



# Maryland Commission on Hispanic Affairs



ANNUAL REPORT

2012



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs advises the Governor and government agencies to expand their outreach and ensure greater access, to serve as a resource to increase the economic, educational, health, political, and social well-being of Hispanics in Maryland.

## Vision

The Commission envisions an increasingly influential and empowered Hispanic community that proactively engages government and other civic institutions to enjoy increasing opportunity and open more paths to progress.



*Many Cultures, One Community, One Maryland*

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



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*A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY*

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to present to you the 2012 Annual Report of the Commission on Hispanic Affairs. This report highlights some of the major accomplishments and efforts made by the Commission over the past year. You will also find a few updates on the State's demographic changes over 2011 within the Latino community of Maryland. You will find these are important demographic indicators of a community that continues its ascendance and is contributing to the progress of our state.

Together we have had a very fulfilling year in our accomplishments. Together we have supported the growing momentum for Maryland's Dream Act. Together we have maintained that Dignity for every individual is the fundamental basis for our policies, and have enabled us to work jointly to also support marriage equality. I look to this Commission to continue our work ahead in our increasingly interconnected world. Our state's diversity allows us to be uniquely positioned to face the challenges and we will reap the benefits of tomorrow.

We maintain that diversity is our greatest strength, and our state's Hispanic community is a solid partner in moving Maryland forward. I encourage you to read over the annual report and contact our Commission or its offices in the Office of Community Initiatives. Together we will continue to support the vibrant growth of Maryland's Latino community.

Sincerely,

Martin O'Malley

Governor

**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

**MARTIN O'MALLEY**  
GOVERNOR



**ANTHONY G. BROWN**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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**GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS**

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**Commissioners:**

*Y. Maria Martinez, Chair*

*Ricardo Martinez, Vice Chair*

*Elizabeth C. Bellavance*

*Lorena Clauser*

*Richard V. Cook*

*Richard Escalante*

*Elizabeth Ysla Leight*

*Hector G. Manzano*

*Sonia E. Mora*

*Nicolas H. Ramos, V*

*Catalina Rodriguez*

*Oscar Ramirez*

*Walkiria Pool*

*Cesar Moreno Perez*

*Dr. Gilberto Zelaya*



**Message from Commission Chair**

We are pleased to share with you this Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs 2012 Annual Report which highlights our renewed Commission which has brought in fresh energy to continue our efforts with the support of our Governor, State agencies and community partners to expand opportunity to Maryland's Hispanic population. We remain committed in contributing to Governor O'Malley's vision of One Maryland; an increasingly empowered community that is increasingly a vibrant part of our state.

Governor O'Malley continues to focus on job creation, and protecting our quality of life. In serving as the bridge so that these efforts reach the Hispanic community of Maryland—we have strengthened our working relationships with many of our leaders in state agencies, enhanced our collaborative efforts with community partners like the Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, and lately we've been more emboldened by the engagement we've had with our Latin American foreign dignitaries who are increasingly curious to visit our state and meet with our state leaders because of their great efforts toward our community, especially our immigrant communities.

Our most important work continues to be to serve as strong advocates for what our Governor calls "policies of dignity": like ensuring that Marylanders across the State know the need for and the benefits of implementing the Maryland Dream Act via referendum. We are encouraged by the full support of our Governor in serving in this role.

On behalf of our entire Commission on Hispanic Affairs, I want to thank Governor Martin O'Malley, Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown, the entire Administration, and the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives for their constant support and shared vision—one which facilitates our ability to help expand opportunity and help protect Maryland's Hispanic working families.

Sincerely,

**Y. Maria Martinez**  
Chair





## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI) coordinates community and volunteer activities statewide and advises the Governor on policies to enhance and improve community programs. This office coordinates outreach to ethnic and cultural communities across Maryland, through the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, the Governor's Commission Hispanic Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern Affairs, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, and most recently; the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs. Other divisions include the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, Volunteer Maryland and community outreach in cooperation with the Governor's Intergovernmental Affairs Office to serve the Executive Branch of Maryland government.

In 2008, Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law HB782, which received unanimous support in the Maryland House of Delegates and the Maryland State Senate. This action codified the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives. Placing the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs within the Governor's Office is a statement of the O'Malley-Brown administration's commitment to the progress of all ethnic communities; specifically that of the Latino community of Maryland, which is the largest ethnic community in our state.

Jessy P. Mejia is the Administrative Director for the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs. She possesses the leadership skills and passion that will assist the Commission in tackling the challenges and find solutions to continue to be the great, diverse state we make as one Maryland.

