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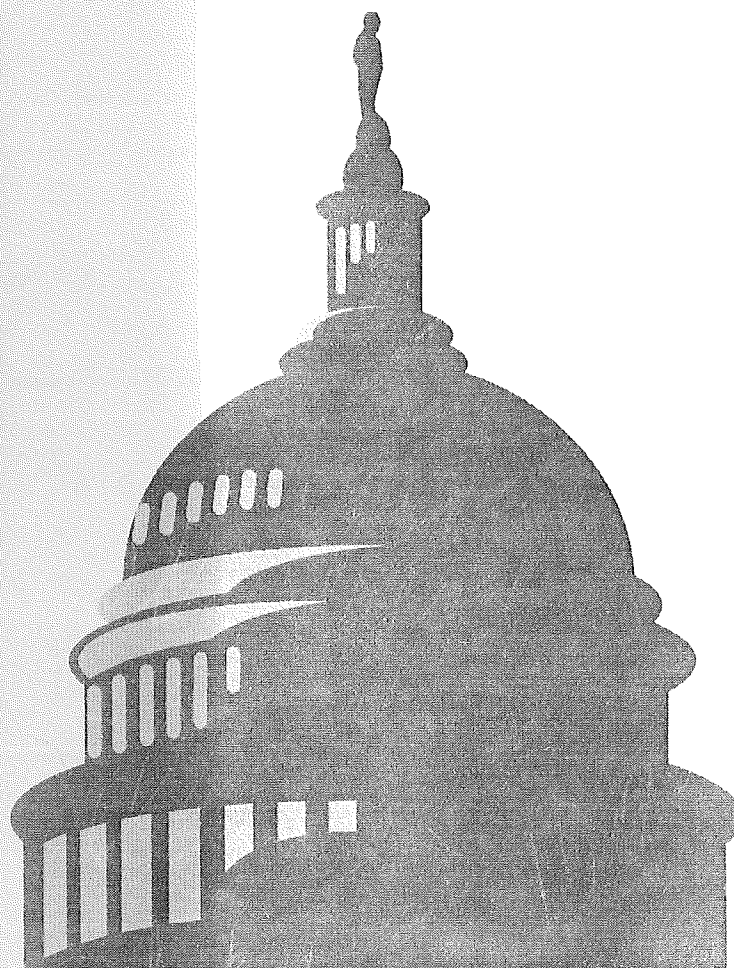


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**Biennium Report  
fiscal years 1993-94  
for the State of Minnesota's**

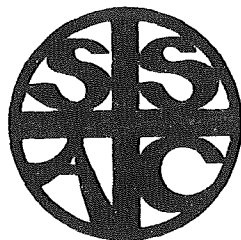
**Spanish Speaking Affairs  
Council**



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1993/94

# ***Biennial Report***

*An update of Activities for the State of Minnesota's*



## **Spanish Speaking Affairs Council for the biennium 93-94**

*The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council is a public policy/state agency. It is mandated to advise the Governor and the State Legislator on issues impacting Chicano/Latino communities throughout Minnesota.*

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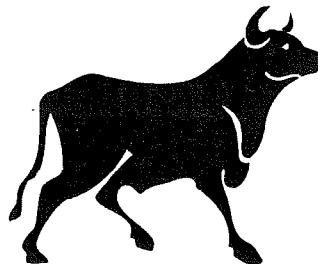
**A**s I travel throughout the State of Minnesota, meeting with Chicanos and Latinos, many things are becoming clear about our community. But the one thing that is crystal clear is that our community is in distress.

Consider the following: almost four out of ten Latinos earn incomes below the Federal government's poverty guidelines. Four out of ten Latino youth drop out of high school. Chicanos and Latinos suffer an eleven percent unemployment rate, verses a mere five percent for white Minnesotans.



The situation only worsens as we review the findings of the Chicano/Latino task force on racism, on which I served as chair.

We documented a pattern of discrimination in all aspects of life in Minnesota: Law enforcement, employment, housing, education and civil rights.



Two issues, poverty and racism, are the twin devils hurting our people and impeding our progress. We must take the energy and commitment in our community and apply it to these issues now, because we simply must not tolerate the gloomy conditions in which our community finds itself at the present time.



We must engage every person of good will, and work together for a better tomorrow. *Para que los que vienen despues, conozcan como es vivir en un pais con Justicia e Igualdad.* There will always be nay sayers and people of bad will. However, we must not lose sight of the goals for which we strive: **justice and equality.** We sit

on the edge of many breakthroughs; and the potential goals are within our reach.

To not reach out, to not stretch ourselves, *sería una desgracia.*

The goals of which I am speaking are:

- ✓ Good jobs
- ✓ Education for our children
- ✓ An assault on racism
- ✓ Decent wages and better conditions for migrant workers

For its part, the Council will focus its efforts on job creation and attacking racism. Together, we will build a better tomorrow.

Roy Garza  
Executive Director

Eustolio Benavides  
Chairperson

**"¡Si, Se Puede!"**  
**César Chávez**



FEB 15 1995

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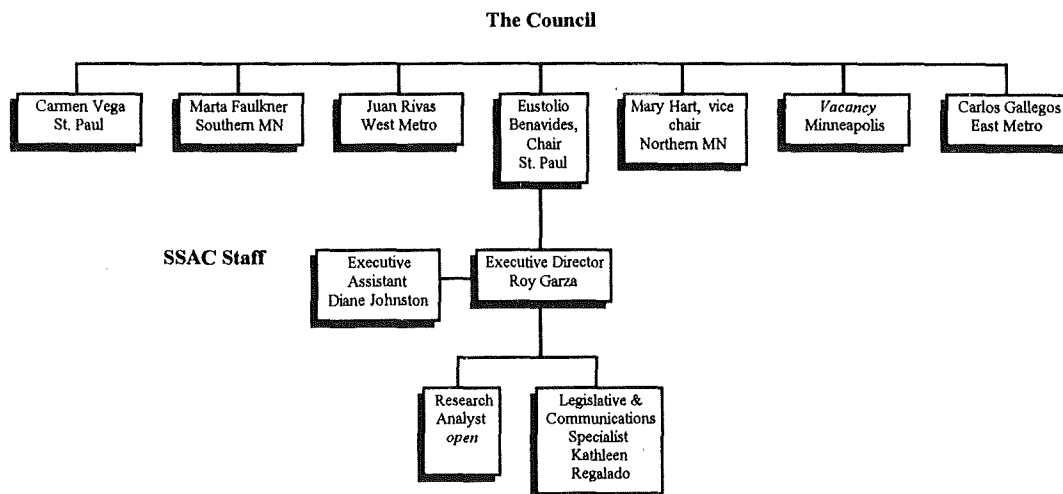
**T**he mission of the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council (SSAC) is to create opportunities for Chicano/Latino people to realize their full potential and to secure a satisfying existence in Minnesota.

