



Bruce Rauner, Governor
George H. Sheldon, Director

October, 2016

Regional Administrators Join LAC at the Leadership Summit



2016 LAC Leadership Summit; front row: Arely Graves, Pedro Mendoza, Sydnie Juarez, Victor Aranda, Rebecca Crnovich, Lourdes Rodriguez, Dulce Ramirez, Juanita Calderon, Lisa Marie Perez, and Maria Pizarro; second row: Desiree Silva, Angela Harris, Olivia Chavez, Mario Martinez, Lisa Gray, Jacqui Coyler, Evelyn Martinez, Sylvia Fonseca, Norma Machay, Yeni Rojas, Jennifer Contreras, Beatriz Ramirez, Karla Soriano, Julia Camacho-Monzón and Rick Echevarria, rear

A vision will create a movement, a structure will further it but only a culture will sustain it. – Alex Medina



The language, values, beliefs, customs and traditions of any group will always give you an indication of how that group relates, proceeds, achieves, advances and grows. The members of any group will always

embrace the culture willingly if, and only if, the group provides vision, direction, safety, love and value.

For the past several years the Latino Advisory Council has been intentional about cultivating a culture and a structure where members thrive, are encouraged, validated and empowered to further the DCFS mission. This does not happen overnight. Values must be clearly defined but most importantly upheld and assimilated by each member; especially by the leaders. This requires work and ongoing relationship. The structure then becomes the leadership vehicle through which the vision and the culture merge and

therefore, this community becomes stronger and healthier.

LAC has purposed itself to create a culture of honor within its membership where honesty, camaraderie, empowerment, collaboration, work ethic and resiliency fuel our every goal with the intent to promote the hiring and retention of Spanish speaking staff at every DCFS level and the collaboration with other divisions to increase the availability of Spanish speaking homes. LAC is committed to these values and goals. During the last twelve months, we have accomplished many goals to that effect. Nonetheless, there are many more that still need to be resolved.

These improvements to the overall DCFS mission and culture have been attained only after Director Sheldon has empowered LAC to pursue relationship and problem resolution with other divisions. We appreciate the collaboration that has taken place amongst Deputy Daniel Fitzgerald from Affirmative Action, Deputy Tammy Grant from Office of Employment Services, Associate Deputy Jataun Rollins from Resources and Recruitment, Deputy Denice Murray from Licensing and Monitoring, Deputy Veronica Resa from Office of Communications and LAC. The lines of communication amongst DCFS divisions seem to have been restored. LAC acknowledges the urgent need to remain in

honest communication and ongoing relationship. Only when we dwell in true unity can we become the state agency that once the nation looked up to. LAC is committed to that. Our desire is that the DCFS culture fully embraces, empowers, validates, protects and celebrates its members, not just the Latinos but the Asian, Native American, African American and Caucasian alike.

Let us continue cultivating a culture of honor where everyone takes their place as a valuable and contributing human being while furthering the mission of DCFS and guaranteeing the safety and care for the children and families we each have committed to serve.

We urge every staff member to take an active role and contribute to building a statewide culture of honor where everyone thrives. You are most welcome to join LAC during our monthly meetings, LAC Summits and yearly Latino Family Institute.

Remember, the members of any group are the most valuable assets that it possesses. Yes, that means you and I.

Blessings,

José Alejandro Medina Álvarez

LAC Chair

2015 Latino Institute Day Award Winners

By Nancy Rodriguez, Award Committee Chair

It was a pleasure to be a part of the DCFS Latino Advisory Council / Family Institute Day in year 2015. As the Chair of the Awards committee, I want to thank the committee members, Carmen Alvarez, Juanita Calderon, Beatriz Ramirez, and Sylvia Fonseca for contributing to the needed tasks of the Awards committee. I also want to thank the DCFS Director, George H. Sheldon, Northeastern Illinois University, and AFSCME Council 31 / Local 2081 for supporting our council.

The DCFS Latino Advisory Council congratulates the winners of the awards.

