

The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs

***Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan
Recognition Luncheon***



Tuesday, October 2, 2001

Statehouse Atrium
Columbus, Ohio



THE OHIO COMMISSION ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS
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The Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Luncheon is held annually by the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs in order to secure appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of Hispanic individuals to the quality of life in Ohio.

The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs provides advocacy and leadership in addressing issues concerning Hispanic/Latino Ohioans. The Commission serves as a liaison between the government and the Hispanic/Latino community in Ohio, and advocates the development and implementation of policies and programs to address the needs of Hispanic/Latino Ohioans, especially, but not limited to, education, employment, economic development, health, and housing. The Commission was established by state law in 1977, and also serves as a clearinghouse for information concerning the Hispanic community in Ohio. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor, are of Spanish-speaking origin, and represent the distribution of Ohio's Hispanic population.

Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Recognition Program

Welcome and opening remarks Emcee Juan Lara, Executive Director of OCHLA

Posting of Colors Ohio State Highway Patrol

Pledge of Allegiance

Greetings from the Governors Office

Invocation Reverend David Garay

-----LUNCH-----

Keynote Speaker The Honorable Eleazar Benjamin Ruiz y Avila
Mexican Consul from Detroit, Michigan

Recognition of 2001 Honorees

❖ Marisol Jones	❖ Lin Avendano
❖ Ray Pagan	❖ Maria de la Luz Galindo
❖ Luisa Hernandez	❖ Margarita de Leon

Closing Benediction Reverend David Garay

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

THE HONORABLE

Eleazar Benjamin Ruiz y Avila

Mexican Consul

The Honorable Eleazar Benjamin Ruiz y Avila obtained his bachelor's degree in Foreign Affairs at the National University of Mexico (UNAM). Other academic pursuits include Public Administration and Diplomatic Studies at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Matias Romero Institute; as well as the Interamerican Institute of Human Rights in Costa Rica.

The Consul has served as General Director of International Affairs, Studies, Project and Documentation at the Executive Secretariat of the National Commission on Human Rights in 1993. Additionally, he was a member of the Mexican Delegation for Human Rights in 1993; and participated as a member in the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations at Geneva, on several occasions. The Consul has also been a lecturer at diverse forums on topics which focused on Mexico's Foreign Policy and Human Rights.

Consul Ruiz y Avila joined the Mexican Foreign Service in November 1980, and was promoted to the rank of Ambassador in January 2000. He has been posted at the Mexican Embassies in: the United States of America (1984-1988); Belize (1988-1990); and Denmark (1996-1998), and since March 2001 he has been the Consul of Mexico in Detroit, Michigan.

While working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Honorable Eleazar Benjamin Ruiz y Avila served as an Advisor for the office of the Chief Director of Bilateral Political Affairs (1978-1979). He also was Head of the Asian Department, Head of the Middle East and Arab Countries and of the General Direction for Africa, Asia and Oceania (1980-1983). In 1991, Consul Ruiz y Avila served as Deputy Director for Bilateral Affairs with the Pacific Rim, and then as Director of Human Rights Affairs for the United Nations (1991-1993). While serving as General Director of Human Rights, Consul Ruiz y Avila was Executive Secretariat of the Interministerial Commission for the Compliance of Mexican International Obligations in the field of Human Rights from 1998 to 2000.

In 1981, Galindo, living in Fairview Park, decided it was her turn to follow her dream. She and her son Jorge opened Luchita's Mexican Restaurant on Cleveland's West Side when she was 62. For the first five years, Galindo and her son kept their day jobs. She would work as a cleaning woman from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., then at 4 p.m., she would take her position in the kitchen. These days, she still can be found in her kitchen, cooking for the two restaurants she now owns.

Maria de la Luz Galindo states, "I was 62 years old, spoke very little English and had four children in college when I decided that I had worked two jobs because I needed to support my children, now it was time to work because I needed to make my dreams come true."

But the successful entrepreneur has not forgotten the importance of family. Her restaurants close for the major holidays and for two weeks at Christmas so her employees can be with their loved ones.

She knows it takes time and effort to achieve what is her most cherished accomplishment: "Raising 11 good citizens of the world."

----- RAY L. PAGÁN -----

Lorain, Ohio

Nominated by: Commissioner Annabell Droz-Berrios

Ray L. Pagan, Principle of Lorain Southview, was born on June 27, 1948 in Santurce, Puerto Rico to Bienvenida Pagán and the late Rosario Pagán. He moved with his family to Lorain, Ohio in 1951 where he attended Lincoln Elementary, Whittler Jr. High, and Lorain Admiral King. He graduated from King in 1966 and immediately worked for U.S. Steel while attending part time classes at Lorain County Community College. In 1969, Mr. Pagán entered the Marine Corps where he served two years of active duty. In 1972, he attended the University of Akron until 1974 where he reviewed his B.A. Degree in Spanish and Sociology. He applied and was hired by the Lorain City School System in 1974. He was assigned to Whittler Jr. High School from 1974 to 1978. During this time he was also the Head Basketball Coach. In 1978, he was promoted to the Lorain Southview High School Assistant Principal position in charge of discipline until 1983. After becoming

the Curriculum Assistant Principle, he went on to become Lorain Southview's Head Principal in 1988. He retired on December 31, 2000.

Mr. Pagán feels that the Hispanic Magazine Award was the highlight of his tenure. This award was given to only two high schools in the nation for their work with Hispanic students and dropout rates. Lorain Southview was honored with this award in 1993. Mr. Pagán was very proud to accept this award at a Washington, DC ceremony. Another recognition of which he is proud to mention is the number of scholarships Lorain Southview High has received during the past five years. In 1996, Lorain Southview received approximately \$350,000 in scholarships. In 2000, Lorain Southview received more than \$2.8 million in scholarships. He is also very proud of the Hispanic students who ranked in the top five percent of their class. He had two Hispanic Valedictorians since being principal, Adrianna Marie Ortiz in 1996 and Natasha Ruiz in 2000. Usually, out of the top ten students half are Hispanic students. Mr. Pagán has had a great interest in Hispanic students who have achieved a high rank, probably because his own daughter, Sarah, was Valedictorian at Lorain Admiral King 1997.

Throughout these past years, the positive reputation and dramatic excellence Lorain Southview has achieved can be directly traced to Mr. Pagán's fair and student-centered leadership. Staff, students and parents readily admit his direct influence on the school's success and sadly regret his retirement.

Mr. Pagán has always felt very fortunate and proud to have been appointed Principal at Lorain Southview High School. He has always said that the best students, parents, and staff worked in his building. He really believes that there is no "bad" student at Lorain Southview High School, "When working one on one, these kids are great." He would like to extend a warm and heartfelt thank you to his staff, faculty, students, parents, and his family.
