

MAKING THE NEWS THIS WEEK

The U.S. Justice Department inspector general clears Attorney General **Eric Holder** of any culpability in its haywire Fast and Furious operation, but accuses his underlings of sloppy oversight...Separate reports by the National Association of Realtors and the U.S. Commerce Department point to continued housing market recovery, with growth in both sales and prices...In a 4-2 decision, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court returns to a lower state court for review of its new photo ID law set to take effect in November. Critics claim it was written deliberately to

reduce Hispanic and black turnout Nov. 6... Detroit Tigers third baseman **Miguel Cabrera**, 29, becomes the first major leaguer since Boston's **Carl Yastrzemski** in 1967 to win baseball's "triple crown," with an American League-best batting average (.330), 44 home runs and 139 runs batted in. His mother, **Gregoria**, played shortstop for Venezuela's national women's softball team for 14 years...Puerto Rico featherweight boxer **Orlando Cruz**, 31, reveals he is gay two weeks prior to his Latino title fight in Kissimmee, Florida...



—White House photo

VICE PRESIDENT JOSEPH BIDEN GREETES YOUNG LATINO MUSICIANS

Welcome Mat Extended to Latino High School Mariachi Group in Nation's Capital

By Almendra Carpizo

A teenage mariachi group from the South Texas town of Zapata made big noise in Washington, D.C. this past week – literally.

Eighteen members of Zapata High School's Mariachi Halcón flew 1,750 miles to the nation's capital to inaugurate the National Geographic's All Roads Film Festival, which featured *Mariachi High*, a PBS documentary about the award-winning group.

During their Sept. 26-28 visit, they gained a new fan — Vice President Joe Biden — when they performed for the fourth-annual Hispanic Heritage Month reception on the grounds of his residency at the Naval Observatory.

Student-musician Ashley Guzmán introduced Biden to about 150 attending Hispanic leaders and other guests.

To the diminutive 17-year-old violinist, the trip was "like out of the movies." Among oth-

ers they met were two U.S. Olympians, including Mexican-American Leo Manzano, who won a silver medal in the Games' 1,500 meter race. "I was so taken aback — I got to touch an Olympic medal," she said.

Mariachi Halcón received more accolades a day later following a performance in the open courtyard between the National Geographic headquarters' building and its museum, which are a few blocks from the White House.

The group played seven songs — from mariachi staples like "La Negra" to the less traditional "Lone Star Medley." With every strum of a string and hit of a high note, Mariachi Halcón attracted dozens more spectators off the busy northwest Washington sidewalk.

The group has won the Texas high school mariachi championship for small schools

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IF HE'S ELECTED, ROMNEY WILL END DEFERRED ACTION

By Almendra Carpizo

Mitt Romney's immigration policy hasn't always been clear, but in the last few days he has clarified one thing — Deferred Action will not be granted if he takes office Jan. 20.

During an interview with the *Denver Post* on Oct. 2, Romney said he would not revoke the special visa that President Obama has put in place." He elaborated that he was "... not going to take



SHARRY

away something that they've purchased."

Not everyone was satisfied by his answer.

Frank Sharry, executive director of America's Voice, a group that promotes "fair and just immigration reform," called Romney's remarks a small step forward, but wondered what would happen if he took office.

"For example, let's say that 100,000 have earned — 'not purchased' — work permits by the time of Inauguration Day. What about the other 1.3 million people eligible for the DREAMer deferred action program?" he asked in a statement.

Sharry didn't wait long for his answer.

The *Boston Globe* made a call to Romney's campaign headquarters the next day to clarify what he told the *Denver Post*. Romney's staff told the *Globe* that those who obtained a work permit — to date only 29 have been approved by the Obama administration — could keep it, but he will end the program when he takes office.



ROMNEY

Political Poop

By Patricia Guadalupe



Key Latino Gains for Obama

New poll numbers continue to show strong support for President Obama over GOP presidential contender Gov. Mitt Romney among Latino voters in key states.

The impreMedia-Latino Decisions tracking poll found 51% of Latino voters in so-called "battleground" states say they approve of the president and Democrats in general to "make the right decisions," compared to 27% for Romney and congressional Republicans.

Most (64%) of respondents said the Democrats were doing a good job of Latino voter outreach. Just 10% of Latinos surveyed said they have a "very favorable" opinion of the former governor of Massachusetts.

