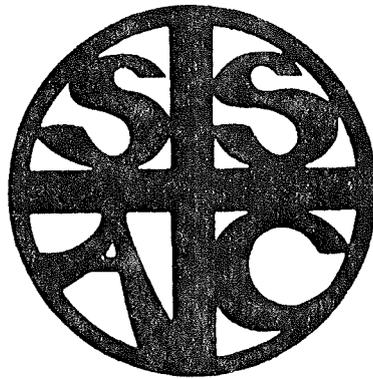


State of Minnesota

SPANISH SPEAKING



AFFAIRS COUNCIL

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Spanish Speaking Affairs Council  
506 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55103  
(612) 296-9587

## Mission Statement

The State Council on the Affairs of Spanish-speaking people is composed of seven members. The Council, which is not a social service agency, advises the Governor and the State Legislature on the nature of issues and disabilities confronting the Spanish-speaking people, including the unique problems encountered by Spanish-speaking migrant workers.

Recent trends which impact upon the Council include:

- a considerable increase in the State's Spanish-speaking population,
  - increased resettlement of migrant workers due to the increased mechanization,
  - stronger demands from the Hispanic community to be recognized and afforded just representation at all levels of government,
  - a desire for an increase in the economic development of the Hispanic community.
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## Program of Work

- Recommend legislation designed to improve the economic, social and educational status of Spanish-speaking people.
  - Advise the Governor and the Legislature on issues and disabilities confronting the Spanish-speaking people and migrants.
  - Publicize the accomplishments of Spanish-speaking people and their contributions to the State.
  - Serve as a conduit for the Spanish-speaking community to the state government.
  - Perform studies designed to suggest solutions to problems in areas of education, employment, human rights, human rights, health, housing, social welfare and others.
  - Implement programs designed to solve problems of Spanish-speaking people.
  - Develop areas of cooperation and coordination with other state agencies.
  - Serve as a referral agency to assist Spanish-speaking people in securing access to state agencies and programs.
  - Serve as a liaison with the Federal and local governments and private organizations.
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CUANDO EMPEZAMOSWHEN WE STARTED

As a result of the efforts of Minnesota's Hispanic community, the state legislature created the Council on Affairs of Spanish Speaking People during the 1978 Legislative Session, (Minnesota Laws 1978, Chapter 510, ). During the first two years, the Council's primary efforts were aimed at developing its program of work and establishing its administrative structure.

The Council initiated an extensive program to involve the Hispanic community during its formative period. At this stage, there existed considerable participation from the Hispanic community at all regularly scheduled Council meetings. It was not unusual to have 50 to 60 individuals attending these meetings.

By the time the second Council's biennium (81-83) the Council was well established and its efforts were well recognized.

The period beginning July 1, 1980 to June 30, 1982, the Council's primary efforts were to increase the availability of resources in the Hispanic community and at the same time maintain Council operations at the current level.

UN REPASOA SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The second biennium can be best characterized as beginning on May 9, 1980, when the Council sponsored a highly successful two day conference: SOMOS UNO, SOMOS FAMILIA: Hispanic Leadership Conference

Spanish Speaking Affairs Council

During this conference, three major areas of work were established for the Council:

- Employment and Affirmative Action Task Force
- Economic Development Task Force
- Hispanic Women's Committee

These task forces were to make up the larger portion of the Council's program of work during the next two years, since they served as a catalyst to the development of new programs.

EMPLOYMENT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TASK FORCE

The Council's Employment and Affirmative Action Task Force prepared a proposal to establish an employment project that would coordinate and develop employment opportunities for Hispanics. This proposal was written in cooperation with HIRED (Helping Industry Resolve Employment Difficulties) Inc. The task force spent about 18 months in preparing this proposal. The project was submitted to foundations for funding. However due to reductions in the availability of federal funds for HIRED and the lack of local funds, it was necessary to limit the scope of the project.

In addition, the Employment and Affirmative Action Task Force coordinated training programs in cooperation with the Department of Employee Relations's Training Division.