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**WE ADVISE** Minnesota's governor, legislators, and agencies on issues and concerns of Chicano/Latino people;  
**SERVE AS LIASON** to federal, county and municipal governments;  
**ADVOCATE** on behalf of people through necessary legislation, policies, rules & regulations;  
**RESEARCH** the needs of Chicanos/Latinos in Minnesota and disseminate key findings;  
**INSIST ON ACCOUNTABILITY** in all programs serving Chicano/Latino people;  
**RECOMMEND** improvements to programs targeting the social/economic/health/educational/ and political well being of Chicano/Latino people;  
**SERVE AS A CATALYST** for the creation of permanently organized, free-standing Chicano/Latino institutions;  
**SPONSOR** public information forums on events affecting Chicano/Latino people;  
**PUBLICIZE** historical accomplishments and societal contributions of Chicano/Latino people; and  
**FOSTER COHESIVENESS** -- forging and strengthening linkages between Chicano/Latino people via the mass media.

---

## SSAC Organizational Structure



**Issues & Objectives for  
fiscal year 93-94 in the  
Chicano/Latino communities of  
Minnesota:**

- ✓ **Rebuilding Infrastructure**
- ✓ **Attacking Poverty**
- ✓ **Promoting Education**
- ✓ **Eradicating Racism**
- ✓ **Eliminating Labor  
Violations**
- ✓ **Promoting Youth  
Development**



## **SSAC Gets New Start**

### **New Director Confronts Old Problems Head On**

**I**n July of '93, when Roy Garza became executive director of the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, it was apparent that the agency had gone through difficult times. The previous budget had been overspent, files were missing, and staff were demoralized.

In beginning the necessary process of rebuilding the agency, Garza issued a call for a fiscal audit. The audit confirmed what many had suspected: poor management controls which resulted in over- and misspending.

The priority became bringing the SSAC budget back into the black. This was not done without sacrifice. New employees' salaries were set at the low to middle end of the pay scale. One of the Council members returned his per diem.

With the operational aspects of the agency basically under control, the new staff and the practically all new Council were able to begin to focus on the issues which affect the Chicano/Latino community, such as of poverty, education, immigration and racism.

It was imperative to prioritize our work in order to move forward in fulfilling the Council's mission as put forth in Minnesota Statute 1990, §3.9223. "The primary mission of the Council is to promote the social, economic, educational and political development of the [Chicano/Latino] community in the state of Minnesota" (Original law, Chapter 510 §1-7, 1978).

## **What's in a Name?**

### **Name-Change Task Force Presents Results**

**O**ver time, the question of whether the Council's name should be changed has come up. This question raises issues of: whether the current name is inclusive; whether all Chicano/Latino people are indeed fluent in Spanish, particularly when the speaking of Spanish has historically been discouraged, and even punished; whether the current name accurately reflects the purpose of the agency as a policy/legislative liaison between the Chicano/Latino communities and rulemakers.

So, SSAC formed a task force to set about finding out what the community thought. The task force held several hearings throughout Minnesota. These hearings were organized by Mario Compeán, then Community Services Program Specialist.

The results of the work is so recent, the Council has not yet sorted out its implications, but will do so by the end of 1994.



# Food Stamps, M.A. Out of Reach for the Poorest of the Poor





## Public Assistance Eligibility Snatched From Undocumented Workers and Caregivers

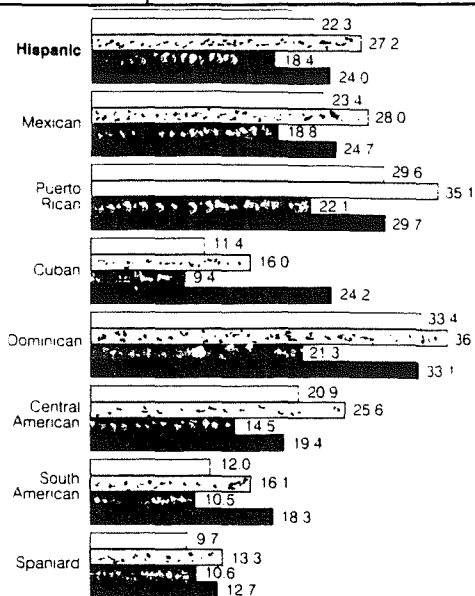
**D**uring the 1993 Legislative session, undocumented individuals receiving General Assistance (GA) and General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) came under scrutiny. As a result a new law took effect October 1, 1993, that denies these public benefits to most undocumented persons. Exceptions to the law include children under 18, Cuban and Haitian entrants, the aged, blind or disabled - those least able to care for themselves. Many undocumented workers find themselves in adverse, under- or unemployed situations. These benefits became the basis for securing the most basic of survival

## The National Picture

### Poverty Rates for Selected Hispanic Groups: 1990

(Percent in poverty)

-  Families living in poverty
-  Females
-  Children
-  Elderly



Source: "We the American Hispanics," U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1993

needs. It is alleged that denial of these benefits will provide substantial savings to the Minnesota taxpayer.

The effect of this new law on Chicano/Latino families has been most severe, especially to our children. Parents are not applying for benefits for fear of losing their children as well as risking deportation by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Many children of undocumented persons are born in the United States. Ultimately, their rights as citizens are jeopardized. Or worse, they are separated from their parents to be left in the care of others in hopes for a better life for them here. Additionally, the cost-saving concept of preventive medicine is also lost. Undocumented families in dire need impact the medical system through local hospital

emergency rooms, thereby dramatically increasing taxpayer dollar for services to the indigent.

