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CHICANO LATINO AFFAIRS COUNCIL  
**BIENNIUM REPORT  
FOR FISCAL YEAR  
1994-96**

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This report shall summarize the activities of the Council since its last report, list receipts and expenditures, identify the major problems and issues confronting Chicano Latinos in the state; and list the specific objectives which the Council seeks to attain during the next biennium.

## BACKGROUND

The Chicano Latino Affairs Council (formerly the Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council; hereinafter CLAC) was created by Minnesota's state legislature in 1978 pursuant to Minnesota Statute section 3.9223. That provision states that the Council shall:

- (1) advise the governor and legislature on issues of concern to the Chicano Latino community, including the unique problems encountered by Spanish-speaking migrant agricultural workers;
- (2) advise the governor and legislature on statutes or rules necessary to ensure Chicano Latinos access to benefits and services provided to people in this state;
- (3) recommend to the governor and legislature legislation to improve the socio-economic status of Chicano Latinos in this state;
- (4) serve as a conduit to state government for organizations of Chicano Latinos in the state;
- (5) serve as a referral agency to assist Chicano Latinos to secure access to state agencies and programs;
- (6) serve as a liaison with the federal government, local government units, and private organizations on matters relating to Chicano Latinos of this state;
- (7) perform or contract for the performance of studies designed to suggest solutions to problems of Chicano Latinos in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related programs;

- (8) implement programs designed to solve problems of Chicano Latinos when authorized by other statute, rule, or order; and
- (9) publicize the accomplishments of Chicano Latinos and their contributions to this state.

**The primary mission of CLAC is to promote the social, economic, and political development of Minnesota's Chicano Latino community.**

The Council is comprised of eleven board members (one representing each of the state's eight congressional districts, plus three at-large members) and four full-time staff people. The board members are appointed by the state's Governor. The Council holds monthly board meetings throughout the state. These meetings provide a forum for community members to voice their opinions and concerns regarding Chicano Latino affairs and to provide recommendations on future Council actions.



## ACTIVITIES OF CLAC SINCE LAST REPORT

### Legislation

During the 1995 legislative session, CLAC was very involved in the passage of Minnesota Statute section 181.635 which governs the recruitment practices of food processing companies in Minnesota. The Council advocated on behalf of the passage of this law after it received complaints from Minnesota's Chicano Latino communities about Minnesota food processing companies using deceptive methods in the recruitment of workers, mostly of Mexican origin, from Texas. The law requires employers in the food processing industry to provide written disclosure of the terms and conditions of employment to a person at the time it recruits the person to relocate to work in the food processing industry. CLAC was also involved in the passage of the Americans of Mexican Origin Education Act, which would make school curricula more relevant to the needs, interests, and cultural heritage of pupils of Mexican origin. After gathering information that non-English-speaking Chicano Latinos were receiving inadequate interpretation services, the Council worked with legislators to require Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) to develop a state-wide interpreter certification process, to assure professionalism in the interpreter industry. During the 1995 legislative session, CLAC also attempted to strengthen the Communication Services Act, a law which mandates that state agencies provide language-appropriate services to non-English speaking clients.

During the 1996 legislative session, CLAC carried a bill which changed the name of the Council from the Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council to the Chicano Latino Affairs Council; changed the definition of those covered by the statute; and expanded the number of board members

serving on the Council. CLAC was also able, through its advocacy efforts, to exempt itself from a sunset provision, which would have had the Council expire in June of 1997. CLAC educated legislators about the roles and responsibilities of the Council and convinced them that because the Council performs functions that are not purely advisory, the expiration dates should not apply. During the same session, CLAC was an active participant in the drafting of and advocating for the passage of amendments to the Communication Services Act, a law which requires state agencies to provide appropriate services to non-English speaking people. The amendments would have required state agencies to appoint a person within each agency to serve as a liaison to the non-English speaking communities; and to report to the legislature the number of non-English speaking persons each agency serves, the languages which those persons speak, and describe the efforts being made to ensure that non-English speaking persons are adequately served. Although the amendments were passed by both houses of the legislature, the Governor vetoed them. CLAC was also involved in the passage of a bill allocating monies to the Department of Health for a report regarding the health and nutritional needs of migrant farm workers. This bill, which was initiated by the Food First Coalition and sponsored by Representative Carlos Mariani, also establishes an advisory committee to help with the organization of the report, of which CLAC is a named member. Further, CLAC's Director testified at legislative hearings regarding how the Minnesota Department of Human Rights could become more effective in its enforcement of the state's anti-discrimination laws. The Council also monitored other legislative initiatives, which affected Minnesota's Chicano Latino communities, such as: the Notary Public Bill, School Vouchers, and the Governor's Youth Initiative Program.

