

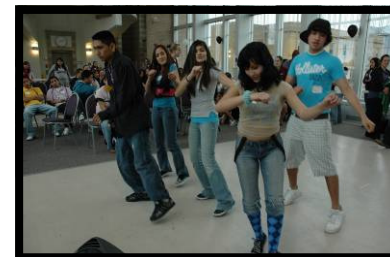
Peace News

Summer 2008
La Oportunidad Newsletter

Latino Youth Successfully Realize Peace Conference

"Who am I? Finding Myself to Promote Peace" was the title for this year's Peace Conference. There were over 130 student attendees at the conference that took place at Metropolitan State University. This year the Peace Conference reached more schools and organizations than any other year. The participants were: Andersen Open, Sanford Middle School, Green Central Park, Folwell Middle School, Richfield Middle and High School, Destination 2010, Southwest High School, Roosevelt High School, Washburn High School, Edison High School, Casa de Esperanza's Peer Facilitators, Highland Park High School, Northeast Middle School, Harding High School, Urban Ventures and West Suburban Teen Clinic.

The theme of identity this year opened the door for fantastic presenters, all great and unique in their own way of introducing the theme. The workshop facilitators: Steven Renderos, Felipe Espinoza, Lorena Duarte, Enrique Estrada, Saul Galvez and Jessica Lopez Lyman were exceptional in delivering their messages to the youth. Offering a variety of topics for all the youth to explore, they used aspects of art, theater, music, writing and media creating a dialogue on identity. Hosting a youth led workshop were Alejandro Villafan and Valerie Villafan who shared stories about their own struggle with identity and getting their peers to reflect on personal experiences. (continued on page 3)



Strategic Plan Integrates Community Input

As a result of its comprehensive, community-based Strategic Planning process, La Oportunidad revamped its mission, vision, values, and created key goals through 2010.

La Oportunidad **envisions** a community in which Latinos, whether long-term residents or new arrivals, thrive and contribute to the strength of the greater community. (continued on page 8)

Message from the Executive Director

Wow, 2008 has been another busy, productive, and fulfilling year!

We began the implementation of our 2008-2010 strategic plan, already accomplished key goals under our three-year technology plan, continued with our high-quality programming and increased the number of schools served, secured with the Latino Youth Development Collaborative funding from Hennepin County to implement activities under this important Collaborative, established new strategic partnerships including those in the area of public policy, hosted our 9th Annual Latino Youth Peace Conference, entered into the third year of co-production and hosting of the weekly Spanish *En Familia* television program, and are currently offering our summer programming and planning for our 14th Annual Latino Family Resources Fair.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff, and, most importantly, our program participants, I would like to thank each one of you who have contributed with your financial resources, time, talent, energy, and spirit to our organization and to the community. I look forward to continuing our work together to accomplish our vision of achieving a community in which Latinos, whether long-term residents or new arrivals, thrive and contribute to the strength of the greater community!

Enjoy the beautiful summer.

Eloisa Echávez



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Peace News is the newsletter of La Oportunidad. La Oportunidad's mission is to champion the development of Latino individuals and families to create a strong, peaceful community.



La Oportunidad, Inc.

Championing the development of Latino individuals and families to create a strong, peaceful community.

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Website: www.oportunidad.org

Technology Highlights

La Oportunidad is proud to announce the launch of its new website. The new website brings with it improvements such as easier navigation and the ability to more easily update content and pictures. The site is now more up to date, user-friendly, and better able to provide program participants, volunteers, mentors, donors, and funders with information about La Oportunidad. It also contains some new features including original design by a local Latino graphic artist, a Google search function, and greater capabilities for postings, images and fundraising. Check out the new website at www.oportunidad.org.

Latino Youth Successfully Realize Peace Conference

(continued from front page)

Our keynote presenter, Enrique Estrada talked to the youth about peace through real life stories from past and present. A musical performer, hailing from the West Side of St. Paul, electrified the students with her wise words through the use of hip hop. Many youth had never heard of Angel Darcourt, who at the young age of 19 has become a well known artist locally. Also from St. Paul, Kalpulli Yaocenoxtli youth danzantes performed a traditional Aztec dance.