In the 1994 Legislative session, SSAC endeavored to build on the Governor's stated goals of encouraging family unity and to care for women and children. SSAC, in coalition with a community Task Force on Immigration sought an amendment that would allow GA and GAMC to undocumented caregivers with children.

The bill was declined a hearing in the first committee through which it would have to pass, and was thus, killed. But, given that the session was not one in which appropriations are made, the coalition intends to pursue another effort for the legislation in the upcoming session.



### Beyond Stereotypes... Chicano/Latino Immigrants in Minnesota

	Undocumented	Legalized	Total
Employed Currently	63%	63%	63%
Unemployed--has worked during the past year	12%	24%	17%
Unemployed--no work in past year	25%	14%	20%

Source: "Hidden Dreams, Hidden Lives: New Hispanic Immigrants in Minnesota," Urban Coalition & Sin Fronteras, 1992

### Economic Development

#### Allocation of State Purchasing Dollars Still Lacking

During the 1990 Legislative Session, a bill passed authorizing the Department of Administration to operate a program whereby Targeted Group (TG) and Economically Disadvantaged (ED) small business meeting certain criteria, would be awarded contracts by state agencies. Effective July 1,

1990, the program defined participants eligible as being 51% owned, controlled and operated day-to-day by a woman, a racial minority, or a person with a substantial physical disability. Certification processes, designated locations and selling preferences for TG and ED small businesses were also established.

The Department of Administration purchases most of the state's goods and services via one-time buys or long-term commodity contracts. All state agencies are allowed a maximum of a \$1,500 purchase without submitting a request through the Department of Administration. Bids from

vendors on the state's bid list are solicited and awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.

The current law states that if a TG business bids within 6%, or an ED business is within 4% of the lowest bid, they will receive the award. This appears to be beneficial to minority businesses. In effect, however, Chicano/Latino businesses receive few awards. There are no goals or distinctions established for the different subgroups categorized within "minority-owned businesses."

For the three years from 1991 to 1994, the Department of Administration has been unable to match the percentage of dollars allotted to minority-owned businesses. A 1990 "Study of Discrimination Against Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses" clearly outlines significant disparities between the availability of contractors and awards received. The allocation of state contract purchasing dollars to Chicano/Latino businesses is still not occurring.

### Voices of Pain, Voces de Dolor

*"When he [police] got out of the car, the first thing he asked me for were my documents from Mexico, my birth certificate, my passport and my social security card. I'm proud of my Mexican heritage, but I'm an American citizen...."*

*"Our landlord's plane came in first and he started spraying [pesticides] towards the middle and he kept going on and on and I kind of signaled to him, to show him that we are here, but they never paid any attention...I felt like they thought we were animals so it was okay to [spray]. It was upsetting, really upsetting and degrading... [after] we had stomach aches."*

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994



## SSAC Scores One for Education

### Council to Study Disparate Drop- Out Rate Among Chicano/Latino Youths

**S**SSAC successfully lobbied for and secured a \$50,000 appropriation, which in a non-appropriations year, is generous.

It will be used to study the causes of the unacceptable high school drop-out rate of Chicano/Latino youth. The study should, as well, provide possible solutions to help remedy this insidious problem.

The study represents a great step forward in breaking the cycle of educational failure of our youth. It also inspires tremendous hope. The lack of education and training in our young has long-term, adverse, socio-economic impact, not only for our Chicano/Latino community, but also for Minnesota society as a whole.

National research reveals that the Chicano/Latino population is the most undereducated ethnic group in the country. Additionally, chronic patterns of high school drop-out rates continue to plague Chicano/Latino communities

### *Muchisimas*

#### *Gracias to:*

- *Rep. Kathleen Vellenga*
- *Sen. Jane Ranum*
- *Rep. Carlos Mariani*
- *Sen. Allan Spear*
- *Rep. Mary Murphy*
- *Sen. Randy Kelly*
- *Rep. Howard Ornstein*

*Sen. Tracy Beckman*

*Rep. Loren Solberg*

*Rep. Wes Skoglund*

*The efforts of these legislators must not be forgotten in recognizing the difficult task of allocating funds to multiple competing priorities. Again, Thank You!!!*

statewide as well as throughout the country.

Further, studies portray a population whose drop-out rates are approaching 50% and whose illiteracy rates are approaching 50%. Of all the subgroups within Chicano/Latino communities, Chicanos tend to have the highest drop-out rates.

The "State of Diversity," a report issued by Minnesota Planning in November, 1993, indicated that the state high school drop-out rate for Chicano/Latino students nearly doubled between 1981 and 1991.

To compound the problem, subgroup data on

the diversity within the Chicano/Latino population is lacking. Hispanics are not a homogeneous population. There is much variance in their educational experience, socioeconomic status and obstacles to success. This lack of data at the state and local level further complicates efforts to develop appropriate intervention and educational programs to remedy the problem.

We need to learn why so many of our youth are not completing high school, and to develop programs to address the problem. Unless this situation is reversed, Minnesotans will ultimately pay a higher price in the form of county services for individuals without skills, and/or for their confinement in correctional institutions.



***"In St. Paul [alone]  
Chicano/Latino  
children have a  
20.3% dropout  
rate."***

Source: **Al Dia**, 11/93

## SSAC Confronts Discrimination in St. Paul Schools

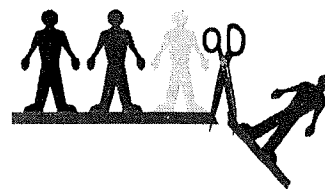
### Group Brainstorms Possible Solutions

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council met with a group of St. Paul Chicano/Latino educators to discuss educational concerns affecting our community. The primary concern was the educational conditions of Chicano/Latino children enrolled in K-12.

For example, in St. Paul, Chicano/Latino children have a 20.3% drop-out rate. Additionally, Chicano/Latino children have a high rate of students in remedial versus college track courses. Other conditions discussed included barriers to parental involvement.

A consensus was reached to meet with Dr. Curman Gaines, Superintendent, St. Paul Public Schools, to discuss these issues and search for ways to address these problems. Also, the group felt strongly that more Chicanos/Latinos were needed in policymaking positions within the school district.