In preparation for the 1997 legislative session, CLAC has taken the initiative in meeting with legislators, state agency heads, and various Chicano Latino community leaders throughout the state to discuss legislative solutions to issues such as: welfare reform; immigration

reform; English as a second language education; migrant farm worker issues; and fair recruitment and employment practices. More specifically, since June of 1996, CLAC has initiated meetings with Chicano Latino service providers and migrant farm worker service providers to ask for their input regarding legislative solutions to issues of concern to the Chicano Latino community.

CLAC has established and maintained ongoing collaborative relationships with the following: Migrant Services Consortium; University of Minnesota Migrant Project; Department of Human Services (Migrant Division); Department of Children, Families, and Learning; Migrant Legal Services; Chicanos Latinos Unidos en Servicio (CLUES); La Raza Federation; St. Paul Mayor's Office; Ombudsperson for Latino Families; Independent Resource Network; Department of Health; Latinas Network; Migrant Health Services; Centro Legal; Oficina Legal; Department of Employee Relations; University of St. Thomas (Pre-College Hispanic Program); Casa de Esperanza; La Oportunidad; Neighborhood House; El Burrito Supermercado; Hispanos en Minnesota; Instituto de Arte y Cultura; Riverfront Economic Development Association; Family Services, Inc.; Department of Human Rights; and many others.

This collaborative effort has assisted in establishing legislative priorities for the Chicano Latino community, such as: welfare and immigration reform (more specifically, the 30-day residency requirement for receiving benefits, and the limiting or denying of benefits for legal non-citizens and undocumented persons); English as a second language training; making government more accessible to non-English speaking persons; and fair recruitment and employment practices. CLAC continues to research the above issues through gathering data, and meeting with legislators to discuss possible legislative solutions to said problems.



## Ensuring Access to State Benefits and Services

One of the biggest barriers which prevents Chicano Latinos from receiving the appropriate services from state agencies is language. During the 1995 and 1996 legislative sessions, CLAC assisted in the drafting of language which strengthened the Communication Services Act (see, above section, entitled "Legislation"). CLAC advocated on behalf of this law not only before the legislature, but also before the Lt. Governor. During the 1996 legislative session, the amendments to the Communication Services Act passed both houses of the legislature. Unfortunately they were then vetoed by the Governor. Despite this defeat, CLAC initiated a meeting in September of 1996 with the Department of Administration (the statute names that department as the implementor of the Communication Services Act) to discuss the implementation of the Communication Services Act. As a result of that meeting, the Commissioner's Office drafted a letter to state agencies explaining the importance of the Communication Services Act, and asked agencies to answer a survey regarding their compliance with the Communication Services Act. This has been an important first step toward assuring that state agencies provide appropriate services to its non-English speaking clients. CLAC will continue to monitor the efforts of the Department of Administration and provide assistance in achieving uniform compliance by all state agencies of the Communication Services Act.

The Latino Task Force Report on Discrimination found that Chicano Latino communities throughout the state had lost faith in the ability of the Department of Human Rights to carry out its job. Chicano Latinos described the process as too long and drawn-out, preventing cases from being reviewed in a timely manner. CLAC heard similar complaints during meetings with community members and leaders. During the

1996 legislative session, CLAC's Director testified regarding the Chicano Latino communities' concerns about the Department of Human Rights, and offered suggestions about how the department could become more effective, and gain back the confidence of the Chicano Latino community. In order to establish better communication and collaboration, CLAC began discussions with the Commissioner of Human Rights. CLAC will continue to work closely with the department to assure that Latinos receive appropriate services from the state's anti-discrimination law enforcement agency.

Another example of how CLAC works to assure that Chicano Latinos receive meaningful services from state agencies is exemplified in a recent effort made with the Department of Public Safety- Driver License Bureau (DPSDLB). In response to a citizen call, reporting that Chicano Latinos were being treated unfairly at the DPSDLB, CLAC initiated a meeting with the Commissioner of Public Safety with the goal of discussing the issue and assisting in finding workable solutions. As a result of that meeting, the Department of Public Safety has agreed to hire a Spanish-speaking person to assist Latinos at the Driver License Bureau. Another possibility that the department is considering is translating the driver license application into Spanish.