Economic issues still dominate, with 59% of Latinos in the critical states including Colorado, Florida and Nevada saying "fixing the economy" is their top issue.

The survey also found that when combined with Latino voters in non-battleground states, the president's approval rating jumps to 72%, compared to 20% for Romney.

President Obama has consistently had high approval numbers among potential Latino voters, with the impreMedia-Latino Decisions noting a slight uptick as the election nears.

Poll Supports P.R. Statehood

Slightly more than half (51%) of Puerto Rican voters would choose to join the United

States as the nation's newest state, according to an Oct. 1 survey conducted by US English, a group that supports making English the official language of the United States and which opposes statehood for Puerto Rico. The group says it opposes statehood for the island because English is not its main language.

While nearly four in 10 (38%) of those surveyed said they "strongly support" statehood; that number dropped to 28% approval for statehood if Puerto Rico were to adopt English as its official language under statehood, the survey found.

In addition to voting for governor and legislative seats, Puerto Ricans go to the polls on Nov. 6 to vote on a non-binding plebiscite asking voters if they prefer statehood, independence or the current U.S. commonwealth status.

'Where are you from? What kind of band are you part of?'

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within the last couple of years.

In a state where football reigns supreme in high school, students credit the school's backing, combined with parental and community support and their own endless hours of practice. "You can spend almost an hour on five seconds of music," said Carlos Rodríguez, who sings and plays violin.

Competition to join the mariachi "varsity" is stressful, but the perks in recognition and travel opportunities are incredible, said guitarrón player Collin Moffet. The trip to D.C. is one of those payoffs.

This was the first time any of the students, some of whom were accompanied by family members, have visited D.C. For Rodríguez, the Lincoln Memorial was the highlight. "My eyes opened, my mouth agape, drooling a little bit."

Still wearing their maroon mariachi garb, they drew lots of attention from strangers while sightseeing, Guzmán said. "They were honking and taking pictures."

The band attracted an audience everywhere, noted violinist Eloy Martínez. "I played 20 questions with a man in the hotel," he said. "Where are you from? What's your uniform for? What kind of band are you a part of?"

Mariachi Halcón's adventure in D.C. may have ended, but its young musicians promise to continue sharing the mariachi tradition.

"It's an honor to be able to keep that going," Guzmán said, "to keep this type of music alive."

(Reporters Tim Picot and Frederick Moreno contributed to reporting on this article.)



CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ



ASHLEY GUZMÁN

TWO HISPANICS RECEIVE MacARTHUR \$500,000 'GENIUS' AWARDS

Among the 23 recipients of this year's prestigious MacArthur fellowships are Natalia Almada, 37, a documentary filmmaker, who resides in Mexico City, and Junot Díaz, 43, a writer of fiction who was born in the

Dominican Republic.

Almada, a dual citizen of the United States and Mexico, is known for her insightful, innovative and imaginative work on Mexican history, politics and culture.

Díaz's book, *The Brief Wonderful Life of Oscar Wao*, won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2008.

Each will receive \$500,000 from the MacArthur Foundation paid quarterly over five years.

CHCI Public Policy Panels Probe Hot-Button Issues

During the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Sept. 10-11 public policy sessions, Weekly Report scribes were on hand to capture the highlights. Following are their summaries:

Absence of Hispanics in Media Draws Concern of Panelists

Reported by Aileen Schlef

Moderator: Zoraida Sambolin, CNN News
Panelists: Alex Nogales, president, NHMC
David Ayer, motion picture director
Michael Peña, actor
Esther Cepeda, columnist

In a fitting finale to CHCI's 35th annual conference, the closing *Latinos in the Media* luncheon panel focused on a long-smoldering issue for communities of color: "the lack of presence and misrepresentation of Latinos in today's multimedia world and daily onslaught of information. Their portrayal is one of great responsibility that carries both short-term and long-term consequences."

The history of exclusion by the media and entertainment industries has been "hidden in plain sight." As Latinos question the continuing neglect and misrepresentation, the movement for parity is growing stronger and more focused, panelists concluded.

This event was introduced by CHCI alumnus Jason Llorenz, now executive director of Hispanic Technology & Telecommunications Partnership.

