



LA CHARLA

NEW YORK STATE LULAC NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the New York State Chapter of the League of United Latino American Citizens

Volume 1, Issue 1

July, 2008

LULAC NEW YORK STATE MEMBERS ATTEND NATIONAL CONVENTION IN WASHINGTON DC

LULAC celebrated their 2008 convention in our nation's capital from July 7 to July 12 and it proved to be a sensational success!

Thousands of delegates from all over the country attended numerous workshops, plenary sessions, luncheons and dinner receptions with top Hispanic business, political and community leaders for the 79th Annual LULAC National Convention & Exposition.

The convention's theme, "America's Latino Community Takes Center Stage", took place in Washington, DC at a time when the Hispanic vote will play a crucial role in determining the outcome of this year's presidential election. As the premier Hispanic convention, the LULAC National Convention drew more than 15,000 participants this year including a first time delegation from New York State to discuss and debate issues, set policies, and elect the organization's national leaders.

Speakers included Presidential Candidates Senator s John McCain (R-AZ); Barack Obama (D-IL), and our own Hillary Clinton (D-NY);

The convention also drew a star studded list of speakers and panelists that included Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez; Actor Eric Martinez from Terminator 4, Model/ Indy 500 Racecar driver who also appeared in the movie Speed Racer, Milka Duno; Director of U.S. Census Bureau Steven Murdock; U.S. House of Representative, Congresswoman Hilda Solis; U.S. Dept. of Treasury, Treasurer Anna Escobedo Cabral; Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Dr. David S.C. Chu; U.S Secretary of Labor, Elaine L. Chao; and the speaker of the House of Representative of Puerto Rico, Jose F. Aponte-Hernandez;.

LULAC National President Rosa Rosales was re-elected to a new term and was well received by the New York State Delegation.

Peter Fontanes, LULAC National Board Member and the New York State Director declared that, "Many of our new members came away inspired to become more involved in making sure that we are well represented in next year's conference which will be held in Puerto Rico next year!"



LULAC NYS Director Peter Fontanes, Former LULAC President Hector Flores, Dr. Suzanne Colin, President NYS Mental Health Council, LULAC President Rosa Rosales and NYS LULAC Health Committee member Martha Laureano.



NYS US Senator Hillary Clinton being welcomed by NYS Director and National Board Member Peter Fontanes

Tony Torres is LULAC NYS Executive Director

Peter Fontanes, LULAC National Board Member and New York State Director announced the appointment of Antonio Torres as LULAC New York State Executive Director.

"I am looking forward to working with Tony in making LULAC a vehicle to make life better for the Latino community from Buffalo to Long Island" said Mr. Fontanes. Mr. Torres is from Puerto Rico and was a grass root Bronx activist.



Antonio Torres

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Inside Story	2
LULAC Supports Puerto Rico Statehood Resolution	
Inside Story	2
LULAC Business Council to Issue NYS Economic Development Report	
Inside Story	3
LULAC National Health Commission Holds Hearings in New York	
Inside Story	3
NYS LULAC Members Attend Puerto Rico State Conference	
LULAC in PR to Host 2009 National Convention	3
Inside Story	4
LULAC NYS to Hold First State Conference in Albany in April, 2009	
LULAC 2008-2009 Event Calendar	4
State Director's Corner	5
LULAC Council News	6
LULAC Youth News	6
Dr. Richard Izquierdo	7
Ed Navarro	
Bernice Gomez	
Editorial	8
Opinions	8



New York State LULAC Director Peter Fontanes speaks to LULAC Delegates at Washington DC National Convention in Support of resolution urging Congress to approve Puerto Rico State-

LULAC SUPPORTS STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO!

In an unprecedented historical move, LULAC delegates at last month's National Convention in Washington DC voted to support Statehood for Puerto Rico.

The assembly voted for a combination of two motions co-sponsored by New York State's Peter Fontanes and New Mexico's Pablo Martinez that urged the United States Congress to pass HR 900

the bipartisan Fortuno – Serrano bill named The Democracy for Puerto Rico Act allowing for a final congressionally sponsored plebiscite which will outline the constitutionally acceptable non colonial and non territorial political status alternatives for which the people of the island can vote for. The assembly was comprised mostly of Non Puerto Rican so it

really reflected the demographics of the US Latino population.

It went further than previous similar motions in that the organization has now gone on record as unequivocally supporting the statehood alternative for Puerto Rico and will now engage itself in an aggressive campaign to see that the American public and local state and national leaders are aware of this important issue.

The Speaker for the Puerto Rican House of Representative, Jose Aponte Hernandez expressed the appreciation of the Puerto Rico delegation in the passage of the motion by acclamation.