More recently, CLAC met with the Commissioner of Human Services to ensure that the needs of Chicano Latinos are taken into consideration when developing changes to the state's welfare system. CLAC provided the Commissioner with the following recommendations both orally and in writing: the state should allow an exemption for migrant workers from any residency requirement for all state-funded welfare programs; the state ought to provide TANF and other state-funded programs to legal non-citizen residents; the state should ensure that safe and accessible child care programs are provided to persons receiving public assistance; the state should adequately fund English as a second language, employment and training, and education programs to ensure

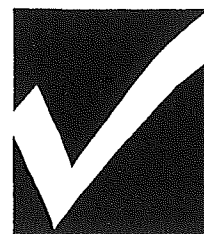
welfare recipients can secure and maintain employment; the state should actively solicit the participation of Chicano/Latino persons directly affected by the federal welfare reform law in the development of the new state plan. Further, CLAC is working in conjunction with the Department of Human Services to coordinate focus groups comprised of Chicano Latino welfare recipients, giving them an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns about welfare reform to DHS officials.



## Bilingual Directory

The Chicano Latino Affairs Council has recently embarked upon an effort to create a Spanish/English Bilingual Directory which will include listings of over 100 agencies that provide services to the Chicano Latino community throughout Minnesota. The goal of the Directory is to provide a comprehensive listing of state agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and media. Phone numbers and addresses for Latin American embassies and consulates will be provided along with information regarding citizenship, visas, and voter registration. The Directory will be published by January of 1997 and distributed throughout Minnesota with the objective of providing updated relevant information to our state's Chicano Latino communities as well as to those who wish to access and/or better serve Chicano Latinos.





## Voter Registration

A top priority of CLAC in 1995-96 has been voter registration. Being a registered voter is the first step in exercising one's rights as a U.S. citizen. It is also the first step in becoming politically responsible. Voting is a concrete way to choose leaders whose beliefs and policies match the voter's own. The Council believes that Chicano Latino communities will gain a sense of belonging and empowerment when they are able to attain representation that parallels their values.

Because of this belief, the Council's voter registration efforts are a vital part of CLAC's community outreach program. As CLAC staff, board members, and volunteers attend community events and churches which attract a large number of Chicano Latinos, they have the opportunity to provide community members with important information both orally and in writing. During each of the numerous voter registration drives, CLAC has distributed educational brochures which cover topics such as: CLAC - Who we are, What we do; Why Vote?; listing of voting sites; Who is Eligible to Vote?; How to Become a Citizen; Employment-Based Visas; Family-Based Visas; etc. CLAC staff, board members, and volunteers also have the opportunity to receive community feedback regarding Council activities and issues of importance to the Chicano Latino community. During these voter registration drives, we are also able to refer people to different state, local, and/or federal agencies, depending on their needs. Voter registration is a lot more than simply registering people to vote. CLAC has come face-to-face with hundreds of community members during these drives. This is the type of one-on-one grassroots outreach that really counts.

## Reports and Studies

### **Crime and Justice:**

The Chicano Latino Community's Perspective, by Jose Verdeja and Juan Martinez, for the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, September of 1996.

### **Bitter Sugar:**

Migrant Farmworker Nutrition and Access to Service in Minnesota, by the Minnesota Food Education and Resource Center (a program of the Urban Coalition), March of 1996. This initiative was a joint effort of the Minnesota Food Shelf Association, The State of Minnesota Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council (now the Chicano Latino Affairs Council) and the Urban Coalition.

### **Minnesota Latino Needs and Resources Assessment:**

By Wilder Research Center, for the Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council (now the Chicano Latino Affairs

Council), through a grant from The McKnight Foundation, May of 1995.

### **The Human Face of Poverty:**

Chicano Latino Children in Minnesota, by Mario Compean, Published by HACER, March of 1995. The Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council (now Chicano Latino Affairs Council) contributed funding and staff support that was instrumental in facilitating the research that resulted in this report.

### **Chicano Latino Dropout Study - Final Report -**

Fifth and eighth grade survey analysis and recommendations, Chicano Latino Learning Resource Center, University of Minnesota, March 1995. The Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council (now Chicano Latino Affairs Council) provided the impetus to request the funds necessary for this project, and the foresight for this important undertaking.