CHCI chair Charles González (D-Texas) presented its 2012 Excellence in Service Award to the *Ahora Es El Momento*, *Univisión's* national public education initiative. Senior VP Ivelisse Estrada accepted it.

Before the luncheon, National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC) head Alex Nogales, an Emmy award-winning journalist, held a press conference on "The Power of Media to Breed Hate, Impact Health and Shape Opinions and What You Can Do About It." He presented findings of three academic studies and a national poll detailing the role of the media in shaping public opinion about Latinos and other groups. Most of those in attendance were Latino media representatives.

The NAACP announced signing collaborate agreements with NHMC and the National Hispanic Foundation on the Arts.

In August, at the August UNITY convention in Las Vegas, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting awarded a two-year grant of \$1.5 million to National Public Radio, which has been criticized for a lack of diversity of its staff and coverage, to put together a six-person team to report stories on race, ethnicity and culture and to explore new strategies for increasing staff and quality news that fully represents the nation's diversity.

On Sept. 18, nearly a year after publishing

a best-selling book *News for All The People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media*, authors Juan González and Joseph Torres spoke at the National Press Club about their research chronicling the effects of more than 200 years of structured U.S. racism.

National Hispanic Foundation on the Arts founder Félix Sánchez wrote a seething complaint to the head of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts after the announcement of the Center's annual awards for excellence in the performing arts once again excluded Latino talent. Only two Latinos, Puerto Rican Chita Rivera and Plácido Domingo of Spain, have been recognized.

When Kennedy Center president Michael Kaiser told Sánchez "go f*** yourself" in response to his complaint, the story received television and print media coverage. Nearly 80% of the awardees have been white.

Latinas Have a Greater Propensity for Suicide

Reported by Almendra Carpizo

Moderator: Ane Romero, staff aide to Rep. Grace Flores Napolitano (D-Calif.)

Panelists: Dr. Rosa Gil, CEO, Comunife
Leon Rodríguez, director, OCR, Dept. of Health & Human Services

Mia St. John, mental health advocate, boxing champion

Luis Zayas, Dean, School of Social Work, University of Texas, Brownsville

One out of seven high school age Latinas attempts suicide, and the lack of research and disconnect in families can be at fault, reported Dr. Zayas.

Latinas contemplate or attempt suicide significantly more than whites and African Americans. They attempt suicide at a rate of almost 14%; white non-Hispanics are at about 8%. The number of Latinas who seriously considered taking their lives in 2011 was nearly 18%.

Studies have focused primarily on the peer-group effect, but with Latinas it is more related to family issues. Overall, cultural and racial factors have not been fully addressed in suicide research.

Hispanic girls feel good about themselves, Zayas said. It's the disconnect with their mothers and families that are major factors that open the possibility of suicide.

Mia St. John, a four-time boxing champion and mental health advocate, recounted her struggle with depression and anxiety as a youngster.

St. John, who is now 45, first overdosed when she was 12.

"I OD'd with the hope of dying," she noted.

At home, St. John didn't understand her mother's culture – in her eyes they were so culturally different. When at school, she didn't feel comfortable with either the Mexi-

can or white kids. She felt alone.

Zayas' five-year study reveals similar stories. Latina adolescents find it difficult to relate to their mothers, who were most likely born outside of the United States and cling to their ancestral traditions.

The more parents are acculturated to the U.S., the better they understand their adolescent children, Zayas said.

Rodríguez noted that there are also other circumstances that affect Latinas. For example, immigrant children experience unique pressure such as being their parents' translator that puts them in an unfamiliar position.

Current immigration issues also affect Latinas' mental health, and in some states have raised the number of suicide attempts.

"Arizona and Colorado have increases that surprise me, but then when I think about what's happening in respects with the immigration struggle," Zayas said, "I can see how demoralization and hopelessness begins to follow these girls."

Getting assistance for Latinas is also difficult. When seeking help for girls, families may face barriers, Rodríguez contended. Families may be too scared to seek aid in states like Arizona.

Not having translators at doctors' offices is a form of discrimination and can also be an obstacle.

Government needs to create programs that are culturally sensitive, said Dr. Rosa Gil. "We think we have the answer, but we don't ask the community what the problem is." The community needs to play a leading role in determining what is required.

