

# Noticias

A publication of the DCFS  
Latino Advisory Committee

Pat Quinn, Governor  
Erwin McEwen, Director

Summer Edition, 2010



# Noticias

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## Welcome from the Chairperson

Evelyn Martinez

¡Saludos calorosos a mis compañeros en la lucha!

It has been a year since I accepted the role of Chairperson for LAC. I have taken time to reflect on the learning experiences and am most grateful to my fellow members of LAC for their support and encouragement. As a frontline worker, I have personal knowledge of how DCFS policies and procedures affect the families we serve. In addition, I know many of the employees that must make the most of the resources we have to offer them in difficult situations. These experiences continue to motivate me to strive to do the best I can for children and families. It does not matter what you do for the Department or what role you have, we all have to have a commitment to help children and families to be safe. I hope you feel the same.

It was a pleasure seeing many of you at our 21st annual LAC Family Institute: "Empowering the Latino Community: Going Beyond the Call of Duty" on October 29-30. We had the opportunity to feel re-inspired and refreshed by many of our speakers and workshop presenters. Networking with our fellow colleagues is one of the ways that we as social workers can remain in touch with each other, up to date with resources and just "check in" with ourselves.

We provide critical service intervention if only by our mere presence and ability to engage families when they may be struggling and in need of assistance or encouragement. These are difficult times for everyone. It does take going beyond the call of duty to accomplish what we have to in a short work day to ensure children and families are safe. Thank you for your tireless, selfless and generous efforts to make this possible. It is truly an honor to work with so many of you that fit this profile.

This Noticias newsletter is another tribute to various people and programs that exist to help our Latino communities. The Noticias staff are DCFS and POS workers who come from different walks of life and have different roles within this Department. Thank you for your contributions, your time and your energy. Anyone should feel free to contribute to our editor and our newsletter staff any articles or information you feel may be important for others to know. If you would like to participate in any of LAC's subcommittees, please contact the chairperson for that particular subcommittee or me to learn more. When we come together, anything is possible to achieve. I look forward to seeing you at conference planning committee meetings, future networking events and at work of course.

Thank you,  
Evelyn Martinez, Chair  
Latino Advisory Committee

## Latinos in Illinois: Information You Should Know

- Latinos are now close to 2 million – 15.3% of the total population of 12.9 million in Illinois.
- Almost 1 out of every 6 persons in Illinois is Latino.
- 81.5% of Latinos report speaking a language other than English.
- About 41.2% of these indicated they spoke English less than “very well.”
- Latinos comprise 20% of Chicago’s metropolitan population. One of every five residents in this metro area is a Latino.
- The Chicago Latino population is approximately the same size as metropolitan San Antonio or Indianapolis. One of every five residents is a Latino.
- The majority of Chicago area Latinos live in the suburbs.
- Between 1970 and 2004, Latinos accounted for more than 96 % of the region’s growth.
- In 2008, the Illinois Latino population had a median age of 26.7 compared with the population as a whole at 36 years of age.
- About 35% of the Latino population was younger than 18, compared with one-fourth of the total population.
- Only 5.3% of Latinos are over the age of 62 compared to 14.6% for the total population in Illinois.
- Latino children are the second largest group of children in the nation and the state.
- Latino children also make up a substantial portion of the total child population of over 3.1 million children; 21.7% or about 1 in every 5 children in Illinois is Latino. Roughly over 54% of the children in the state are white and about 16.9% are African American.
- According to the 2008 American Community Survey (2009) for Illinois, the major ethnic groups within the



Latino population were: Mexican 1.6 million (79.2%); Puerto Rican, 175,722 (8.9%); Cuban 24,853 (1.3%); and those from other Latin American origins 209,379 (10.6%).