SSAC convened a meeting with Dr. Gaines. One of the results of which was the appointment of Mr. Julio Almanza as Assistant Superintendent in charge of Planning and Support Services. Mr. Almanza holds a very key position in the school district. He will be able to aid in addressing the educational needs throughout the Chicano/Latino community.



## Voices of Pain, Voces de Dolor

*"...basically, we know that an above average number of Hispanic children that are going through pre-school screening are being identified as delayed. Because the screening is done in the normal [sic] English way, and my question would be 'if pre-school were done in Spanish by someone who is Hispanic, would the same number of children be identified as delayed?' And my guess would be no."*

Willmar

*"...there is better opportunity and treatment for those children who are of Anglo-Saxon descent. In a certain way, our children are discriminated against. For example, during the bussing services, the girls or the person in charge of the bus tells her to go sit in the back with the rest of the Mexicans or Hispanics, because [these] seats are going to be used by some Anglo-Saxon girls..."*

Willmar

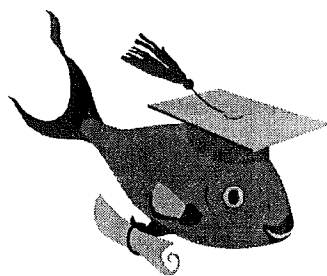
*"...when I was in high school, I remember hating walking through the main area of the high school, called the commons, because all the high school jocks used to line themselves up and I hated walking past them because I would hear things like 'spic' and 'why don't you go back home to Mexico?' I was born and raised in this area."*

Moorhead

*"...When we went to the junior high, the other students began to spit on the floor.... They would also say such things as 'why don't you go back to Mexico,' or 'what are you doing here?' ... Some of the teachers were saying the reason the students were treating the Hispanics badly is because they are different and they had a different culture... that we had to understand that's why, and understand that we are different."*

Willmar

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994



## Adelante

### SSAC Initiates Partnership to Develop Model Program to Educate MN Chicano/Mexicano Youth

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council has formed a partnership that hopes to develop a model program to educate Chicano/Mexicano Youth in Minnesota public schools. The program, called *Adelante*, will be implemented in the school year 94-95 at Litchfield Public Schools (District 465). Although *Adelante*'s emphasis is on improving the educational success of Chicano/Mexicano students, it also includes a cross-cultural component that seeks to facilitate understanding and appreciation of the Mexicano/Chicano people of Minnesota for white students, teachers and other staff.

The partners in the project include the Litchfield Public Schools, the Chicano student organization at St. Cloud State University, *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan* (MEChA), and SSAC. The project will be implemented with

funding support from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), who awarded the partnership a grant from its cross-cultural education fund established by the Minnesota Legislature in 1993. The proposal for the grant was written by Mario Compeán, then Community Services Program Specialist for SSAC, in consultation with MEChA and Litchfield Public School officials.

The *Adelante* program consists of three components. A mentoring and esteem-building component is a curricular track in Mexican and Chicano history and culture. These activities will be implemented by MEChA students who will volunteer their time twice per week which includes commuting 110 miles roundtrip per meeting day.

A second *Adelante* component seeks to engage Chicano/Mexicano parents in the education of their children on an ongoing basis. This will consist of a series of meetings and workshops designed to assist parents in the acquisition of skills that will empower them to become effective advocates and partners in providing a good quality education for their children. Content of the workshop curriculum will include information on how the schools are organized, operated and governed.

The third *Adelante* component consists of a cross-cultural program that seeks to promote understanding and appreciation of the Chicano/Mexicano people. A teacher inservice instructional unit offers a course on "Educating the Mexican-American Child," designed to promote more effective teaching of Chicano/Mexicano students. The course, offered through St. Cloud State University, was developed and is taught by

Soaring Hawk, who is a masters graduate student in Education at the University. The "Mexican Child Task Force," formed by sixteen teachers who took this course last June (led by Meg Litts, English middle school teacher) is already developing curriculum units in Mexican History and culture based on a text being developed by Soaring Hawk. These units have the potential of reaching 600 middle school students (7th and 8th grades).

These latter activities promise great potential in promoting cross-cultural understanding between white and Chicano/Mexicano students in the Litchfield Public School. In announcing the *Adelante* program, SSAC executive director Roy Garza said, "given the periodic reports of racism and discrimination that reach our office, it is highly gratifying to report positive, progressive initiatives. Superintendent Donn Hoffman and the Litchfield School Board are to be commended for supporting the *Adelante* program." Garza also praised the MEChA students. "Credit must be given to the MEChA students who have the vision and commitment to educate our younger generations," Garza said.

*Adelante* is the brainchild of MEChA leader Walter Ochoa Reyes, who grew up in Litchfield and is a graduate of Litchfield High. The principal, concerned about a Chicano/Mexicano dropout rate of 36% for that year, assisted Ochoa in enlisting the support of the Superintendent.

The partners in the project hope that the model, will be replicated in other Minnesota public schools.

*"The more hearings that we have, the more concerned I become. It is hard for me to imagine how humans can mistreat and take advantage of other humans as part of their normal daily routine. This process has made me much more aware of problems that exist in our state for minorities. Those populations are not just those of color, but also poor, students, handicapped, and many, many other groups. I know I don't have to tell you all these things, but it helps me to put them down, to look at, as I try to think of some solutions for the challenge that faces all of us in Minnesota...."*

**Task Force Member**

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994

## Chicano Latino Task Force on Racism Sets Pace

### Testimony Provides Needed Data, Proves Existence of Racism

**"J**ustice is the Remedy" was the response to a statewide Chicano/Latino Task Force on Racism report that was recently released by the Minnesota State Department of Human Rights.

Five major patterns of discrimination emerged from the testimony taken at community meetings throughout the state. The areas in which the discrimination most consistently occurred were those of law enforcement, education, housing, employment and social services.