By the end of the biennium, the work of the task force was delegated to the Council's staff and alternative methods were established to increase employment opportunities for Hispanics.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

Since 1973, Hispanic business owners had attempted to establish a Hispanic business association. Unfortunately, efforts were unsuccessful. At the SOMOS UNO, SOMOS FAMILIA Conference, it was determined that an economic development task force be formed. This task force was charged with the responsibility to review the feasibility of developing economic development programs for the Hispanic community. Two college interns were recruited to conduct research and develop a feasibility study. As the task force progressed, enthusiasm from Hispanic business owners increased and greater participation took place.

After the feasibility study was completed. It was determined that a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce be created. The task force then proceeded to form this chamber. On November 13, 1980, six months after the conference, the Minnesota Hispanic Chamber of Commerce became a reality.

Since its creation, the Minnesota Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has been highly successful in developing its own programs.

The Chamber established a scholarship for Hispanic students wishing to study business related courses at the College of Saint Thomas and also developed a very successful corporate trade mission program.

The Minnesota Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was named the Hispanic Chamber of the Year at the U. S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Annual Convention in Chicago, Illinois in August 1982.

HISPANIC WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

As a result of a resolution passed at the SOMOS UNO, SOMOS FAMILIA: Hispanic Leadership Conference, the Council created a committee to address the issues and concerns affecting Minnesota's Hispanic women. This committee was placed under the auspices of the Council's Communications Task Force. One of the first tasks of the committee was to review the status of the Hispanic women, or Hispana in the state. After considerable review, it was recommended that the Council sponsor a two day conference to address Hispana issues and concerns. Funding for the two-day conference was obtained from the private sector. The UN PRIMER PASO (A first step) Hispanic women's conference was held on March 18 and 19, 1981. Over two hundred women from the Midwest attended this conference. This was the first major conference specifically designed to address Hispana concerns held in Minnesota.

Conference participants passed a series of resolutions and agreed to hold a second conference the following year. One of the results of the conference was the UN PRIMER PASO: Hispanic Motivational Project. This project, which is sponsored by the College of Saint Catherine's (Saint Paul) and is funded by the Saint Paul Foundation is designed to motivate junior high school age Hispanas to enter post-secondary education. Forty students participate in this program every summer.

Another effort of the UN PRIMER PASO Conference is the development of the CASA DE ESPERANZA, (House of Hope) a shelter for Hispanic battered women. Initially the shelter was funded

through the State Advisory Task Force on Battered Women, State Department of Corrections.

In addition to the activities that were the direct result of the SOMOS UNO, SOMOS FAMILIA: Hispanic Leadership Conference outlined above, the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council was involved in several other major projects, special events and activities. The following is a summary of these efforts.

#### HISPANIC TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT

During the first week in August, 1981, a group of Hispanic leaders met with representatives of Honeywell, Inc., to discuss Honeywell's participation in the socio-economic improvement of the state's Hispanic community. A special task force was formed under the auspices of the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council to determine which types of projects could be designed. The task force developed the HISPANIC TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL PROJECT, a comprehensive and coordinated process to identify, recruit, train and place Hispanics in the technical, engineering professional and technical fields. This project is designed to provide opportunities for Hispanics to enter these fields; will supplement and increase their academic training opportunities and will increase the corporate sector's awareness that Hispanics are an excellent human resource. The project includes the secondary, post-secondary and graduate levels. Also, a community education component is included.

Honeywell, Inc., provided an initial funding of \$35,000 dollars for the project's first year. The corporation also provided an executive on loan to assist in additional fund-raising and considerable technical assistance was made available. Sperry Univac, Inc., provided a full-time project coordinator. 3M Company provided a \$10,000 dollar grant to the project.

It has been the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council's policy to initiate programs and assist them in becoming independent. The Hispanic Technical and Professional Education Project became incorporated as a non-profit entity in June, 1982. The project is now self-sufficient and the Council maintains a very close working relationship with the project's board of directors and staff.

