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Lubbock/West Texas Region

New Reality Confronts Latinos' College Aspirations

By Edwin Mora
Hispanic Link News Service
First of two parts

The nation's ongoing economic turbulence will further hinder many Latino students' capacity to afford college by advancing the decline of their family's household income and diminishing student lending options.

That's the word of Antonio Flores, president and CEO of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

"The crisis is going to have a very detrimental effect on the ability of Latino families to pay for college. The impact can be very widespread and very long-lasting, depending on how long the economic crisis continues without light at the end of the tunnel," pumping the word "very" all three times.

It's HACU's mission to improve the quality of higher education institutions by making them more inclusive and accessible to Latino students.

A study released in October by the Higher Education Research Institute at University of California-Los Angeles' Graduate School of Education and Information Studies covers household income of Latino students.

Its research shows a growing discrepancy between household incomes of Latino and non-Latino students at four-year colleges and universities over the past 30 years. The income difference skyrocketed from \$7,986 in 1975 to \$32,965 in 2006.

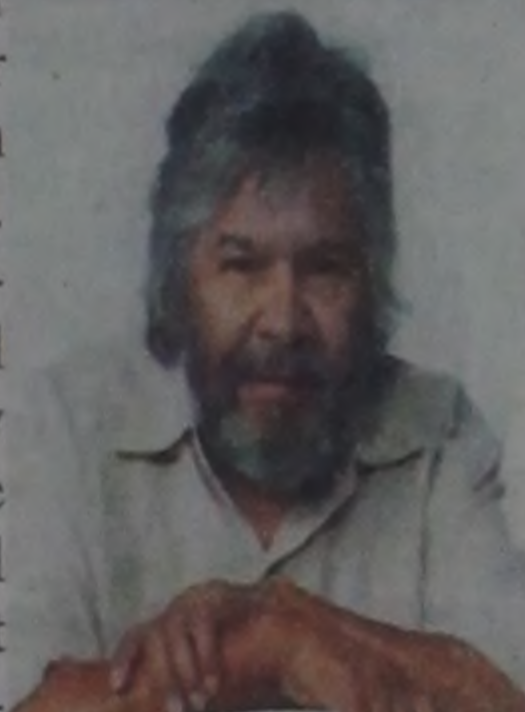
With the economy in shambles, the financial state of Hispanic students isn't likely to get any better.

A recent report by the Economic Policy Institute reveals that the Hispanic workforce is prone to face tougher financial challenges than other workers due to the downturn. This is largely because Latinos' finances did not improve during the latest recovery period. They were, not surprisingly, worse than when the recession began.

"It's disturbing that the Latino household income will continue to shrink as a result of the economic crisis," says Flores.

Comentarios de Bidal

James Olmos will be speaking at Tech at the Frazier Pavilion on Feb 19. His audience will definitely not be the general student population since the admission price is \$65 per person. Or you could always go to the reception that will cost \$100 per person. Word is that he will then speak to a group of executives at the Country Club, no word on how much they will charge since it is a private affair. The good thing is that word also is that he will also speak to some local school classes.



The Hispanic Association of Women will also have their Winter Gala the Saturday, No word on how much they are charging for admission. The event will be at the Legacy, 1310 Ave. N Information is available online at www.hispanicassociationofwomen.org, or by calling Davis at 441-7687. It is good that HAW is planning to raise up to \$10,000 for scholarships. HAW also yearly has a Conference in which workshops and speakers are provided for the general public. What is lacking in our opinion are services such as pap smears, mammograms and programs for women from the community that are not necessarily members. Maybe this is something they can look into establishing.

Talking about celebrations, Lubbock Centro Aztlan is currently in the final stages of planning it's 15th annual Festival Viva Aztlan that will take place on March 13th and 14th. The festival has appropriately taken them of La Quinceañera and will bring together Ballet groups from throughout the U.S. More on this later. Hasta luego.



Economic necessity driving Latinos to community colleges:

By Edwin Mora
As the national economic turmoil expands, more Latinos are flocking to two-year institutions. "Latinos will continue to over-concentrate in community colleges so long the economic crisis continues on," says Antonio Flores, president of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. According to HACU, 46% of Latino college students attend two-year institutions. This contrasts to 37% of all college students.

"We estimate that enrollment at community colleges has risen approximately eight to ten percent for fall '08," says Norma Kent, vice president of communications for the American Association of Community Colleges. "We've had increases reported from one percent to almost 20 percent."

Cost of tuition in comparison to four-year institutions, according to Kent, is one of the main reasons for the increase.

The economic status of the average Latino household fuels the financial aid dependency exhibited by many Hispanic college students. Financial aid was a top priority when Latino freshmen were considering a four-year college or university, according to the UCLA study.

"About 82% of our Latino students do apply for financial aid," says Raúl Lema, financial aid director for University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP). "We have definitely seen more students asking for the maximum aid amount this year."

According to the UCLA report, 20% of Hispanic freshmen identified as a major problem their capacity to afford college. That contrasts to 8.6% of non-Hispanic freshman in 2006.

Latinos make up about 75% of UTEP's student body, according to Lema. This university is one of the lower-cost schools in the University of Texas system, charging about \$2,900 in tuition fees for 15 undergraduate credit hours.

The Pew Hispanic Center reveals that more than half of Latino college students are enrolled in Texas and California institutions.

Next: College funding options are reduced. (Edwin Mora is a reporter with Hispanic Link News Service in Washington, D.C. E-mail: emora83@gmail.com) ©2009

Enfrentan Nuevas Barereras Juventud Latina Que Aspira Estudios

El estado económico de la familia promedio latina nutre la dependencia en la asistencia financiera que exhiben muchos estudiantes universitarios hispanos. La asistencia financiera fue prioridad principal cuando estudiantes latinos de primer año consideraban una universidad de cuatro años, según un estudio de UCLA.

"Aproximadamente el 82% de nuestros estudiantes latinos solicitan asistencia financiera," dice Raúl Lema, director de asistencia financiera de la Universidad de Texas, El Paso (UTEP). "En definitiva hemos visto a más estudiantes que piden la máxima asistencia posible para este año"

De acuerdo con el informe de UCLA, el 20% de estudiantes de primer año hispanos identificaron como problema principal su capacidad de costear los estudios universitarios, lo cual contrasta con el 8.6% de los estudiantes de primer año no hispanos en el 2006.

Los latinos comprenden un 75% del cuerpo estudiantil de UTEP, describe Lema. Esta universidad es una de las de menor costo del sistema de la Universidad de Texas, cobrando aproximadamente \$2,900 en matrícula para 15 horas de clase pre-grado.

El Centro Hispano Pew revela que más de la mitad de los estudiantes universitarios latinos están matriculados en instituciones en Texas y en California.

Segunda parte: se reducen las opciones de financiación (Edwin Mora es reportero de Hispanic Link News Service en Washington, D.C. Comuníquese con él a: emora83@gmail.com) © 2009

El Editor
Informing-Educating
Creating Action.
The Job of a Real
Newspaper of
RECORD

Una de ellas va dirigida contra niños indocumentados, acusó Expresa Representante Alonzo su total desacuerdo a las propuestas antiinmigrantes de Rick Perry

Dallas, Tx. - El diputado estatal por el Distrito 104 de Dallas, Roberto Alonzo, expresó hoy su total desacuerdo y tajante rechazo a las declaraciones del gobernador republicano Rick Perry de apoyar la aprobación de leyes que atacan directamente a los inmigrantes indocumentados, entre ellos "de manera inhumana a los niños", acusó el político mexicanoamericano.

Además, de igual manera, Alonzo manifestó su descontento con la actitud de Perry de rechazar la ayuda para Texas de los estímulos federales monetarios anunciados por el presidente Barack Obama tendientes a contrarrestar la profunda crisis financiera que atraviesan los Estados Unidos. El legislador por Dallas dijo que incluso hoy mismo estamparía su firma en el documento que sus colegas demócratas han presentado ante la Cámara de Diputados en el que aseveran su rotunda oposición a la negativa del gobernador republicano a recibir fondos federales para reactivar la caída economía texana.

Sobre la política antiinmigrante de Rick Perry, Alonzo indicó que los extranjeros sin documentos no sólo tienen que sobreponerse a la difícil situación económica que enfrenta el país y a las constantes e "injustas" campañas de redadas que se suceden por todo el país,



sino que ahora también a propuestas de ley "que pretenden destruirlos y denigrarlos como personas y comunidad".
"Nosotros, como legisladores, así como las personas e instituciones defensoras de la justicia, la libertad, la democracia y los derechos elementales del hombre, debemos unir filas, esfuerzo y lucha para combatir por todos los medios esas medidas, a sus autores y promotores, ya que las mismas atentan y

violan incluso nuestra propia Constitución", aseveró.
La ola de severas recriminaciones desatada en el Congreso texano contra el gobernador republicano obedece a que Rick Perry dijo -- ante otras antiinmigrantes declaraciones-- que se mostraba a favor de negar servicios sociales gubernamentales tanto a niños como a personas indocumentadas.

Census works to reach all Latinos

By MERCEDES OLIVERA
New technologies will certainly play a role in the upcoming 2010 census.

Hand-held computers, Global Positioning System software and digital maps are a few of the devices to be used by census workers when they start counting heads in May of next year.

But old-fashioned, person-to-person contact may still end up working best among Latinos, who have traditionally been undercounted in past demographic endeavors.

That means more bilingual census workers and questionnaires, and outreach campaigns on Spanish-language media and with community organizations to reassure viewers and listeners that all data is confidential.

These are some of the methods the Census Bureau plans to use as it gears up for the decennial headcount, said Gabriel A. Sánchez, the agency's regional director in Dallas.

The agency recently opened six offices in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, which has one of the largest Hispanic populations in the state. The bureau plans to open a total of 39 offices in Texas and will employ 75,000 people to work in a three-state region that also includes Louisiana and Mississippi.

"Based on our analysis of error rates, we know that Latinos are traditionally undercounted," so the agency hopes to improve its success rate by working directly with grass-roots organizations, Sánchez said.

One of the organizations that will be working

closely with the bureau to ensure an accurate headcount is the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). It has designed a nationwide campaign, Hágase Contar -Make Yourself Count - that will launch this April. The campaign is considered

a crucial element of its mission to involve more Latinos in the civic process.

"The census is a civil rights issue," said Arturo Vargas, executive director of the NALEO Educational Fund. "It's part and parcel of the empowerment movement by Latinos that we've seen over the past three years."

That movement started with the spontaneous nationwide marches of 2006, he said. NALEO followed with a campaign to get Latino immigrants to apply for citizenship and register to vote. Then there was the record turnout of 10 million Hispanic voters in the November elections.