(not pictured)

Youth Awards: Lidia Castillo; Ingrid Hernandez; Carlos Rodriguez

Celeste Peña Award: Sol Flores

DCFS Support Bilingual Employee of the Year: Domillie Garcia

All are welcome to submit nominations for the 2017 awards.



Madeline Gonzalez-Garcia, Dahlia Roman, Beatriz Ramirez, Alex Medina, Carmen Alvarez, Special Recognition Award, Director George Sheldon



Alex Medina, Jennifer Contreras, Consuelo Alicea and Fabian Medina, Bilingual Foster Parents of the Year, Carmen Alvarez, Beatriz Ramirez



Alex Medina, Jennifer Contreras, Beatriz Ramirez, Fausta Perez, POS Support Bilingual Employee of the Year, Carmen Alvarez



Alex Medina, Beatriz Ramirez, Carmen Mejia, POS Worker of the Year, Carmen Alvarez



Alex Medina, Arturo Herredia, DCFS Bilingual Employee of the Year, Carmen Alvarez, Beatriz Ramirez



LAC MEMBERSHIP

Chair-Person: Alex Medina
 Past Chair-Person: Beatriz Ramirez
 Chair-Elect: Juanita Calderon
 Scribe: Jennifer Contreras

DCFS Members:

Glendy Aponte
 Julia Camacho de Monzon
 Rebecca Crnovich
 Sydnie Juarez
 Miriam Mojica
 Dulce Ramirez
 Nancy Rodriguez

POS Members:

Yeni Rojas
 Karla Soriano
 Lisa Marie Perez

Ex-officio Members:

José J. López, OLS
 Lourdes Rodríguez,
 Burgos Coordinator

Committees:

Child Safety & Permanency
 Community Risk Reduction
 and Staffing
 Data Validity & Disproportionality
 Strategic Communications
 Latino Family Institute

Chicago Children's Advocacy Center

By Ana Nunez, Psy.D.

In 1998, former Mayor Richard M. Daley established the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center with the mission to unite public, private, and community partners to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of abused children. Following three years of program development and facility construction, the Chicago CAC opened in August 2001 to help over 2,500 children each year who are reported to authorities as suspected victims of sexual abuse/assault (age 0-17) or severe physical abuse (age 0-3) in the City of Chicago.

The Chicago CAC is a public-private partnership between a non-profit agency and the public agencies that respond to reports of child abuse in Chicago – the Chicago Police Department, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Cook County State's Attorney's Office, and Cook County Health & Hospitals System. Professionals from all five agencies work together to investigate reports of child abuse and protect suspected victims. The Chicago CAC provides collaborative investigations, forensic interviews, and immediate sup-



port services to suspected child victims of abuse in the City of Chicago. The CCAC's programs are designed to provide children and families with the social, mental health, and case management services they need to begin healing and to participate in the justice system.

The Mental Health Department at the Chicago CAC provides evidenced-based mental health counseling to sexually abused children and their families. Sexual abuse can have devastating short and long-term consequences for a child, many linked to the psychological harm caused by the abuse. The therapeutic interven-

tions focus on the treatment of symptoms children experience as a result of sexual abuse and their well-being throughout the healing process. The therapists work from an integrated theoretical approach with a focus on the treatment of trauma. The majority of our clients are Latino children whose parents/caregivers, require services in Spanish. Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Integrative Treatment for Complex Trauma (ITCT), and Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC), psychoeducation and treatment groups are used to assist families in healing from trauma. In addition, training regarding the prevention of child sexual abuse is provided for parents in their community in Spanish.

Bilingual Foster Parent Recruitment

Resource workers and supervisors are hitting the pavement and airwaves in a big way. They have been present in numerous community events and interviewed on television and other news and social media. The Department is committed to finding bilingual foster homes to help meet the growing need of bilingual children in care.