This report is reflective of the commitment and dedication of the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs to the residents of the State of Maryland.

Israel C. "Izzy" Patoka  
Executive Director  
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

## Hispanic Commission 2012

The Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs is a 21-member Board that is appointed by the Governor to serve 4-year terms advising him, his Administration, and Cabinet Secretaries on issues of impact and outreach to the Latino community of Maryland. They are a coordinating entity that ensures state resources and programs are reaching Latinos and represent the Governor to the Latino community in their public work meetings.

**Y. Maria Martinez, Chair** (Colombia, Baltimore County)

- Founder and CEO of Respira, Inc.
- Chair of Centro de la Comunidad

**Ricardo Martinez, Vice Chair** (Puerto Rico, Frederick County)

- Founder and President/CEO of Project Enhancement Corporation
- Commissioner, Maryland Economic Development Commission

**Gregorio Antonio Arenas** (Montgomery County)

- President of energy vehicle solutions
- Legal applicant for the House of Ruth, Maryland

**Elizabeth C. Bellavance** (United States, Wicomico County)

- Hispanic Outreach Representative for the Eastern Shore of the Maryland Catholic Conference Social Concerns Committee
- Advisory board for institute of public affairs and civic engagement, Salisbury university

**Lorena Margarita Clauser** (El Salvador, Carroll County)

- American Translators Association
- Courts of Maryland Spanish interpreter
- Diplomatic and judiciary interpreter and translator

**Richard V. Cook** (United States, Baltimore County)

- Director of Social Work Community Outreach Service, University of Maryland School of Social Work
- Founder and First Executive Director of Neighborhoods' Institute of Baltimore

**Maria D'Arcy**

- Works with kids in after school programs at Eastern elementary school
- Chesapeake multicultural reserve center

**Richard Escalante**

**Elizabeth Ysla Leight** (Mexico, Anne Arundle County)

- Director of Government Relations and Legal Affairs, Society of Professional Benefit Administrators
- Member of the Maryland State Bar Association
- President elect Maryland PTA
- Co chair of the education committee



**Hector G. Manzano** (Venezuela, Baltimore City)

- Pollution Control Analyst III, Baltimore City Government
- DPW Hispanic Community Liaison, Environmental Sciences

**Sonia E. Mora** (Colombia, Montgomery County)

- Manager Latino Health Initiatives, Montgomery County Government
- Adjunct Instructor, George Washington University, Department of Global Health
- Board Member, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC

**Dr. Ligia Peralta**

**Cesar Moreno Perez** (Mexico, Montgomery County)

- Executive Board Member, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement

**Walkiria Pool** (Dominican Republic, Prince George's County)

- Founder and President of Centro de Apoyo Familiar (CAF) an affordable housing, foreclosure prevention, credit rebuilding, and financial literacy organization.
- National Council of La Raza ....

**Oscar Ramirez** (United States, Montgomery County)

- First Vice Chair, Maryland Democratic Party
- Member, Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee

**Nicolas H. Ramos, V** (Mexico, Baltimore County)

- Business Owner, Arcos Restaurant, Ramos Realty, Rumba, LLC
- Former President, Maryland Mexican Association

**Catalina Rodriguez** (Ecuador, Baltimore City)

- Board Member, Friends of Patterson Park, Baltimore City
- Latino Providers Network
- Director, Baltimore City Hispanic Commission

**Dr. Gilberto Zelaya** (El Salvador, Montgomery County)

- President, Montgomery County Hispanic Employees Association
- Lead Steward & Contract Negotiator

*Currently, there are three pending confirmations from Governor's Office.*

## Executive Summary

In 2012 the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs began a new four-year term and with it the infusion of new members. These newest Commissioners brought with them a bright focus on the most pressing of community priorities and launched a new era of more engagement with current and new community partners and leaders. Nine new members have joined the Commission in 2012 with a commitment to continue the work in the areas of Health, Housing, Education, Business, and Policy—areas in which our new members have expertise and organizational experience. The Commission, having worked so hard to see the Dream Act's passage through the State General Assembly, was pleased to see the passage of the Maryland Dream Act via referendum in November's general election.

This new Commission, under the leadership of our Chair and Vice Chair, has accomplished more initiatives in 2012 than in any of its preceding years since 2008.

- More public meetings were held to provide greater impact to the voice of Hispanics in the General Assembly; especially in regards to the Maryland Dream Act;
- Health disparities were prioritized by providing model programs to Secretary Joshua Sharfstein and Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown;
- The Commission provided Governor O'Malley with a best practice model program to consider to help further close education achievement gaps within the Latino student population and retain more students in school;
- The Commission worked with victims of insecure housing during emergency weather in Prince George's County, a heavily populated county.