Gil created a program called "Life is Precious" to help close the gap between mothers and daughters. The program is centered on cultural norms. While her program is centered in the Bronx, Gil thinks similar programs could and should be developed in other states.

If one in seven people have the flu, it is considered a big issue, Zayas said. Yet that same number of young Latina suicide attempts does not draw much attention. That, he concluded, is negligence.

Road Ahead: From Deferred Action to Immigration Reform

Reported by Sandy Ledesma

Panel Chair: Rep. Luis Gutiérrez (D-Ill.)

Moderator: Norma García, news anchor, *Telemundo* Dallas & San Antonio

Panelists: Ali Noorani, executive director, National Immigration Forum
Gabriela Pacheco, project consultant, United We DREAM

Rev. Freddy Santiago, pastor, Rebaño Church, Chicago.

This panel addressed the issue of immi-

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VOTING: Hard If You Show Up, Easy If You Don't

Guest Column

José de la Isla



The application for a mail ballot was partially filled in with her name, address and boxes checkmarked in red for the November election. All she — or someone — needed to do was to sign, and it would arrive in the mail. She or someone could cast a ballot this way, without the bother of presenting ID. In fact, the party had ID'ed her for voting.

In 2011, more than 30 states considered laws requiring voters to present government-issued photo IDs in order to vote. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, more than 11% of citizens lack this type of identification and must instead negotiate cumbersome ways to substitute for it, or do without voting.

According to Anabel, the GOP approach is to suspect everyone, unless properly documented, to get access to the ballot. But that is really bogus, she tells me.

HOW GOP BECAME DOMINANT IN STATE

She explains how years earlier a sister-in-law filled in the postcard request for her mother and had the ballot sent to her. Her mother never had to wait in line or present a government-issued photo ID or even show her face to anyone.

The sister-in-law filled in the ballot, had her mother sign it, sent it in and they were done performing their civic duty.

If Republicans were looking for fraud, this is the setting — absentee voting. One would think voter suppressors would go after absentee ballots sent by mail to elderly people who never identify themselves in person — also like military personnel and emergency care workers — people not seen at the polls. In fact, abolishing absentee voting by unidentified people might be the solution.

Don't bet on it.

Hard-won rights and procedures like voter registration, non-intimidation and encouraging election-day turnouts are among the ways to bring about change, she explains. That's how the Republicans got in and became dominant in Texas.

Still, nobody gives up political power easily, she says. So now the effort is to bend the rules and procedures to convenience the power establishment, to make it hard for those who show up to vote and easy for those who don't.

(José de la Isla is a nationally syndicated columnist for Hispanic Link and Scripps Howard news services. Reach him at joseisla3@yahoo.com.)

HOUSTON — My friend Anabel wanted to see me right away. She wanted to talk about absentee voting.

In the upcoming presidential election, Texas is not a swing state. It is solidly Republican. But the level of support Obama might get is a gauge into how new voting coalitions are forming to overcome decades of a weak state Democratic Party.

Democrats, only recently, elected Gilberto Hinojosa state party chairman. Not since the times of the Kennedy boys have state politics received such a jolt. Although lots of people will read in all kinds of ethnic meaning, nuance and social issues (just as Catholicism was read into the Kennedys' politics), by and large it just means change is now more evident, as it was a half century ago.

Power establishments become more entrenched and they use their incumbency when they see their social infrastructure eroding.

LATINOS NOW 28% OF TEXAS' ELIGIBLE VOTERS

Hispanic Texans are a threat because of their longstanding Democratic tie, and they now make up more than 28% of the eligible voter population. That proportion keeps growing, and largely keeps Texas Republicans wondering whether they can maintain their red-state dominance much longer without having to compromise.

In the coming years, Texas is likely to become more speckled red/blue, urban/suburban/rural/cosmopolitan, transnational and a more moderate state, less like current governor and one-time presidential hopeful Rick Perry's worldview.

What had upset Anabel was a four-color postcard from the Republican Party. She is an elderly rich lady, who has studied, read and traveled widely. She has lost friends because she is uncomfortable with the Tea Party takeover of her precinct. No longer does she contribute to the party, although she still receives its mail and phone solicitations for giving.

The postcard she received had George and Barbara Bush's picture on the front. It said "Join Barbara and President George H.W. Bush in requesting your ballot by mail today."