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## PUBLICIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF CHICANO LATINOS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

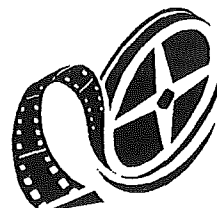
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### Newsletter And Brochures

The Chicano Latino Affairs Council does an excellent job publicizing the achievements, accomplishments, and contributions of Chicano Latinos through a variety of means. CLAC's newsletter, AL DIA, has featured many Chicano Latino success stories. Some examples: the August 1995 edition includes a story about migrant farm workers protesting at the State Capitol and convincing Governor Carlson to include migrant farm workers in the emergency aid package he requested from the President of the U.S.; the September 1995 edition features a story about a Latino organization, which works in the areas of violence and crime prevention, and its new Executive Director, Puerto Rico-born, Miguel Ramos; the January 1996 edition covers a story about numerous Chicano Latino organizations and community leaders coming together as a collaborative named "The Latino Leadership Association" to jointly address issues of concern to the Chicano Latino community; the February 1996 edition includes a story about a grassroots effort in Southern Minnesota called "LA MANO", which was started by a group of Chicano Latino community members; the September 1996 AL DIA features some very touching and inspiring stories about CLAC's Board members; and the November issue includes a story about Jose, a courageous Chicano Latino man, who is suffering from leukemia and struggling to find a bone marrow donor.

In addition, CLAC has been working on expanding its educational brochures to include feature stories about Chicano Latinos who have overcome hardships and attained success. One such brochure features Pete Padilla, a successful advocate who comes from a migrant farm

worker family, and is an inspiration to Chicano Latinos throughout the state.



## Media

CLAC has successfully utilized the media to publicize the achievements and contributions of Chicano Latinos, as well as to educate the public at large about problems facing Minnesota's Chicano Latino communities. CLAC has developed an excellent working relationship with the print, radio, and television media throughout the state. CLAC maintains close ties with the media by providing them with new story ideas and up-to-date information on current stories, through frequent phone calls and press releases.

Some examples of stories covered by the media include: KTCA-TV (Channel 2) covered a story about one of CLAC's voter registration drives, which took place at a local church's "Baile de Carnaval" (dance); Minnesota Public Radio interviewed CLAC's Director about rural racism, which gave CLAC an opportunity to debunk stereotypes about Chicano Latinos, and educate listeners about the contributions of migrant agricultural workers to Minnesota's economy; several media interviewed CLAC's Director about the impact of the police brutality incident which occurred in California against a Latino man and woman; Channels 5, 9, 11, & 4 covered CLAC's door-to-door voter registration drive, which took place in the West Side of St. Paul and brought together over 40 volunteers; Minnesota Public Radio interviewed CLAC's Director about welfare and immigration reform and other issues of interest to the

Latino community; and La Prensa interviewed CLAC's Director about the INS raid at Bailey's Nursery. These are just a few of the stories which have been covered by Minnesota media regarding the problems and stereotypes facing Chicano Latinos, and the accomplishments and contributions of Chicano Latinos.





## Public Speaking

Public speaking engagements have presented CLAC with the opportunity to promote and enhance the overall image of Chicano Latino persons and communities, as well as to dispel myths and stereotypes and present a more realistic picture of Chicano Latinos' histories and lives. In July of 1996, CLAC's Director addressed an audience of correctional facility educators about the history of Latino immigration to the U.S. During this presentation, CLAC's Director had an opportunity to talk about the richness of the Latino culture, and to offer stories of courage and success within the Latino community. During another public speaking engagement, CLAC's Director addressed honor high school students of color from around the country. Topics covered were: the importance of higher education, the impact of welfare reform on people of color, and racism. CLAC's Director offered hope to these students of color by talking about Latinos who overcame odds and achieved success in a racist world. In September of 1996, CLAC's Director addressed Immigration and Naturalization Services employees on Latino culture and values.

Educating the public at large about the problems facing Latinos, about the stereotypes which damage Latinos, and about the truth of the beauty of the Latino culture is one of the most important functions which the Chicano-Latino Affairs Council serves. It is only through education, and the bringing forth of the truth, that racism and discrimination will come to an end.