- According to ACS 2008 data for Illinois, Latinos are more likely to live in family households, 79.7% compared to 65.90% for the total state population, where there is a child present (52.5% for Latinos compared to 31.4%). In over half of the Latino households there is a married couple (53.5% for Latinos and 48.8% for the total) living with their own children (36.2% v. 22.0%). Latino families (4.05 compared to 3.29) and households (3.65 compared to 2.63) are larger than is characteristic for the total population.
- The nature of the extended family structure more common among Latinos is evidenced in the composition of the household. Latino households are almost twice as likely to include other relatives (12.2% compared to 6.6% for the total). Non-relatives are also reported more often as part of Latino households.
- More Latino households are multigenerational. Looking at the population over 30 years old, more than twice the number of Latinos or 7.4% report living with grandchildren compared to the general state population at 3.4%.

Please remember to stand up and be counted this CENSUS 2010!

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## The Focus is on You - Rubicelia Viveros and Damaris Acevedo, POS Bilingual Employees of the Year

*In every issue of Noticias we focus on a different Spanish-speaking bilingual employee. In this issue we would like to introduce Rubicelia Viveros, winner of the POS Bilingual Employee of the Year, and Damaris Acevedo who was awarded the POS Honorable Mention award at the 2009 Latino Family Institute. If you know of someone we should highlight, please send an e-mail to Julia Camacho de Monzon.*

### Rubicelia Viveros

***How long have you been with Association House?***

I've been working at Association House about five years as a Licensing Representative in the Child Welfare Program.

***What brought you into social services?***

The passion of a DCFS Child Welfare Specialist impacted me positively and I decided I wanted to make social work my professional career. My first job after college was in the field of child welfare.

***What challenges do you face in doing your job?***

It is challenging at times to work with other stakeholders involved in the family's case because we may have different perspectives regarding children's permanency or placement. Workers in child welfare should strive for the best interest of the child, but best interest is difficult to define and perceive when there are many people involved in one case.

***What do we need to keep in mind when servicing children and families including foster parents?***

We need to keep in mind that our children and the foster families are to be treated with dignity, respect, honesty and consideration. As professionals involved in the child's case, we need to ensure these factors are consistent when serving our families.

***What advice would you have for other staff about working with children and families?***

I would advise staff to take advantage of the great opportunity we have to work with foster children and to constantly remind children that you believe in them. I feel our children need to hear those words from professionals.

***How do you feel about receiving the award?***

It is a great honor to be recognized as the POS bilingual worker of the year. This award represents one of the many benefits of working in the field of child welfare.

***Has any case in particular touched you?***

There was a case of two children that I brought to a foster home just around the time the oldest girl would be eight-years-old. The child had told her foster parents that a birthday party in her honor was something that was never celebrated. The foster parents told the child she would have her first birthday celebration and invited neighbors and friends the day of the birthday party. Next time I saw the child, she thanked me for finding her two parents who had celebrated her first birthday celebration.

***School Degrees:*** I hold a MA in Higher Education Administration. Although, my master's degree is not in social work, I try to apply the concepts behind higher education in my everyday work with foster families and children. For instance, I speak with the families about the school dropout rates among Latino high school students and encourage them to assist and prepare their foster children for higher education.

### Damaris Acevedo

***How long have you been with Association House?***

I have been at Association House since October 31, 2005. I graduated from the University of Illinois in Chicago (Jane Addams College of Social Work) in May of 2004. I also worked one year as a case manager at Casa Central's Teen Parenting Service Network (TPSN) program.

***What brought you into social services?***

I was brought into the social service field because of everyday life experiences. I grew up in Humboldt Park with two very traditional, working class Puerto Rican parents who emphasized love of education, culture and service to others. Initially, I wanted to serve others through education; however, as my college career progressed I realized that I wanted to be an instrument of change through social work. Historically, Latinos have been stigmatized and pathologized; therefore I thought it was important to work towards a

profession that would allow me to intervene on various levels.

***What challenges do you face in doing your job?***

Each day we face cases with their own distinct challenges. The challenge that affects me most in doing my job is having limited resources to effectively manage my cases.

