



STATE OF CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission's 2010 Annual Report

December 31, 2010

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

18-20 Trinity Street

Hartford, CT 06106

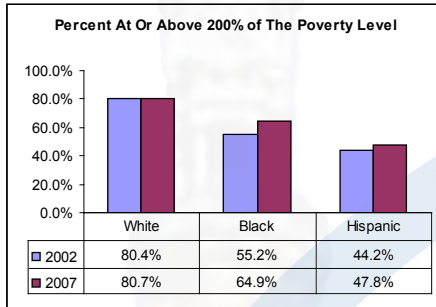
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Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission Report on the Status of Latinos

ALL Connecticut Latinos Are Healthy, Safe, Economically Self-Sufficient, Achieve School Success, and Live Lives Free From Discrimination.

Latinos and Self Sufficiency:



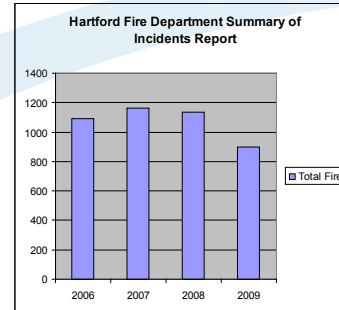
Story behind the baseline:

There is a relationship between self-sufficiency and lack of participation in a variety of services that will increase probability of Hispanic families becoming more adept at accessing a variety of services and successfully obtaining better employment, education and healthcare. Self-sufficiency is also impeded by Limited English Proficiency, lack of parental involvement in the public school systems and achievement of better quality of life.

Proposed strategies to turn the curve:

- (1) Develop media plan to distribute information about available training programs;
- (2) Develop collaboration among a variety of service providers to eliminate duplication of services and share costs of providing self-sufficiency programming to the community;
- (3) Create an electronic program that can be replicated among social service agencies to share information on clients served and type of services provided;
- (4) Develop consistent support mechanisms for the agencies to gain access to expert trainers in various fields to assist with client training;
- (5) Outreach and Education Re: available training on: financial management, preparing a budget, creating a winning resume, obtaining access to adequate and safe housing, access to bilingual education for adults.

Latinos and Public Safety (Fire Hazards):



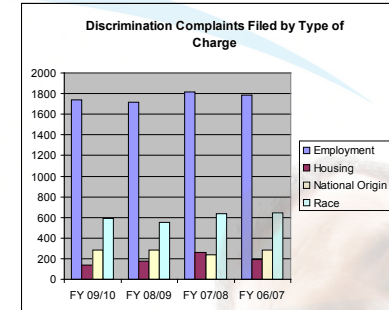
Story behind the baseline:

(1) Lack of understanding of 911 system rules and regulations, (2) Lack of understanding of housing code violations within living environment; (3) Poor housing in poor neighborhoods tend to contain more probability of fire hazards; & (4) Lack of emphasis on preventative measures or access to educational programs to educate the community about the code violations and hazards.

Proposed strategies to turn the curve:

- (1) Education: develop a cohesive plan for educating the community on housing code violations, where to file a complaint against non-compliant landlords and how to spot signs of possible hazards;
- (2) Develop child-specific training mechanisms for 911 use, how to stay safe in an emergency and how to get to safe location should a fire erupt;
- (3) Emphasize Prevention and Education of Adults and Children;
- (4) Advocate for a consistent plan of action that would be used in all communities throughout the state so that as the families move, what they have learned can be applied wherever they move.

Latinos and Discrimination:



Story behind the baseline:

(1) Lack of access to adequate housing; (2) Lack of access to employment; (3) Opportunities; (4) Lack of access to proper healthcare; (5) Lack of access to adequate public safety;

Proposed Strategies to turn the curve:

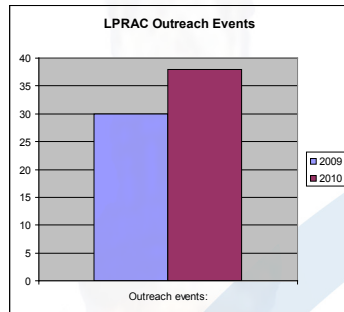
- (1) Develop a consistent across the board system of information sharing for public safety so that the community gets same type of information regardless of what town or city they may move to;
- (2) Develop a communications system among governmental agencies that will share information with one another and track clients served across the board so to avoid duplicating services or unnecessary request for info from client;
- (3) Develop links with community agency training programs and area community colleges to provide access to vocational training to unemployed or underemployed;
- (4) Connect housing servicing agencies statewide so that clients can be identified and placed more easily into adequate housing;
- (5) Host public hearings on discrimination process with the CHRO.



