

The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs

Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Recognition Luncheon



Friday, October 16, 1998

The Statehouse Atrium
State Capitol Building
Columbus, Ohio

she can to make a difference and demonstrate her gratitude.

The Reverón Family

The Reveron family--Rigoberto, Judy, and their children, Anna, Eric and Javier--depict the strength of the Latino family as a whole, and it is precisely that trademark--one of unity combined with service to others--for which they are being honored as a group, or more appropriately, a Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan family.

Rigo, as the now-Councilman Reveron, is affectionately known, hails from Humacao, Puerto Rico, and came to Cleveland in 1954 with his mother and step father. By 1962, young Judy had left Utuado, Puerto Rico to visit her brother in Lorain, and before long, Northern Ohio was her new home. Rigo and Judy met while they were employed by a clothing manufacturer in Cleveland. Soon after, as a result of the Vietnam War, Rigo had joined the Air Force, and was based in Texas. By 1970, having completed his military duty, Rigo and Judy were married, and had moved to Lorain, Ohio, where Rigo had been offered employment with Beneficial of Ohio, Inc., a consumer lending company. The company made a good investment in this employee, because Rigo has worked for them ever since, 28 years. Back then, Rigo and Judy were concentrating on education and were focusing on starting their family and adult lives--the same priorities that are currently being emphasized with their own children. It is with that basis that the Reverons' service to the community has developed. For example, Rigo began his community involvement as a parent of then 7-year-old little leaguer, Eric. Once Eric had started Little League, Rigo soon became a coach for the Little League organization. Rigo was a sports mentor for many years also seeing son Javier through baseball and wrestling. Likewise, Judy, raising her family within the Parish of Sacred Heart Chapel, became not only a volunteer, but a trusted leader in the parish. She was Parish council president, and also taught catechism in the church. She chaired the high school senior banquet, and the Fiestas Patronales. As Judy says, "The best way I know how to best serve my community is through the church." Judy is currently a library clerk at Homewood Elementary School. As a community volunteer, Judy sets an example of involving others, thus mentoring new leadership for the Hispanic community. She also targets her involvement in projects that have a lasting impact on the community. For instance, she was on the site selection committee for the new South Lorain library. Recently, she co-chaired the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Puerto Rican settlement in Lorain. Her brother, Ernesto Velez Gonzalez, was one of the first pioneers to come to Lorain from Puerto Rico 50 years ago.

In the volunteer world, one thing leads to another. After Rigo did such a great job with the Little League teams, soon everybody wanted him to help their "team." He served on Sacred Heart Parish Council for six years, and then served on the finance committee for the church. He is now president of the board of trustees for Sacred Heart Manor. Rigo served as the third president of Hispanic Political Voice, and then one day, long-time political insiders, Iris and Joe Gracia, approached him about becoming involved in politics. Since 1991 Rigo has run for local office four times, and has won three out of four races. With Election Day approaching, it is important to note that the one time Rigo lost, it was by only five (5) votes. Rigo ran again and is currently serving the 9th Ward on Lorain City Council, where he actively advocates on behalf of his constituents and joins them to rally for improved neighborhoods and conditions. He is also the treasurer of the Hispanic Fund, a philanthropic organization.

Like their parents, the three Reveron children look after one another, make sacrifices for one another and trust in each other. Anna Michelle is the eldest, and she earned her

(Reverón family, continued)

Bachelor of Arts degree in Education in 1990 at Baldwin Wallace College. She teaches at Hawthorne Elementary School in Lorain, and recently became a mother herself.

The second oldest Reveron child, Eric Orlando, is 26. He too, graduated from Baldwin Wallace, earning his degree in sociology and business administration in 1996. Eric literally embodies the family's "Together we can" philosophy. Eric is a permanent substitute teacher for Lorain City Schools, and he has been filling in for his sister, Anna, teaching her students, while she has been on maternity leave. Eric is currently pursuing his Masters degree through Ashland College and plans to pursue teaching as a career. The youngest of the three children, Javier Rigo, 22, attends John Carroll University where he is majoring in communications and will graduate in December of 1998. Javier was an all-star wrestler at Southview High School and was a Lorain County all star wrestler for three years, and was the outstanding freshman wrestler of the year. In college, Javier was a wrestler his freshman & sophomore years.

So what is it that comes to mind when the children are asked to reflect upon their family and what their parents have instilled in them? Values... structure... education... health... life-long-learning... honor...community... strong family values... trust in family. The Reveron family, like many other Latino families, have relied upon their extended family and the extended family that exists within the church and community. As they said, "Whatever we have given to the community, it has given back."

Eneida Uehlin

Eneida Uehlin, President of Dana Printing, recalls a saying from her dad who came to the US from Puerto Rico. He stresses, "By working for yourself, you hold the future in your hands."

Eneida worked as a former marketing representative for a medical manufacturer in Cincinnati for nine years. When approached by a friend, Jeanne Johnson, who owns 45% of Dana, about the prospect of buying the printing company, Uehlin took the plunge. She gained majority ownership of Dana in 1992. It was primarily a black and white forms printing enterprise. However, her focus was change. With a now 28 employee organization and an investment of \$1 million, the company provides printing, including color separation and mailing, marketing plans, writing, graphic design, web-site design and creation and consulting services.

Uehlin is careful to leave gender out of her business dealings. Dana is a quality-based organization with quality-based leaders. She says, "The fact that we are women-owned is the icing on the cake." Still, Uehlin is not unaware of the difficulties faced by women in business; so, she devotes a great deal of time to making business opportunities easier for other women.

Commitment to quality and technology, with Procter & Gamble, Fifth Third Bank, Gibson Greetings and Mercantile Stores among its clients earned Dana the 1997 Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year Award. This was presented by the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce. Furthermore, in 1996, Dana was awarded the minority business certification and became the largest Hispanic-Ohio certified printer. She received the 1996 Business Achievement Award from the Tri-State Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The other shoes Uehlin fills are those of wife, to husband Jim, and mother to sons, Nick and Jack. Eneida believes it is important to keep a healthy balance between work and family.