***What do we need to keep in mind when servicing children and families including foster parents?***

You must be able to work in collective groups in order to do this work. It is extremely important that you are humble and don't allow your ego to get in the way of the work you do.

***What advice would you have for other staff about working with children and families?***

I would advise workers to be receptive to information and to learn to take care of yourself in order to avoid compassion fatigue.

***How do you feel about receiving the award?***

I feel extremely honored to have received this award. I recognize that I am fairly green in this profession and that there are many workers that are more deserving than I am.

***Has any particular case touched you?***

Every case I have had has touched me to some degree or another. There isn't one in particular that comes to mind.

**School Degrees:** I am currently working on getting my MSW degree from Dominican University. I am just trying to stay focused on managing school, work, my children and husband.

## DCFS Bilingual Employee of the Year

The DCFS Bilingual Employee of the Year recognition was awarded in November 2009 to Jeanette Camarillo, Child Welfare Advance Specialist, Cook North region. The following excerpts were taken from the nomination form submitted to the Latino Family Institute Awards Committee.

Jeanette exemplifies an extraordinary professional who embodies the true spirit of the Department. Her greatest reward in life seems to be providing for and going the extra mile for the children and families that she serves and her co-workers as well. For the last 15+ years, Jeanette, who gracefully serves both Latino and non-Latino children and families, has demonstrated a high sense of dedication, commitment and professionalism towards her clients without expecting anything in return but the satisfaction of serving the children and families on her caseload.

EventhoughJeanettehasencountered several personal obstacles that would have discouraged and devastated the average person, her courage, strength and deep faith has made her triumphant in her professional and personal life. She has received several juvenile court commendations for her outstanding performance and has served as acting supervisor for her team. Although she works long hours, she gives the same dedication and unconditional love to her husband and four children, whom she adores and considers her pride, joy and main incentive in life.

Jeanette has gone above and beyond her call of duty, making a difference in the lives of the children and families that she unselfishly serves. She exemplifies the very best with her many years of very hard work, high moral values, sacrifice, commitment and integrity.



***“My passion is caring about those who don't have enough to make it through life in society. It's about poor people and families that need help raising their children. That's why I come to work every day, that's why I want to make a difference.”***

***Luz Vega-Marquiz, Philanthropist  
President and CEO, Marguerite Casey Foundation***

## Yes! Latino Family Advocacy Centers

Advocacy Centers! Advocacy Centers! What and where are advocacy centers? Yes, there has been a great deal of discussion about advocacy centers.

During 2009's 21st Latino Family Institute, a workshop was presented by recently appointed Deputy Director of Service Intervention Daniel L. Fitzgerald and Deputy Director Arthur Bishop. Staff had many questions about these centers. A critical question posed whether there will be advocacy centers to support the Latino population. The resounding response is yes. There will be family advocacy centers in Spanish-speaking communities whose responsibility will be to provide meaningful supports to assist Latinos in ways that have been forgotten and sometimes ignored in the past. The cultural divide that exists can begin to disappear.

Dr. Deb Daro states, "The moment you think you know everything you need to know about your profession or your job, you cease to be relevant." Daro also stated that the time has arrived for all of us to begin thinking outside of the box. Establishing family advocacy centers is a great beginning.

Family Advocacy Centers are directly related to the principle of "Strengthening Families." We protect children by strengthening families. Advocacy centers were replicated from the "recovery coaching model." Raising children has not been DCFS' strength. Removal of children for safety is required in some situations; however, when possible, the removal should not become long term. Advocacy centers will be community based with the primary responsibility of providing

parents with needed support and encouragement that will enable them to follow through on goals required to regain custody of their children.