LPRAC Performance Report Card: 2010

ALL Connecticut Latinos Are Healthy, Safe, Economically Self-Sufficient, Achieve School Success, and Live Lives Free From Discrimination.

Approach 1: Outreach



Story behind the baseline:

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC) hosts numerous forums and educational seminars on a variety of topics of critical importance to the Hispanic community. Most recently, the agency launched a massive outreach-awareness campaign to inform Connecticut residents born in Puerto Rico to renew their birth certificates as of July 1, 2010. The graphic above shows an increase in our outreach events for the year of 2010.

Progress:

The LPRAC hosted its 13th Annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony on Saturday, October 16, 2010 at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville, Connecticut. A total of 11 students were awarded a \$4,500 scholarship each. We also recognized a Latina and Latino citizen doing outstanding work in the Hispanic community as well as an organization that has gone above and beyond in serving Latino girls through mentorship programming in the Milford area of the state of Connecticut. (Please see picture on the bottom center of this page).

The LPRAC also hosted three “Turn The Curve” sessions in compliance with the Results-Based Accountability model. During the spring the LPRAC hosted a turn the curve session on discrimination, one on public safety and another on self-sufficiency. Each session was attended by numerous state and community agencies including the Dept of Social Services, the New Haven Police Department, the Hartford Fire Department, the FBI-New Haven headquarters, the US EEOC and CHRO. Community agencies such as the Spanish Speaking Center, Catholic Charities and the United Way also participated in the sessions.

Finally, the LPRAC board of Commissioners voted in favor of hosting two of its Regular Commission meetings in the commu-

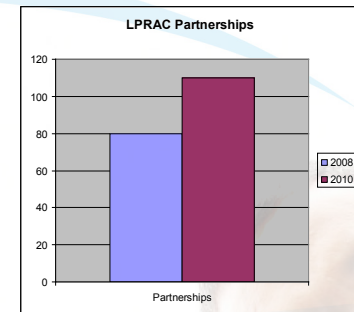
nity to boost our agency’s visibility, show our community how the meetings are held and most importantly hear directly from our constituency about issues relevant to them. In 2010 the LPRAC hosted a meeting in the City of Bridgeport and New Britain.

Case Study: Financial Literacy Educational Outreach Program

The LPRAC provided funding from a Bank of America grant to the “Mi Casa” agency in Hartford to provide money literacy training to youth attending their agency programs during the summer. Mi Casa was able to prepare a 5 week training session in at least 5 financial topic areas in conjunction with a staff member from Bank of America where a total of 50 youth were trained in how to manage a checking and savings account, how an ATM works, why it is important to establish and maintain good credit and how to participate in on-line financial services. The youth began the program with little or no financial knowledge. After participating for the 5 weeks, however, their financial literacy increased to 90%. In addition, the older youth took the younger participants under their wing and taught them the use of the ATM and other financial tasks.



Approach 2: Partnership



Story behind the baseline:

The LPRAC leverages its partnerships with lawmakers, federal and municipal elected officials, and national civil rights leaders to effect change on issues such as financial literacy, education funding, cultural pride, veteran recognition, housing and workplace discrimination and immigration reform.

Progress:

In May of 2010, the LPRAC created a partnership with a community agency in Windham and the Windham Public Schools to host a HIV-AIDS presentation to help students identify at-risk behavior and to inform them that everyone is at risk of getting HIV from blood-to-blood contact, sharing needles or unsafe sex.

The LPRAC also convened a very successful information campaign regarding Puerto Rico’s new birth certificate law. Agency staff was able to generate over \$30,000 in funding from our new partners from State Farm, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and ASPIRA of Connecticut. The objective of the campaign was to inform people born in Puerto Rico residing in Connecticut about the importance of applying for a new birth certificate. The law regarding Puerto Rican birth certificates changed on July 1, 2010 and called for all Puerto Ricans to obtain a new-fraud proof certificate in an effort to protect Puerto Rican citizens’ identity from identity theft.