Mr. Hernandez declared that "This is an historical vote for it is the first time that Latinos from all over the country have made it clear that Statehood for Puerto Rico is part of the Latino national political agenda"

NYS LULAC TO HOLD HEARINGS AND ISSUE STATEWIDE REPORTS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMMIGRATION IN NEW YORK HISPANIC COMMUNITIES

"When we can stop counting on undocumented workers to make our beds, feed our children, beautify our homes and construct our buildings, then, and only then, can we claim the right to deport them ! In the meantime, we must treat them with justice and compassion! That is what the real American Dream demands of us!"

Peter Fontanes LULAC NYS Director

New York State LULAC will be holding hearings and issuing comprehensive reports on the state of economic development and the immigration reform.

The hearings will be held in each of the regions of the state where there is a substantial Latino population. Parties interested in testifying should contact Mr. Torres at 347 686 8278 ASAP.

The final reports will be issued at next year's LULAC Convention to be held in Albany.



LULAC New York State Chapter protests against unjust Immigration Laws and calls on Congress to enact comprehensive Immigration reform legislation that secures borders

NEW YORK YOUTH GO TO NEW MEXICO FOR LULAC LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Two high school students from New York State were awarded scholarships for the LULAC Leadership Training Program held in July for two weeks at the University of New Mexico. Desiree Joy Frias, 14, of the Bronx and Jason De la Rosa, 16, of Westchester represented New York State. They were exposed to meeting other young people from all over the country and took part in capacity building and problem solving on issues related to the environment. To apply for 2009 call 347 686 8278.

LULAC VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE TO BEGIN IN AUGUST FOR 2008 ELECTIONS

LULAC in conjunction with both the New York State Democratic and Republican Committees will participate in a month long Voters Education and Registration during

September.

The goal is to increase the Latino vote in New York State by 10% .

Volunteers are requested to call 347 686 8278.



LULAC youths from all over the country including two from New York State participate in leadership training program in New Mexico



Editorial - Governor Patterson Should not Balance the Budget on the Back of the Latino Community

Governor David Patterson has never been known to be a staunch supporter of Republican fiscal conservatism but it is no surprise to many of us who have followed his career in Albany that he now sounds more like a Joseph Bruno kind of guy than someone Speaker Sheldon Silver and the Democratic liberal establishment would like.

Much to his credit the Governor’s first major thrust of his leadership is to discourage talk of raising taxes and instead wants to put the brakes on government spending. His fellow democrats are somewhat dismayed at the prospect of allowing the rich get a break from the 11.3% state and local income tax levied against top earners in New York City. This is one of the highest in the nation and does nothing to attract or keep major producers of commerce in the Empire State. As the Governor said in his doomsday speech last week, “We should be thinking about how we got our economy in the place that it is. I think that the foremost area that we want to address is to tighten our belt, not to drive up taxes for a constituency that has been just battered over the past number of years. And compared to other states I do not think that is where we should be going.”

Now, we all want to keep a vibrant economy in this state but not at the cost of sacrificing a child’s education, or allowing an elderly hospital patient to go without life saving prescription medicine or allowing critical capital infrastructure projects to fall by the wayside creating unsafe conditions in our transportation hubs so that a wealthy Manhattan business man can trade in his BMW and upgrade to a Rolls Royce.

So this year’s state budget ultimately comes down to not just balancing accounting sheets but to a balancing of human value systems as well. Our political leaders and the general citizenry have to come to a consensus of what programs will be needed so as to allow our quality of life to continue and what others must be sacrificed for the short term until an economic upturn is possible. Certainly research and development projects and tax incentives for private real estate developments that are not geared toward affordable housing may have to be put on the sideline for the foreseeable future.

However, what we will not tolerate is the balancing of the budget on the backs of a large segment of the population who live in the lower rung of the economic ladder. This class of people depends on many of these government sponsored programs which allows them to subsist and move forward as constructive components of our society. In fact, many Latinos fall in this category and we at LULAC will not allow the Governor to force these members of our community to take a couple of steps backwards in their basic life experiences in order for others to seek wanton luxury for themselves. That is not just common sense! It is also justice!

Readers Opinions

So Puerto Rico wants to be a state and lose all the great tax benefits it now has? Or maybe it wants to lose the right to compete in the Olympics? We all know that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States but more importantly is still remains a nation living under occupation! LULAC should wake up and stop

dreaming that the American community is ready to accept a nation of poor Spanish speaking residents. Look at how Democratic presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama has been vilified by the right wingers just because his father was an African Muslim with Black skin . That should give you a clue as

to what to expect from the enlightened American citizens of the United States who still are looking to make 12 million Latino undocumented workers leave this country as criminals. Wake up LULAC!