The Peace Conference was made possible thanks to our sponsors, in-kind contributors, and volunteers. Financial sponsors include **Medica Foundation**, the **Metropolitan Regional Arts Council**, through an appropriation of the Minnesota Legislature, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota**, **Carlson Companies**, **Thomson Reuters**, and **U.S. Bank**. **Metropolitan State University**, **Manny's Tortas**, **Target**, and **The Hub Bike Co-op** provided in-kind contributions. Photography by **Rebecca Pottebaum** and **Emmett Timmons**.

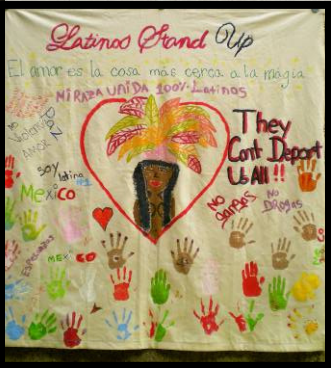




A very dedicated Youth Committee was integral in the decision-making process throughout the planning for this event. Thanks to **Johana Cornejo-Cisneros**, **Alejandro Villafán**, **Valerie Villafán**, **Eliana Sánchez** and **Viridiana Meza** the conference was well received by both students and chaperones. They met for the first time on the 29th of November and every week thereafter; committing their time and effort into making this conference a success. One student stated something they learned that they can use in their everyday life, which was, **"One person can make a difference. Peace starts with you."**



Mural Project at Andersen's Embajadores Latinos

During the spring term of Andersen School's after school program, fourteen 6th and 7th grade girls designed and painted two murals on 6'x6' canvases entitled "Latinos Unidos" and "Latinos Stand Up." The themes of the murals are "Who am I?" and "Who am I in my community?" The students in the group take pride in being Latina and want to be active members in our Latino community in order to make the positive changes that they believe we need to make. These **murals won 1st Place** at a middle school talent show at The Urban Hub will be displayed throughout South Minneapolis this summer:

- 6/16-7/13: Mercado Central (Lake St & Bloomington Ave)
- 7/14-8/88: Midtown Global Market (Lake St & Chicago Ave)
- 8/9 from 10am to 2pm: La Feria Latino Family Resource Fair (Midtown Farmers' Market)
- 8/9-9/8: Lake Plaza (Lake St & 4th Ave S)



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Summertime Youth Programming

In partnership with Full Cycle, The Hub Bicycle Co-op, and La Loma Tamales, La Oportunidad's Latino youth participating in the **Tamales y Bicicletas** summer programming learn about healthy alternative modes of transportation and basic bike repair while serving the community. The youth will also learn how a bike shop is run and managed and become acquainted with youth services in the community. Latino youth in the program will have an opportunity to fix community members' bikes on July 31, 2008 and give out free tamales donated by La Loma. In 2007, we repaired about 25 bikes and gave away 70 tamales.

This summer, Latino youth will explore the theme of community by understanding the significance that **murals** hold for people in our neighborhoods. Children will speak with business owners, residents and muralists, distinguishing the varying ways in which society values these types of works of art. They'll also have the opportunity to examine murals by visiting several sites in the Twin Cities area. Aside from interacting with their community, students will learn how to use hand-held cameras to document their work and utilize a studio to assist in the editing process of their documentation.

The **Four Elements Latino/Chicano Youth Leadership Camp** trip will take place in partnership with YMCA Camp Menogyn. During this seven day camping and canoeing wilderness exploration, youth will physically and culturally gain knowledge of the four elements and their importance to life. Latino youth will also gain tools to deal with anger in a positive way and build self-awareness with the help of the Latino Youth Programs coordinators in small discussion groups. We hope the youths' discovery of our woodlands will inspire our youth to believe in themselves and encourage a desire to continue learning and furthering their education.

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La Feria Latino Family Resource Fair

La Oportunidad and Metropolitan Health Plan in collaboration with the Midtown Farmers' Market are pleased to host the 14th Annual Latino Family Resource Fair, La Feria. The event will be held on August 9, 2008 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Midtown Farmers' Market between 22nd Avenue and Hiawatha Avenue on Lake Street in South Minneapolis. La Feria has grown from a small resource fair, to a fun-filled family event packed with a variety of educational, social service and health related resources, live music, food, activities for children, and an array of local produce, meats, cheeses and Minnesota-made crafts available at the Midtown Farmers' Market.