*"Justice is the  
Remedy" was the  
response....*

in lobbying for the passage of this legislation

In addition, SSAC called on the State Human Rights Department to further investigate the Worthington Police Department and some employers of Chicanos in Southern Minnesota for

*"...We need to realize that it takes others longer to feel secure and reassure them that it's okay. Members of our community are concerned that we don't have enough resources. Is it straining our social programs, fire department, police department and educational system? If it is, how are we as taxpayers going to keep up with the rising cost? You and I both know that this community has gained a lot of positive resources as a result of this growth of our Hispanic community [emphasis added]. This information needs to be shared to balance out the concerns that some of the members of our community have. We need assistance in creative problem-solving and the knowledge that there is an abundance of resources available to us.... This is a community made up of good people, Anglo and Hispanic. Help us help ourselves...."*

**Willmar**

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994

The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council will now take responsibility for providing the leadership to translate these recommendations into legislation during the 1995 legislative session. Organizing has been underway to include as many Chicanos/Latinos as possible

possible Civil Rights violations. Commissioner David Beaulieu responded to the call by publicly stating that the Department of Human Rights will heed the call and will proceed with further investigation of these allegations.



*"...The Police came up to the door and they said, why didn't you open the door, and I said I have my own privacy, this is my house. The question was about my legality in the United States and they asked me where I was born and they wanted to know about my papers...."*

Worthington

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994



## INS Harrassed Latino- Looking Persons

### SSAC Discusses "Migra" Raid With Vento

Spanish Speaking Affairs Council staff and representatives of the legal community met with Congressperson Bruce Vento on July 18, 1994, to voice concerns about the enforcement practices of the Immigration Naturalization Service agents (INS). Roy Garza, SSAC Executive Director requested the meeting in response to angry

community reaction to the "migra" raid which occurred in the Twin Cities on June 30, 1994.

Karen Ellingson, an attorney with Centro Legal, and Mario Compeán, then SSAC Community Services Program Specialist, met with Congressperson Vento at his local office in downtown St. Paul. Also attending were community activist Rick Cardenas (staff for U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone), and Vento staffpersons Molly Grove and Sally Stoppel.

Ellingson and Compeán expressed concern over alleged violations of Chicano/Latino individual rights by INS agents. Ellingson voiced concern over the legality of INS procedures when agents interrogate and detain suspected undocumented persons. Compeán related to Vento receiving angry calls at the SSAC office by callers who complained of possible Constitutional rights violations. Callers also raised issues of selective enforcement amid reports that agents were interrogating persons at random during the raid "just because they looked Latino." Compeán conveyed to Vento a request from SSAC Director Roy

Garza for a Congressional investigation of INS enforcement practices and policies.

"Congressperson Vento," Compeán said, "was receptive but also raised concerns over possible obstacles to

such an investigation."

Vento cited the preoccupation of the current Congress with issues of healthcare reform, "negative" community attitudes toward "illegals," and concerns with reelection, as examples of these possible obstacles. "It (the investigation) is not going to happen over the next two months," Vento said.

Vento concluded the meeting by issuing a request for documented evidence of INS individual rights violations, to determine whether to proceed with SSAC's request for a Congressional investigation of the INS. Compeán responded that SSAC will proceed to gather and document reports of INS violations, and will submit them to the Congressman.

*"Landlords are inappropriately requesting INS documentation ("green cards") from prospective and current tenants."*

Report Findings

*"I went to rent a trailer by Winter St. here in Marshall, and I was told that I couldn't rent it because I didn't have my green card. All I had was my Texas ID."*

Marshall

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner.



## Task Force Watch

### SSAC Follows Up On Task Force Recommendations

**S**SSAC staff met with the Commissioner of the MN Department of Labor and Industry. The meeting was the first in a series of meetings with the various Commissioners of state departments. SSAC is taking leadership in facilitating the implementation of the recommendations from the Chicano/Latino Task Force on Racism's Report on Discrimination.

The findings in the report show several abuses relating to Labor. According to the report, "Chicanos/Latinos are recruited from out of state and promised adequate housing, decent wages and benefits which do not materialize.

"Chicanos/Latinos are usually not provided equal training and promotional opportunities, equal accommodations and medical attention. They are usually not given adequate union representation, nor are terms and conditions of their contracts explained to them."

The report goes on to show that, "when injured on the job, some Chicano/Latino workers have been sent back to their prior residence without being advised of their rights under the

Workers Compensation Law."

SSAC was heartened to see that the Department has begun to develop an outreach program for employees to address some of the recommendations in the report. The intent of the program is to remedy the inequities of the current labor standards. The efforts include attempts to incorporate translation services for workers.

Nevertheless, there is still an aching need for the businesses and employers to be held accountable for the injustices suffered by Chicano/Latino workers, as so clearly delineated in the report.

Thus, SSAC not only presented the recommendations from the discrimination report, but will be working with the Department to assist them in the implementation process, in order to make the necessary administrative changes. The recommendations include:

- ⇒ The Department of Labor & Industry should study the practices used to recruit workers from out of state.
- ⇒ SSAC and the Department of Labor & Industry, in collaboration with union and business representatives should determine how unions can best meet the needs of their Chicano/Latino constituency.
- ⇒ The Department of Labor & Industry, in collaboration with business, should provide mandatory training for those in supervisory positions.

In the ensuing months, a series of meetings will be scheduled to facilitate the consistency of the implementation. Each month the progress will be covered in the **Al Dia**, the newsletter of the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council.

## Chicanos & Latinos in the City

### SSAC Meets with Mayor of St. Paul

**S**SSAC led a delegation of Latinos in a meeting with Mayor Norm Coleman to discuss the underrepresentation of Chicanos/Latinos in city government. The delegation included Representative Carlos Mariani, Lu Alvarado, Juan M. Lopez, Rafael Ortega and Marcelino Coronado. The group urged Mayor Coleman to take action to address the gross underrepresentation of Latinos in city government.

For example, of 2,903 government jobs, only 90 (3%) are held by Chicanos/Latinos with not a single Latino in the Mayor's Cabinet. The group specifically requested three areas in which the Mayor should take action.

1. The Mayor needs to appoint a Latino to the vacant position of Public Health Director.
2. There needs to be a reappointment of the existing handful of incumbent Latinos.
3. Coleman needs to direct the Mayor's Cabinet to increase the number of Latinos hired.

Said Executive Director, Roy Garza, "While the meeting was helpful and constructive, the Mayor expressed reluctance to open the doors of city employment to St. Paul's Chicano/Latino community."

SSAC will diligently follow up to check on the Mayor's progress.