J. Hernandez, Albany Student

To send a correspondence via email to LULAC newsletter, please forward your document with a complete contact information to lulacnys@aol.com. We will select letters to be printed at our discretion with an impartial sense of fairness unless views are deemed to be obscene or insulting. Deadline for submission is the last day of the month



State Director's Corner by Peter Fontanes

Many of my friends who have watched my metamorphic toward becoming a full fledged LULAC aficionado have been entertained by my high school like enthusiasm about the organization. I first became familiar with the group while I was Chair and organizer of the First National Hispanic American and Migrant Agenda Summit held in 2000 in Chicago, Illinois. Despite the good intentions of that effort, there were some who out of envy or lack of vision were not supportive of our goals and objectives. A few naysayer did not believe that an Hispanic American and migrant grass root effort could bring together a wide variety of different Latino nationalities with a myriad of political, sexual and religious preferences to coalesce together and draw up a common Hispanic American and migrant agenda to present to the presidential candidates. These skeptics were eventually proven wrong when our much lauded report was finally released to the public. The group that eventually became one of the most enthusiastic supporters of this gargantuan effort that many thought was an impossible mission was the League of United Latino American Citizens (LULAC).



I was especially impressed by the dedication and endless energy of Blanca Vargas who served on the Advisory Board of the Summit leadership and who was also the Illinois State Director of LULAC. I was amazed at the number of Chicago based LULAC volunteers, both young and old, that she was able to garnish together to assist us in handling the many details of tending to hundreds of delegates from around the country. The loyalty of these LULAC members ran deep and can only be earned by those like Blanca who, through example have touched the heart strings of her followers the way only she could with sincere humility, a pureness of heart and total lack of subjective motive. Additionally, LULAC National President Hector Flores, took time from a busy travel schedule, to attend the conference on a three hour layover to be our keynote luncheon speaker.

The success of that effort truly was contributed to the input of the LULAC organization. I walked away from that experience with a total respect for the organization but was surprised to hear that the LULAC New York State leadership never were able to effectively organize themselves in that state. Consequently, years later, I met with Brent Wilkes, the LULAC National Executive Director and inquired as to the possibility of LULAC reorganizing in New York. I volunteered to put together a meeting of influential leaders from New York State and invited LULAC Regional Vice President Toula Politis Lugo and our newly elected National Vice President for Women, Regla Gonzalez to attend and speak to us about how we could start a LULAC State Chapter in New York.

We then started to form LULAC councils in Buffalo, Long Island, Brooklyn and Queens. We also started a Youth Council and a Health Council. So far as the New York State Chapter of LULAC we have been active in issues such as the Jason Tirado police shooting, lobbying for the Columbia Trade Pact, the Salsa con Politica Scholarship Drive, the National LULAC Health Commission hearings and working to insure the passage of HR 900 to bring closure to the political status issue on that island and for comprehensive federal immigration reform.

Despite the enthusiasm we find at first breath, people could still not understand how LULAC works. Simply put. LULAC is comprised of hundreds of local councils comprised of 11 people or more. Each of these councils operate autonomously of each other and even have their own respective federal tax ID for exemption. How easy is that to understand?

The best part is that it still only cost \$25 annual membership fee to join. Go into our web site www.lulac.org and find out more. So if you want to be part of the largest Hispanic American and migrant organization in the country, all you have to do is sign up and pay your dues. You will then be put on our mailing list to keep up with all of the various issues, activities and events that we hold during the course of the year. Remember: Juntos! Si Se Puedes!



Presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama with LA Mayor Antonio Villagairosa at LULAC Conference.



LULAC Local News

Buffalo

Lourdes Iglesias of the Hispanics United of Buffalo had a successful fund raiser honoring some of our friends like Miquel Santos and Judge Betty Calvo Torres. Cesar Cabrera has been appointed by Governor Patterson to be a head honcho of the state's Department of Labor! A great choice for a man who labors well for our peo-

ple. Good Luck! Cesar!

Rochester

Wow! Another "Empanada Stop" by Juan Contreras and his wife, Maria. They are the royalty of that tasty treat found all over the world but best tasted in their kitchens especially if you want taste to die for !.

Syracuse

Rita Paniagua, is getting her Latino Festival in high

gear and rumors has it that the locals are getting ready for a possible Mayoralty bid by that city's Council President, Bea Gonzalez

Kingston

RM Production headed by Eddie Ramirez held their annual Latino Festival in this colonial village which is fast becoming an enclave and a haven for upstate Latinos.