A Monumental Moment — Obama to Join in Honoring César Chávez's Legacy at La Paz Oct. 8

By Gabriella Canal

The White House announced Oct. 1 the establishment of a national César E. Chávez monument, honoring the legacy of the co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association. President Obama will travel to Keene, Calif., Oct. 8 to participate in the commemoration ceremony.

So will his Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solís.

The monument is to be built on the property known as *Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz* (Our Lady Queen of Peace), or La Paz, home and workplace of Chávez and his family from the early 1970s until 1993.

The grounds have also served as the national headquarters for the United Farm Workers union. It is the final resting place of one of this country's most revered civil rights activists. Along with a visitors' center containing Chávez's office will be a memorial garden containing his gravesite.

The dedication will mark President Obama's fourth for a national monument using the Antiquities Act.

President Obama stated in a White House release, "César Chávez



gave a voice to poor and disenfranchised workers everywhere. La Paz was at the center of some of the most significant civil rights moments in our nation's history, and by designating it a national

monument, Chávez's legacy will be preserved and shared to inspire generations to come."

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Chávez's prime accomplishment: the founding of the UFW predecessor, the NFWA, one of the greatest labor unions of its time.

U.S. Rep. Charles González (D-Texas), chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, attributed, "Chávez's vision and leadership was not just important for the Hispanic community, but rather, Chávez was a champion for the living wage and the dignity due to all workers. Anyone facing adversity and speaking truth to power can find inspiration in his story. His courage and dedication proved to all Americans that when we work together, we can accomplish extraordinary things."

The monument validates words Chávez kept dear: "Sí, se puede."

NEW READS *Martín Espada's 'Trouble Ball' is no trouble at all*

Reviewed by Charlie Ericksen

I can't remember playing literary critic before, but that's not to say I don't read books.

I do. Mostly those authored by Latino or Latina friends — colleagues like José de la Isla, who writes about culture and politics.

Many that I read are more autobiographical than literary. Ron Arias's *Moving Target: A Memoir of Pursuit* tracks his search for the truth about his father, who as a Japanese prisoner of war in World War II has been portrayed alternately as a life-saving camp hero and traitor.

Another one, former EEOC commissioner Armando Rodríguez's *From the Barrio to Washington: An Educator's Journey* also comes to mind. His amazing life included dozens of "firsts," including San Diego's first Mexican-American high school principal (and wrestling coach) and five years as president of East Los Angeles College.

Now 91, Armando stills plays nine holes of golf weekly, caddying his own clubs, and is regularly invited to San Diego State University's Ivory Tower to share his near-century of wisdom and wit.

Other authors who have won my attention and affection over time include Sandra Cisneros, Rudolfo Anaya, Julia Alvarez and the late Tomás Rivera.

For his depth of cultural wisdom and gentle yet sometimes biting wit, José Antonio Burciaga had no peer.

Then, some months ago, from New York publisher W.W. Norton along came *The Trouble Ball* by Martín Espada. It's a small book of poetry, free verse, just 66 pages. On its cover is a young pitcher, left leg skyward, his crotch in my

face, as he winds up to deliver what has to be a screwball.

The title tale, just two and a half pages, is about the day Martín's father went to a Brooklyn Dodgers game at Ebbets Field in 1941, pre-Sachel Page. There's the line in it, "My father, who remembers everything, remembers nothing of that dazzling day but this: *¿Dónde están los negros? No los dejan.*"

The Puerto Rican author's name should have registered with me. His *The Republic of Poetry* was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2007. His father, Frank Espada, is a world-class photographer, an old friend of mine whose photo-art Hispanic Link carried decades ago.

Martín's collection gathered dust in our office for weeks until I passed it to an 11th grade summer intern to review. He didn't get to it. When he left, the book found its way back to my desk.

I opened it and began reading the titles of some of its 30 tight verses, some less than a page long: *Blessed Be the Truth-Tellers, The Day We Buried You in the Park, Epiphany, Blasphemy, Litany at the Tomb of Frederick Douglass.*

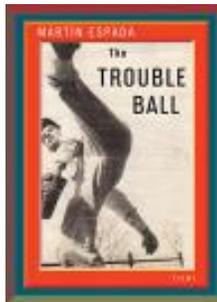
I started to check a couple and I didn't stop until I finished all 66 pages.