This year's theme will focus on social services and will highlight information from providers with a holistic array of community-based bilingual and culturally competent services to children and families. Fairgoers can expect to find free health screenings, information about healthy lifestyles and health insurance, as well as legal and social service resources.

La Feria would not be possible without the support of each participating agency, as well as from our 2008 event sponsors: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, City of Minneapolis Civil Rights Department, City of Minneapolis Health and Family Support, Hennepin County Office of Multicultural Services, Medica Foundation, ClearWay MinnesotaSM, UCare and the YWCA at Midtown.

We anticipate a day filled with an abundance of community resources, family fun and of course, dry weather!



Parents Collaborates with Girl Scouts

Child supervision is provided for parents participating in Padres parenting program activities. In order to provide more effective programming to the children being supervised, increase mainstream participation, and increase a sense of belonging, La Oportunidad developed a relationship with the **Girl Scouts**. Latinas Unidas Girl Scouts Troop 13397 consists of girls ages 6 to 15 years old. This troop has been building courage, confidence and character to become a better person and build a better community since January 2008.

The troop and families took an overnight camping trip to Camp Lockeslea in May. The trip provided the girls with knowledge about camping and built personal skills, including self confidence, team work, and communication. Troop 13397 will go on another trip in July.

Volunteering

Each year, the volunteers and interns at La Oportunidad contribute an immeasurable amount to the organization's success and ability to effectively serve the Latino population. Each volunteer that comes through our door brings a set of unique abilities and talents that are shared with our clients. Even halfway through 2008, volunteers have already contributed over 800 hours of volunteer service through providing childcare during parenting groups, helping to plan events such as the Latino Youth Peace Conference and the Latino Family Resource Fair, and assisting our children and youth in the classroom. Our volunteers often find their experience to be rewarding and we find many of them coming back to help year after year! If you would like to spend some of your time volunteering at La Oportunidad, following are examples of positions are available for the summer.

Latino Family Resource Fair Volunteer: Spend a summer day listening to live music, eating local foods and enjoying the outdoors! La Oportunidad needs volunteers for the 14th Annual Latino Family Resource Fair, La Feria, on Saturday August 9 from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm. Volunteers opportunities include registration, children's area supervision, and parking enforcement.

Child Supervision: Lead activities and care for children of all ages while their parents attend a parenting group. Playing fun games and leading interesting activities is a great way to spend an evening.

To learn more about these and other positions, contact haleyb@oportunidad.org or 612-872-6165.



Thank You Volunteers and Mentors!

- Mallery Barr
- Pamela Barragan (Board)
- Philip Burger
- Tiffany Calderon
- Megan Craig-Casmer (Mentor)
- Tiffany DeLeon
- Ana Espitia
- Olga Maria Fernandez Solivan (Mentor)
- Linda Fremon (Board)
- Theresa Galles
- Arlette Gaona-Ramon
- Kerry George (Development)
- Alex Gonzalez (Board President)
- Maria Gonzalez-O'Brien (Board Vice President)
- Gianna Gutierrez
- Mari Kempton (Development)
- Anne Knauff (Mentor)
- Josey Landrieu (Mentor)
- Carmen Lara
- Joe Mailander
- Jordan Monson
- Jackie Murillo
- William Nelson (Board)
- Emily Oaks
- Jesika Peredia Rodriguez
- Daniela Perez Velez
- Ross Peterson
- Paula Piazza
- Rebecca Pottebaum
- Lindsay Prowizor
- Daniela Quevedo
- Maria Ramirez Johnson (Board)
- Jennifer Reidy (Mentor)
- Sarah Ritterspach
- Rick Rocheford
- Christine Schlangen Espinoza
- Val Schulz
- Lilia Serna (Mentor)
- Andre Shannon
- Sarah Smith (Board)
- Susan Sobelson
- Adam Spencer
- Ann Springer
- Maureen Springer (Mentor)
- Tim Streitz
- Marco Tapia
- Emmett Timmons
- Lucia Trinidad
- Cindy Valle
- Bianca Villeda
- Beatriz Viveros
- Igor Yakushev