Spanish language prospective Foster Parent Orientations are held every

**3rd Thursday of the month at
1026 S. Damen Ave, Chicago, IL
5:30 PM**

and every

**3rd Tuesday of the month at
1701 S. First Ave, Maywood, IL
5:30 PM**



Miriam Mojica (right) at the Univision-Chicago studios

For more information, please contact **Miriam Mojica at 312-814-1803** or miriam.mojica@illinois.gov

Priority Enforcement Program

By José J. Lopez

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) administrators met with DCFS staff in January of this year to review The Priority Enforcement Program (PEP). ICE operates under the Department of Homeland Security. The PEP consists in the following:

- **Prosecutorial Discretion:** The authority of a law enforcement agency to decide to what degree to enforce the law against a particular individual, to include taking no enforcement action at all. ICE may exercise Prosecutorial Discretion on a case by case basis in various forms: They will look at negative factors and Humanitarian factors (violent crime victim, pregnant or nursing, poor health, primary caretaker of a minor or seriously ill relative).
- **Parental Interest Directives:** ICE issued a directive, in the Course of Civil Immigration Enforcement Activities. The directive establishes ICE policy and procedure to address the placement, monitoring, accommodations and removal of certain parents, legal guardians and primary caretakers of minors in the United States while safeguarding their parental rights. Giving access to their children while they are in process.

- ICE conducts a **Risk Classification Assessment (RCA)** at intake. The RCA allows ICE officers to document whether an individual is a primary caretaker. The RCA will not recommend detention for an individual who has identified as a primary caretaker if not subject to mandatory detention.
- ICE is to keep detained parent in the **Area of Responsibility (AOR)** of apprehension if the children or family court/child welfare proceedings are within that AOR. ICE shall initially place the detained parent into a facility as close as practicable to the children and/or location of the family court or child welfare proceeding. ICE shall arrange for a detained parent's appearance at his or her family court or child welfare proceeding. ICE shall facilitate, to the extent practicable, any court-ordered parent-child visitation, including contact visitation and accompaniment by a court appointed monitor.

If a detained parent or legal guardian is subject to final order of removal. ICE should accommodate to the extent practicable the detained parent's efforts to make care arrangements for their children

and make other necessary preparations prior to removal. If the removed parent desires to participate in a family court or child welfare hearing in the U.S., ICE may grant parole, on a case by case basis. The sole purpose of the return must be to participate in the termination of parental rights proceedings. The family court or child welfare authority has determined and confirms that the removed parent must be physically present at the proceedings.

There is a designated point of contact for parental rights in each ICE area of responsibility. Responsibilities include: receiving and addressing public inquires related to the parental rights or family ties of detained parents or legal guardians of minor children. For further information please contact the DCFS Latino Services office at Jose.J.Lopez@illinois.gov

Su Salud

By Sydnie Juarez

I am certain that we all want to enjoy the holiday season to the fullest! Here are some tips for before and after the upcoming holiday splurges. Let's look at our eating habits and what changes we might need to make.

1. Are we into excess? How many carbohydrates (bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, and flour products) are we eating at each meal? If you said more than 1-2, then we are getting too much. We also have to look at what is considered a serving size, example 2 corn tortillas is 1 serving!



2. Are we eating too often or not enough? It is recommended that we eat 5 small meals a day, instead of just 2! This sounds easy... it isn't! Here is a quick guide to time frames. If you wake at 5AM, 1st meal is within 30mintues. 5:30am Breakfast; 8:30am snack; 11:30 Lunch; 2:30pm snack; and

5:30pm dinner! Remember each meal is to be smaller by half. This is just to give you an idea of a schedule.

3. Physically active? Not so much, that's okay! Start simply walking or increase what you are already doing, it's better to walk 5 days a week for 15 minutes instead of 2 hours once a week. An additional benefit is that physical activity is a proven stress reliever!

These are just a few tips to get started. *No-ticias* wishes you a Happy Holiday Season!

Response to ICE's Priority Enforcement Program

By Karla Soriano, MSW

“Immigration policies and laws are based on the belief that families will and should be united whether or not parents are deported. Likewise, Child Welfare policy aims to reunify families whenever possible. However, in practice, when these parents are detained and deported, children are relegated to the foster care system, and family separation can prolong. What occurs, often times is that children lose the opportunity to see their parents again when a juvenile dependency court terminates parental rights”

– *The Applied Research Center (ARC)*

As a Child Welfare professional, I believe that the Priority Enforcement Program (PEP) as proposed by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) will prevent family separation in the state of Illinois and across the nation. The rate of children entering foster care as a result of their parent’s detention and deportation has increased significantly over the years. Evidence suggests that many parents are losing their children in part by being held at detention centers for extensive periods of time without access to legal counsel

and deprives their ability to comply with Child Protection Services requirements for family reunification. The Applied Research Center (ARC) collected data from six states, and included other 14 states which includes IL and they estimate that there are at least 5,100 children who are presently in foster care whose parents have been detained or deported.