*"...Job Service offers another example of institutional racism, as it refers the majority of Hispanic farm workers to agricultural jobs during the season."*

**Moorhead**

*"This happened in a little place called Fisher. We were working in the field and we got sprayed with pesticide, insecticide, and a lot of I don't know what... That day, it was around 6:00 in the evening, and when I got back from work I went ahead and called the Clinic at the Crookston Hospital and I told them what had happened to us, and that my eyes were so swollen and that we had all these symptoms going on. There at the hospital they said that they couldn't see us because we were all coming down with a cold and that we would get over it."*

**Moorhead**

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994

## **Putting Chicanos & Latinos in State Employment**

### **SSAC Assists in Efforts Resulting in Two Vital Appointments**

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council assisted in efforts that resulted in vital appointments: that of the Commissioner of the

Department of Human Services, and the creation of the recruiter for people of color in state employment.

SSAC joined with the Department of Employee Relations Equal Opportunity Division in urging Governor Carlson to appoint a Chicano/Latino person as Commissioner of the Department of Human Services. Ms. Maria Gomez was appointed, and began her duties as Commissioner on December 13, 1993. She becomes the first person of Latino background to serve as Commissioner under the Carlson administration.

Executive Director Roy Garza assisted with the

lobbying effort that resulted in the creation of a position that would create a job for a recruiter of people of color in state employment. Thus, the Minnesota Department of Employee Relations Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity has recently added Sonia Alvarez as the new recruitment coordinator. She will assist in the development of a State recruitment strategy, revising a recruitment directory used by state government, and utilize a resumé bank.

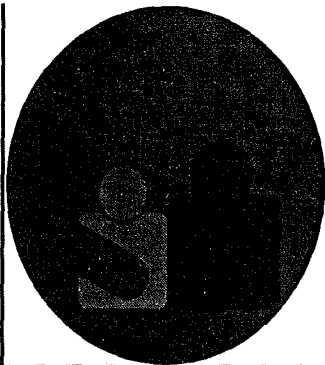
*"...My only complaint is with Heartland. When these people need to see a doctor, I have a hard time getting them to release them to go to appointments."*

**Marshall**

*"Since I started working there, I immediately sensed that I was not worth much. I was treated badly. They would throw meat in my face, boxes at me, and they would make abusive comments. But I had to put up with it because I needed the work and the money."*

**Worthington**

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner



## Challenges Facing Chicano/Latino Youth

### Report of the Ombudsperson

**P**atricia Torres Ray serves as the Ombudsperson for Chicano/Latino families in the State of Minnesota. She alone is responsible for 87 counties in the State of Minnesota. There was a time when she was paid a salary for only half-time employment. The actual duties she has carried out, because of her commitment to families in our communities has gone far beyond. The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council has acted as a sort of fiscal sponsor as the creation of her position unfolded. In May of '94, Patricia Torres Ray became full-time staff. The following account comes from excerpts from a draft of her own report as it relates to her hard work for our communities.

The legislation which created the Office of Ombudsperson outlines a broad range of responsibilities and duties for the Office. It is apparent that the authors of the bill knew these tasks would be too much for one person to do alone, as the bill speaks of selecting and appointing assistants "as deemed necessary to discharge

responsibilities." However, the funding required for adequate staffing to carry out the tasks assigned to the Office of Ombudsperson simply not there. The reality is that one ombudsperson for each of the communities of color have job responsibilities that far exceed what any one person's capacity can meet.

In addition to the duties specifically delineated by the legislation which created the Office of Ombudsperson, there are demands placed upon the Ombudspersons by both other state agencies and by people from our communities. There is a great deal of pressure being put upon planning groups and bodies throughout state government to include input from the communities of color in their decision-making processes. Given the scarcity of Mexicanos and Latinos on the staffs of state agencies, I am frequently called upon to participate in these planning groups. I believe my participation in these groups is very important, and I use these opportunities to remind policy makers that decisions they make often differentially impact children from the communities of color. I work with these various groups to insure that respect for cultural differences is built into programs from the ground up in a way that will help insure that our children and families are well served.

I am also called upon by community members to help them with matters that are not

**"They tease them because they eat tacos and they say the 'taco girls' or the 'refried bean girls'."**

Source: Testimony from study in "Hidden Dreams, Hidden Lives: New Hispanic Immigrants in Minnesota" Urban Coalition & Sin Fronteras, 1992

directly related to my duties. Nevertheless, I feel and respond to a sense of obligation to help them find someone who can help them with their problem.

Patricia Torres-Ray has not only acted as family advocate and policy/cultural consultant for rulemakers, but also has begun several project areas in her time in which she was housed with the Council. They are:

- ⇒ the identification of priority counties,
- ⇒ the compilation of a Child Protection & Placement

#### Legal

##### Handbook

- ⇒ Ensuring DHS compliance with statutes 260.165 and 257.0725
- ⇒ assessment of guardian ad litem programs
- ⇒ Assist with the recruitment of Latino foster homes.
- ⇒ ensure culturally appropriate mental health assessment procedures.
- ⇒ Improving advocacy for the children of migrant farm workers.
- ⇒ Mandate training of Court Officials, Public Policy Makers and Service Providers
- ⇒ Research: Cultural competence, and more.

Ms. Ray, along with the other Ombudspersons for the minority communities are in the process of going independent. We, at the Council wish them the best of luck, and extend our support.

## Chicano/ Latino Youth Leadership Program Developed Project Prepares Youth for the Future

**A**rticulation of this project's mission, goals and methods grew out of discussions regarding the importance of insuring the next generation of leaders from the Chicano/Latino community. It was agreed that Minnesota's Spanish Speaking Affairs Council was an appropriate vehicle for the development of a youth leadership project. The council committed a small amount of funds to initiate this project.

The first step was to broaden the involvement of community members by establishing a small planning team consisting of eleven members. Most of these individuals were Chicano or Latino and came from a variety of backgrounds: students, youth workers, teachers, community advocates. Their charge was to assist in preparing a Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership program.

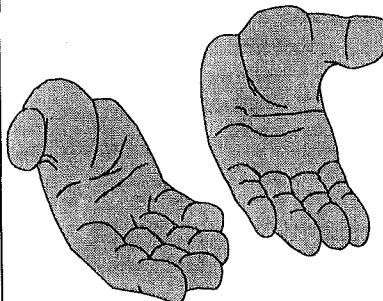
The project mission is to be accomplished through actual involvement in problem solving and by developing skills through community service.