HISPANIC EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE--UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, in cooperation with several Hispanic representatives, formed an education advisory committee to President Peter McGrath, University of Minnesota. The purpose of this committee is to advise the president on the issues and concerns in relation to the education of Hispanics at the University and to make recommendations to improve the educational opportunities of Hispanics. The seventeen member advisory committee drafted a series of resolutions and made several recommendations to the University. Some of the concerns addressed have been adequately answered, while others are still pending.

AZTLAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

During 1978, the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council assisted in the development of the Aztlan Cultural Organization, which is composed of a group of Hispanic inmates at the Minnesota Correctional Facility at Stillwater (MCF-Stillwater) and other interested Hispanics. Aztlan's primary mission is to develop internal educational programs for the inmates and to encourage the involvement of the local Hispanic community in meeting the needs of the Hispanic inmates. The Council assisted in the development of a bilingual education program at the institution, securing office space for the group and in resolving problems with the institution's administration. Council staff have been actively involved in addressing health care issues and probation and parole concerns for the inmates.

MINNESOTA CUBAN REFUGEE PROGRAM

The Spanish Speaking Affairs Council members and staff became directly involved in developing a Cuban Refugee Resettlement Program for Minnesota, in cooperation with the Minnesota Cuban Refugee Committee. Council members and staff, in cooperation with the Governor's Office, visited Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, to review firsthand the Cuban Resettlement Program.

In addition, the Council participated directly with volunteer groups in the resettlement of Cuban individuals and in resolving problems that arose during their resettlement. It's estimated that 1,200 Cubans settled in Minnesota.

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD'S LATINO PROJECT

During the 1978 Legislative Session, the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council recommended the establishment of a \$750,000 scholarship program for Hispanics. The state legislature did not act on the recommendation but instead established a program, under the auspices of the Higher Education Coordinating Board to identify, recruit and assist Hispanic students to enter post-secondary education. HECB was required to set aside \$60,000 for this program. Council members and staff participated in this program's advisory committee and assisted HECB staff in the development of the program.

Five high schools were selected for pilot projects. The program was considered very successful.

MINNESOTA LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PROGRAM

The Council played a key role in the establishment of the state's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Program, which is commonly known as the bilingual education program. Originally this program was funded at \$450,000 per year. Through the Council's efforts, this funding was increased to \$3.4 million dollars per year. This program has been in operation since 1978 and is operated by the Minnesota State Department of Education.

In addition to working at the state level LEP program, the Council has also actively advocated for a stronger LEP program at the local school district levels. Council staff are actively involved in the monitoring of the Saint Paul School system's Bilingual Education Program.

MAJOR PROBLEMS AND ISSUES CONFRONTING HISPANICS IN MINNESOTA

The major problems and issues confronting Hispanics in Minnesota can be categorized into four main areas:

- o Lack of adequate educational opportunities
- o High unemployment and underemployment
- o Limited economic base
- o Inadequate social and human services

While these four main areas can also apply to other minority groups, the Hispanic community faces also the unique challenges of a bicultural-bilingual society in a predominately mono-cultural world. Thus language and culture also can play an important role in defining the needs and concerns of Hispanics.

In the last few years, the state's Hispanics have made considerable progress in the education and political fields. However, one recent area of activity has been economic development programs for Hispanics.

The major problem with the delivery of social and human services lies in the fact that most traditional agencies do not have Hispanic bilingual staff. This lack of specialized staff, particularly in the health field, prevents many Hispanics from availing themselves of these services.

Hispanics share the same high unemployment rates as other minorities. In addition the annual influx of migrant agricultural workers, many of them without work agreements, increases the number of unemployed Hispanics.

SPANISH SPEAKING AFFAIRS COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEMBERS

	TELEPHONE NUMBER	
	Work	Home
● FERMIN L. ARAGON 100 N. 6th St., Suite 440 B Butler Square Building Minneapolis, MN 55403	(612) 333-3600	(612) 935-3807

Nationality: Mexican; Political Party: Independent; Term in Office: (9/81-1/84). President and owner of IMPACT (a consulting and data processing firm). Chairperson of Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Member of the United Way Board of Directors. Special interest: Economic Development.