LPRAC Performance Report Card: 2010

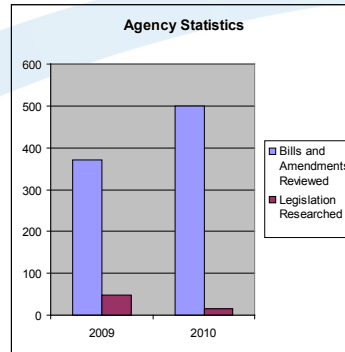
ALL Connecticut Latinos Are Healthy, Safe, Economically Self-Sufficient, Achieve School Success, and Live Lives Free From Discrimination.

Approach 2: Partnership ~ Continued...

The LPRAC also partnered with the United States Postal Service to host a Hispanic Heritage month celebration which highlights famous Hispanics on US postage stamps. On September 14, 2010, the USPS launched the latest release of famous Hispanics on US postage stamps in San Juan, Puerto Rico. They released a stamp in tribute to “Julia de Burgos” in honor of one of Puerto Rico’s most famous poets. On October 1, 2010, the LPRAC invited legislators, staff, dignitaries from the Hispanic community and the public at large to attend a ceremony in honor of Hispanic Heritage month. The collection of the framed stamp collection that the agency has was hung for display from October 1 through October 29, 2010 in the concourse between the Legislative Office Building and the State Capitol. The collection has now grown to 25 pieces with the addition of the new “Julia de Burgos” stamp. More than 75 guests from throughout the state including Attorney General Richard Blumenthal and Attorney General candidate George Jepsen attended the event.



Approach 3: Advocacy



Story behind the baseline:

The LPRAC takes great pride in having access to the legislature advocating in support of a broad range of issues that impact the Latino community. The decrease in legislation researched in 2010 is the result of staff reductions suffered in October of 2009. The LPRAC took a 53% budgetary cut, which resulted in staff layoffs and staff salary reductions.

Progress:

In 2010 the LPRAC worked with the State of Connecticut Health Equity Commission, as mandated by statute, to formulate standards for better health care access for all Connecticut residents and reducing racial and ethnic health disparities in prevention and practice. A member of the LPRAC staff has recently been voted Secretary of the Health Equity Commission and Co-Chair of the Legislation Committee and is working to identify health priorities for the upcoming year. The LPRAC also partnered with the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association in approaching the Governor to name at least one attorney to the Judicial Selection Commission as well as to name at least one Hispanic attorney to serve as judge. The LPRAC continues to represent the Hispanic community at the state level to help close the racial & ethnic educational achievement gap and in December 2010, hosted a legislative roundtable on education reform to discuss recently adopted legislation and analyze reports aimed at closing both the racial and ethnic education achievement and attainment gap. The work of this panel will continue in 2011 but it was agreed by all its participants that this topic will be prioritized due to the urgency within the prevailing economic context. The panel discussed the importance of quality early childhood programs, iden-

tify best practices and guidelines for English Language Learners, embrace literacy programs and support holistic approach that incorporates schools, districts, higher education, and state programs; attract and retain good teachers that are culturally sensitive; and emphasized the need to focus on parental involvement and the connection between the pursuit of basic equity/rights and the prioritization of legislation in an economy that is presently operating in a deficit.

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission’s Board and staff have been working with various legislators to re-introduce the In-State Tuition bill in the Connecticut General Assembly in 2011 in support of the children of undocumented state residents. In addition, the agency was instrumental in working with activists from the New Haven area to get the US Justice Department to investigate the allegations of the East Haven Police Department over harassment behavior on the police force against Latino small businesses in the town. The LPRAC also took a position on Arizona bill #1070 which called for the police to stop residents who they felt might be undocumented. At the December meeting, the board authorized the writing and submission of a letter in support of the national DREAM Act legislation. Unfortunately, the bill failed passage. In addition, the agency, through the initiative of its acting director who hails from Chile, also played a role in coordinating the Chilean earth quake relief efforts taking place throughout the state of Connecticut.



LPRAC was an active partner of Campaign LEARN whose mission was to raise awareness of the reality of the racial & ethnic achievement gap in CT which resulted in the passage of Public Act 10-111 “An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut.”