"The census is the next step," Vargas said. "Everybody can be counted."

As you know, the count is crucial because it ensures an accurate distribution of federal funds to cities: Roads, classrooms and hospitals all rely on census data collected every 10 years.

It's also the basis for the reapportionment of congressional seats and redistricting, a contentious issue between Republicans and Democrats in recent years.

Consequently, many Latino elected officials and leaders monitor the activities of the census closely.

"The importance of an accurate census can't be underestimated," said state Rep. Rafael Anchía, D-Dallas, "because local, state, and federal funds - and political power - must accurately reflect the strength and size of the Latino community."



Immigration Reform in Sight, Say Advocates

Pro-immigrant advocates believe the Obama administration will have a window of opportunity between this September and March 2010 to shepherd a comprehensive immigration package that will provide a path to legalization for an estimated 12 million undocumented residents, strengthen border security and help the ailing economy. Part of their optimism is attributed to the large Latino vote that broke for Barack Obama by a 2-to-1 ratio in key states like Arizona, Nevada and Colorado. "Obama has made clear a campaign commitment to address this in his first year (in office), and we plan to hold him accountable," said Janet Murguía, president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza. "The election created a very new understanding of how immigration plays in our political arena," said Murguía, one of five immigration advocates who participated in a telephonic briefing earlier this month. Murguía said voters turned candidates who favor enforcement-only methods into "distinct minorities." Not so fast, says Ira Mehlman, media director for the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). The national organization favors enforcement of immigration laws, including workplace regulations, as a disincentive for undocumented immigration. "What we need

is enforcement against employers to hire (undocumented workers)," said Mehlman in a telephone interview. "The collapse of the economy has done some of that." When there is no work available for undocumented workers, the flow of undocumented immigrants will slow to a trickle, he said. The election, said Mehlman, did not give Obama a mandate for comprehensive immigration reform. "Republicans certainly got slammed hard in this recent election, largely because the public held the Bush administration accountable for the economy," said Mehlman. Democratic gains in the 2006 and 2008 elections came in districts that were competitive, he added. "I'm not sure if any of those folks want to go back to voters in 2010 with the economy bad and say to voters, 'We didn't do much to fix the economy, but we passed amnesty for 13 million (undocumented) immigrants,'" said Mehlman. Murguía believes the Latino vote has shifted the political wind in favor of comprehensive immigration reform that sputtered in 2007. That belief was shared by America's Voice executive director Frank Sharry, Cardinal Roger Mahony, and John Wilhelm, president/hospitality industry of the union group Unite Here. "Elections matter, and it needed to be proven to the political class that swing voters want a solution, Latino/im-

migrant voters want respect, and, opponents of (immigration) reform as voters make a lot of noise but don't have a lot of juice," said Sharry. "The election and the effort that went to mobilize voters shifted the landscape." But first, say immigrant advocates, Obama must focus on an economic stimulus plan. Immigration reform will play a role in the country's recovery, they said. "I don't believe it is possible to fix the American economy without fixing immigration reform," said Wilhelm. "We will not be able to create the kinds of good jobs that support families and communities unless we put all of those who work in this country on an equal footing." Sharry said studies show legalization of undocumented immigrants support Wilhelm's thinking. American workers saw their wages go up 14 percent in five years shortly after the Immigration Reform and Control Act was signed in 1986. Mahony said handling immigration reform on a "piecemeal fashion" will not work. "They are extremely unhelpful," said Mahony. "We cannot have immigration reform taking place at the local level." Mehlman remains skeptical that comprehensive immigration reform will occur, largely because of the slumping economy.

EL EDITOR #1 in NEWS!

You Gotta Know When to Fold

By Richard N. Baldwin T.

The title is from an old folk song about playing poker. And it is apropos to not only politics but current Mexican politics as well. The subject is México's internal war on drug terrorism.

While recent approval ratings for president Calderón is still high (63% recently), this is more of an approval for his effort than results in the ongoing war. Consider the following:

Last year, the total deaths in the war were about 4,000. A record then. Now, in the beginning of December, we have passed 5,000. Another record. Assassinations in the single digits are hardly worth reporting in the press. Now the numbers are a dozen or more at a time. In the first week of December 13 teenagers were found killed, execution style along a rural road. And we are looking at more than 300 police assassinated this year. The numbers just keep going up.

México is continuing arrests of high-ranking drug lords and expediting as many as possible to the US for crimes committed by them in the US. At least conviction and secure imprisonment are more certain in the US than in México. But the problem remains that in removing the gang leaders result in more destabilization of the cartels, and therefore more inter-cartel fighting for the lucrative drug smuggling routes to the US. You can't win for loosing.

After more and more street protests by the terrorized population, arrests for kidnapping have increased and kidnappings are "officially" down a little bit. But with such a small percentage of kidnappings even being reported in the first place, who knows what the real figures are. It is of note that the government itself admits that only about 2% of kidnappings result in any convictions. Let's face it. Kidnapping is a good low risk business in México. And some in government are actually talking about reinstating the death penalty in a narrow scope. This is extreme in the least.

And in the meantime, street drug prices in the US remain at about the same levels as usual. And addiction rates are stable. This means that little has happened to the vast and profitable drug business in the US.

In a rare piece of candor for México, president Calderón recently admitted that only one-half of the nation's police personnel are qualified for their jobs. This was in relation to a conference on trying to do something about providing more security for the population in México. And the people know that inept police go hand in hand with corrupt police. There have been some eye opening high level arrests of public security personnel who were found to be in the pay of the drug cartels. It even reached into the US embassy to a high official being investigated for passing "tip offs" on to corrupt law officials.

What this sums up to is the fact that there is no way to win the war if your forces (mainly the police) are corrupted. And solving this problem, in even the best of circumstances, is going to be a long haul. The great majority of the police are in the control of the states, not the federal government. And that control is not going to be given up easily by the states. In addition, México has traditionally feared strong police forces and prefers breaking up the police systems into smaller units. Corruption breeds fear of the police and fear breeds weakening of the police. The corruption snake eats his tail.

Where does this leave us?

In a recent book on the drug war problem in México, three options were listed:

1. Continue the present hard line fight with as many federal troops as required. Problem: México might well be in for a 10 year internal war considering all of the above. Building a well-trained and coordinated police force free of corruption along with a strong judiciary from almost scratch will take a good deal of time. While judicial reform is in process, it is estimated that another 6 or 7 years will be needed to implement these basic changes. In the meantime, the public patience in México is starting to wear thin.

2. Work with the US in a bi-national effort to reduce the drug (consumption) market in the US. At the same time, try to reduce the southward flow across the border of illegal high power arms that makes the drug gangs better armed than the Mexican police forces. Problem: It is this US market that funds this war. And the US has traditionally been lax here. The drug consumption and money flow into the drug suppliers has remained fairly constant over a good number of present and past US administrations. Politically, it is not a high priority, especially now with global meltdown taking high priority. It will take both countries to do this. México can't do it alone, even with the long delayed release of a small part of the Merida Initiative funds.

3. Unilaterally, México will reduce their anti-drug effort. Concentrating more to reduce internal drug consumption (even to the point of limited decriminalization). This has already started in proposed legislation in the Federal District. Along with this, a slow withdrawal of federal military forces as long as the violence slowly subsides. And if the drug cartels become more stabilized, the violence will be reduced. Problem: The US will be unhappy with this approach. But to take a Capone like attitude, if there is a market for something, why not supply it? And maybe a way could be figured out for some tax revenue?

This last approach might well increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Mexico as there is good evidence that the uncontrolled violence in many regions of México has caused second thoughts for many potential investors, both in factories, residential and tourist sectors. It is a matter of record that a large Japanese company pulled out of a large factory near the northern border due to the general lack of security there. How many more have simply decided not to get involved in Mexico in the first place for the same reasons?

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L.A. TIMES, ANTI-IMMIGRANT GROUP ON SAME OLD DANCE CARD

By José de la Isla

Hispanic Link News Service
HOUSTON — Oh boy, did The Los Angeles Times pull a doozy.

On Feb. 2 they carried an innocuous looking screed by Ira Mehlman. In it he excoriated, without naming it, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, a group of 26 top Latino organizations. More than three months ago, they put immigration at the top of their reform priorities to press on the new Obama administration.

Mehlman thought NHLA should have used instead the priorities from a Pew Hispanic Center study based on public-opinion polling.

There is no confusing the 26 groups making up the NHLA. They have a long history advising presidential candidates and administrations. John Trasvina, president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, heads the group.

The Pew Hispanic Center, in Washington, D.C., produces research but takes no position nor makes recommendations based on their findings.

And Ira Mehlman is simply listed as the Los Angeles office media director of the Federation for Immigration Reform, or FAIR.

For those who don't know, FAIR was founded by and is "part of a network of groups created by a man who has been at the heart of the white nationalist movement for decades," according to the Southern Poverty Law Center website, announcing the release of a new report, "The Nativist Lobby: Three Faces of Intolerance."

SPLC is a reputable organization that has been fighting and exposing extremist groups since the civil rights struggle.

FAIR is hardly in the same category as NHLA or Pew or SPLC, nor is it a reliable (forget sensible) source to tell the Latino community what's best for it.

The right for FAIR to have its ludicrous viewpoint is its business. But regurgitating old and settled issues, criticism and bitter discussion to stimulate controversy over a closed matter in a public forum is something to ponder about this kind of agit-prop, to borrow a term from George Orwell.

Clearly we need to turn to a new page in discussing immigration.

L.A. TIMES, GRUPO ANTI- INMIGRANTE CON LA MISMA CANTALETA

José de la Isla
Hispanic Link News Service

HOUSTON — Uyuyuy, sí que metió la pata el periódico Los Angeles Times.

El 2 de febrero publicaron un rollo aparentemente inocuo por Ira Mehlman, en el que recriminó, sin mencionar nombres, a la National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), compuesta por 26 organizaciones latinas de las más importantes. Hace más de tres meses, pusieron como prioridad la reforma migratoria como tema con el que presionar a la nueva administración de Obama.

Mehlman pensó que la NHLA debió poner, más bien, las prioridades de un estudio que hizo el Centro Hispano Pew con base en encuestas de opinión pública.

No hay forma de confundir a los 26 grupos que componen la NHLA. Tienen larga historia como consejeros de presidentes y sus administraciones. John Trasvina, presidente del Fondo Mexicano Americano de Defensa Legal y Educación (MALDEF por sus siglas en inglés), encabeza al grupo.