The new infusion of energy has enabled the Commission to also engage new leaders in our community—and not just within our State. This year the Commission worked with the Secretary of State's Office to introduce the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and our community leaders to the Vice President of the Dominican Republic; Dr. Rafael Albuquerque, his Ambassador to the U.S., his Excellency Anibal Castro, and a Diplomatic Corps from their country. The Governor and First Lady were also introduced to the Foreign Minister of El Salvador; Hugo Martinez, and his Ambassador to the U.S., his Excellency, Francisco Altschul. During the Salvadorian visit, the Governor, First Lady, and the Commission were provided with an invitation from President Mauricio Funes and First Lady Vanda Pignato of El Salvador to visit the country. Other notable engagements with foreign leaders include hosting ProMexico, a business and trade office for Mexico and a business delegation from Colombia in Annapolis.

The enthusiasm generated by the Commission hosting our Latin American foreign leaders in Maryland and introducing them to our state's leaders also provided an opportunity to enhance our relationship with Hispanic media. They were very much a part of all of our events, chronicling our business meetings as much as our receptions with Latin American leaders for their readership. This renewed interest by Hispanic media in the Commission's work has sharpened our own media savvy, so that we are now more visible with our work; announcing more of our public meetings and initiatives, but especially able to broaden the Governor's message and efforts to continue moving our state forward. The Commission is excited to begin another four-year term with its new leaders who have brought renewed energy and enthusiasm, and remain committed to improving the lives of Latinos in Maryland.





## Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs - 2012 Highlights

<b>February</b>	<p>Commission's Hispanic Legislative Roundtable Public Meeting in Annapolis</p> <p>Co-Hosted the Hispanic Business Legislative Reception with MD Hispanic Chambers of Commerce</p> <p>Co-Hosted the North America Regional Office of Trade and Investment; ProMexico, with MD Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Governor meets with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in Capitol Hill to advocate for their support of the MD Dream Act</p>
<b>March</b>	<p>Commission Hosts His Excellency, Dr. Rafael Albuquerque, Vice President of the Dominican Republic in Maryland</p> <p>MD Dream Act Debate at the University of Maryland, College Park with Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Alex Sanchez</p>
<b>April</b>	<p>Governor and Commission host Minister of Foreign Relations Hugo Martinez and Ambassador Francisco Altschul of El Salvador</p> <p>Commission's MD Dream Act Information Night Public Meeting at Montgomery College</p>
<b>June</b>	<p>Commission's Closing Health Disparities Public Meeting, showcasing Mary's Center new location in Prince George's County, as best practice model</p> <p>Commission leaders engage in Lieutenant Governor's Health Enterprise Zones Public Town Halls with Mary's Center</p>
<b>July</b>	<p>Commission's engagement with Red Cross and Casa de Maryland in assisting victims of a strong storm in Prince George's County. (Housing)</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>Governor Honorary Host of the National Immigrant Integration Conference in Baltimore City, and Commissions contribute with New American's Festival</p>
<b>October</b>	<p>Commission's "Model Program to Help Close Hispanic Education Achievement Gap" Public Meeting in Annapolis with Special Guest Tony Plana, Actor and Executive Director of East L.A. Classic Theater Program.</p> <p>Governor and Commission's Hispanic Heritage Awards Ceremony and Reception at Government House</p>
<b>November</b>	<p>Successful DREAM Referendum is passed in Maryland</p>



## Commission's Hispanic Legislative Roundtable Public Meeting in Annapolis

Every February, as it has become tradition for the Commission, it hosts one of its most important Commission Public Meetings in Annapolis. During Legislative Session the Commission makes it a point to have its presence in the General Assembly to provide its public with a more thorough overview of the legislative agendas important to the Hispanic Community. These agendas include; the Governor's legislative agenda, the legislative agenda of the three Hispanic members of the Assembly who represent parts of the most heavily Hispanic-populated counties in the state; Prince George's and Montgomery counties. The Commission also provides the opportunity for other members of the General Assembly to introduce themselves and their legislative goals for the session.

## Co-Hosted the North America Regional Office of Trade and Investment; ProMexico, with the MD Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Special guests Jorge Lopez, Manager, and Mexican Consul Anibal Gomez Toledo were hosted by the Commission and the MD Hispanic Chamber to talk about the opportunities of trade and investment in Mexico. The meeting took place in the James Senate Office Building. Board members of two other Hispanic Chambers were present; the Baltimore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The meeting resulted in ongoing conversations about a possible trip to Mexico by the Commission, Chamber with the Secretary of State's Office of Maryland.