Mentoring Makes a Difference

Anne Knauff and Reyna Yadira Martinez are two participants in La Oportunidad's mentoring program *Líderes del Mañana* (Tomorrow's Leaders). They were matched in March of 2007 and are now in their second year of the program together. Anne and Reyna spend their time together doing a variety of activities that are both fun and educational such as bead making, visiting the Walker Art Center, working on homework, bike riding, volunteering, attending theater performances, and much more. But what they both agree upon is that one of their favorite things to do is just getting together to talk. Reyna says that having someone to talk to is the thing that she appreciates most about having a mentor. She says that having a mentor can help you a lot because it's someone you can always count on to be there for you. She says that Anne has helped her improve her grades by helping her with school projects and together they have explored computer careers, a possible career interest of Reyna's. Anne says that she has also benefited from being a mentor, "I feel so lucky to have a new friend with different perspectives, different ideas. Yadira's youthful energy is infectious!" She says she's learned "just how rich cross-generation friendships can be! We are in different stages in our lives and bring such different experiences and perspectives to our friendship, and that has been what has made it so rich!"

Become a mentor! To find out more about the *Líderes del Mañana* Mentoring Program and how to become a mentor, contact Maureen at mentoring@oportunidad.org or 612-872-6165.



Internship Program

"When I got the job as the La Oportunidad Intern for the 9th Annual Latino Youth Peace Conference, I had no idea how much I was going to learn. As a senior at St. John's University, I was looking for an internship that would offer me professional training as I ended my college career. Not only did I gain the excellent professional experience of fund raising, event coordination, and networking, but I also learned about what it means to love your work. All the staff members at La Oportunidad love what they do and are dedicated to providing quality services for people they genuinely care about. Because of their passion and devotion to La Oportunidad, the staff here accomplishes their goals with pleasure. As I continue on my career path, I know my experience at La Oportunidad will lead me towards a professional job that I truly feel passionate about."

Joe Mailander was able to gain valuable experience in event planning, including gathering sponsorships, logistics coordination, and working with committees, all while receiving academic credit. **Would you like to do an internship with La Oportunidad?** Contact Haley at 612-872-6165 or haleyb@oportunidad.org for more information about La Oportunidad's internship opportunities.



Strategic Plan Integrates Community Input

(continued from front page)

La Oportunidad's mission is to champion the development of Latino individuals and families to create a strong, peaceful community.

Values:

- **Celebrating Culture.** We believe that a strong cultural identity promotes individual health and adds vibrancy to community life.
- **Promoting Peace.** We believe people can learn nonviolent strategies that allow relationships, families, and communities to thrive.
- **Pride.** We take pride in La Oportunidad as the center where culture flourishes and creative solutions to Latino needs are nurtured.

Goals

- La Oportunidad will increase its **visibility** as the “go-to” organization for policy-makers, funders, and others seeking services, resources, or information for and about the Latino community.
- La Oportunidad will ensure appropriate **physical space** that aligns with programming needs.
- La Oportunidad will increase its capacity by expanding its **pool of supporters**.
- La Oportunidad will increase its involvement in **public policy** on behalf of the Latino community.

Special thanks to all who participated in La Oportunidad's Strategic Planning process!