El Centro Hispano Pew, en Washington, D.C., produce investigaciones, pero no asume ninguna posición ni hace ninguna recomendación con base en lo que hallan.

Y se encuentra identificado Ira Mehlman como director de medios para la Federation for Immigration Reform, o FAIR.

Para aquellos que no la conocen, FAIR fue fundada por y forma parte de "una red de grupos creada por un hombre quien ha estado al centro del movimiento nacionalista de blancos durante décadas", según el sitio web del Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), que anuncia un nuevo informe, "The Nativist Lobby: Three Faces of Intolerance".

El SPLC es una organización de buena reputación que ha venido luchando contra y exponiendo a grupos de extremistas desde la era de la lucha por los derechos civiles.

A FAIR no se le puede poner en la misma categoría que NHLA, ni Pew, ni SPLC, ni tampoco se le puede considerar fuente fiable (mucho menos sensata) para poder decirle a la comunidad latina lo que le conviene.

El derecho que tiene FAIR para guardar su ridícula perspectiva es cosa suya. Pero el volver a mascar temas viejas y resueltas, críticas y discusiones amargas para estimular la controversia sobre un tema ya cerrado en un foro público es algo que ponderar este tipo de discordia propagandística, para prestarnos un concepto de George Orwell.

It is self-evident from a study, released in January, by The Americas Majority Foundation. It definitively shows that in 90 competitive House races of 2008, where immigration was used as an issue, candidates with less restrictive positions did much better than those who favored more restrictive ways.

"[I]mmigration was a wedge issue benefiting the Democratic Party, but not the G.O.P.," said their report.

So the public has already settled the matter, and all that remains to be done is to start coming up with perspective and good proposals about what to do next.

The other guys lost. We don't have to replay their exaggerations and lies, unless of course newspaper editors never read their own papers.

That's why there's no need to regress back to the hours following the election more than three months ago to grouse about the people's choice. It's almost like arguing that John McCain really did win the election.

No he didn't. And FAIR's perspective lost decisively. Period.

Instead, there is a public need to provide a forum for those who do have something to offer. Instead, "immigration" is now serving as the petty excuse for resisting change and denying we need to move ahead and create opportunities.

For starters, those who are interested in living in the future instead of trying to prevent it would benefit from happening would benefit from looking at "Latino Metropolis," a book by professors Víctor Valle and Rodolfo Torres. It helps put some of the history of migration into perspective. It implies how grand opportunities are forming and how global cities connect into new cross-border networks.

Visionaries are needed. That's the help-wanted sign some newspapers, websites and think tanks should put up on their front windows. Tell the losers with their hearts of darkness they need not apply and to just keep on walking by.

[José de la Isla, author of "The Rise of Hispanic Political Power" (Archer Books, 2003) writes a weekly commentary for Hispanic Link News Service. E-mail joseisla3@yahoo.com.] ©2009

Claramente tenemos que pasar la página en cuanto a la discusión sobre la inmigración. Queda sin duda con un estudio publicado en enero de The Americas Majority Foundation, el cual muestra en definitiva que en 90 campañas competitivas del 2008, en las que la inmigración se usó como tema, los candidatos con posiciones menos restrictivas salieron mucho mejor que los que favorecían formas más restrictivas. "La inmigración fue un tema divisorio que benefició al partido demócrata, pero no al republicano", indicó el estudio.

Por ende, el público ya se ha expresado sobre el tema, y todo lo que queda por hacer es comenzar a sacar perspectiva y buenas propuestas sobre qué hacer como siguiente paso.

Los otros perdieron. No tenemos que volver a repetir sus exageraciones y sus mentiras, al menos, claro está, es que los editores de periódicos no leen sus propias publicaciones.

Es por eso que no hay por qué regresar a las horas después de la elección hace más de tres meses para refunfunar sobre la elección del pueblo. Es casi como aseverar que John McCain sí que ganó la elección.

No ganó. Y la perspectiva de FAIR perdió decisivamente. Punto.

Lo que hay es una necesidad pública para proveer un foro para los que sí tienen algo que ofrecer. Pero ahora "la inmigración" está sirviendo de pobre excusa para resistir el cambio y negar que tenemos que avanzar y crear oportunidades.

Para empezar, los que están interesados en vivir en el futuro en vez de tratar de prevenirlo se beneficiarían de ver "Latino Metropolis", un libro escrito por los profesores Víctor Valle y Rodolfo Torres. Es útil para poner en perspectiva alguna de la historia de la migración. Implica cómo se están formando grandes oportunidades y cómo las ciudades globales se conectan con nuevas redes que atraviesan fronteras.

Se necesita visionarios. Así deberían colocar en vitrina algunos periódicos, sitios web y centros de investigación. Hay que decirles a los perdedores con su corazón de las tinieblas que no postulen y que sigan su camino.

[José de la Isla, autor de The Rise of Hispanic Political Power (Archer Books, 2003), redacta un comentario semanal para Hispanic Link News Service. Comuníquese con él a: joseisla3@yahoo.com.] © 2009

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WHAT IS YOUR #1 PRIORITY?

Right now, Congress and the new Administration are setting priorities for 2009. Make sure they understand the issues that you and your community care about, whether they be immigration reform, foreclosure prevention, health care reform, juvenile justice, education, or workforce development.

On March 4 and 5, 2009, join hundreds of National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Affiliates, Latino leaders, and community partners at the 2009 NCLR National Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day in Washington, DC. On March 4, experts will present policy briefings on current issues to attendees, and participants will spend a day visiting with U.S. Congressmen to discuss the issues on March 5.

The NCLR policy team will be conducting conference calls for participants to learn more about the issue agenda in the weeks leading up to the event. Please click here to see the conference call schedule and to RSVP. For more information and resources on the issues, please visit the Event Agenda and Resources page.

Registration ends February 20, 2009. National Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day is held in conjunction with the 2009 NCLR Capital Awards and Lideres Congreso for youth. Please contact Sun Hee Choi with questions at advocacyday@nclr.org or (202) 785-1670.

Representante Alonzo Condena Perry

(Viene de la Primera)

Para tal efecto, el mandatario estatal pidió que el gobierno texano investigue cuánto y qué tipo de ayuda ofrece a través de sus diversos programas de asistencia social a los menores de edad y extranjeros que radican de manera ilegal en Texas.

Pero Perry no detuvo ahí su conocida política antiinmigrante. Dijo también que expresaba su respaldo a la eliminación de todas aquellas ciudades protectoras de inmigrantes, como Dallas, que se han declarado "santuarios para los indocumentados". Estas metrópolis tienen como política gubernamental rechazar todas aquellas iniciativas de ley u ordenanzas que vayan dirigidas contra las personas que carecen de residencia legal en los Estados Unidos, protegiendo y respetando sus derechos.

Roberto Alonzo expresó además su profundo repudio y rechazo a la propuesta de Perry de negar también licencias de conducir a los residentes legales que hayan vivido menos de un año en esta nación.

Al respecto, influyentes organizaciones como MALDEF criticaron con severidad la decisión del polémico gobernador republicano e indicaron que su lucha la llevarán a cabo en todos los niveles, incluso legales, para rechazar la cuestionable medida. Alonzo manifestó su total respaldo a la reconocida institución latina y dijo que está preparado para unificar esfuerzos y derrotar contundentemente tan "injusta e inhumana decisión".

Sobre este sentido, cabe recordar que el diputado estatal Roberto Alonzo es el principal promotor en el Congreso de Texas de la iniciativa de ley que demanda se otorguen licencias de conducir a los inmigrantes indocumentados. Esta propuesta ha sido aprobada en dos ocasiones por ambas Cámaras legislativas, pero al final y a punto de convertirse en ley fue vetada por el propio Rick Perry.

Sin embargo, para esta legislación el representante estatal por el Distrito 104 de Dallas enfatizó que continuará en busca de la mayoría de votos entre sus colegadas y senadores de ambos partidos para conseguir la aprobación definitiva en esta legislación de la ansiada iniciativa.

Asimismo, Alonzo criticó los cambios a que serán sometidas las nuevas licencias de conducir, que de ahora en adelante serán diferentes entre las solicitadas por una persona que se encuentra legal y la de

los ciudadanos estadounidenses.

"Aún existen políticas racistas y antiinmigrantes como estas de las licencias que denigran a las personas y las quieren convertir en extranjeros de segunda clase, y esto no lo podemos permitir jamás", aseveró el reconocido político mexicanoamericano.

Actualmente, todos los solicitantes de una licencia de manejo deberán de comprobar al momento de iniciar su trámite que viven legalmente en el país, de lo contrario se les negará el documento. Por otra parte, para las personas que se encuentren en los Estados Unidos de manera temporal, la licencia indicará la fecha de culminación de su estadia legal o proceso migratorio.

"Expresó mi total desacuerdo y rotundo rechazo a las declaraciones del gobernador Rick Perry, por ser injustas e inhumanas al atacar contra nuestra propia Constitución y la dignidad y los derechos de nuestros niños y las personas indocumentadas", acusó Roberto Alonzo.

Con respecto a la declaración de Rick Perry de rechazar para Texas la ayuda económica propuesta para todo el país por Obama de unos 800 millones de dólares, Alonzo dijo que se sumaba a la críticas contra la postura del gobernador republicano hechas por la mayoría de los congresistas demócratas.

En ese sentido, el senador estatal demócrata por El Paso, Eliot Shapleigh, dijo que si existiera cualquier riesgo sobre recibir ese estímulo federal Perry podría rechazar ese dinero, ya que "nosotros queremos legisladores responsables que lo tomen, lo asignen y lo utilicen para Texas", señaló.

Entretanto, los diputados estatales demócratas por El Paso, Joe Pickett y Marisa Márquez, presentaron una resolución a la Legislatura en la que recomiendan la importancia de tomar el dinero federal para esta entidad.

Roberto Alonzo dijo que precisamente para presionar a Perry para que acepte los estímulos monetarios federales, la Cámara Baja aprobó ya en días pasados una iniciativa de ley, por lo que de continuar incrementándose este movimiento legislativo de rechazo al gobernador texano por su actitud, pronto Texas podría contar "con suficientes fondos para crear miles de empleos, comenzar a aliviar los difíciles momentos que estamos sufriendo y reactivar en términos generales nuestra estancada y crítica economía", enfatizó.



Senate Passes Stimulus Package Bill . . . Now What?



With the economy on the rocks, today's Senate passage of the \$838 billion stimulus package bill undoubtedly comes as a relief to many (and an irritant to some). But the finish line on President Obama's desk could still be at least a week away. So what's next?

The Senate's version of the bill differs substantially from the \$819 billion bill approved nearly two weeks ago by the House, and now the two need to be reconciled.