In the confines of two pages, Espada's *Isabel's Corrido* covers his "conspiracy to commit a crime."

"This is my confession: I'd do it again," he writes. His free-verse piece begins "Francisca said: 'Marry my sister so she can stay in the country.'"

Are you hooked?

***The Trouble Ball* by Martín Espada, W.W. Norton and Company, 66 pages, \$24.95 hardcover.**



Unemployment Rate Drops from 8.1% to 7.8%; for Latinos 10.2% to 9.9%

By Almendra Carpizo

The September unemployment rate for Hispanics fell below 10% — from 10.2% to 9.9% — for the first time in 45 months. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data show the number of unemployed Hispanics down 176,000 from a year ago.

Overall, after 43 consecutive months above 8%, the unemployment rate for all persons in the national workforce dropped three-tenths of a percent, from 8.1% to 7.8%.

Job growth has increased consistently for the last 31 months of the Obama administration.

Fox News anchor Monica Crowley tweeted "October surprise: 43 consecutive months of above 8% unemployment, & 1 month before election, the rate miraculously drops to 7.8%. Ahem."

Secretary of Labor Hilda Solís called the inference "ludicrous," stating that "BLS workers are professionals who work on behalf of all administrations." She said there is still more work to be done when it comes to Latino unemployment numbers. "We are not totally out of the woods, we have to do more, and we remain committed to making sure Latinos get the appropriate training to get credentialed into new careers."

Lawrence Mishel, president of the non-partisan, non-profit Economic Policy Institute, took to his blog to talk about the issue. "BLS is a highly professional agency with dozens of people involved in the tabulation and analysis of these data ... The data trends reported are clearly in line with previous monthly reports and other economic indicators (such as GDP)."

At the end of the Bush Administration, the nation was losing 700,000 jobs a month. The jobless rate has not fallen below 8% since President Obama took office in 2009. September 2008 was the last time the rate for Hispanics was 7.8%, according to the BLS.

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CHCI Workshops: One message in common — we must go out and vote

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gration reform and possible improvements to implement.

The passage of the DREAM Act has been a big step toward immigration reform, but all panelists agreed, this is not the ultimate goal.

Rep. Luis Gutiérrez (D-Ill.) opened the floor by reminding the audience that President Obama had undocumented immigrant Benita Veliz address the Democratic National Convention; meanwhile Romney was socializing with Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa), who has a strong opposition toward immigrants.

Gutiérrez implied the Obama administration is, therefore, more likely to support the immigration cause.

The next step to become closer to an effective immigration reform is obtaining the 279 votes to pass the legislation in the House of Representatives, Noorani said. Latinos need to make sure representatives have learned about deferred action and its benefits.

He suggests students who were recently granted deferred action need to reach out to the House members and explain how their lives have improved and benefited from the opportunity.

Latinos also need to focus on people that are not supporting the DREAM Act in order to change their minds, Pacheco said.

She also demonstrated the growing influence of immigrants in America by naming Latino figures, like undocumented immigrant and journalist José Antonio Vargas, who was on the cover of *Time Magazine*.

Hispanics can have the same impact on society as non-Hispanic white citizens, and have the same values and ideals despite some may have different immigration status.

Santiago brought the influence of religion to the table. He suggested the community remove religious labels since there is an understanding that Evangelists are conservatives and therefore against immigration.

The panelists agreed that Latino political participation needs to continue to increase and Latinos must take responsibility in changing the immigration system.

Opening Plenary: Latinos: Past, Present and Future

Reported by Xochitl Davila

Moderator: Juan Williams, political analyst, Fox News

Introducing the session: U.S. Senator Robert Menéndez (D-NJ)

Panelists: Dolores Huerta, co-founder of United Farm Workers

Eliseo Medina, international secretary-treasurer, SEIU

Henry Cejudo, Olympic gold medalist

In 2008, 20 million Latinos were registered to vote, but only 10 million of them did so.

Three generations were represented in this

panel, yet they all had one message in common — go out and vote.

Voter ID laws are the biggest “push back” Dolores Huerta has seen in her lifetime, she said.

SEIU’s Eliseo Medina and Olympic gold medalist Henry Cejudo agreed that Latinos need more political participation.