The end results are to foster an awareness and appreciation of community, the value of participating in civic life, the responsibility of service to one's own community. Clearly the challenges facing Minnesota's Chicano/Latino community requires careful thought, commitment and sheer energy.

*The project aims  
to prepare Youth to  
more fully  
participate in  
Minnesota's  
educational, social,  
economic and  
political  
development as we  
approach the  
twentyfirst century.*

This project was generously funded by the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, the St. Paul Companies, the Cantina Del Rio Restaurante and the McKnight Foundation.

*Muchisimas Gracias!*



## Love is For Giving

### Chicano/Latino Foster Care Families Recruited

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council has appointed Arturo Peña to recruit Chicano/Latino families as Temporary Foster Care Providers. This is a newly created position funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

The position's duties and responsibilities call on Mr. Peña to assist with the identification and recruitment of families to be licensed by the State of Minnesota as Temporary Foster Care Providers. Mr. Peña's charge extends to three counties: Hennepin, Clay and Kandiyohi. According to Mr. Peña, there are a disproportionate number of Chicano and Latino youth who need temporary placement with foster care providers who are of their own cultural heritage.

Mr. Peña's position is only funded for half time, yet given the need, he is attempting to do the work of three full-time employees: one for each county. Consider, as well, the unmet need that exists outside of these counties. The Council and community are fortunate to have him.

**Achievements &  
Challenges for fiscal year  
93-94 in the Chicano/Latino  
Community.**

- ✓ **Outreach to Community**
- ✓ **Improving Service to Families**
- ✓ **Crime Prevention**







## In Resonse to the Community

**SSAC Investigates Employee abuse at Heartland Foods**

TRACY/MARSHALL--

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, in conjunction with the State Department of Human Rights, is investigating charges of discrimination and employee abuse at Heartland Foods. Moreover, attorneys Alberto Miera and Manuel Guerrero are representing Mexican-Americans in a potential lawsuit against local government.

## Hispanic Alliance of Willmar Celebrates One Year

**Executive Director of SSAC Invited as Guest Speaker**

WILLMAR--

**T**he Hispanic Alliance of Willmar celebrated the first year of the organization's existence on November 3, 1993. Organization members, guest speakers and

local dignitaries gathered at the Centro de la Comunidad Christiana in Willmar in a program that highlighted recognition of individual community members for their contribution to the social progress of Chicanos/Latinos in Willmar and Kandiyohi County.

***"He emphasized also the need for unity in the struggle for social change and progress for Chicanos and Latinos...."***

Roy Garza, Executive Director of the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council was invited as a guest speaker. Garza stressed the importance of unity among Chicanos and Latinos in Willmar as crucial for effective strategies in combating racism, and for advancing and protecting their own welfare. He emphasized also the need for unity in the struggle for social change and progress for Chicanos and Latinos in Willmar and the other areas in Minnesota.

Garza concluded by praising the Alliance for its commitment to struggle for self determination and self protection. "I admire your courage. I know that *Alianza* members are committed to making the highest personal sacrifice if necessary to promote and protect the well being of Chicanos and

Latinos in Willmar," Mr. Garza told Alliance members.

## SSAC Holds Leadership Conference

**Community Leaders Convened to Identify Issues**

ST. PAUL--

**O**n November 19th and 20th of 1993, a group of approximately 112 Chicano and Latino leaders and activists were brought together by the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council at the University of St. Thomas.

The purpose was twofold: to discuss ways of working together, and to identify and prioritize the issues affecting Latinos in Minnesota.

The following issues were identified and ranked:

1. Education
2. Employment/Economic Development
3. Civil and Human Rights
4. Violence, especially among our youth
5. Health and Human Services
6. Racism and Discrimination
7. Identity

SSAC will take these issues and use them as a basis for their legislative agenda for forthcoming legislative sessions.

*"I believe that these hearings are an important first step in bringing this issue out into the open and inviting the local community to shake off its denial of the existence of institutional racism and discrimination against Hispanics and migrant farmworkers..."*

**Moorhead**

Source: Testimony from the Chicano/Latino Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of the Department of Human Rights, May 1994

## State Task Force to Study Racism

### SSAC Executive Director Appointed As Chair

STATEWIDE--

**S**SSAC Executive Director, Roy Garza, was appointed by Commissioner David L. Beaulieu, Department of Human Rights, to serve as Chairperson of the State's task force on Chicano/Latino discrimination and racism.

Garza and then Council member, Vincent Chavez, joined ten other members, collecting testimony on the racism affecting Chicanos/Latinos in Greater Minnesota.

The first hearing was held in Willmar. The second was held in Worthington in December of 1993. At this hearing, 125 Chicanos and Latinos were in attendance. Eighteen testified about how

racism adversely affects their lives. The issues ranged from discrimination in education, employment, police and health and human services.

"Justice is the Remedy" was the response to a statewide Chicano/Latino Task Force on Racism report that was eventually released by the Minnesota State Department of Human Rights.

The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council has taken responsibility for providing the leadership to translate these recommendations into legislation for forthcoming sessions.

Discussions are underway to include as many Chicanos and Latinos as possible in lobbying for passage of this legislation.

In addition, SSAC called upon the State Human Rights Department to further investigate the Worthington Police Department and some employers of Chicanos in Southern Minnesota for possible Civil Rights violations. Commissioner Beaulieu responded to the call by publicly stating that the Department of Human Rights will heed the call and will proceed with further investigation of these allegations.



## Name Change Task Force Formed

### Focus Groups Gathered Around the State

**O**ver the years, the issue of the Council's name will arise. Various arguments include the question of whether the name embraces the hundreds of Chicanos and Latinos who are not fluent in Spanish.

Other perspectives argue that we need to be more specific about our ethnic origins in order for data to be more accurately collected and thus, represent us more effectively as the Council puts forth legislation on behalf of the community.

Though not an exhaustive list, the bottom line is that all the arguments are valid. Therefore, SSAC's response was to form a Name-Change Task force. The group held several focus groups throughout Minnesota to obtain feedback regarding the Council's name.