In general, the House version of the bill -- which passed without a single Republican vote -- is more Democrat-friendly. It provides more money to states, mostly for the purpose of bolstering the ailing budgets of schools and local governments, and includes more relief to people who lost their medical insurance after getting laid off. The Senate version includes more tax cuts. Although the Senate bill passed with the support of three Republicans, the GOP has been generally critical of it as well.

As early as today, several lawmakers from each chamber will be appointed to iron out the discrepancies.

Then, both the House and the Senate must approve the revised bill again. The goal is to have this finished before Friday. Only after that is accomplished can President Barack Obama sign the bill.

President Obama's goal is to have it signed before President's Day on Monday, but given the contentious nature of the discrepancy between the two bills, the deadline could be optimistic.

Here are a few key differences:
Education: The House version includes \$79 billion that would go to the states, largely to prop up schools; the Senate shaved the amount to \$39 billion. The Senate also eliminated roughly \$20 billion that would have gone toward school construction.

For The Unemployed: Although both bills include \$80 billion to help the unemployed,

the Senate bill removes an option from the House bill that allows states to extend medical benefits to recently laid-off low-income workers who are unqualified for insurance. The Senate bill also includes less of a subsidy for the jobless who are now paying for their own health benefits: 50 percent for 12 months, as opposed to the 65 percent subsidy included in the House version.

Tax Break For Upper-Middle Class: The Senate bill sets aside \$70 billion for a tax break that would benefit many middle- and upper-middle-class families. The money will "patch" the alternative minimum tax, which, by definition, is meant to assure that wealthy individuals and organizations pay at least a minimum amount of federal income taxes, but over the years has expanded to include many upper-middle-class families. This will grant some 20 million taxpayers a \$2,000 break this year, according to the Associated Press.

Homebuyers: The Senate bill dedicates \$35.5 billion for tax credits for homebuyers, while the House version includes just \$2.6 billion. The Senate plan would grant all homebuyers a \$15,000 credit in the year after the bill is signed. The House bill would limit the beneficiaries to first-time homebuyers, cap the credit at \$7,500 and phase out credit for couples that earn at least \$150,000.

Car Buyers: The Senate bill also includes \$11 billion for a tax deduction benefiting car buyers; the House bill does not.

Tax Break For The Newly Laid Off: The Senate version of the bill allows the unemployed to forgo paying taxes on the first \$2,400 they receive in unemployment benefits, according to CNN. The House version includes no such provision.

Green Vehicles: The House bill includes \$600 million to purchase fuel-efficient government vehicles; the Senate's plan includes \$300 million.

Senate Excludes E-Verify Check on Illegal Immigrant Workers from Stimulus Package

The Senate passed today a \$838 billion stimulus plan that did not include E-Verify, a mechanism to check whether workers are legal immigrants or U.S. citizens. While Senate Democrats blocked the E-Verify amendment from being voted on, the House has voted 417-2 in favor of including the worker identity checking program in its version of the stimulus package. The fight over E-Verify, or Basic Pilot, now moves to the House-Senate conference where the differences between the two economic recovery packages will be hammered out in negotiations. Proponents and opponents of the E-Verify measure have targeted the legislative negotiations as a key battleground over the issue.

Proponents of E-Verify say the measure is necessary to prevent newly created jobs from going to undocumented immigrant worker in the United States. The House bill prohibits any stimulus funding from going to a company or government office that fails to use the E-Verify identity checking system. This online electronic database checks whether a person is authorized to work in the United States. A number of groups including the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Human Resource Initiative for a Legal Workforce, opposed the insertion of an E-Verify Measure into the bill. The Hispanic Caucus sent a letter on Jan. 26 to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi arguing against the measure. The caucus wrote that E-Verify would "disproportionately affect Hispanic workers and their employers. We urge

you to ensure this provision is stripped from legislation." The caucus argued that the database used to confirm the worker's status "has been widely documented as unreliable and inaccurate." They said that mistakes in the database could "result in 3.6 million workers a year being misidentified" as not authorized for employment. In addition, "Foreign-born American citizens are 30 times more likely than native born workers to be incorrectly identified as ineligible for work." The U.S. Chamber of Commerce too has consistently opposed a mandatory E-Verify program. In a press release, the chamber stated that "Given the current economy, now is not the time to add more bureaucracy and billions of dollars in compliance costs to America's businesses." Randy Johnson, the chamber's vice president on immigrant and labor issues, said, "The Chamber supports legislative initiatives to develop and implement an electronic verification system, but first we must be sure that the system is effective, efficient, and manageable under real-world conditions." In contrast, Federation for American Immigration Reform strongly argued for including E-Verify in the final bill. Dan Stein, FAIR's president yesterday wrote: "With millions losing jobs, it would be immoral for Senate leaders to neglect vital protections for U.S. workers." He added, "When spending nearly one trillion dollars of taxpayers' money to reinvigorate the economy, the American people expect programs such as E-Verify to not only included but made mandatory."

EEUU pone en duda ciudadanía de personas en la frontera con México

El gobierno estadounidense está poniendo en duda la ciudadanía de cientos, si no miles, de personas que nacieron en la frontera con México con la ayuda de comadronas.

Esas dudas han salido a la luz ahora que los estadounidenses solicitan pasaportes al por mayor para satisfacer nuevas disposiciones, que estipulan que para salir o entrar al país habrá que mostrar ese documento.

Las personas que nacieron con comadronas tienen certificados de nacimiento e historiales médicos. Pero la dependencia que emite los pasaportes cuestiona la credibilidad de esos documentos, aduciendo que es bien sabido que muchas parteras anotan en Estados Unidos bebés nacidos en México.

Se están cuestionando solicitudes de pasaporte de hijos de mujeres mexicanas que se cree cruzaron la frontera para dar a luz en Estados Unidos, e incluso las de empleados del servicio de Aduanas y Protección de la Frontera.

El gobierno "ha convertido en ciudadanos de segunda clase a un grupo de solicitantes por el solo hecho de que son de ascendencia mexicana o hispana y nacieron con comadronas, no en hospitales en los estados sureños de la frontera", señala una demanda radicada el año pasado en la ciudad fronteriza de McAllen, estado de Texas.

Abogados especializados en asuntos de inmigración y la Unión de Libertades Civiles esperan que la demanda sea catalogada como una acción representativa de todos estos casos, pues creen que miles de personas pueden ser afectadas.

Inicia juicio contra activista demócrata del sur de Texas

Un reconocido recaudador de fondos para el partido demócrata, dueño de un despacho de abogados del sur de Texas, fue señalado como "abogado" en el sitio de internet de éste, presentó a sus colegas un documento que dijo era su licencia mexicana para ejercer la profesión, lo cual promovía en las cartas membretadas de la firma, dijeron el martes testigos. Sin embargo, Mauricio Celis, fundador de CGT Law Group International, no

Desde 1960, 75 parteras han sido halladas culpables de anotar bebés mexicanos como si hubiesen nacido en Estados Unidos. En cierto momento, el gobierno preparó una lista de casi 250 parteras "sospechosas" de incurrir en irregularidades, aunque nunca explicó qué las hacía sospechosas.

El portavoz del Departamento de Estado Andy Laine declinó hablar del tema porque hay un proceso legal en marcha. El organismo se negó asimismo a decir cuántas solicitudes de pasaporte han sido rechazadas.

A partir del 1ro de junio, todo estadounidense que regrese al país desde México o Canadá deberá presentar un pasaporte. Ya no bastarán una licencia de conducir y un certificado de nacimiento, como ahora.

Para las familias que viven en la zona desde hace generaciones, la frontera es apenas un río que atraviesa la comunidad. Mucha gente vive en un lado de la frontera y trabaja en el otro.

"Cruzar la frontera es algo normal para ellos, es como ir de un sector de la ciudad a otro para nosotros", comentó Lisa Graybill, directora de asuntos legales de la ULC en Texas.

Si la demanda no se resuelve para el 1ro de junio, "muchas familias tendrán que elegir entre vivir en México o vivir en Estados Unidos, porque no van a poder cruzar de un país al otro", expresó Lisa Brodyaga, la abogada que radicó la demanda contra el Departamento de Estado.

Anna Karen Ramírez tuvo

que demandar al Departamento de Estado para conseguir su pasaporte, por más que tenía certificado de nacimiento, historial médico y recibos de la estadía de su madre en una clínica de Hidalgo, al sur de McAllen, en la que dio a luz en 1989. También aportó las firmas de dos policías que presenciaron el nacimiento.

Los padres de Ramírez vivían en México y los criaron allí, pero la mujer vino a dar a luz a Estados Unidos.

La familia se reunió varias veces con funcionarios consulares, pero la solicitud de pasaporte fue rechazada una y otra vez.

El padre, Narciso, maneja un taxi y cruza la frontera todos los días. Le dijeron que la visa que le permite ingresar al país con el taxi podría peligrar si insistían en pedir el pasaporte para su hija.

Anna decidió radicar una demanda y, mientras la misma se tramitaba, votó sin problemas en las elecciones presidenciales. Un mes después, recibió su pasaporte, pero el gobierno rechazó una solicitud de su abogada pidiendo que firme una constancia de que es ciudadana.

Si bien el gobierno dijo que Ramírez había "demostrado que nació en Estados Unidos", la abogada Naomi Jiyoung Bang teme que "cada diez años (cuando renueve el pasaporte) tenga que presentar más documentos".

Mark Krikorian, director ejecutivo del Centro para Estudios de Inmigración, que promueve leyes migratorias menos restrictivas, opina que las prácticas del Departamento de Estado "son herencia de un mundo antiguo, menos regulado.

"Las prácticas modernas chocan con las de antes", añadió.

Krikorian dijo que el gobierno no puede creer las historias de todo el mundo, ni puede rechazar toda solicitud de alguien que nació con una partera.

Dado que Ramírez es joven, sus padres pudieron dar con los documentos que exigió el gobierno. La partera todavía vive y pudo prestar testimonio. La familia, por otra parte, estaba en condiciones de pagar un abogado.

A David Hernández le costó más encontrar los documentos requeridos.

Nació en San Benito, Texas, en 1964. Su madre es una mexicana que visitaba a amigos cuando dio a luz. La asistió una partera, que el gobierno consideró sospechosa por más que no tenía antecedentes delictivos. Hernández y su madre regresaron inicialmente a México, pero se radicaron en Estados Unidos unos pocos años después. El fue a escuelas estadounidenses y sirvió en el Ejército.

Consiguió una cantidad de documentos corroborando su servicio militar, vacunas, bautismo y affidavits de testigos. Pero cuando buscó los papeles de la escuela primaria, le dijeron que ya no los tenían.

