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Special Thanks

OCRC Commissioners

Pastor Aaron Wheeler, Sr., Chairman
Jeanine P. Donaldson
Leonard J. Hubert
Grace Ramos
Rashmi Yajnik

Project Manager

Brandi F. Klein, External Affairs Liaison
OCRC-PACE

OCRC Bilingual Staff

Richard Garcia, Roberto Lopez, Carmen Madera,
Beatrice Sanchez, and Marcy Valenzuela

Rosario Martinez
Secretary - Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs



Hispanic Heritage Month

*Celebrating the many
achievements of our
Hispanic community
and honoring those
who are making a
difference in promoting
cultural awareness in
our state.*

Wednesday, October 4, 2006
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

OCRC Central Office
Continental Room
1111 E. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43205



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Program

Welcoming Remarks

Commissioner Altagracia Ramos

Cultural Horizons Program

*OCRC Public Affairs Director,
Toni A. Delgado*

Keynote Speaker

Chief Cel Rivera

Presentation of Resolutions

*Pastor Dan Vazquez
Juan Jose (“John”) Perez
Julieta Maria Simms
Manuel Rodriguez*

Closing Remarks

*OCRC Executive Director,
G. Michael Payton*

Club Family Award, Certificate from Gov. Taft (Cincinnati Reads) for her mentoring at the Cincinnati Public School. Julieta is President/majority owner of VASH Services, Inc. She holds an Associate and Bachelor Degrees in Labor Studies from the State University of New York.



Pastor Dan Vazquez

Pastor Dan Vazquez is an active leader in the Hispanic community. As pastor of the Latin Harvest Church Pastor Vazquez is actively working to coordinate, plan and implement religious services and outreach programs in the Hispanic community. Pastor Vazquez has provided translation, education, financial, and social service assistance to the Hispanic community. Through the Latin Harvest Church, in 2005 Pastor Vazquez distributed over 200,000 pounds of food into various Central Ohio communities. Pastor Vazquez has volunteered with various organizations including the House of New Hope in Louisville, Ohio and the Buckeye Boys Ranch in Grove City, Ohio where he assisted with event programming and rallied community support for various events including the Winter Wonderland Festival, the holiday adopt a child program and the Buckeye Ranch Film Festival and Premiere Party.



Julieta Maria Simms

Julieta Maria Simms was born in the Republic of Panama. She and her husband migrated to the United States in 1968. She was active in many organizations in New York City before relocating to Cincinnati in 1988.

She attended several Pan American Society affairs where she met Mr. & Mrs. James Harney. They introduced her to Grace Ramos of Dayton and the rest is history. She was very active in the Hispanic Republican Party where she served as President. She was present and assisted in many gatherings to promote awareness of the growth of the Hispanic population.

She presently serves and used her position on boards to promote, refer and educate. She is a Commissioner for the Cincinnati Human Relations Commission, Board of Trustees of Mercy Health Partners Foundation, Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio, former Vestry (board) of Christ Church Cathedral. She is Vice Chair of the Cincinnati Public School Early Childhood Policy Council. She translated for them Spanish publications for English as a second language parents. This resulted in more parental participation and children were better prepared to go into the first grade speaking English. She is a member of the newly revitalized Hispanic Commission for the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio.

She organized a luncheon/forum with the then Superintendent of Schools Dr. Adamoski of over 100 Hispanic leaders in the community. This resulted in the hiring, sensitivity awareness and education of the Hispanic culture. She just recently chaired/organized/Mistress of Ceremony of a luncheon bringing together Chambers of Commerce.

She has been the recipient of several awards which include but not limited to Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan with recognition by the governor and the legislative branch, PTA, Lion and Lioness

Keynote Speaker Chief Celestino (Cel) Rivera

Lorain Police Chief Celestino (Cel) Rivera is well known through the State of Ohio as a passionate speaker on promoting positive community relations. He was appointed to the Lorain Police Department on April 21, 1971. Promoted to Sergeant, 1977; Lieutenant, 1981; Captain, 1983; and Chief of Police, 1994. During the last 35 years Chief Rivera has been assigned to Patrol, Traffic, Detectives, Narcotics, SWAT, and Special Operations as both an officer and supervisor. He is a former President of the Fraternal Order of Police and Policeman of the Year.