In 2010, there were 1 million unauthorized immigrants under the age of 18 in the U.S., as well as many as 4.5 million U.S.-born children whose parents were unauthorized (Pew Hispanic Center). Furthermore, the PHC, found that nearly two-thirds of unauthorized immigrants had lived in the U.S. for at least a decade and nearly half (46%) were parents of minor children. As cited by the Census Bureau “9 million people lived in mixed-status families.

In a recent research from The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), as it relates to the state’s and city of Chicago’s undocumented immigrant mixed-status population, it was reported that about 145,000 Illinois families with children include at least one documented parent ; in Chicago there

are 48,000. This research further suggests 48,000. Among these families there was an estimate of 126,000 that is 88% include at least one native-born and 107,000 (74%) include only native-born children. This data determines that children with unauthorized parents make up nearly one third of all children with immigrant parents and roughly 8% of all U.S. children (Migration Policy Institute, 2013).

“This policy will provide many benefits not only for families but children in DCFS care. Being separated from one’s family can be a very traumatic experience for a child. In many cases there are family members whom are undocumented that would be able to provide a safe and nourishing environment for that child. However, they fear to be detained and deported. This policy will provide the security that families seek as it will allow a child to remain in the care of loved ones as opposed to being placed in a home where they fear the unknown.” – *Alex Martinez, Child Welfare Specialist from UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago*

Spanish-Speaking Birth Parents are on the Move



For the first time ever, Spanish speaking Birth Parents were able to attend the Birth Parent Institute in Chicago in June 2015. The Partnering with Parents, Cook County Birth Parent Council sponsors this event

every year for birth parents providing them with useful information, training, inspiration and motivation.

Again in June 2016 Family Advocacy Centers (FACs) with predominately Spanish speaking clients worked together and two Spanish speaking workshops were provided as well as interpretation services for the keynote speaker and general sessions.

We are making progress as not only did Spanish speaking Birth Parents attend the 2016 Institute but will also attend the

Transformation Summit in Itasca this October and one parent will sit on a panel and participate in a video-taped interview that the Department will use as part of the DCFS Strategic Plan.

A special shout out to Erie Neighborhood House for lending us their equipment for a second year to provide birth parents with simultaneous interpretation.

By *Julia Camacho-Monzón*



News from the Office of Affirmative Action

By Deputy Director Daniel Fitzgerald

The Office of Affirmative Action along with the Office of Employee Services and the Office of Communication collectively conduct employment recruitment events statewide. Fifty-Eight (58) Latino applicants were hired or promoted statewide, for fiscal year 2016, ending June 30th. It is through the efforts of Latino Services, Chief, Jose J. Lopez and Magda Gomez, Human Resource Specialist that this was possible, Kudos to them! Quarterly meetings with internal stakeholders responsible for employment recruitment have been essential in establishing the need for bilingual staff, positions and areas where staff is needed. These meetings are on-going.

Recruitment of bilingual and Latino staff is a year-long commitment with many activities occurring on the weekends. From community health fairs, festivals and college employment events our team has been very active.