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Pamela Barragan (St. Paul Police Department) | • María Gonzalez-O'Brian (Ameriprise Financial) |
| • Eduardo Bernal (En Familia TV Program) | • David Greenberg (El Colegio Charter School) |
| • Rick Birmingham (MAP for Nonprofits Circuit Rider, Technology Consultant) | • Marjorie Grevious (United Way, Youth Programs Manager) |
| • Fran Carr (Bloomington Schools, Office of Educational Equality, Program Coordinator) | • Nancy Halverson (Hennepin County, Unit Supervisor) |
| • Claire Chang (St. Paul Foundation, MIF, Sr. Program Officer) | • Stacy Janisch |
| • Justino Cruz (Ramsey County, Probation Officer) | • Anne Knauff (Mentor) |
| • Kari Davis (United Way, Achievement Gap Manager) | • Ursula Moncada (Centro, Youth Coordinator) |
| • Oscar Echandi (Chicano Latino Affairs Council, Community Liaison) | • William Nelson (Volunteers of America) |
| • Dave Ellis (United Way, Family & Domestic Violence, Manager) | • Dixie Olmstead (Wellstone International High School, Principal) |
| • Angela Domme (Dakota County, Unit Supervisor) | • Juan Perona (Richfield Middle School, Outreach Worker Principal) |
| • Linda Freemon (eV3) | • Maria Ramirez Johnson |
| • Carlos Gallego (Children's Museum) | • Amy Saybe (Ramsey County, Probation Officer) |
| • Bibiana Garzón ("Aquí Para Ti" Latino Teen Pregnancy Prevention; Hennepin County Community Clinics) | • Nancy Schaefer (Hennepin County, SISED) |
| • Gabriela Geissler (Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota, Parenting Program Coordinator) | • Sarah Smith (Medtronic) |
| • Alex Gonzalez (Thrivent Financial for Lutherans) | • Rico Sotelo (Archdiocese of St. Paul/Mpls) |
| | • Jocelyn VanKnight (MN Dept of Public Safety, Youth Intervention Project, Grants Manager) |
| | • Nancy LeTourneau (St. Paul Youth Services, Executive Director) |
| | • All La Oportunidad staff & numerous La Oportunidad clients |
| | • Consultant Christine Hammes (MAP for Nonprofits) facilitated the process. |



Wish List

Over the last 20 years, La Oportunidad has become an internationally recognized and leading provider of bilingual and bicultural family-centered educational and supportive programs. A nonprofit 501c3 organization created in 1987, La Oportunidad achieves its mission through programs, services, community outreach and collaborations. This success happens only with the generous support of our community.

Are you able to help La Oportunidad with any of the following?

- Digital camera, digital camcorder
- Games and toys for child supervision
- Gift certificates to grocery store for group snacks
- A \$50 gift will pay for one youth to participate in our annual Latino youth Peace Conference.
- A \$100 gift covers the total cost of snacks and supplies for one child or youth participating in our school-year programs.
- A \$250 gift ensures one youth can participate in a leadership conference or camp.
- A \$350 gift provides anger management and domestic violence programming for one adult
- A \$500 gift will cover the total cost of materials, supplies, and child supervision for one adult participating in our Parenting program.
- A \$1,000 gift will provide one child, youth, or adult participation in any of our year-round programs.
- A gift of talent and time. For volunteer opportunities contact Haley at 612-872-6165 or haleyb@oportunidad.org.

Thank You to Our Generous Funders in 2008!

Corporations and Foundations: 3M Foundation, Ameriprise Foundation, Elmer and Eleanor Andersen Foundation, Anonymous, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, Otto Bremer Foundation, Butler Family Foundation, Carlson Foundation, Epworth Methodist Church, Hispanics in Philanthropy, Imation Corporation, Jewish Community Relations Council, Marbrook Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, Michaud Cooley Erickson, Casey Albert T. O'Neil Foundation, Piper Family Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation, Prosperan Bank of Maplewood, Prudential, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation, Wells Family Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation, Wells Fargo

In-Kind Donors: Ameriprise Financial Holiday Gift Program, Robert J. Bauer, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, Full Cycle, Loh Shih Hurng, La Loma Tamales, Manny's Tortas, Patagonia, REI, Javier Rodríguez Gaitán, Medica, Target, The Hub Bicycle Co-op, UCare, YMCA Camp Menogyn, YWCA of Minneapolis

Government and Federated Funds: Dakota County, Greater Twin Cities United Way, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, Saint Paul Youth Services, State of Minnesota, Twin Cities schools, United Way Combined Federal Campaign

Sponsors: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, Carlson Companies, ClearWay MinnesotaSM, Medica Foundation, Metropolitan Health Plan, Thomson Reuters, UCare, US Bank, YWCA of Minneapolis

I have been able
to express myself
peacefully
and have been able
to help others
do the same.

Valerie, JOVENES



Check out our new website!
www.oportunidad.org

Portraits from La Oportunidad's
20th anniversary celebration project,
Reflections of Peace.

Me ha ayudado
a reflexionar
sobre mis actitudes
y a vivir en
harmonía
con la familia.

Aurelio



[La Oportunidad] has helped me to reflect on my
attitudes and live in harmony with my family. Aurelio



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