Manhattan

Al Cappas, the lower east side activist, just declared that he is no longer an advocate for Independence for Puerto Rico. In a statement posted on the web he declared himself in favor of statehood.

Long Island

Thomas Suozzi, Nassau County Leader with CASA head Marianela Jordan honoring local Latino leaders at a reception this month.

NYS LULAC Young Adults and Youth Leaders to initiate Leadership Institute

Jonathan Rivera, a 22 year old business college student from Buffalo was appointed by NYS LULAC State Director Peter Fontanes as the LULAC Youth Director . As such, he will be responsible for being a liaison between the group and other institutions such as colleges and corporations to enhance opportunities and address issues of importance to Latino young adults. Mr. Fon-

tanes said that, "this appointment of an extraordinary young man from our community will insure that programs such as the New York State LULAC Young Adult Leadership Training, the LULAC Mentoring Program, the Graduate School Opportunity Scholarship, the Young Adults Voters Registration and Education Drive will move forward effectively."

Mr. Fontanes also announced that Desiree Joy Frias, 14, of the Bronx and Jason Tavares, 16, of Westchester were appointed Co Chairs of the Youth Councils from New York. Beginning in September. they will be conducting a series of retreats, social events and reading clubs throughout the state If you have a teenager or a young adult



Jonathan Rivera

who wants be part of these groups,. Please call 347 686 8278 for more information.

NYS LULAC to Focus on Community Technology

Technology is the prime driving force in the ability for LULAC members to get our message out there not just all over New York State but all over the nation and the world. That is why Peter Fontanes, LULAC's New York State Director, is focused on developing a team of IT experts to lead

the movement for Latinos in New York to utilize the many fantastic tools available via the Internet to reach out to our community.

Silvia Falker CEO of OAT Corporation, a Buffalo based IT consulting , will be chairing the special LULAC Technology Coun-

cil.

The fiery Chilean born business woman said that "I will be very active in making sure that our Latino communities are not left behind in the 'Digital Divide' either as business owners or consumers!"



Silvia Falker will help NYS LULAC Chapter members how to use modern technology to advance our mission.

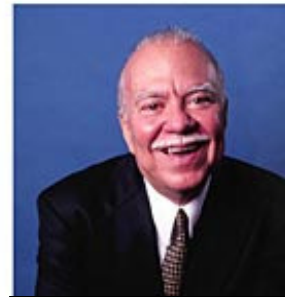


**Focus on:
Dr. Richard Izquierdo
Bronx**

Richard Izquierdo was born in East Harlem. He was raised and studied throughout New York State and Puerto Rico, finally settling in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. He attended Long Island University from where he graduated. He chose to attend the University of Madrid Medical School and jointly enrolled at the University of Lausanne Medical School

in Switzerland where he graduated in 1957. Upon his return to the United States, Doc completed his internship and residency programs in pediatrics at Fordham Hospital and in 1962, he opened his first practice on Southern Boulevard in the Bronx. By 1964, Doc had not only become a thriving physician but also a community activist. In 1967, Doc purchased an empty building

on Southern Boulevard and created the San Juan Health Center. He has served on numerous organizations including the local Community Planning Board. He ran for the New York City Council in 1977. His dedication however has always been to serving the medical needs of his community. He spearheaded the growth of the Urban Health Plan and a 37,000 square foot facility, in 2001. He is truly an icon and a legend in the history of the Latino community in New York State.



Dr. Richard Izquierdo

**Focus on:
Ed Navarro
Rochester**

Ed Navarro was born in Cuba. With the advent of Castro's regime, the Navarro family immigrated to the United States, settling in Rochester, New York. A ten year affiliation with Eastman Kodak, introduced Ed to the high-tech world of imaging optics and electro-optical technologies. His duties included the development and optimization of

new business opportunities in the U.S., Europe and Asia. A civic-minded individual and a real entrepreneur at heart, Mr. Navarro acquired EIC Electronics in March of 1999, as a means of preserving natural resources while infusing his home town with a city based business committed to economic development and local hiring initiatives.

Since his acquisition of EIC Electronics, Ed Navarro has widened the scope of its capabilities to include engineering, light manufacturing, secondary assembly operations, procurement and distribution services. Ed Navarro is the current Chairman of the Rochester Hispanic Business Association. His leadership has proven to be pivotal in Rochester's Latino business growth.



Ed Navarro

**Focus on:
Berenice Gomez
Long Island**

Berenice Gomez recognizes the value of education. As President and CEO of Harvest Home Mortgage, Gomez's personal motto is "There's always something new to learn."