Congratulations to:

Sandra Aguirre-Lievano*
 Sandra Arechar
 Flora Amezuca
 Deisy Anaya
 Leticia Arroyo
 Geraldo Avila*
 Alissandra Calderon
 Mariella Callejas
 Juan Calvillo
 Vanessa Castro*
 Martha Cerda-Babington*
 Matthew Chmiel
 Celia Dakenbring*
 Erika Diaz
 Gabriel Jara

Darlene Feliciano*
 Luis Fernandez
 Vanessa Flores
 Vanessa Gomez
 Ana Gonzalez
 Erin Gonzalez
 Maria Hernandez*
 Roberto Hernandez
 Nereindira Huerta
 Sergio Jimenez
 Roxanne Lizcano
 Andrea Lopez
 Angela Lopez*
 Gladys Lopez
 Erica Lozano

Norma Machay*
 Evelyn Martinez*
 Alejandro Mateos
 Maria Mejia-Ramirez
 Narisco Mendoza
 Dolores Miranda
 Maria Moreno-Horne
 Maranjelyn Muniz
 David Muñoz
 Susana Olivas*
 Gloria Ornelas*
 Jose Oropezza*
 Zulema Ortiz
 Enrique Pimentel
 Octavio Ponce

Dahlia Roman*
 Liliana Romero
 Jhomarie Ramos
 Veronica Resa*
 Melissa Ramirez
 Andres Rodriguez
 Eulalia Rodriguez
 Maribel Rodriguez
 David Salcido*
 Dolores Tapia
 Juan Tapia
 Sylvia Torres-Stephen
 Marcelita Vargas
 * indicates promotion

Spotlight on You!

Carmen Alvarez

By Sydnie Juarez

Although we celebrate great people becoming eligible for retirement, we have to acknowledge, that we (DCFS as a whole) will feel their loss!

So let us review the asset that Carmen Alvarez has been to us over the years!

She began her career at DCFS in 1980 as a Social Worker Trainee. She went on to supervise both intact and placement teams. She later became a case reviewer and also served as Acting Deputy Director of Administrative Case Review. In May, 1995 Carmen was appointed Burgos Coordinator. In 2004, she stepped down

as the Burgos Coordinator to work as a Clinical Service Coordinator, and lastly was the Public Service administrator in the child Intake Recovery Unit.

In addition, she has been an active Latino Advisory Council (LAC) Member for many years and was also instrumental in starting up OCTAVITA celebrations, where bilingual workers came together to



Special Recognition Recipient Carmen Alvarez (left) with her family at the 2015 LAC Institute

network. Carmen willingly pitched in on projects/activities that LAC sponsored for bilingual workers throughout the years.

Spanish-Speaking Group

Important Addition at Indian Oaks Academy

Indian Oaks Academy- Youth and Family Solutions

www.nexustreatment.org

815-802-3700

By Karla Gomez

MANTENO – In efforts to meet the special needs of clients who identify with the Hispanic and or Latino/a culture, Indian Oaks Academy (IOA) formed a Spanish Speaking Group. The Spanish Speaking Group was created to offer opportunities for identified IOA clients to practice their native or second language as well as help keep their Hispanic and or Latino/a

heritage alive. IOA's Spanish Speaking Group has an open enrollment process. As long as the need exists to serve Hispanic clients, this group will remain active. The Spanish Speaking Group currently meets twice a month for one hour. Since the group's inception August 2013, members have engaged in a wide range of activities and projects which include making piñatas; celebrating traditional holidays and Hispanic Heritage month; cooking and eating traditional dishes; creating an altar for Dia de los Muertos; and, learning about different music. And, the feedback has been positive. A former group member

who was discharged to her family said, "It was fun and educational, and I really liked it." A current group member shared, "When I heard about the Spanish Speaking Group, I was very excited. It's good for me to learn about my culture and language." Another client from an IOA unit that serves developmentally delayed youth said, "Me gusta el grupo para comer y escuchar musica en el Español." (I like group to eat and listen to music in Spanish). Group membership has grown from four to fifteen clients, and Indian Oaks Academy remains committed to serving the special needs of the Hispanic population.