En abril del 2008, el gobierno le negó el pasaporte.

"Nací aquí", declaró el abogada ULC tomó su caso. "Vivo aquí y serví en el Ejército. Me sentí traicionado, como si mi país me clavase un puñal en la espalda por el simple hecho de que mi madre no tuvo dinero para dar a luz en un hospital".

La entidad. Celis no cumple con ninguno de esos requerimientos, dijo Valdez, quien maneja el caso con la Fiscalía General de Texas. "Vamos a demostrar que no está facultado en ningún lado", dijo Valdez. El primer testigo de la fiscalía, Manuel Orlando Narváez, abogado de Corpus Christi que empleó a Celis como investigador, declaró que éste le presentó en el 2000 un documento que lo acreditaba como abogado en México.

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Vuelve 'La fea' original



1996 y que originalmente se vio en Estados Unidos por Telemundo. "No sé si de pronto sería su carácter de comedia", dijo Fernando

Hay feas en inglés y en ruso, con acento mexicano y acento español. Pero para muchos, ninguna como la original.

La telenovela colombiana Yo soy Betty, la fea hizo historia hace 10 años, rompiendo los esquemas del culebrón tradicional e impulsando varias versiones alrededor del mundo, incluyendo la mexicana La fea más bella y la estadounidense Ugly Betty, que transmite ABC.

Pero a partir de esta noche, el público podrá redescubrir el encanto de la Betty original, cuando la cadena Telefuturo comience a retransmitirla. En entrevista telefónica la semana pasada, el guionista y productor de Betty la fea habló de las cualidades que hicieron un éxito de la telenovela, que se estrenó en Colombia en

Gaitán. "La comedia tiene una gran virtud, y es que generalmente está a prueba de tiempo".

"Creo que fue un suceso muy importante; creo que hay nuevas generaciones que no la vieron. Eso pasó aquí en Colombia, donde está actualmente al aire, después de 10 años, la repetición. Por lo que me cuentan, es una diversión volver a ver la novela".

Antes de Betty la fea, ya Gaitán era reconocido por darle contexto social a telenovelas tan exitosas como Café con aroma de mujer. Es algo que viene, según explicó, de su trabajo anterior como periodista.

"Fui criado en las salas de redacción, muy dado a la investigación", dijo. "Y eso siempre

ha sido algo que me ha ayudado, mi metodología de investigación periodística. Por otro lado, la realidad permite surtir de muchos más elementos la trama; incorporarle a la trama del culebrón elementos reales cotidianos genera una mayor identificación, y por otro lado fluye más verosímil la trama. El hecho de que se desarrolle en un contexto real permite que haya una mayor credibilidad".

El regreso de Betty la fea a EEUU coincide con la reciente decisión de ABC de remover de su horario nocturno su versión en inglés. Oficialmente, Ugly Betty no ha sido cancelada, pero los niveles de audiencia de la comedia protagonizada por América Ferrera han decaído en esta temporada.

Según Gaitán, de todas las versiones internacionales, la estadounidense es la que más se ha desviado de la original.

"Es la única versión donde hay un cambio de género, donde pasa de telenovela a serie con emisión semanal de una hora, con un universo muy distinto", dijo Gaitán. "Que la quiten del aire me daría una enorme tristeza porque independientemente de que la historia original sea mía, es un buen producto; estuvo nominada al Emmy".

Aunque continúa escribiendo guiones para la colombiana RCN

—su próximo proyecto lleva el título provisional de Profesión: Bruja— Gaitán dedica parte de su tiempo a su afición por la música.

"Lo que pasa es que yo soy más melómano que escritor", dijo Gaitán, que ocasionalmente funge como DJ en un bar bogotano. "Soy un fanático de la música desde hace mucho tiempo, cosa que no riñe con el oficio de escritor; son complementarios. Y desde hace un tiempo estoy metido en bares que tienen música en vivo como una forma de exorcisar mi frustración de no haber sido músico nunca".

"Es un hobby nocturno que tengo, de estar en bares, y en muchas ocasiones, en días especiales, los miércoles y jueves, hago noches de música mía; me lanzo de disc jockey pero de música muy internacional, española, cubana, brasileña, jazz".

¿Y que escucha Gaitán en estos días?

"Estoy escuchando a una cantante colombiana que acaba de sacar un disco de boleros espectacular", dijo finalmente. "[Además], lo último de Rosario, que es maravilloso".

"Yo soy Betty, la fea" puede verse de lunes a viernes a las 10:00 p.m.

Impact Awards to Honor Hispanic Entertainers

Actor and comedian John Leguizamo, Hollywood leading lady Rosario Dawson and film director/choreographer Kenny Ortega are all scheduled to be honored at the National Hispanic Media Coalition's 12th Impact Awards Gala on Feb. 20.

The trio will headline the glamorous ceremony and dinner at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and will be joined by other Latino luminaries, including past Impact award recipients Edward James Olmos, America Ferrera, Eva Longoria and George Lopez.

The coalition announced they will also present Impact awards to four other Hispanic talents: to Wilmer Valderrama for his work in voicing the title role in the Disney cartoon series "Handy Manny"; to actress Lauren Velez for her gritty

portrayal of Lt. Maria LaGuerta in Showtime's drama series Dexter; and to actor Freddy Rodriguez for his role in Nothing Like the Holidays. Finally, an Impact Award for Outstanding

Marketing in Film and Television will be bestowed upon Santiago Pozo, CEO of Arenas, a premiere Hispanic entertainment marketing company and the Hispanic AOR for Paramount Pictures.

NHMC, which hosts the annual award ceremony, is a Hispanic media advocacy and civil rights organizations. The awards "celebrate outstanding

theatrical, television and film performances by Latinos both in front and back of camera and this year's honorees are among Hollywood's most sought after stars," said the coalition in a press release.

Ortega is scheduled to receive

the Impact Award for Outstanding Director for a Motion Picture. He is being honored in part for his direction of the Disney Channel film High School Musical and

its very popular sequels. Early in his career, Mr. Ortega worked with dance legend Gene Kelly in the film Xanadu and went on to achieve fame with his choreography of dance numbers in the film Dirty Dancing. He has also



been honored for his choreography in such music videos such as Madonna's "Material Girl".

Comedian Leguizamo will receive the Impact Award for "Outstanding Performance in a Motion Picture." Alex Nogales, NHMC president and CEO, praised Leguizamo, saying, "Very few Latino personalities have had such a powerful impact on critics and fans alike."

Vicente Fernández promocionará "Primera Fila" en gira



El cantante mexicano Vicente

Fernández, que se mantiene en los primeros lugares de los Top Latin Albums de Billboard con "Primera Fila", arrancará su periplo el 25 de marzo en Honduras y seguirá en Guatemala el 27 y 28 de ese mismo mes.

El intérprete, también conocido como "El Charro de Huentitán", se presentará el 3 de abril en El Salvador, un día después en Costa Rica y cerrará la gira en Nicaragua, el 5 de abril, dijo en un comunicacion

do "28 Producciones", encargada de realizar el espectáculo.

Fernández, que tiene 41 años de carrera artística y más de 50 millones de discos vendidos, ofrecerá sus éxitos como "Por tu maldito amor", "Lástima que seas ajena", "Mujeres divinas", "Cruz de olvido", "El rey", "La diferencia", "La ley del monte", "Me voy a quitar de en medio", "Acá entre nos", entre tantos otros éxitos.

Además, presentará su primer sencillo "El último beso", tema

escrito por Joan Sebastian y que se desprende del álbum "Primera fila", que salió al mercado en diciembre pasado.

El cantante mexicano, que se hizo acreedor de un disco de Diamante, así como del Grammy Latino en la categoría de Mejor Álbum Ranchero, después del éxito de su producción "Para siempre", cuenta también con diversos premios Billboard, Diosas de Plata y Heraldos, entre otros

Willie Colón: 'El Malo' strikes back

More than a decade after his last CD release, and an immersion lesson in digital technology, salsa legend Willie Colón is back with a new album.

In between his latest recording, "El Malo, Vol. 2: Prisioneros del Mambo," and 1998's "Demasiado Corazón," Colón devoted himself to touring and city politics — far from the mixing studio where he last worked with tapes.

"It took me a while to be ready, but once I got used to the new technology, which is like a word processor, I added a lot of details, sound levels," says the Bronx Boricua. "It looks simple from afar, but it's complicated."

The result is 13 songs — some with Colón's trademark social message — that mix salsa with plena ("El Brujo"), bomba ("Mucha Leña

Pa'l Fuego"), son, 1970s descarga and even some urban music, a combo of genres he calls his "Afro-Boricua rhythm."

"In this album, I play various trumpet and trombone solos, I sing and even do the chorus of some songs," he explains. "Also, there are various of my own arrangements and compositions. I was able to do a bit of everything."

The 58-year-old Colón, who has worked with Rubén Blades, Celia Cruz and Héctor Lavoe and whose name is synonymous with the heyday of salsa, retakes the name of his first album, "El Malo," from 1967.

He also breaks with today's music rule that songs should not exceed four minutes "so they are played on the radio," he says.

Actually, nine of the songs in

"Prisioneros del Mambo" break the barrier. "Four minutes is not really enough to develop the musical stories that I want to create," he says.

Released on his own label, Lone Wolf, the CD is on sale on Amazon, in local music stores and at www.williecolon.com.

He hopes it will mark a new beginning for his live performances.

"It would be a gift to be able to play a new repertoire, because where I go, people have the list of what they want to hear. They ask for 'El Gran Varón,' 'La Murga,' and if you want to play something new, they want to stone you."

A critic of the "El Cantante" movie because it focused too much on the "tragedy" of Lavoe's life and addictions and not his music, Colón includes his own tribute to his friend in the CD.

Bilingual, yet still contentious 'West Side Story' headed back to Broadway

Notice to all those Jets and Sharks nostalgics counting the hours for the "West Side Story" Broadway comeback: the actors aren't botching the words.

This time around, Maria's "I Feel Pretty" becomes "[Me] Siento Hermosa" and Anita spits out "Un Hombre Así" instead of "A Boy Like That."

That's because the show's producers felt that adding Spanish to the songs and dialogue would give a new dimension to the barriers faced by Puerto Ricans in the hostile New York of the 1950s.

And perhaps it will also tackle the criticism that the popular



1957 Broadway musical-turned-film created a lasting Puerto Rican-as-hoodlum stereotype.

"I couldn't help still having those mixed feelings," said Rafael Fantauzzi, the executive director of the National Puerto Rican Coalition, who saw the musical in D.C. last month. Previews start at the Palace Theater in New York on Feb. 23.