The six (6) protective factors that serve as the framework in strengthening families and protecting children include:

1. Parental Resilience (Be Strong and Flexible)
2. Social Connections (Parents Need Friends)
3. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development (Being a Great Parent is Part Natural and Part Learned)
4. Concrete Support in Times of Need (We All Need Help Sometimes)
5. Social and Emotional Competence of Children (Parents Need to Help Their Children Communicate)
6. Healthy Parent-Child Relationships (Give Your Children the Love and Respect They Need)

As many of us are aware, when children are born no instructions are provided regarding their care. Parents are not provided any handy tools or a guide of what to do in various situations that arise as the child grows and family situations change. In the current economic climate many families are faced with circumstances and situations that they would not have imagined would occur in their lives.

Effective January 1, 2010, Senate Bill 807—The Differential Response Program Act—became law. Having such a bill allows DCFS to be more flexible and supportive in helping families. DCFS can strive to lose its stigma of being the Department that takes children away from families to one of being more approachable and providing "support" to parents

who are experiencing stress as they struggle to meet the needs of their children.

Encompassed with family advocacy centers are Strengthen Parent Leadership methods (Love is Not enough Parent Cafes, Parent Leadership Training and Parent Cafe Training Institutes), Psychological First Aid Training and a Statewide Provider Database.

### Family Advocacy Centers (\* denotes open)

\*Girls and Boys Town

Chicago – Back of the Yards

\*Westside Family Advocacy Center/Healthy Families Chicago

\*Fellowship Connection

\*Mujeres Latinas en Acción (Latin Women in Action)

Casa Guanajuato (Esperanza: Latino Community Services Network)

Erie Neighborhood House

Nicasa

\* South Central Community Services, Inc. – East St. Louis

\* Primed for Life/Professional Advocacy and Outreach

\*Family Advocacy in Champaign County – Savoy

\*Family Community Resource Center – Bloomington

\*Lifeline Family Services – Peoria

Latino Resource Institute

\*A Knock At Midnight – Chicago

\* First Evangel World Outreach  
Bright Star Community Outreach

Family Focus – Aurora

Future Foundation

## Cook North Region Latino Heritage Month

Cook North's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration took place on September 30, 2009, at the Bradley office site. This celebration was somewhat bittersweet as the Bradley office was scheduled to close in November. We celebrated our heritage, culture, music and history and shared our food knowing this would be our last celebration with our co-workers at the site that we have shared for over six years.

Placement manager Amie Joof read a letter sent by Regional Administrator Jackie Bright, who was unable to attend. It was a letter of appreciation and acknowledgement for the commitment, dedication and hard work of Latino staff at Cook North.

We played a game of "match the flag to the country" which ended up as a group effort. Although we realized that we would not be together next year, we laughed, talked and enjoyed a great meal together as a family—our diverse DCFS Bradley family.



*Denise Alvarez and Juanita Calderon*



*Deborah Batiste, Dr. Lia Knox and Melissa Wright*



*Emely Sanchez, Carmen Alvarez and Grandvil Whitsett*

We set up a table representing our Latino countries, flags, pictures and various cultural items for display. Sharing our culture through our music, food and recipes offered an opportunity to share with others unique aspects of our various Latino cultures. Many joyfully participated in dance lessons.

It is heart-warming to see how meaningful this event was and has been for the past years. Special thanks to Iris Cuevas, Emely Sanchez, Maria Calderon, Domillie Garcia, Dora Delgado, Ana Campos, Susan Mellema and all the others who coordinated this event. What was most important was for others to learn about the diversity within the Latino culture.

We hope to continue hosting this celebration of our cultures in honoring Hispanic Heritage Month.

## Partnerships in the Community

In 2007, the Latino Consortium expanded its services to the community with the creation of a Licensing Coordinator position. In an effort to recruit Spanish-speaking foster parents to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking children and families, the Consortium has attended numerous events throughout the Chicago metropolitan area.

Based on ongoing service needs the Consortium has partnered with community organizations to help meet those needs. The Consortium is involved with the Latino Social Service Network in Glen Ellyn, the Recruitment Councils in the Northern Region, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Chicago Latino Network, Healthy Hermosa, Healthy Albany Park and Healthy Chicago Lawn Coalition as well as community organizations.