## Co-Hosted the Hispanic Business Legislative Reception with MD Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

Another February tradition has become the co-hosting of the Maryland Hispanic Legislative Reception with several Hispanic Chambers of Commerce from the state. This year, the Commission hosted the event with the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Baltimore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The Reception was sponsored by Verizon. Over 100 Chamber members, guests, and commission guests were present.

## Governor meets with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in Capitol Hill to advocate for their support of the MD Dream Act

To raise the national profile of the Maryland DREAM Act and the impending Referenda in November, Governor O'Malley set out to broaden national political support for the measure; the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs was on deck, to help him make that request of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). The members of the CHC, all Democrats, were gathered for a Member-only event where the Governor was invited to address the group. At the meeting, the Governor placed the Maryland DREAM Act referendum in the context of its importance in the national immigration debate; it is the first time that a proactive measure expanding immigrant access is put to popular vote; the results of the Maryland referendum will also set the context for other state-level legislation in



other parts of the country, and locally, the results will impact the future of progressive legislation in the state. Losing Maryland, the Governor stated, will put other pro-immigrant measures in other states at risk. If in Maryland, the second most democratic state in the nation, we cannot defend DREAM, the opposition will be emboldened in other states. Losing will show that pro-immigrant reforms will be turned in to Tea Party base-building mechanisms for the General Election, and emphasized that the national immigrant rights community understands that this is one of the national priorities.



### **Commission Hosts His Excellency, Dr. Rafael Albuquerque, Vice President of the Dominican Republic in Maryland**

The Commission, along with the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce hosted the Vice President of the Dominican Republic, and a Diplomatic Delegation that included the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to Washington, DC for an entire day of Maryland activities. Including in the agenda was a private meeting with Governor O'Malley, Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown, Secretary of State John McDonough and Executive members of the Commission at the State House in the Governor's Reception Room. Following the meeting, after a private lunch in Annapolis, the Vice President and the Delegation were provided a tour of Baltimore. After the tour, a business meeting was held at the Frederick Douglass- Myers Maritime Museum. The business

meeting included members of the Boards of the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Baltimore City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and points included in the conversation were increasing trade between Santo Domingo and the Port of Baltimore, among other trade and security issues. The evening concluded with a Reception at the Museum, with Special Guest Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and leaders of the Dominican, Latino and business communities of Maryland.







FUE RECIBIDO COMO "INVITADO DE HONOR" EN BALTIMORE

## Vicepresidente dominicano fortalece relación con MD

Plantea mecanismo de cooperación entre la República Dominicana y el Estado de Maryland.

REDACCIÓN  
WASHINGTONHISPANIC

**E**l vicepresidente de la República Dominicana, Rafael Alburquerque de Castro, destacó el fortalecimiento de las relaciones bilaterales entre su país y Maryland, durante su reciente visita oficial que realizó a Estados Unidos.

Durante el acto de bienvenida, efectuado en un gran salón del Museo Marítimo Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers, de Baltimore, el dignatario fue presentado por el gobernador Martin O'Malley, a quien consideró como su "invitado de honor de Maryland".

En la reunión con Alburquerque también estuvieron presentes líderes del Senado estatal y de la Asamblea de Delegados de Maryland, donde el ilustre in-



**El Vicepresidente** de República Dominicana, Rafael Alburquerque de Castro (segundo de izq. a der.), dialoga con líderes de la comunidad hispana.

FOTO: BEVERLEE BARTHEL

vitado habló de la necesidad de establecer un "mecanismo de cooperación" entre dicho Estado y la nación dominicana, para abordar temas relacionados con educación, seguridad ciudadana y salud, entre otros.

Alburquerque destacó que su país tiene "mucho que apren-

der" de Maryland, y destacó que a pesar de la crisis económica global ha sido reconocido como el Estado que tiene los mejores índices de educación en el país.

El evento fue organizado precisamente por la Cámara de Comercio Hispana de Maryland en coordinación con la Comi-



**La comunidad hispana** de negocios de Maryland se rodea al Vicepresidente de República Dominicana, Rafael Alburquerque de Castro, después de la ceremonia de bienvenida, el martes 13 en Baltimore.

FOTO: BEVERLEE BARTHEL

sión de Asuntos Hispanos del Gobernador del estado.