"There's more Spanish in the show, it's a great work of art, but it continues to perpetuate the stereotype of Puerto Ricans."

Bronx-born, Paterson, N.J.-raised Myra Peralta, agreed. She thought it's "unfortunate" the way Puerto Ricans are portrayed.

When she saw the movie as a young teen, "I was so excited to see Puerto Ricans portrayed in it that I didn't focus on how they were shown, or that most of the performers weren't even Puerto Rican," she said.

But over the years, Peralta, who directs the Hispanic Education Alliance, has become more sensitive to these depictions, especially how they affect the self-images of the young.

Those thoughts were far from Elizabeth Oliver-Farrow's mind, who said the revival, which played for a month until Jan. 17 at the National Theater in D.C., instantly transported her back to her Tiffany St. fire escape in the South Bronx.

As Tony serenaded Maria in the play's balcony scene, Elizabeth, 14 years old again, watched her boyfriend carving a heart in

the snow-sprinkled hood of a car while her father called for her to come into the apartment.

"For me, it was all nostalgia," said Oliver-Farrow, the head of the Oliver Group, a public relations firm. "I was moved by the story, and enjoyed the production. It's a love story for the ages."

Retired federal government lawyer Max Ramírez de Aréllano, who spent 18 years working in New York, didn't then, and doesn't now, get shook up by the portrayal of Puerto Ricans.

"I don't take this as a sociological treatise," he said. "The play is partly about Puerto Rican gangs, not about all Puerto Ricans. I loved the play back in the 1950s and I still love it."

No less than New York's Lin-Manuel Miranda, the actor-songwriter-playwright behind the hit Tony Award-winning musical "In the Heights," translated some of the songs — from the magnificent Leonard Bernstein-Stephen Sondheim score — into Spanish. Cecilia Anderson, a 27-year-old half Puerto Rican public school teacher, said neither the movie, which she saw as a child, nor the current bilingual production caused her any image upset.

Like many of the other D.C. theatergoers, she was really impressed by Karen Olivo's fervent Anita and Argentine actress Josefina Scaglione's sweet and tender Maria.

"What I really liked about the play," she said, "was that the women outshone the men."

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Jose Torres to be Honored as Boxing-Focused Fridays Continue on ESPN Deportes



the 30-minute program continues to feature the insights and gut perspective of seven-time world champion Marco Antonio Barrera along with Jorge Eduardo Sanchez. Also included in the Friday, Feb. 13 pugilistic line-up is a championship bout between Juan Urango and Herman Ngoudjo of Cameroon for the light welterweight IBF title. That fight will be followed by a match between Dorin Spivey and Antonin Decarie. Unbeaten Decarie will try to hang onto his WBO/

NABO welter title against Spivey, a fighting veteran from Virginia. The evening's entertainment also features a tribute to Puerto Rican boxing great Jose Chegui Torres and a live chat with Leopoldo González. ESPN Deportes' weekly broadcast is just one blast in the network's shotgun approach to covering boxing. The network splatters its boxing content across an array of media platforms, including Web sites, videos and radio broadcasts.

Boxer Calzaghe retires with undefeated record

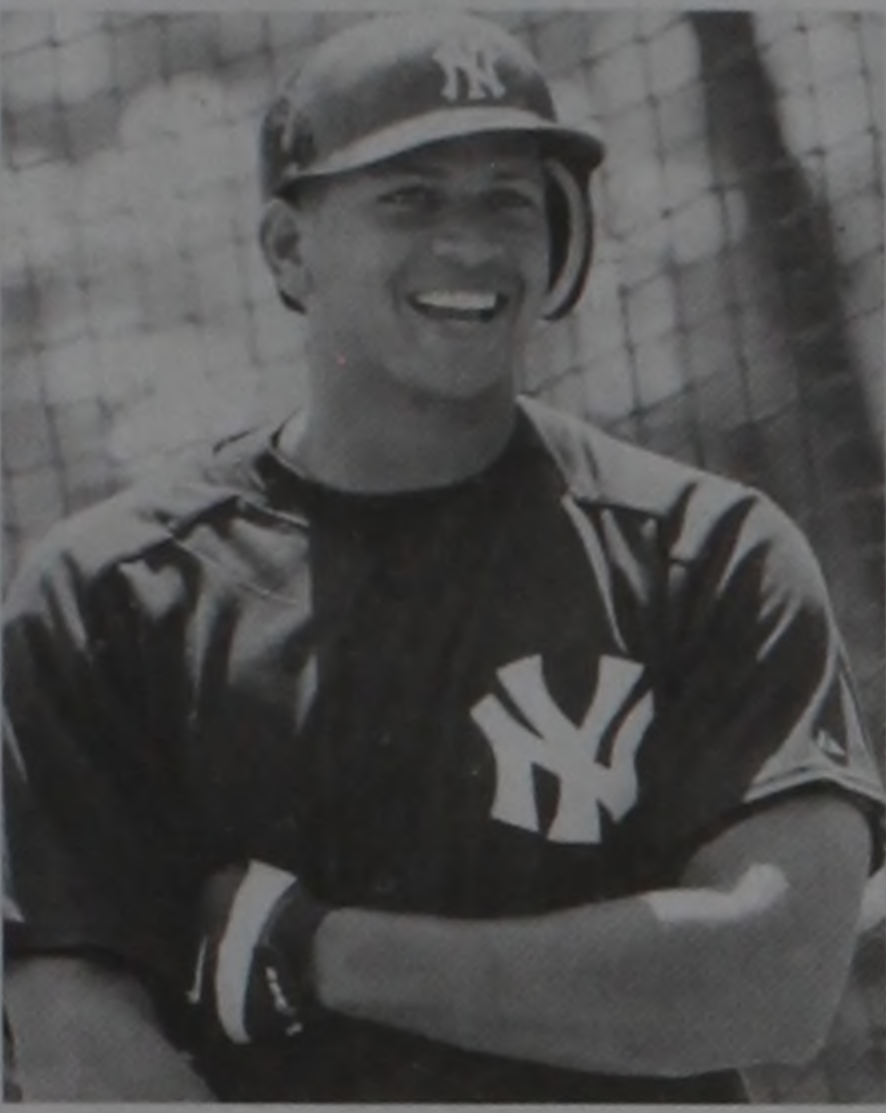
Former super-middleweight champion for 11 years, unifying



the super middleweight division, going to America and winning light heavyweight titles against great fighters like Hopkins and Roy Jones.

"I had a long think with my family. My children wanted me to give up, plus my mum. That's why I decided to call it a day and will go on to do something else." Calzaghe said he was tempted to fight three more times to match Rocky Marciano's 49-0 record, but said he lacked the hunger. And there will be no comeback, he pledged. "My decision is to retire. I've been boxing for 25 years and, like I said, I've achieved everything I want to achieve," he said. "You can never say never in this game, but I can't see myself boxing again. "There's loads of things I want to do. I'm proud to be one of only a few fighters in history to retire undefeated."

Rodriguez admits use of performance-enhancing drugs



on its website that Rodriguez was among 104 names on a list of players who tested positive for steroids in 2003, when testing was intended to determine the extent of steroid use in baseball. The results weren't subject to discipline and were supposed to remain anonymous, but were seized by the government in 2004 and remain under seal.

Rodriguez said he alone was to blame but then accused one of the Sports Illustrated reporters who broke the story of collecting "nonsense."

"When I arrived in Texas in 2001, I felt an enormous amount of pressure. I felt like I had all the weight of the world on top of me and I needed to perform, and perform at a high level every day," Rodriguez said.

"And I did take a banned substance and, you know, for that I'm very sorry and deeply regretful. And although it was the culture back then and Major League Baseball overall was very -- I just feel that -- you know, I'm just sorry. I'm sorry for that time. I'm sorry to fans. I'm sorry for my fans in Texas. It wasn't until then that I ever thought about substance of any kind."

In his first prime-time news conference, President Barack Obama called Rodriguez's admission "depressing" news.

"And if you're a fan of Major League Baseball, I think it tarnishes an entire era, to some degree," Obama said. "And it's unfortunate, because I think there were a lot of ballplayers who played it straight."

Rodriguez said part of the reason he started using drugs was the heat in Texas.

"Can I have an edge just to get out there and play every day?" he said to himself. "You basically end up trusting the wrong people. You end up, you know, not being very careful about what you're ingesting."

Though Rodriguez said he experimented with a number of substances, he never provided details.

"It was such a loosey-goosey era. I'm guilty for a lot of things. I'm guilty for being negligent, naive, not asking all the right questions," Rodriguez said. "And to be quite honest, I don't know exactly what substance I was guilty of using."

SI reported Rodriguez tested positive for Primobolan and testosterone.

He said he stopped using during spring training 2003, when he sustained a neck injury. It was just as baseball started its drug-testing survey. It was only in 2004 that testing with penalties began.

Rangers owner Tom Hicks said the admission caught him by surprise.

"I feel personally betrayed. I feel deceived by Alex," Hicks said in a conference call. "He assured me that he had far too much respect for his own body to ever do that to himself. ... I certainly don't believe that if he's now admitting that he started using when he came to the Texas Rangers, why should I believe that it didn't start before he came to the Texas Rangers?"

During those three seasons, Rodriguez averaged 161.7 games, 52 homers, 131.7 RBI and a .615 slugging percentage. In the other 10 full seasons of his career, he averaged 149.2 games, 39.2 homers, 119 RBI, and a .574 slugging percentage, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

"This is three years I'm not proud of," Rodriguez said.

The 33-year-old Rodriguez ranks 12th on the career list with 553 homers, including 52, 57 and 47 in his three seasons with the Rangers. He is 209 behind Barry Bonds' record 762.

Now, though, he's on top of another -- the highest-profile player to confess to doping. Yankee teammates Jason Giambi and Andy Pettitte and former MVPs Ken Caminiti and Jose Canseco admitted it earlier.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Maryland Democrat who sits on the House committee that brought Roger Clemens, Mark McGwire and other baseball players to Capitol Hill in recent years, favored a congressional hearing with Rodriguez.

"It would be good perhaps for us to sit down and talk to him," Cummings said in a telephone interview. "I would think that he would want to cooperate with us so that the Congress would have the information it may need."

The Yankees said in a statement that "we urged Alex to be completely open, honest and forthcoming" and that "we take him at his word that he was."

"Although we are disappointed in the mistake he spoke to today, we realize that Alex -- like all of us -- is a human being not immune to fault," the team said. "We support Alex, and we will do everything we can to help him deal with this challenge."

