uconn.edu

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Mentoring Opportunities



M.E.T.A.S. 2005 members

Thinking about getting involved? If so, the M.E.T.A.S. Program may be perfect for you! M.E.T.A.S. (Mentoring, Educating, and Training for Academic Success) is a peer mentoring program designed to assist first-year and transfer students with their college transition.

New students are paired with existing UConn students to connect them to campus life. Benefits to participation include learning about resources and opportunities at UConn, attending educational, cultural, and social events sponsored by the Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center as well as other departments throughout campus, and meeting other students who are going through the same experience.

The program's goals are: to enhance Latino student retention; to create a strong sense of community among students; to provide leadership opportunities; and to provide a support system for freshmen and transfer students as they transition into college life.

If you would like to join our growing program, just stop by PRLACC to learn how!

National Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month was first celebrated in 1968 when Congress designated the week including September 15 and 16 as National Hispanic Heritage Week. It was not until August 17, 1988 that the week was changed to National Hispanic Heritage Month, to be celebrated beginning September 15 and ending October 15. The Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center, established in 1972, started celebrating Latino Heritage Month in April, long before it became a national event. However, this year, PRLACC will begin celebrating Latino Heritage Month from September 15 through October 15, as is done nationally.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, because it is the anniversary of independence for five Latin

American countries - Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18. During this month, the United States celebrates the culture and traditions of its residents who trace their roots to Spain and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

PRLACC has great programs planned during this time, which include the Welcome Dinner, Latino Faculty and Staff Luncheon, Howard Zinn, Latino Jeopardy, and much more. For complete details, check out our website at www.latino.uconn.edu or come by the Center for a copy of the Fall Calendar of Events.

Did You Know?

Have you ever wondered what the difference is between the terms *Latino* and *Hispanic*? Although often used interchangeably, in American English, *Hispanic* and *Latino* are not identical terms, and in certain contexts the choice between them can be quite different and significant.

The term Hispanic is derived from Hispania, the name given by the Romans to the entire Iberian Peninsula — modern-day Spain and Portugal — during the period of the Roman Republic. Thus, Hispanic has the broader reference, potentially encompassing all Spanish-speaking peoples in both hemispheres and emphasizing the common denominator of language among communities that sometimes have little else in common.

Latino—which in Spanish means "Latin" but which as an English word is probably a shortening of the Spanish word *latinoamericano*—refers more exclusively to persons or communities of Latin American origin. Of the two, only *Hispanic* can be used in

referring to Spain and its history and culture; a native of Spain residing in the United States is a *Hispanic*, not a *Latino*, and one cannot substitute *Latino* in the phrase *the Hispanic influence on native Mexican cultures* without garbling the meaning.

This distinction is of little significance when referring to residents of the United States since most Spanish-speakers are of Latin American origin. However, for a certain segment of the Spanish-speaking population, *Latino* is a term of ethnic pride and *Hispanic* a label that borders on the offensive. According to this view, *Hispanic* lacks the authenticity and cultural resonance of *Latino*, with its Spanish sound and its ability to show the feminine form *Latina* when used of women. Furthermore, *Hispanic*—the term used by the U.S. Census Bureau and other government agencies—is said to bear the stamp of an Anglo establishment far removed from the concerns of the Spanish-speaking community. While these views are strongly held by some, they are by no means universal, and the division in usage seems as related to geography as it is to politics.

Source - American Heritage Dictionary



Attention Graduate Students:

Wondering where all the Latinos are? Wait no more! PRLACC will be hosting the first Latino Graduate Student Call Out meeting on Thursday, September 21 at 7 p.m. LGSA will serve as a resource for graduate students. This is a great opportunity to meet other graduate students at UConn, get involved, and/or share concerns. Got questions? Contact Fany Velásquez at fany.velasquez@uconn.edu or 486-9014.

Fall Semester Event Highlights

M.E.T.A.S. Opening Event – Aug. 27

WRAAP Open House – Sept. 11

Latino Heritage Month - Sept. 15 - Oct. 15

Seminar: *The Latino Mortality Paradox* - Sept. 15

Welcome Dinner – Sept. 19

Homecoming Kick-Off – Sept. 20

Latino Graduate Student Call Out - Sept. 21

Howard Zinn, Sept. 26

Faculty & Staff Luncheon - Sept. 28

Ice Cream Social - Sept. 28

Latino Jeopardy - Oct. 3

Film & Discussion: *Balseros* - Sept. 28

Cultural Explosion – Oct. 7

Presentation: *The Face of Gay Puerto Rico* - Oct. 11

The Political Process... - Oct. 12

Día de los Muertos – Nov. 2

Martin Espada – Nov. 8

For a complete listing of our events, please visit our website at www.latino.uconn.edu or pick up a calendar of events at the Center.



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