Without big money to influence government, the strongest way they can do so is through voting. As the fastest, largest growing ethnic group, Latinos have the power of determining who will be the next president.

The panelists discussed the positive influence Latinos have had in society.

“It is time to stop talking about what Latinos will contribute and start talking about what they have already contributed to this country,” said Senator Robert Menéndez.

The number of Hispanics in the U.S. with bachelor’s or higher degrees increased by 80% between 2001 and 2011. There are also currently 2.3 million Hispanic-owned businesses.

Yet, despite these statistics, there have been several factors that have prevented Latinos from voting. Among them, the idea that Latino votes don’t count.

It is time to stop putting Latinos down, Menéndez said. “I will not accept being a second-class citizen.”

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Diversity in Corporate America

Reported by Francois Le Derff

Moderator: U.S. Rep. Joe Baca (D-Calif.)

Panelists: Sandy Fernández, senior vp of city community development, CitiBank

Alejandro Gómez, director of diversity bus. development. Coca-Cola North America

José Nido, vice president, global supplier diversity, Wyndham Worldwide

Carlos Orta, CEO, HACR

Lawrence Parks, VP, Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco

Issac Reyes, gov’t affairs, Target

This panel focused on the best practices to improve the Hispanic share of the workforce.

Orta opened by reminding people that the Hispanic population accounts for 16.3% of the U.S. population, which represents a buying power of \$1.3 trillion. Moreover, these figures, will increase over the coming years. Despite these facts, Orta noted the persistence of the low representation of the Latinos in the labor force in comparison with African Americans and Asians, especially when looking at the number of Hispanics sitting on the boards of directors of the *Fortune* 500 firms.

All of the panelists tried to show how their firms are promoting diversity. Sandy Fernández and Alejandro Gómez explained how important it is for Citigroup and Coca-Cola, respectively, to have a workforce that

matches their customers’ diversity. José Nido mentioned that Latinos already represent 20% of Wyndham Worldwide’s employees.

Nevertheless, more needs to be done. Latinos must build a competitive workforce. The panelists agreed that the key to success is education. Alejandro González praised the scholarship program set up by Coca-Cola and Fernández called for the development of networking among the Hispanic community. According to Isaac Reyes, communication about the several successes of Hispanic employees should also be improved.

Reyes of Comedy

Reported by Xochitl Dávila

Special guests: Rep. Silvestre Reyes (D-Texas) & Rep. José Serrano (D-NY)

Featured comedians: Felipe Esparza, Alex Reymundo, Eric Rivera, Melissa Villaseñor

The *Reyes of Comedy* reach out to an audience in the Ronald Reagan Amphitheater that ranges from politicians to students, and bilingual borderlanders to culturally deprived English-only speakers.

First up is Eric Rivera, who warms the house with marriage jokes. A newlywed, he talks about his wife, who is white, and how she is already hitting him with the “baby” talk. He explains to the crowd, “This never happens with Latinos. We do not plan children. We just have them.”

Next is Melissa Villaseñor. Her unique voice makes her stand out. She is a rising comedian and, while she coaxes a few laughs, she is most appreciated for her impressions.

Number 3 is Alex Reymundo. He needles the congressmen who had kicked off the evening with a few jokes of their own, asking Reyes and Serrano when did they write their gags. “They must have a lot of free time on their hands,” he tells an appreciative crowd.

Next he teases the loosened up audience. “How many of you speak Spanish?” he asks, reframing a gag Paul Rodríguez has been relying on for years. “For those of you who don’t know, it’s time to learn. You’re in America.”

The tag still draws laughs.

Topping the evening is raised-in-East-L.A. Felipe Esparza. He shares his experiences growing up, mimicking his parents, how they act, especially when they get mad. Their broken English is difficult even for him to comprehend, he confesses.

Then he follows with a riddle that would even make Cantinflas smile.

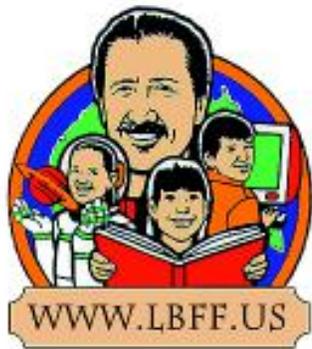
“What are you drinking there, sir?” asks the stranger.