En el acto también estuvo presente el embajador de República Dominicana en los Estados Unidos, Anibal de Castro. Asimismo, estuvieron el vicegobernador de Maryland, An-

parte de un amplio plan de trabajo destinado a comprometer y fortalecer a la comunidad de negocios hispana en Maryland y en la región metropolitana.


A la reunión también asistieron el vicegobernador Brown, el Secretario del Departamento de

MacDougall; y los comisionados Ricky Martínez, Cristina Díaz Malone y Jessy Mejía.

La ceremonia concluyó con la interpretación de danzas folclóricas dominicanas, que no sólo disfrutaron las personalidades asistentes sino también sirvió



Governor Martin O'Malley  
The Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs  
and  
The Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Cordially Invite You to a Reception With



**Dr. Rafael Alburquerque de Castro**  
**Vice President of the Dominican Republic**  
Tuesday, March 13, 2012  
5:00pm  
Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Museum  
1417 Thames Street  
Baltimore, MD 21231

An evening to celebrate our State's Dominican Community  
And learn about business and investment opportunities with the Dominican Republic

Space is limited. Please RSVP to <https://m360.mdhcc.org/admin/forms/viewform.aspx?id=31952>  
For more information please follow: [info@mdhcc.org](mailto:info@mdhcc.org)



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## MD Dream Act Debate at the University of Maryland, College Park with Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Alex Sanchez

Alex Sanchez, Secretary of DLLR represented the Governor at a formal debate held by the University of Maryland along with Delegate Pat McDonough, who debated against the measure. Close to 100 guests attended the event, moderated by University of Maryland professor, and students and guests had a chance to provide questions and hear both sides of the argument on the legislation. The debate was held to provide students with a better sense of the measure before the pending referenda.



Secretary Alex Sanchez



Delegate Pat McDonough





## GOVERNOR AND COMMISSION HOST MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS HUGO MARTINEZ AND AMBASSADOR FRANCISCO ALTSCHUL OF EL SALVADOR

The Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs welcomed the Foreign Minister of El Salvador, Hugo Martinez, Ambassador to Washington, D.C., Francisco Altschul, and the Embassy's Business Minister to Maryland. Together with the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Commission was able to host the Diplomatic Corps at the Ana G. Mendez University of the Capitol Area Campus in Wheaton, Maryland, for a Trade and Business Opportunities event for Salvadoran and other Hispanic Business Owners in the state. The Embassy's Business Minister highlighted the country's growing industries, the needs in several business sectors, and shared the President's ongoing efforts to streamline investment and entrepreneurship opportunities in El Salvador for Salvadorans and other businesses owners abroad. In the evening, the Commission hosted the Foreign Minister, the Ambassador, and the Diplomatic Corps at a private dinner in Baltimore City; at Chazz's Restaurant by the harbor, along with Governor Martin O'Malley, First Lady Katie O'Malley, and State Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez.







### **Commission's MD Dream Act Night Public Meeting at Montgomery College with Special Guest Travis Taazelar**

In preparation of a months-long education and advocacy drive by the Commission within the Hispanic and non-Hispanic ethnic community of Maryland, the Commission held its April meeting with Special Guest Travis Taazelar at Montgomery College's Takoma Park Campus. Travis Taazelar, director of the then nascent Educating Maryland Kids organization, was beginning to add leadership to the organization, and the Commission provided the first base of support. He provided a presentation on the legislation, what the actual language of the law passed provided to Dream kids and the process and steps that would enhance the organization in the upcoming months. The Commission also invited Dream Kids who volunteered to go public and tell their story, their struggle, and their advocacy efforts to ensure the law was enacted by popular vote in November.





## **Commission's Closing Health Disparities Public Meeting, showcasing Mary's Center in Prince George's County, with Special Guest Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

In June, The Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs held its third meeting of the year at the newly opened Mary's Center for Childhood and Maternity Health in Adelphi, Maryland (Prince George's County), the first site in that county. Mary's Center, a very successful healthcare clinic that opened its first site in Washington, DC, previously expanded to several DC sites and one in Montgomery County. After providing excellent and culturally-effective healthcare to a majority ethnic community in the region, Mary's Center has been recognized by top national Health organizations and by First Lady Michelle Obama for their work to help close the minority healthcare gaps in access and care. The Commission highlighted the business model used by Mary's Center to provide low-cost, professional health care, and was tapped to help serve and provide best practices for minority healthcare access to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, along with Commission's leading healthcare expert, Commissioners Sonia Mora and Dr. Ligia Peralta. Dr. Sharfstein and the Commission were provided with a tour of the new facility and discussed ways to help generate more similar health outcomes in the community.