His commitment to human rights is reflected in his civic participation and leadership. He is the Vice President & Advocacy Chairman for CHIP (Hispanic Coalition); is the Founder/Former Co-Chairman of the Lorain County Domestic Violence Task Force; Co-Chairman, Summit, Lorain Project: Law Enforcement Response to those with Limited English Proficiency; Board Vice-Chairman, Lorain County Safe Harbor (Genesis Home for Battered Women); President, Do the Right Thing Program; Chairman, Community Forum on Violence; Board Member of Community Foundation of Greater Lorain County, the Center for Children and Youth Services (CCYS), and El Centro de Servicios Sociales, as well as a Member of the International, Ohio, and Lorain County Associations of Chiefs of Police.

Chief Rivera is one of eight children whose mother died at age 5. Subsequently, he spent seven years at Parmadale Orphanage as a Ward of the Court and placed in foster homes. He joined Military on 17th birthday and now holds the rank of Sergeant in the U.S. Army. He is a Vietnam Veteran and has been awarded a Bronze Star, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

Chief Rivera is has received many awards for his community service and involvement such as: Hispanic of the Year, Lorain Community (1986); "Spirit of 87—Liberty through Law" Award - from Ohio Governor's Office (1987); Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan by Governor George Voinovich (1992); Martin Luther King Social Sensitivity Award from Lorain Community Action Agency (2002); Hispanic of the Year Award (Cleveland), Honored by Governor Taft, Senator Voinovich, Congressman Sherrod Brown, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs- Jones, Congressman Dennis Kucinich, and Mayor Jane Campbell (2002); Community Needs Outreach Award, Blessings Magazine, for "Do the Right Thing" Program (2004); NAACP Community Peace Award (2005).

Juan Jose (“John”) Perez

Juan Jose (“John”) Perez was born in Carrizo Springs, Texas. Because his parents were migrant workers, he and his family traveled through the northwestern states working in the fields. John attended elementary and high school in many states. Upon graduation from high school, he enrolled at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee. Upon graduation from Lee University, he attended the University of Toledo College of Law and graduated in 1985.

John began his legal career as a law clerk for a federal judge in Toledo. From those roots, he has advanced to being the founder of the only Hispanic-owned law firm in Central Ohio (Perez & Morris LLC). Prior to opening his own office, John was associated with a major Columbus law firm, first as an associate and later as a partner. He also served as General Counsel and Vice President of Administration for a publicly traded company.

John founded his own company not only for economic reasons but to allow him to do business based on his belief. Among the clients his company represents are Hispanic business owners as well as individuals with immigration and migrant matters. He does not want their language and culture to be a barrier to fair representation. John’s concern for equal rights and his desire to help give back to the community has been the basis of his commitment to empower the community. It is through John’s support that the Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce has been so successful. John is an outstanding role model to the Hispanic community and to Ohio citizens.

He is a member of the Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; the Greater Columbus Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; to Ohio Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission; the Bureau of Motor Vehicles Citizens Advisory Committee; the South Central Ohio Minority Business Council; the Advisory Board of the Gathering of Colum-

bus; Chairman of the Ohio Republican Hispanic Assembly; and serves on the Governance Board of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Greater Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

John and his wife, Joan, have three sons. He is very active in church and community activities, and is fluent in Spanish.



Manuel Rodríguez

Manuel Rodríguez is the Senior Vice President of Government & International Affairs and Corporate Responsibility Officer of Chiquita Brands International.

In this capacity he is responsible for Chiquita’s adherence to leading environmental, social and ethical standards; responsible for Chiquita’s relationships with governmental agencies worldwide and manages the company’s labor relations.

Noteworthy information:

Mr. Rodríguez has been a driving force behind the development and implementation of the labor rights framework agreement signed in 2001 with the International Union of Food workers and COLSIBA, the affiliation of banana workers unions in Latin America. This landmark agreement has been widely recognized as a model for worker’ rights.

Prior to joining Chiquita, Mr. Rodríguez served as legal counsel for the Migration Division of the Government of Puerto Rico, Director of Agricultural Programs and Deputy National Director of Puerto Rico and Director of “Plan Medico de Seguro No-Ocupacional Para Trabajadores Agrícolas Puertorriqueños.