The overwhelming result of these groups was the finding that most people were not aware of who we are, or our function. These findings then spurred the Council to look ahead to an aggressive PR campaign.

In terms of the name, the Council voted to come up with a name that is as inclusive of as many Chicanos and Latinos as possible, as well as one that shows the mission of the Council.

## Improving Services to Families...

### **SSAC Facilitates Communication**

#### **SSAC Convenes Meeting with Superintendent**

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council met with a group of St. Paul Chicano/Latino educators to discuss educational concerns affecting our community. The primary concern evolved around the educational conditions of Chicano/Latino children enrolled in K-12.

A consensus was reached to meet with Dr. Curman Gaines, the



Superintendent of the St. Paul school district. The purpose would be to discuss these issues and search for ways to address these problems. Also, the group felt strongly that more Chicanos/Latino were needed in policymaking positions within the district.

SSAC convened the meeting with Dr. Gaines, which resulted in the appointment of Julio Almanza as Assistant Superintendent in charge of Planning and Support Services. Almanza holds a very key position in the school district. He will be able to aid in the addressing of educational needs throughout the Chicano/Latino community.

**Foster Care Recruiter, Arturo Peña, joins SSAC staff to recruit Chicano/Latino homes for the hundreds of awaiting Chicano/Latino Children.**

**Peña is funded by a grant that authorizes him to work in only three counties. Those fortunate counties are:**

- ✓ Hennepin
- ✓ Kandiyohi
- ✓ & Clay

**This position is currently funded for only half time, though**

**the need is for that of three full-time persons.**

*We commend Mr. Peña's tenacity and commitment in taking this monumental feat on.*

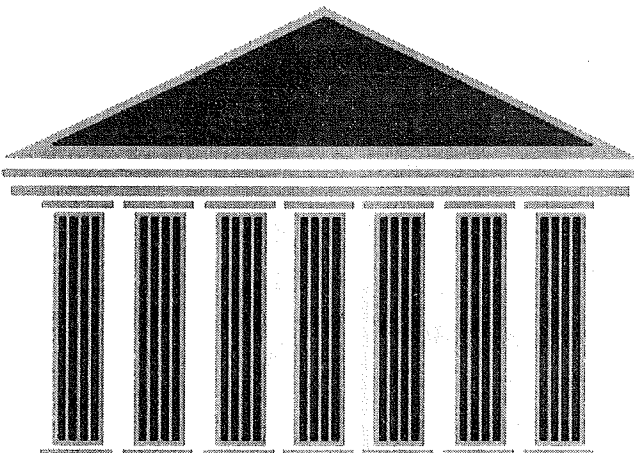
### **SSAC Works in Partnership for Communication**

#### **SSAC Collaborates With Legislators to Strengthen Communications between Families and Schools, Services**

**S**SSAC collaborated with Representative Carlos Mariani and Senator Sandy Pappas to strengthen the current Communications Services Act.

The statute, in its current form, holds ambiguities that allow agencies (primarily schools) to avoid accountability in communicating with families whose first language is Spanish. The first attempt to tighten this legislation failed, but will be readdressed in forthcoming sessions.

**The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council lobbied for and secured an appropriation of \$50,000 to conduct a study that will determine the causes and possible solutions for the disparate rate at which Chicano and Latino youth drop out of high school before graduation.**



**Where poverty is like a cancer in our communities, creating despair for families and individuals trying to survive, this despair can sometimes lead to crime; therefore, when we fight poverty, we fight crime.**

**SSAC has and will continue to support legislation that would restore public assistance eligibility for undocumented caregivers of children.**

*"I came upon an accident. There were three individuals who needed first aid and I stopped to help. [I said to mom] 'Go and call the ambulance,' and she did, but afterwards the police officers came and arrested me. I tried to explain and reason with them that I was not the one in the vehicle, I was just there to help the individual...I told them that I just happened to be coming out of the army and that I was trained to do first aid, but still [they] wouldn't believe me. Instead he said that it was a ride, and he assured me that I stole the car; and I [was] puzzled and I tried to convince him that I was not in the vehicle. It didn't work. Instead it got worse."*

**Willmar**

Source: Chicano/Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination, Report to the Commissioner of the Department of Human Rights, May 1994

**The State of Minnesota  
Spanish Speaking Affairs Council**



**General Fund Appropriation  
FY93-94**

**Revenues**

State of Minnesota 248,000

**Expenses**

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Salaries	184,300	148,679
Per Diem	3,100	1,980
Benefits	√	3,455
Rent	17,671	20,535
Advertisement	500	225
Repairs	√	173
Insurance	0	0
Printing	6,829	5,442
Consulting	1,515	2,420
Data Processing	0	238
Purchased Services	3,000	888
Communication	8,000	5,819
Travel - intrastate	9,500	5,104
Travel - Out of State	4,500	1,226
Fees/Training	200	200
Supplies	1,200	7,400
Equipment	4,000	33,684
Indirect Cost		0
	<hr/> 244,315	<hr/> 237,468

5,000 Transferred to Ombudsperson



**To Build  
Legislative  
Efforts**

**I**n order to accomplish the objective of building our legislative efforts, SSAC will first create its legislative agenda on the critical issues facing Chicanos and Latinos and migrant farmworkers throughout the state.

In 1995, for instance, the SSAC legislative agenda will be built primarily on the recommendations from the Chicano/Latino Task Force on Discrimination, report to the Commissioner of Human Rights, May 1994.

**To  
Prepare  
&  
Implement  
Jobs  
Creation  
& Anti-  
Racism  
Strategy**

**I**n order to accomplish the objective of preparing and implementation of these two important goals, SSAC will need resources that are sorely lacking with our agency at this time. These are money and staff.

Our agency appropriation must be expanded in order for us to more effectively reach our constituency base, which is well spread

geographically over Minnesota's 87 county area.

At this point, however, SSAC intends to support existing Latino social service agencies and through job creation.



**Prepare a  
Strategic  
Plan for  
the Next  
3-5 Years**

**T**he Spanish Speaking Affairs Council will meet at a day-long strategic planning retreat in St. Paul on December 3rd, 1994. The purpose of the meeting will be to do the necessary long-range planning that needs to occur in order to move our communities forward; to serve as the legislative liaisons that we are committed to be.

**Jobs  
&  
Justice**