## **Commission leaders engage in Lieutenant Governor's Health Enterprise Zones Public Town Halls with Mary's Center**

Following its Public Meeting at Mary's Center, the Commission tapped leaders of the Adelphi office to help feed information on first-hand experience to help close Latino health disparities in Maryland for the Lt. Governor's initiative with Health Enterprise Zones (HEZs). This unique pilot program, Health Enterprise Zones, carried out by Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown and the state health department – will dedicate to reducing health disparities among the economically disadvantaged. Numerous studies have shown that poorer Americans are more likely to be obese, and as a result, have the associated chronic health conditions like heart disease and diabetes. Down the road, these chronic conditions lead to higher costs for everyone. Health Enterprise Zones are being touted as a possible solution to help decrease the incidence of these chronic

diseases to help state taxpayer money. Lt. Governor Brown compares them to economic development zones, except with a focus on health instead of business. In order to qualify for the pilot program, coalitions comprised of health-care providers, government agencies, nonprofits and local businesses must identify the population they want to help (which must be at least 5,000 people so data-tracking would be possible), the health disparities they want to reduce, their plan for expanding primary-care access and the community resources they have to do it. A total of 19 groups have initially applied to the state health department for funding in September. Four applicants will eventually be chosen. The state Legislature has allocated \$16 million over four years (\$4 million a year, for an average of \$1 million per zone per year) for the pilot. The applicants chosen as HEZs will be able to get creative in reducing disparities; the coalitions that receive funding can use that money for any of six purposes: state income tax credits, hiring tax credits, loan repayments (for medical school students, for example), capital improvement grants, priority in a state patient-centered medical home program and priority in a state program that provides finance assistance for electronic health records (EHR) adoption. The Commission, along with Mary's Center, was able to provide information in the formation phase of the initiative—in private meeting discussions with the Lt. Governor's Office, and in public Town Hall meetings.

## **Commission's engagement with Red Cross and Casa de Maryland in assisting victims of severe thunderstorm in Prince George's County.**

During the storm that dislocated hundreds of families from several Prince George's apartment complexes in the mid-county area, the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs was there to help triage at Northwestern High School's makeshift Red Cross Shelter for victims, primarily Hispanic families. Casa de Maryland was also present to help with additional translation and triage, as well as help families recover belongings and settle in safer housing. The apartment complexes had suffered severe structural damages to roofs, floors, and walls due to leakages from the severe thunderstorm weather. Over 50 families were helped back to safer housing units in the same complexes and several more were helped into other family housing. Governor O'Malley and Prince George's County police, rescue, and housing authorities visited the site to help secure assistance.

## Governor Honorary Host of the National Immigrant Integration Conference in Baltimore City, and Commission's contribution with New American's Festival



In an effort to continue to build momentum for a pro-immigration policy reform debate at the federal government, and in celebration of Maryland's immigrant-friendly city; Baltimore, Casa de Maryland was this year's host of the 6th Annual National Immigrant Integration Conference. Co-hosted by the National Partnership for New Americans, The Knight Foundation, and the Florida Immigrant Coalition; immigrant integration leaders, advocates, service providers, academics, and government officials came together in Baltimore from 33 states. Keynote speakers included NAACP Director Ben Jealous, U.S.C.I.S. Director Alejandro Mayorkas, and Governor Martin O'Malley. The Commission helped the conference, along with its sister ethnic Commissions, in providing

logistical and technical help for a successful and welcoming event. The Commission, along with its sister ethnic Commissions also hosted the Welcome to Baltimore New Americans Festival where performances of different ethnic origins were held after a citizenship swearing-in ceremony for over 50 new Americans, hosted by the Lieutenant Governor.





## Commission's Education Public Meeting on Best Practices for Hispanic Students

The Commission hosted Special Guest Actor and East L.A. Classic Theater Executive Director and Founder, Tony Plana. An accomplished actor and director who has starred in dozens of films, television series and theatre productions, Mr. Plana is the recipient of numerous awards for his work and is a creative force behind many of the most successful Latino-led productions in entertainment today. Mr. Plana oversees all artistic, programmatic, and administrative affairs of the organization serving as chief spokesperson, fundraiser, business developer and manager of ECT. In Maryland, he looked to the Commission to explore the possibilities of expanding his organization in Baltimore. The Commission was able to provide a meeting with leading Baltimore school officials, political leaders, as well as introduce him and have a meeting with Governor O'Malley. He was tapped by the Commission to provide his star-power support for the Maryland Dream Act, and he was also decorated with a Hispanic Heritage Award by Governor O'Malley. During his presentation to the Commission's Education Public Meeting, he was able to provide statistical evidence of the difference such programs make in helping to close successful achievement gaps in schools.