The Healthy Hermosa Coalition is being highlighted for its commitment to the community despite its limited resources. The Healthy Hermosa Coalition builds collaborations and partnerships to ensure higher quality of life by promoting: safety, education, community involvement and investment, family unity, multilingual/multicultural services, violence intervention and prevention, access to quality health care and healthy lifestyle choices for all those who live, work and visit the Hermosa community. For more information contact Herminia Vanna at: [vanna\\_herminia@cdph.org](mailto:vanna_herminia@cdph.org) or 312-747-8820.

## UCAN High School to College Program: Paving the Way to College

During 2009's 21st Annual Latino Family Institute a UCAN High School to College workshop was conducted by April Curtis, Omar Sanabria and Greishen Rodriguez. Omar and Greishen are DCFS youth enrolled in the program.

The mission is to enhance and provide advocacy, leadership and growth opportunities for youth in care so that they may realize academic, personal and professional success leading to self-sufficiency. The program is designed to assist 8th – 12th graders in the Chicago Public Schools with identifying their goal of enrolling and attending either a high school or a post-secondary educational program. This program is designed to improve the academic and professional skills for adolescents in state care. Some of the program components include training, bi-weekly goal meetings, weekly group meetings, individual development plan meetings, and E-Learning sessions and educational outings. One of the critical aspects of the program is that the youth set their goals on a yearly academic basis.

The workshop was very informative, and the youth sharing their experiences drew the participants' attention. April Curtis emphasized that we "need to challenge our youth, connect to them and become more human to them, as well as coming into their world." As we continue to meet the needs of our youth and families, the daily responsibilities with court mandates, required paper work, connecting families with resources, and service planning, we can find ourselves overwhelmed and unable to keep up with new policies, as well as utilizing existing resources critical for the needs of our youth.

The workshop offered much information on ways of meeting the educational needs of our youth. Curtis spoke of our need to think outside the box and how this holds especially true for our youth. She gave some concrete examples and advice on how to connect youth to furthering their education: Get our kids to college fairs. Keep it real. If they are failing, challenge them to pass their classes. Forms scare our kids, and they are afraid of documentation.

One important aspect of the program is that if youth leave the program, they can always come back. Omar and Greishen spoke positively about the program and are very motivated to continue their educations.

Listening to our youth can drive us to plan better with them and to support them in not only becoming independent but in giving them the tools to further their educations. This workshop reinforced how important it is to capture what Curtis expressed when she said that we need to come into their world: "What does it take to get through to them? See them as human beings, not as foster kids."

Omar is a model youth in the program, and he bravely stood before the participants and spoke from his heart. As a 17-year-old he experienced 40 workers and he ran from placements. Even when he was on run, the consistent contact from Curtis with regard to schooling motivated him to continue in the program and to cooperate. Curtis reiterated the need to look beyond the youth's behavior when they are angry.

Greishen, another presenter and youth from the program, is preparing for college. She has been in the



program since she was in 8th grade. The program has seen her graduate from 8th grade and will now be there when she graduates high school.

The workshop stressed the need to reach out more to our youth and equip them with fostering their educations. We have a responsibility to do what is best for our youth and to ensure that we give them the tools and abilities to connect them with education. Many of our youth have lost contact with their families, and in assuming their care, we are the pivotal crossroad in their lives. As they leave DCFS care, they will need to rely on themselves to truly become independent what better way to give them this goal then to connect them with education. Achieving even small educational goals can make the world of difference for our youth. I'll remember the important messages that Omar, Greishen, and April brought to this workshop.

There are excellent resources available through College Zone including a checklist for high school students. Information and resources can be accessed at [www.collegezone.com](http://www.collegezone.com). You can also contact April Curtis at [curtis@ucanchicago.org](mailto:curtis@ucanchicago.org). There is a waiting list for this program but they hope to expand soon to help more youth. Please contact UCAN to see if H2C is in a school near you!

# Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth

LGBTQ youths are at higher risk than heterosexual youth for emotional and physical abuse from peers, caregivers and family members and are more likely to drop out of school, face discrimination and be subjected to homelessness. LGBTQ youths are also more likely to face depression, suicide, severe isolation, substance abuse and barriers in meeting permanency, well-being and safety needs. DCFS has an existing procedure, 302. Appendix K Support and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youths, that became effective March 2009, to address these issues, to guide staff in servicing LGBTQ youths and to also protect the rights our youths in care. The procedure can be found on the DCFS Web site and includes information identifying and meeting youth's needs, definitions of terms and multiple resources.

Within the DCFS Clinical Division, specialty consultation is available to support staff. Elizabeth Monk, Specialty Services Administrator, and her staff provide training and consultation statewide on servicing LGBTQ youths. They also participate in staffings and advocacy for LGBTQ youths in care. Many support, education and counseling resources are available for LGBTQ youths throughout Cook County and downstate. DCFS LGBTQ Clinical Services Consultants can be reached at 312-328-2150, 312-814-5987 and 312-814-4153.

Here is a summary of child welfare Do's and Don'ts as excerpted from the 302. Appendix K policy:

## Do:

- 1) Contact a LGBTQ Clinical Consultant immediately when there are acknowledged or suggested concerns regarding the sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression of a children or youth for whom the Department is responsible.
- 2) Implement recommendations made by the LGBTQ consultant within five working days of the contact.
- 3) Inform youth about their legal rights.
- 4) Make every effort to ensure that LGBTQ youth are placed in gay-affirming environments that respect the youth's right to self-determination.
- 5) Always be respectful of the youth's gender expression and self-determination.
- 6) Protect the youth's right to privacy about his or her sexual orientation and gender identity.
- 7) Documentation and disclosure of LGBTQ issues shall be guided by the youth's right to privacy, the scope of document distribution, and the youth's informed consent.
- 8) Consider personal attitudes, beliefs and knowledge surrounding issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- 9) Create an environment in your office and in meetings that signals to all clients that you are a safe and supportive person for them to talk with about LGBTQ issues and concerns.

## Do Not:

- 1) Make written reference to a youth's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression without the permission of the youth except in case notes or when the youth presents a danger to self or is at risk of being harmed by others because of his or her LGBTQ status.
- 2) Address a youth as deviant, pathological, immoral or in need of changing because of his or her sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or questioning status.
- 3) Contract or seek treatment services for the purpose of changing a youth's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- 4) Assume that only LGBTQ adults can be effective in working with LGBTQ youth.



## Latino Advisory Committee Members

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Luis Carrión, Chair-Elect

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Lourdes Rodríguez

## Regenerations Program offers help to previously incarcerated youth

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois (LCFS) is looking for individuals who would consider becoming foster parents for young people in our Regenerations Program. Regenerations is an innovative program that serves adolescents who have been in foster care and were recently incarcerated.

The program supports these young people to reconnect with family, friends, and community after incarceration. We need individuals who can assist these young people to learn from their mistakes and to develop positive choices for themselves.

Youth who participate in the program are in the custody of the DCFS, are aged 14-21, and are involved with LCFS and the Department of Corrections. They must be willing to participate in educational, vocational and advocacy programs. This has been and remains a vastly misunderstood and under-served group of young people.

Without someone to take them in,

these youth would be forced to remain incarcerated until a family could be found who can help them adjust to the demands of the outside world.

Regenerations combines the expertise of the state of Illinois, Illinois Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. and Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago to provide intensive advocacy and wraparound services that assist the foster family and youth in making an effective transition. Each youth has a team composed of the foster parents, case manager, advocate, probation officer and therapist.

LCFS is a non-profit social service agency serving over 35,000 individuals on an annual basis with programs such as foster care, adoption, counseling, youth residential treatment and a variety of community services.

For more information on LCFS or the Regenerations program, please visit [www.lcfs.org](http://www.lcfs.org) or contact 800-363-5237.