A Look Back at 2015

Last December, the council had a retreat where the year's accomplishments were reviewed and we set goals for the New Year. We all agreed that we wanted to leave a legacy in place. Here are some of our accomplishments in 2015:

- Latino Advisory Committee changed to Latino Advisory Council
- 1st & 2nd Summit of Middle and Upper Management – Meeting twice in 2015 studying issues and making recommendations to benefit all, clients, workers, community
- Funding for Latino Family Institute Day – with special thanks to Director Sheldon and AFSME
- Increase of LAC membership by 6 people-Including DCFS and POS
- LAC participated in the Burgos Compliance Committee
- LAC has brought awareness about children under the age of 6 who were lingering at the shelter
- LAC initiated and maintains an external relationship with IAHSE
- Re-engagement of POS and LAC for the Family Institute Day
- Meeting with the Director of DCFS has resulted in positive changes and new relationships within the Department.
- LAC expertise has been recognized in all areas of the Department
- We have engaged with deputies of OES, Licensing and Communications
- A diversity recruitment and employment work group was created and is led by Affirmative Action
- A LAC representative has been mandated by the Director to the foster parent/day care work group
- There has been an increase in bilingual promotions to PSA/SPSAs positions
- Cook county Day Care Licensing caseloads have been significantly reduced
- Intern and bilingual staffing policy have been approved by the director pending feedback and implementation by Tammy Grant, Andrew Flach and Carolyn Ross

If you would like to participate in any of our committees, please contact any LAC member or Alex Medina at JoseAlex.Medina@illinois.gov



Chairperson Alex Medina addresses Institute attendees.



Domestic Violence Seminar.



The "Bandolero" band provided cultural entertainment at the closing reception.



2016 Illinois Latino Statewide Events

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	ORGANIZER/CONTACT
OCTOBER			
Oct. 1-15 10:30 am	Bi-National Health Week Kick Off	Hispanic Consulates	United Latin American Consulates of Chicago
TBD	Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Gala	Hyatt McCormick	Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
TBD	Mujeres Latinas en Acción Conference	Hyatt Regency	Mujeres Latinas en Acción
TBD	Latino Social Workers Conference	UIC Forum	Latino Social Workers
Oct. 7 8:30 am – 5 pm	IAHSE 29th Annual Conference	Tinley Park Convention Center	Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees
Oct. 11 6 pm	NLEI Hispanic Heritage Celebration	3015 W. Division Chicago	National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture
Oct. 12 6 pm	Ayudando Nuestras Familias Fundraiser	The Casino Club 195 E Delaware Pl.	Catholic Charities Latino Advisory Committee
Oct. 13 6 pm	Hall of Fame Reception	Godfrey Hotel	Chicago Latino Network
Oct. 21 8:30 am – 5 pm	DCFS Latino Family Institute Day	Northeastern Illinois University	DCFS Latino Advisory Committee
Oct. 22 6 pm	Arden Shore Child & Family Services 115th Annual Meeting	San Filippo Estate Barrington Hills	Arden Shore Child & Family Services
NOVEMBER			
Nov. 5	Day of the Dead Ball	National Museum of Mexican Art	National Museum of Mexican Art
Nov. 5	Annual National Cuatro Festival	Harris Theater 205 E. Randolph St.	Cuatro Committee
TBD	Annual Gala Dinner	6876 Spring Creek Rd. Rockford (<i>pending</i>)	La Voz Latina
Nov. 18th 8:30 am	Annual ILLCF Conference	Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont	Illinois Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation


312.814.6800
www.DCFS.illinois.gov



NOTICIAS is brought to you by the Latino Advisory Council 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. A major part of this endeavor is you! We are asking 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 incoming events or news to: Julia Camacho-Monzón, Strategic Communications Committee Chair julia.camacho-de-monzon@illinois.gov 800 Roosevelt Rd, Bldg. D-10, Glen Ellyn 60137

and to:

Juanita Calderon, Co-Chair
Juanita.Calderon@illinois.gov

Or to any of the **Strategic Communication Committee members:**

Julia Camacho-Monzón, Chair, Juanita Calderon, Co-Chair, Carol Kline, Co-Editor, Norma Machay, Karla Soriano, Sydnie Juarez, Alex Medina

If you would like more information or would like to participate in one of the LAC subcommittees, please contact Alex Medina at JoseAlex.Medina@illinois.gov

Special thanks to:

Bert Tijerina, DCFS Office of Communications; José López, DCFS Office of Latino Services and Daniel Fitzgerald, Deputy Director, Office of Affirmative Action