## **Major Problems and Issues Confronting Chicano Latinos and Objectives Which the Council Seeks to Attain During the Next Biennium**

The major problems confronting Chicano Latinos are:

- ⇒ the recent changes in immigration and welfare laws
- ⇒ the need for better educational and employment opportunities
- ⇒ the need for English as a second language (ESL) instruction
- ⇒ discrimination against Chicano Latinos in public services, credit, public accommodations, education, housing, employment, and law enforcement
- ⇒ securing better access to government services
- ⇒ negative stereotypes of Chicano Latinos in the media
- ⇒ problems unique to the migrant agricultural worker, such as false recruitment practices, the non-payment of wages, pesticide use in fields, and hostile work environment.

In order to address these problems the Council has the following objectives:

(1) to develop policies which would improve the socio-economic status of Chicano Latinos in this state by drafting bills or amendments to existing statutes, and providing testimony at legislative hearings on issues impacting the Chicano Latino community. More specifically, to draft statutory language and advocate on behalf of an exemption for migrant agricultural workers from the 30-day residency requirement for receiving welfare benefits; to draft amendments to employment/recruitment laws, which would ensure better protection for Chicano/Latino employees; to advocate on behalf of increased funding

for English as a second language education; and to draft amendments to the Communication Services Act, which would mandate state agencies to comply with the requirements stated in that Act.

(2) to research, analyze, and monitor the effect on the Chicano Latino community, of immigration and welfare reform efforts, and recommend legislative and other policy solutions to the Governor, State Legislature, and other state agency heads;

(3) to expand employment opportunities by researching and analyzing employment and recruitment practices and promoting participation in education programs such as English as a second language (ESL) and Workforce Literacy;

(4) to promote leadership skills for Chicano Latino youths across the state of Minnesota by sponsoring a Youth Leadership Conference

(5) to work with state, federal, and local anti-discrimination law enforcement agencies to assure that discrimination against Chicano Latinos in public services, credit, public accommodations, education, housing, employment, and law enforcement is stopped;

(6) to collaborate with housing officials at the federal, state, and local levels to promote affordable housing alternatives in the state, including Greater Minnesota;

(7) to encourage and assist state agencies to better service the Chicano Latino community by establishing lines of communication between state and community, and developing workshops and seminars on the availability of state services;

(8) to encourage Chicano Latinos to become active participants in the political process by conducting voter education and registration drives;

and by sponsoring and/or coordinating educational forums on the legislative process;

(9) to provide vital information to the Chicano Latino community by producing educational brochures on citizenship, visas, voting, and other relevant issues;

(10) to improve relations and foster understanding between the Chicano Latino community and the public at large, by publicizing the accomplishments and contributions of Chicano Latinos through public speaking engagements, media interviews, the AL DIA newsletter, and other public contact opportunities; and

(11) to research and analyze the issues impacting migrant farmworkers and recommend solutions to the Governor, State Legislature, and other state agency heads.



**State of Minnesota**  
**Chicano Latino Affairs Council**  
*(Receipts & Expenditures for FY96-97)*

<b>Expenditures</b>			
	<b>Actual FY96</b>	<b>Budgeted FY97</b>	
<b>Fund 100--General Fund</b>			
Salaries	126,678	174,800	
Per Diem	4,353	5,000	
Rent	16,326	18,200	
Repairs	1,800	4,000	
Printing & Advertising	10,682	9,000	
Professional & Technical Services	4,483	6,000	
Computer Services	1,000	5,000	
Communications	9,505	8,000	
Travel-in state	5,129	9,000	
Travel-out state	1,047	500	
Supplies	2,187	4,000	
Equipment	2,091	24,220	
Employee Development & Training	1,396	2,000	
Other operating costs	1,391	43,498	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$188,068</b>	<b>\$313,218</b>	
<b>Fund 300--Federal Funds</b>			
Professional & Technical Services	1,738	7,262	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,738</b>	<b>\$7,262</b>	
<b>Fund 690--Gifts &amp; Grants Fund</b>			
Printing & Advertising	0	15,000	
Professional & Technical Services	0	5,000	
Supplies	78	5,000	
Other Operating Costs	1,222	0	
Equipment	48	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,348</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$191,154</b>	<b>\$345,480</b>	
<b>Receipts</b>			
	<b>Actual FY96</b>	<b>Budgeted FY97</b>	
<b>Fund 100--General Fund</b>	248,600	313,218	
<b>Fund 300--Federal Funds</b>	2,250	6,750	
<b>Fund 690--Gifts &amp; Grants Fund</b>	2,381	25,000	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$253,231</b>	<b>\$344,968</b>	