● RAUL CARDONA, Jr. ALBERT LEA AVTI 2200 Tech Drive Albert Lea, MN 56007	(507) 373-0656	(507) 373-5717
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Nationality: Mexican; Political Party: Democrat; Term in Office: (3/80-1/85). Minority Advisor in Vocational Education at AVTI Vocational Institute, Vice Chairperson of Minnesota Migrant Council. Special interest: Education Migrant Affairs.

● JUAN LOPEZ 175 Charles Avenue St. Paul, MN 55103	(612) 292-0117	(612) 292-8667
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Nationality: Mexican; Political Party: Democrat; Term in Office (9/81-1/83, serving expired term, until re-appointment). Present Chairperson of Council. Mr. López is a farmworker advocate in Minnesota since 1974. Main interests: to promote legislation on behalf of Hispanic issues before Legislature; Migrant Affairs and Bilingual Education.

● JUAN MORENO University of Minnesota-Crookston Crookston, MN 56716	(218) 281-6510	(218) 281-5915
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Nationality: Ecuadorian; Political Party: Republican; Term in Office: (9/81-1/85). Director of Special Student Services at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. Special Interests: Employment and Education.

T E L E P H O N E      N U M B E R

Work

Home

- ENRIQUE SERRA  
College of St. Catherine (612) 690-6569 (612) 854-0657  
2004 Randolph Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

Nationality: Cuban; Political Party: Republican; Term in Office: (1/82-1/86).  
Hispanic Professor at the College of St. Catherine. Vice Chairperson of the  
Minnesota Hispanic Republican Council. Main Interests: Education and Interna-  
tional Relations.

- PAULA VILLEGAS  
2920 West Dean Parkway  
Suite 303  
Minneapolis, MN 55416 (612) 920-7094

Nationality: Mexican; Political Party: Republican; Term in Office: (12/82-1/84).  
Coordinator at Metro Wellness Counseling Clinic in Edina. Counselor in Mental  
Health and Chemical Dependency. Member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.  
Special Interests: Women's concerns and economic development.

- APPOINTMENT PENDING

COUNCIL STAFF

- José H. Trejo, Executive Director

National Heritage: Mexican

Mr. Trejo has been Executive Director of the Council since its creation in 1978. Prior to this he was Executive Director of the Governor's Office on Hispanic Affairs. He served as Corporate Employee Relations Representative for the Buckbee Mears Company. In addition, Mr. Trejo served as Director of Youth Programs for the Saint Paul Metro National Alliance of Business; Director of the Human Resources Development Department of the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and Director of the Saint Paul Employers Council.

Mr. Trejo received a degree in Secondary Education from Mankato State University and attended the Institute for Organization Management at the University of Colorado.

- Elsa Vega Pérez, Community Liaison Representative

National Heritage: Puerto Rican

Ms. Pérez was born in New York City. She arrived in St. Paul at the age of 18. Her past work experience has been in the areas of youth motivation, personnel and education.

Ms. Pérez has been involved in the Hispanic community through her work with youth at Neighborhood House, the Emergency School Aid Act, Title VII-St. Paul Schools desegregation plans. She served as Vice-president of the Puerto Rican Civic and Social Association and is a member of other community organizations. Her personal interests include teaching dance, cooking and cultural arts.

- Ruby Azurdia Lee, Administrative Secretary

National Heritage: Guatemalan

Ms. Lee moved from Guatemala City to St. Paul in the summer of 1981. Since then she has been working with the Council. Her past work experience in Guatemala, has been with government agencies that provided services to indigenous communities. She enjoys the contact with the public and the office management. Her personal interests are; International Relations and Cultural activities.

Ms. Lee has been instrumental in the creation of the Minnesota Socio-Cultural Guatemalan Committee, of which she serves as President.