## Governor and Commission's Hispanic Heritage Reception and Awards Ceremony at Government House

Over 150 guests attended this year's Governor's Hispanic Heritage Reception and Awards Ceremony at the Governor's Mansion in Annapolis.





## **Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs Public Meetings 2012**

### **Hispanic Legislative Empowerment Forum**

Wednesday February 1, 2012  
House Of Delegates Office Building  
6 Bladen Street Room 170  
Annapolis, Maryland

### **Maryland Dream Act Night**

Wednesday, April 18, 2012  
Montgomery College – Takoma Park Campus  
7600 Takoma Avenue  
Takoma Park, Maryland

### **Quality Healthcare Access for Hispanics in Maryland**

Wednesday June 20, 2012  
Mary's Center for Childhood and Maternity Care  
8908 Riggs Road  
Adelphi, Maryland

### **Helping Improve Quality Housing in Multi-Unit Housing for Safer Communities in Prince George's County (Postponed)**

Wednesday August 15, 2012  
Centro de Apoyo Familiar/Center for Assistance to Families  
6801 Kenilworth Avenue Suite 201  
Riverdale, Maryland

### **Best Practices in Education for Hispanic Students**

Thursday October 25, 2012  
Banneker-Douglass Museum of Annapolis  
84 Franklin Street  
Annapolis, Maryland

### **Joint Ethnic Commissions Assembly**

December 2012  
M&T Bank Stadium  
Baltimore, Maryland



## Maryland DREAM Act

In 2011, Maryland became the 12th state to pass a state DREAM Act, a law that's all about fairness. It's about kids who graduate from Maryland high schools and whose families pay Maryland taxes and who should pay Maryland in-state tuition. The law makes sure the rules are the same for everyone regardless of immigration status and invests in the future of our state.

**Here are some important facts about the law, which is being challenged with a ballot referendum in November 2012:**

1. The law applies only to young people who grew up in Maryland, worked hard and played by the rules. They speak English, their families pay taxes, and they attended a Maryland high school for at least 3 years and graduated.
2. Most of these students were brought here by their parents at a young age and the only country they know as home is the United States.
3. All students have to earn acceptance to college; this law only affects tuition rates.
4. DREAM Act students must start at a community college and then transfer to a four-year institution. They aren't competing with other Maryland applicants—community colleges have open enrollment and they're considered in the same pool with out-of-state applicants for four-year institutions.
5. In other states that have passed DREAM Acts, only small numbers of immigrant students have enrolled in college, so we're talking about a small group of smart, hardworking kids.
6. Everyone eligible for the DREAM Act must pay taxes for three years before becoming eligible and must pay taxes every year they're in college.
7. These kids will graduate college and give back to our state. Education is always a sound investment and these students will help build the educated workforce that will ensure Maryland's economic strength and competitiveness in the future.

President Obama's announcement that his administration will stop deporting DREAM Act eligible students nationwide and provide them work permits makes an even stronger case for upholding the Maryland DREAM Act.

Kids in our state who've excelled in school and earned acceptance to a Maryland college will be great assets to our economy. We should make sure they have the education they need to fully contribute to our workforce.

**Here's one example of a student who is directly affected:**

Yves, Paint Branch High School graduate and DREAMer

I came to this country when I was only 12 months old, from India. In 2010, I graduated from Paint Branch High School in the top 5% of my class. It was a bittersweet achievement. I had completed the first step in pursuing my dream to become a doctor, but I did not know what my future would hold considering I am also undocumented.

## 2012 Hispanic Heritage Awards and Reception

### Awardees

#### 2012 Hispanic Heritage Month Reception and Governor's Heritage Awards Ceremony

*This year's theme at the Awards: "Education. Community. Empowerment."  
commemorates a year of championing the Maryland Dream Act.*





### **Senator Joan Carter Conway**

Representing Baltimore City, Senator Joan Carter Conway first broke ground by becoming the first African American woman to Chair a Maryland Senate Committee in the Maryland General Assembly. We recognize Senator Carter Conway today for being instrumental in her support, advocacy, and being key in the passing of the Maryland In-State Tuition Bill in 2011, as everyone knows it, the MD Dream Act. Together with some of us, Senator Carter Conway worked collaboratively with then-newly minted Senator Victor Ramirez, and together were the driving force of the bill in the Senate as Chair of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Senate Committee that passed the legislation. This is a belated recognition of her monumental efforts, but certainly, one the Commission intends to highlight as part of the life of Dream's success in November.