## Save the Date!

DCFS 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Latino Advisory  
Committee Family Institute Days

November 4 - 5, 2010

Double Tree Hotel  
Oak Brook, Illinois

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## DCFS and POS Staff Celebrate Octavitas 2010

Once again Latinos and their close friends throughout DCFS and POS agencies got together to celebrate our time-honored tradition—gathering. The commemoration of Octavitas is always special because it affords us the opportunity to celebrate our camaraderie and the treasured cultural bonds we all share. The word “Octavitas” means eighth, and it refers to the eight days that follow the arrival of the Three Kings. In Puerto Rico, this day unofficially ends the holiday season—one in which Christmas Day itself, although important, does not take center stage. The end of Octavitas is a prelude to the beginning of the Lenten season.

Owing to the vigilance of cultural devotees like LAC member Miriam Mojica, throughout the years we have been able to honor and nurture this link to our roots as well as to one another.

At the end of the evening, event volunteers asked the celebrants to fill out an evaluation. The second of three questions best reflects this connection: To what extent does this type of activity meet your needs and the needs of other bilingual staff? The following represents nearly three-quarters of those who chose to respond:

- Provides an opportunity to get to meet other bilingual staff and have some fun.
- I am not bilingual. However, I could see how people were feeling community.

- We get to socialize and network. It is so much fun.
- Gives staff a chance to have a good time. Also gives staff a chance to not think about cases.
- Networking and camaraderie.
- It’s good to develop a sense of Hispanidad within the Department.
- Get to meet co-workers.
- It's a way to socialize with other Latino staff/friends.
- It is great opportunity to see each other and meet new workers.
- Socializing with other Latino employees.
- It is very important to have these types of activities to loosen up!
- You get to see other bilingual staff that I am not able to see any more as I am no longer in Cook County.
- I really had the chance to connect with other bi-lingual staff that I never had the chance to meet.

Without a doubt, these moments stand out not only because of their cultural significance but also for their power to create a meaningful and healthy sense of community among us all.

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## Upcoming Latino Events

The Office of Latino Services/Office of Affirmative Action invites you to volunteer and represent your agency! For more information, please contact Jose Lopez at 312-808-5298 or [Jose.J.Lopez@illinois.gov](mailto:Jose.J.Lopez@illinois.gov).

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u>   | <u>LOCATION</u>                          |
|-------------|--|--|
| October 8   | 23rd Annual State Employees Conference<br>Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees (IAHSE) | Hyatt Regency McCormick Place<br>Chicago |
| October 15  | Hispanic/Latino Mental Health Conference   | Chicago School of Psychology<br>Chicago  |
| November 19 | Annual Latino Caucus Foundation Conference   | Rosemont Convention Center<br>Rosemont   |

Noticias is brought to you by the Latino Advisory Committee and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. It is distributed to DCFS employees, POS agencies, and agencies affiliated with DCFS. The newsletter includes articles pertinent to child welfare, Latino welfare issues, and DCFS/ POS programs, and strives to be an informative source for staff by providing updates on new child welfare initiatives as well as upcoming events. It is our hope to continue providing staff with a vehicle for the sharing of information. In this endeavor, we are looking for your input, submission of articles, and suggestions for improving Noticias. Articles related to your experiences with families and personal stories

are also greatly appreciated.

Please submit articles, information about upcoming events, or news to:

Julia Camacho de Monzon  
LAC Newsletter Chairperson  
DCFS

1240 S. Damen Ave.

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If you would like more information or would like to participate in one of the LAC subcommittees, contact Evelyn Martinez @Evelyn.Martinez@illinois.gov.



**Special thanks to the Newsletter Committee Members:**

Maria Calderon, Carol Kline, Carmen Alvarez and Madeline Gonzalez-Garcia

**Thanks to:**

Jenny Florent, DCFS Division of Communications; and Jose Lopez, DCFS Office of Latino Services

Latino Advisory Committee

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