Rodriguez's admission was in stark contrast to the denials of Bonds and of Clemens, Rodriguez's Yankees teammate.

Bonds, a seven-time MVP, is scheduled for trial next month on charges he lied when he told a federal grand jury in 2003 that he never knowingly used

performance-enhancing drugs. Another federal grand jury is considering whether to indict seven-time AL Cy Young Award winner Clemens on charges he lied when he told a congressional committee last year that he never used steroids or human growth hormone.

Rather than hold a news conference, as Giambi and Pettitte did for their confessionals, Rodriguez chose the controlled setting of an interview with ESPN, one of Major League Baseball's television partners. "You have nutritionists, you have doctors, you have trainers. That's the right question today: Where did you get it? We're in the era of BALCO," Rodriguez said. "There's many things that you can take that are banned substances. I mean, there's things that have been removed from GNC today that would trigger a positive test."

Monday's ESPN interview directly contradicted a December 2007 interview with CBS's 60 Minutes, when Rodriguez said "No" when asked if he had ever used steroids, human growth hormone or any other performance-enhancing substance.

"I wasn't even being truthful with myself," he said Monday. "Today, I'm here to tell the truth."

In his 2008 book, *Vindicated: Big Names, Big Liars, and The Battle to Save Baseball*, Jose Canseco claimed he introduced Rodriguez to a steroids dealer. Canseco, who has admitted using steroids, subsequently said he had no knowledge of any drug use by Rodriguez. "They are looking in the wrong places," Canseco said in a text message to the Associated Press. "This is a 25-year cover-up. The true criminals are Gene Orza, (union head) Donald Fehr and (commissioner) Bud

(Selig). Investigate them, and you will have all the answers."

SI said that Orza, the union's chief operating officer, tipped off three players in September 2004 that they would be tested. Orza has repeatedly denied that he tipped off players, saying he merely reminded them late in the season that if they had not yet been tested, baseball's drug agreement required them to be tested by the end of the regular season.

Orza, who has been widely criticized by media since the SI report, said in an e-mail to the Associated Press that he doesn't care what the media says.

"I know the facts," Orza wrote. Fehr reiterated in a statement that there was no improper tipping of players.

"Any allegations that Gene Orza or any other MLBPA official acted improperly are wrong," he said.

Rodriguez said Orza told him in August or September 2004 about the list of names that had been seized by federal investigators.

"He said there's a government list. There's 104 players in it. You might or might not have tested positive," Rodriguez said.

On Friday, Rodriguez is still expected to attend an event at the University of Miami, which is renaming its baseball field in his honor. He gave \$3.9 million to the school in 2003, the largest gift ever to the Hurricanes' baseball program and money that provided much of the resources needed for renovating the existing on-campus stadium. In return, the baseball complex will be called Mark Light Field at Alex Rodriguez Park.

Despite the scandal, the facility will continue to bear Rodriguez's name.

Acusan a Tejada de mentir al Congreso

El estelar torpedero dominicano Miguel Tejada fue acusado el ayer de mentirle al Congreso sobre consumo de esteroides y se indicó que hoy comparecerá ante un tribunal para declararse culpable.

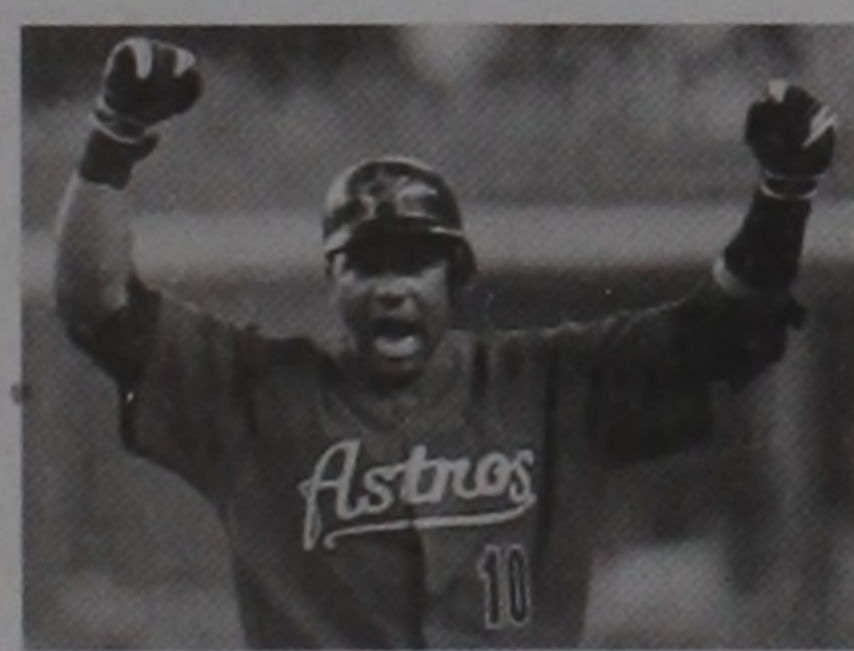
Los cargos contra Tejada, quien actualmente juega con los Astros de Houston, fueron presentados ayer ante un tribunal federal en Washington.

El auto de acusación indica que se llegó a un acuerdo por el cual Tejada se declarará culpable. Se trató de contactar al abogado de Tejada, Mark Tuohey, pero no hubo respuesta inmediata.

El jugador más valioso de la Liga Americana en el 2002 encara una sentencia de hasta un año en la cárcel si es hallado culpable de mentirle al Congreso. Según las guías de sentencias federales, probablemente recibirá un castigo menos severo.

La acusación se produjo en un documento legal llamado una "información criminal", que sólo puede ser radicado con el consentimiento del acusado y usualmente significa que existe

un acuerdo. Hay un audiencia programada para hoy a las 11:00



(1600 GMT) en Washington, y Tejada y su abogado tendrán una rueda de prensa más tarde el mismo día en Houston.

La acusación contra el jugador de los Astros de Houston se produjo un día después que Alex Rodríguez reconoció que en el pasado consumió sustancias para mejorar el rendimiento.

Tejada no es el único en la mira del FBI por mentirle al Congreso. Roger Clemens, siete veces ganador del premio Cy Young a la excelencia como lanzador, es investigado por la veracidad de su testimonio ante un comité de la cámara baja el año pasado, cuando negó haber consumido

esteroides y la hormona de crecimiento humano.

A Tejada se le acusa específicamente de mentirle a los investigadores del comité de supervisión y reforma del Congreso en 2005, cuando negó tener conocimiento sobre si un compañero utilizaba sustancias para mejorar el rendimiento.

El compañero no fue identificado en la acusación, pero se le menciona como que había jugado con Tejada en los Atléticos de Oakland.

Tejada "ilegalmente ocultó información pertinente al comité porque el acusado, antes y durante su entrevista con el personal del comité, sabía bien que el jugador número 1, uno de sus compañeros con los Atléticos de Oakland, consumió esteroides y HGH (siglas en inglés de la hormona)", menciona el auto de acusación.

De hecho, los fiscales sostienen que durante la pretemporada en 2003, Tejada adquirió una sustancia, que se presume es la hormona, a ese jugador,

con pagos de 3,100 y 3,200 dólares.

En el informe Mitchell, que investigó el uso de esteroides en el béisbol, el jardinero de Oakland Adam Piatt dijo que habló con Tejada sobre el uso de esteroides, y alegó que le dio a Tejada testosterona y HGH.

El informe Mitchell, publicado en diciembre de 2007, incluía copias de cheques alegadamente firmados por Tejada para Piatt en marzo de 2003 por las cantidades de 3,100 y 3,200 dólares.

Los cargos se recogen en un documento de seis páginas que se requiere presentar cuando un acusado llega a un acuerdo con los fiscales para aceptar su culpabilidad.

Las sospechas comenzaron a caer sobre Tejada cuando otro ex compañero, Rafael Palmeiro con los Orioles de Baltimore, testificó ante el comité de la cámara baja. En enero de 2008, ese comité le pidió al Departamento de Justicia que investigara si el dominicano le mintió al Congreso.

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Viva Aztlán Festival will be celebrating 15 years! Stay Tuned for more details about Ballet Folklorico & Mariachi Competitions on March 13 & 14!

El Editor gives a sneak peak at this years entertainment.....Mariachi Los Arrieros desde El Paso, TX!!!

SCHIP Passes Senate

The U.S. Senate voted to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), including a provision to expand access for legal immigrant children and pregnant women. The bill was approved by all Senate Democrats and seven Republicans. In the House, all but two Democrats voted for the bill, as did forty Republicans.

America's Voice praises Democratic Senators and Members, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), as well as Republicans like Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL), who fought to keep the immigrant children's provisions intact. Unfortunately, Republican Senators and Representatives filed



amendment after amendment to gut these provisions and deny hundreds of thousands of Latino and immigrant children access to health care.

According to Frank Sharry, Executive Director of America's Voice: "SCHIP was the first test on immigration for the new Congress, and there are some clear winners and losers here. Winners include the Democratic majority

and key Republicans who made good on a promise to America to work together towards progress and solutions. Losers include the many Republicans who fell back on their old playbook, beating up on immigrants as a way to try to undermine legislation they have no plans to support in the first place.

"We were disappointed to see that a number of Republican Senators and House Members are still in denial about the lessons of the November 2008 elections. Americans voted for change because they want the parties to come together to solve tough problems, not continue down the path of polarization and politicization. Nowhere is this truer than in the immigration debate.

"The illegal immigration 'wedge' issue was a colossal failure in the elections of 2006 and 2008, and it has failed again in the SCHIP debate. Many Republicans have talked about the need to 'reach out' to Latino and immigrant voters, but it is clear the Party has yet to learn the lesson."

Clearly, the "scapegoat the immigrants" strategy is on a losing streak. However, some Republicans in Congress are now objecting to the stimulus package, which passed the U.S. House this week, citing the immigration bogeyman as their excuse. Echoing leading Republican strategists and leaders, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) said, "it is about time the Republicans got a different piece of reading material and get off this illegal immigrant stuff."

Zumba, with its Latin flavor, adds spice to group exercise class



Kay Sullivan grew tired of the typical exercise machines.

Lifting weights bored her. And Pilates and Yoga?

"They make you just want to lay there and fall asleep," says the 45-year-old Fogelsville, Pa., woman who decided to try a Brazilian-flavored group exercise class, Zumba, to spice up her routine.

One recent day, she took a spot in the back of the class at Dance Fusion in Allentown, Pa., and hoped for the best.

Ten minutes after learning the hip shakes, pelvic circling and moves she said she'd never be caught dead doing in public, she felt like she was "dancing with the stars."