### **Jorge Steven Acuna**

Jorge, a young gentleman of only 18 years of age, is the head of the Justice for Students in America Movement—or JSA Movement for short—which also bear the initials to his name. At this young age, Mr. Acuna has been spearheading this youth movement across the country, which began with the tragic story of his and his father's imprisonment in a Montgomery County jail and the organization of his high school friends for their release. Now known by most of the Congressional leadership of our State, Mr. Acuna and his organization are travelling the country to make other Congressional and political leaders aware of the student movement across the country to make the federal Dream Act a reality. Here in Maryland, they have been very strong supporters to engage high school students to go out and support the MD Dream Act.



### **Laurie Campos**

Laurie Campos, of Silver Spring, Maryland, is a graduate of Towson State University and American University. After holding a position with the international political consulting firm of Shrum, Devine & Donilon, Laurie went on to hold administrative positions at the Wall Street Journal in Washington, D.C. and New York. In 2001 Laurie founded MultiLingual Solutions, a Rockville-based foreign language services company which she has grown from a modest small business into a leading provider of innovative language and cultural training for the U.S. Military and Intelligence community worldwide. With business in over 60 countries, she provides translation and interpretation services in over 100 languages. In 2012 MultiLingual Solutions partnered with acclaimed actor/director Tony Plana to both enhance its adult-learner education offerings as well as to teach language acquisition skills to at-risk youth. The partnership draws from Tony Plana's 15 years of successful program implementation in several southern California school districts. Tony Plana and MultiLingual Solutions are now combining best practices and currently exploring developing similar theatrical-based programs for the Seed School and Living Classrooms here in Baltimore, Maryland.

We are very excited about their educational exploration here in Maryland and we hope Laurie, MultiLingual Solutions, and Tony Plana make Baltimore their new home.



### **Gilberto de Jesus**

Gilberto de Jesus is an attorney with the Federal Communications Commission's Office of Communications and Business Opportunities in Washington, D.C., where he is helping develop efforts to increase broadband adoption among small and disadvantaged businesses as well as promote ownership opportunities of telecom facilities by small, women, and minority owned businesses. He has also worked for US Senator Ben Cardin where he oversaw the Senator's efforts to write legislation to curb the abuse of contract bundling that affects small entrepreneurs doing business with the federal government. He is a former Assistant United States Attorney. After the United States Attorney's Office, he worked in the Office of International Affairs at the US Department of Justice, serving as legal advisor to federal and state prosecutors on issues of international law enforcement. He was liaison with Foreign Ministries of Justice, the State Department, INTERPOL, foreign diplomatic missions and represented the United States Government in treaty negotiations with other countries. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Maryland University Medical Systems, the Baltimore Development Corporation, and is Vice President for the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He obtained his B.A from Columbia University and his J.D from the National Law Center at George Washington University.

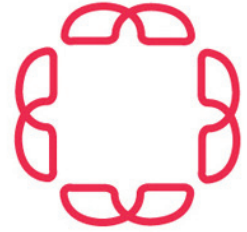


### **Dr. Eduardo Rodriguez**

Dr. Eduardo Rodriguez is a powerhouse in the medical, surgical community not just of Maryland, but also of the US and the world. Based here in our own backyard at the University of Maryland Medical System, Dr. Rodriguez has performed the first extensive, record-breaking, full-face transplant in the country. Most recently, in combination with the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Education Based Latino Outreach, and the University of Maryland Medical System; the Dr. Eduardo Rodriguez Science and Robotics Academy was announced to be opening at EBLO for Latino students and families. The Center will develop a curriculum using Lego Robotics and other tools to encourage math and science to help students foster the pursuit of science and math and the medical profession.

## The Ana G. Mendez University System – Capital Area Campus

This new, dual-language University in Wheaton, Montgomery County, MD but certainly part of a University System that is not new in the U.S. Founded in Puerto Rico in 1949, the Ana G Mendez University System is a fully accredited institution serving some 42,000 students in Puerto Rico, and three other branches in Florida. They offer degrees in varying disciplines ranging from Associates degrees to Masters and P.h.D programs. The uniqueness of this particular University is its focus on the education of adults with limited English-speaking skills, particularly Latinos looking to go back to, or enhance their language skills and develop their professional skills for the new economy. This new Campus in Wheaton, Montgomery County, has boosted Wheaton's redevelopment efforts, and provided a new focal point for higher education for Latinos in the region, and for that we highlight them tonight.



Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez





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