“I’m drinking *horchata*, fruit of the gods.”

“What does it taste like?”

“Well, I’m Mexican. To me it has always tasted like *horchata*.”

If you didn’t laugh, you’re not Mexican.



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Media Report

Tim Picot & Almendra Carpizo

SCRIPPS HOWARD FELLOW: Almendra Carpizo has joined **Hispanic Link News Service** as its **Scripps Howard Foundation Wire Fellow** for the fall semester.

She will contribute to **Hispanic Link Report** and the Link's column syndication service through the remainder of 2012.

Carpizo graduated from California State University, Chico with a news editorial degree and a health science minor.

While in Chico, she spent her summers as a news intern for Northstate Public Radio, an NPR member, and on the copy desk of that city's **Enterprise-Record**.

Carpizo, a Chula Vista native, has been the editor-in-chief of two award-winning student publications – **The Orion** and **The Southwestern College Sun**, in San Diego.

During her time in Washington, D.C., she will mostly focus on the myriad of health issues affecting Hispanics – an area she has always felt passionate about.

ROMNEY RAPPED ON IMMIGRATION: A Sept. 26 **Washington Post** editorial denounced the immigration policies, or lack of policies, of presidential candidate Mitt Romney. The editorial recalls the incoherence of Mitt Romney's handling of immigration issues and advises that he develop an immi-

gration policy that is "fair, cogent and economically rational," which would be a change from the last six months. The editorial also addresses Romney's vagueness about his promise to address immigration reform, which he talked about during his appearance on **Univisión**.

His answer didn't provide a plan other than saying he wouldn't deport the 11 million undocumented U.S. immigrants. The editorial goes on to talk about President Obama's unfulfilled 2008 campaign promise of implementing a comprehensive immigration reform, but agrees with him about the "uniform opposition of congressional Republicans, including those who once favored such an approach," leaving Obama to implement some measures to attempt to fix the system.

NAHJ CONFERENCES: The **National Association of Hispanic Journalists** regional divisions will conduct two regional conferences in October.

American University's School of Communication will host the *Cultura at the Capital* conference in Washington, D.C. Oct. 13.

PBS NewsHour's Ray Suárez will be the keynote speaker. He will discuss the growing influence of Latin America during a luncheon. There will be workshops run by Hispanic journalists, including Eli Reyes of the **Washington Post** and **Univisión's** Fernando Pizzaro.

The conference will focus on how to use social media for investigative reporting, discuss Latinos and politics, and will feature the film *In Search of the American Dream* by Baldemar Rodríguez, who will be there.

The same day, the *Identidad en el Presente: A Conference for Southeastern Journalists*, will be held in Atlanta, Ga., and will feature an opening speech by Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed.

Workshops during the conference will address such developments as President Obama's Deferred Action program and domestic violence in the Hispanic community.

More information on those events and the registration procedure can be found on the NAHJ website www.nahj.org

NEW NAMIC BOARD: The **National Association for Multiethnicity in Communications** has elected a new board of directors to serve beginning this coming year. NAMIC is a non-profit association that was founded in 1980 to focus on multiethnic diversity in the communication industry. Its membership consists of 2,700 professionals in the field.

Newly elected executive committee members include Jaime Rodríguez, vice president, business affairs for *Univisión*. Raymond Rodríguez, **CBS Television's** executive vice president for human resources and current NAMIC board chair, will remain active as immediate past chair.

For more information on the organization, go to www.namic.com

MEXODUS WINS AWARD: University of Texas-El Paso's Spanish-language news site, *Mexodus*, was awarded top honors in the **Online News Association's** small/medium site non-English category.

The idea for *Mexodus* came from Zita Arocha, director of **Borderzine** and a senior lecturer at University of Texas-El Paso.

Following a lengthy career as a print journalist, she served as National Association of Hispanic Journalists executive director.

CARACAS OPENING: Bloomberg News has a job opening in Venezuela.

It is looking for a reporter for its Caracas office to cover the energy industry and government decisions affecting the market in that country.

A minimum of three to five years of business journalism experience is preferred and candidates must be fluent in Spanish as well as English.

For more information on how to apply, go to bloomberg.com/careers.



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Congressional Hispanic Caucus members take a bow during the CHC Institute's annual gala. (Story, page 3)