"We've never felt so sexy in our lives," says Sullivan, who was dancing, laughing and joking through the class. "Of course, I know I don't look as good as her."

She is referring to instructor Shawn Schmitt, who was break-

ing down the salsa, meringue and cha, cha, cha steps for one of about a dozen Zumba combinations taught in the hour-long class. Schmitt is one of several area instructors trained in the latest exercise craze that comes from Latin America.

Schmitt says the official Zumba slogan, "Ditch the workout; join the party," fits the experience.

"Dance is something you associate with fun and having a party," says Schmitt. "It's really how you feel when you're doing this exercise. The beat of the music keeps you going and inspires you to want to move and shake your hips. You have too much fun to realize you are exercising."

Schmitt became certified in Zumba two years ago at an Ohio exercise conference hosted by Beto Perez, who created the fitness routine in Colombia in the mid 1990s. Before class one day, Perez forgot his traditional aerobic music and improvised with music he had in his car. He popped in his Latin music, mixed in a few hip-hop and Salsa combinations and Zumba was born. Zumba quickly spread to gyms in Miami and continues to pack classes across the country.

"I think the popularity of 'Dancing with the Stars' helped," says Schmitt, adding that the choreography is easy enough for even nondancers to pick up. "And how often do you get a chance to dance like that anywhere else?"

Another plus, she says is that you're exercising and working several different muscle groups at once.

Participants can burn between 500 to 700 calories in an hour-long class, depending on the intensity of the workout, Schmitt says. But she says the people who fill her classes are seeking a change as much as a challenge.

Kutztown, Pa.'s Maria Woytec, 38, a fan of "Dancing with the Stars," gave Zumba a try after seeing a class in action at her daughter's dance studio, Dance Fusion.

"I've been phobic of exercise my whole life and I'm not coordinated, but I just love this," says Woytec. "It's not competitive; it's not scary, and once you start, it's hard to stop."

Lisa Yeager, who is teaching Zumba at area YMCA clubs, says Zumba is luring people from mainstream exercise classes because it reaches people of all abilities and fitness levels.

"You can be in great shape or a couch potato," says Yeager, who also teaches at Allentown, Pa.'s Jewish Community Cen-

ter. "It's something everyone can do and enjoy."

Yeager says the Latin dance choreography can appear intimidating, but she gives participants some assurances before the music starts:

"I make sure to tell them not everyone moves the same and it takes time to train your body to move in different ways. I tell them, 'your booty shake isn't going to look like the next person's booty shake.'"

In Schmitt's class, Caroline Chandik of Allentown has her own strategy for getting through Zumba.

"If you don't look in the mirror, you feel like you're doing great and you look like her," says Chandik, referring to Schmitt.

Sullivan, after experiencing Zumba for the first time, says she loved the fun moves, especially the "hip slap" move that had her wiggling in circles.

"You have to do it with a little attitude," says Sullivan, who plans to return to try it again.

Nancy Hoffman, of Orfield, Pa., 37, says Zumba makes her feel "young."

"I absolutely love Latin music and pretending I'm a dancer," she says. "It's great. You laugh the whole time and sweat like you can't believe."

For Jordan Price, 20, of Hamburg, Pa., Zumba beats traditional exercise classes and machines.

"It entertains you the whole time you are working out," she says. "I would have lasted about five minutes on a treadmill."

San Valentín Aplicar la economía a los sentimientos



menú de un restaurante o significarse positivamente durante una reunión de trabajo.

El verdadero objetivo de la economía, resalta Cowen, es sacarle el máximo partido a las cosas buenas de la vida.

De acuerdo con estos presupuestos, el secreto de una buena relación sentimental

Nuestra vida está inundada de sentimientos, entre otras cosas porque somos espíritu, de acuerdo con la teología. Pero como al tiempo somos materia nos vemos obligados constantemente a tomar decisiones que nos permitan la supervivencia en la selva del "homo homini lupus" (el hombre es un lobo para el hombre), según recordó el clásico Plauto y popularizó el filósofo inglés Thomas Hobbes en el siglo XVII.

La vida también es un mercado en el que casi todo se vende y se compra. Por ello la economía actúa como elemento integrador en cuántas transacciones realizamos a lo largo de nuestra existencia. Sin embargo, no todo está en venta (o no debería estarlo al menos). Los sentimientos que brotan del espíritu no deben tratarse como una mercancía. "Ni se compra ni se vende el cariño verdadero... no hay en el mundo dinero para comprar los quereres", decía el cantante español Manolo Escobar en uno de sus temas de los años 60 del pasado siglo.

No obstante, el economista estadounidense Tyler Cowen sostiene que el concepto clave no es el dinero a la hora de lograr los objetivos, incluidos los sentimentales, sino los incentivos. A fin de cuentas, conquistar a la persona que nos atrae puede depender de un incentivo, que no es otra cosa que una motivación de la conducta humana que anima al individuo a tomar una decisión en lugar de otra. Por supuesto que el cariño verdadero ni se compra ni se vende pero no está prohibido recurrir a los incentivos para lograr una conquista sentimental o decidir de forma acertada.

La economía comenzó a desarrollarse a partir de la evidencia de que muchas cosas que merecen la pena no nos caen del cielo. En este planteamiento se incluyen cuestiones personales tan habituales como elegir a la persona amada más acorde con nuestra personalidad, inclinarse por los platos más adecuados del

y/o marital radica en las falsas ilusiones, que es una fórmula aleatoria de incentivos. Según el economista norteamericano, las parejas que permanecen más tiempo juntas son aquellas que viven bajo el paraguas de la ilusión y cuando vuelven la vista hacia el pasado lo ven todo de color de rosa, gracias al mecanismo de "olvido selectivo". Es decir, la clave para que un matrimonio perdure radica en saber cuándo olvidar y también cuándo no darse por enterado de ciertas cosas negativas.

A la hora de las encuestas, las parejas felizmente casadas durante decenios tienden a creer que tienen más en común con sus cónyuges de lo que en realidad tienen. Cuando se les pregunta sobre ciertos aspectos de su vida en común suelen responder que son "espíritus afines" o "almas gemelas", incluso cuando siguiendo criterios objetivos se llegue a la conclusión de que en realidad no parece que sea así. Algunos estudios revelan que la frecuencia sexual de las parejas que llevan mucho tiempo juntas es muy escasa, e incluso nula. Este hecho puede ser un reflejo de la frustración acumulada en este tipo de relaciones que determina una imagen negativa del otro. Cowen aconseja cerrar esta peligrosa senda y mantener una visión positiva de nuestros cónyuges, si queremos que la relación sea duradera.

El incentivo también se plantea como recurso a la hora de abordar una reunión de trabajo. Definición inadecuada de objetivos, ausencia de toma de decisiones o de asignación de tareas, duración excesiva, lentitud e interrupciones son los problemas más comunes de este tipo de encuentros que suelen llevar a la conclusión de una inútil pérdida de tiempo, en la mayoría de los casos.

If healthy, warming comfort food sounds like just what the doctor ordered, you're in for a treat when you decide to trim your supermarket bill. Once you start spending less, you'll eat more low cost, nutrient-dense dishes. And that includes homey favorites like pot pie, rice pudding and stew.

"Everyone is hurting economically right now, but there is also an opportunity here," says registered dietitian Keith Ayoob, associate professor of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. "Foods that offer good nutrition often cost less."

Healthy foods aren't processed, and they require us to do a little cooking. That's not a bad thing, says registered dietitian Keri Gans, spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association.

"To get the most bang for your buck, choose foods that aren't expensive but are high in fiber and protein," she advises. "Plan ahead, take a list, and cook more than you need so you can freeze some."

Eggs: They offer high-quality protein at a very low price, says Ayoob, and "they have never been tied to cholesterol. Eggs get in trouble more because of the company they keep - sausage and bacon." Pair eggs with whole grain bread and a fruit, or make an omelet with a load of vegetables. At two eggs per person, you can feed a family of four for about \$1.25 when you use eggs, Ayoob says.

Milk: "When you look at the price - \$4 a gallon, well, that's a latte," Ayoob says. At that price, a glass of milk costs about a quarter. It has the same number of calories as regular soda, but lots more nutrients. Use in shakes, smoothies, or to make rice pudding.

Cabbage: This is always one of the cheapest vegetables, and it's loaded with antioxidants. Try stir frying it, making it into coleslaw, or simmering it in soup. You can get a huge head for about \$2.

Frozen corn: Not just corn but all frozen vegetables are a money saver and they're often more nutritious than fresh, since they are picked at the peak of ripeness. Also, there's no waste since you don't throw out frozen - fresh veggies tend to get overcooked in the freezer and get tossed out when they're slimy. Toss thawed corn into casseroles, tacos, burritos and soups. (No need to thaw first.)

Pasta: Pasta sales are up dramatically, due to the recession. You can get a pound for \$1.50 or so, and it's the base for a great meal. Instead of loading on the meat sauce and cheese, sauté some vegetables, including garlic, in olive oil, and toss with the noodles. Using a light hand, sprinkle with a little grated cheese.

Carrots: Loaded with antioxidants and very low in calories, these can be eaten raw with a yo-

gurt dip. But for a better taste, steam them for about 15 minutes, then toss with a little olive oil, coarse salt and pepper. You can also chop and add to homemade soup. Or grate carrots and toss with lemon juice and raisins for an easy salad. Or use in a vegetable stew.

Beans: They are rich in fiber, a good source of protein, and versatile. It's your choice whether to opt for kidneys, black beans or garbanzos - they are all highly nutritious and

cheap, too. Per serving, when you use canned beans, the cost is about seven cents. Canned beans are a little pricier: about 25 cents a serving. Be sure to rinse canned beans to get rid of the salt, and toss into omelets, stir fries, salads. Or sauté with onion in a little olive oil and eat as a side dish or main course. "It's all in the way you package it," Ayoob says. "When a restaurant puts chicken on a bed of beans, everyone goes crazy for it."

Oranges: You can find bags of oranges for around \$2 now, since this is one fruit that is in season. Pack in lunch boxes, cut up and serve with breakfast, or use to garnish the dinner plate. Squeeze out the juice for marinades, dressings and smoothies. Whole chicken: It's cheaper than the boneless breast and a no-brainer to make, Gans says. Oven-roast, then remove skin and bones and serve as is or use in soups, casseroles, pasta dishes. Or make chicken pot pie with a-biscuit topping.

How to eat cheap

¿Tiene alta presión, diabetes o familiares con problemas en los riñones? Necesita hacerse la prueba para la enfermedad de los riñones. Hable con su doctor, hoy.

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

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