Having graduated from UNPHU University in the Dominican Republic with a degree in business administration and come to the United States in 1988 at the age of 18, Gomez knew right away that she wanted to make a difference.

"I came here and I had a goal," she said. "I wanted to break from the traditional Latina role."

She soon started in the mortgage industry and quickly climbed the corporate ladder. But after more than a decade, she noticed a void.

"I saw the need a few years ago for a company headed by a Latina to understand our culture," she said. "So I decided to open my own busi-

ness. With their knowledge and expertise, Harvest Home Mortgage has already positioned itself as one of the dominant players in the Hispanic and mortgage financing market.

Aside from serving as president of her company, Gomez also serves as wife (her husband, Jose Martinez, is Harvest's COO) and mother of four. Additionally, she has a branch office in Florida, a management company, Mago



Berenice Gomez



LULAC National Health Commission Holds Hearings in New York City

The LULAC National Health Commission came to New York and met with key health activists to discuss the problems facing the Latino community from Buffalo to Long Island.

George Zeppenfeldt, the President of the United States Chamber of Commerce on Health, was present at the hearing as well as Dr. Richard Izquierdo of the San Juan Health Center. Dr. Antonio Abad of the Association of Latino Mental

Health Professionals also testified.

A spokesperson from AstraZeneca focused on the danger of artreocolosis among Latinos and the role of the pharmaceutical company in developing grass root awareness programs through it's mobile Explorer van.

Licet Valois of the Alzheimer's Association made an impassioned plea for LULAC to step forward for Latino victims of the dreaded nerve

center disease. Jaime Martinez from Texas, who is also LULAC's National Treasurer and Sal Alvarez, Co Chairs of the Health Commission were very disturbed that this disease was not being given the attention nor the resources and programs to combat an increasing rate of incidence as the Latino elderly population grows in numbers.

The Health Report will become available later in the year and will be posted on the national web site and presented to Congress.



Jaime Martinez and Sal Alvarez, LULAC Health Co Chairs and Health activist George Zepenfeldt at New York Health hearings with AstraZeneca Artreoclorosis

NYS LULAC Members Attend Puerto Rico LULAC State Conference in San Juan and Meet with Island Leaders

Last May, Puerto Rico Senator Roberto Arango was pleased to see that his fellow LULAC members from New York had made it to San Juan to be part of the island's annual LULAC Convention. NYS LULAC leader, Peter Fontanes, said that it was a way to pay back the

great support that the Senator has given the Puerto Rican community from that state. The New York group also had a chance to meet with the candidate for Puerto Rico Resident Commissioner, Pedro Pierluisi and the speaker of the Puerto Rican lower

House, Jose Aponte.

LULAC Puerto Rico Hernandez voted in a new leadership with Haydeé Rivera chosen as the new State Director, Aldo Rodríguez as Assistant Director, Vanessa Aguilú as Women VP and, Miguel Miranda as Youth VP.



Carlos Cossi, Candidate for PR Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi and NYS LULAC Peter Fontanes in San Juan

Puerto Rico to Host 2009 National LULAC Conference

"Pa' San Juan Vamos en 2009!" is what the LULAC membership is saying in anticipation of what will promise to be one of the most fun filled and informative events held next year by any national Latino organization. It will come at a time when the island politi-

cal scenery will be changing with the general elections and a political status plebiscite that may profoundly alter local and national politics. Make reservations now and join the hundreds of New York State Latinos expected to attend.





A Publication of the New York State
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**LULAC NYS to Hold First State
Conference in Albany in April, 2009
with Governor Patterson and Sena-
tor Clinton as Keynote Speakers.**

The New York State Chapter of LULAC will hold it's first Statewide conference in Albany at the Marriott Marquis in April, 2009.

The keynote speakers will be New York State Governor David Patterson and US Senator Hillary Clinton.

The theme will be "A Statewide Latino Grassroot Effort—Making it happen in New York!"

There will be a number of informative workshops dealing with contemporary issues affecting the state's Hispanic American and migrant communities including immigration, education and health among others. Well known national panelists will be leading many of the discussion groups.

This will also be the first time that the entire conference will be web cast to allow maximum participation. There will also be a Youth forum to engage young people in the conference. A Dinner reception and dance will conclude the daylong event . Participation in the conference is free.

"The upstate Latino community has been neglected for so many years and we have never had a statewide voice to represent us until LULAC came along!"

Miquel Santos—Buffalo

NEW YORK CHAPTER 2008 2009 PROGRAM

August- There are no meetings in August except for Gala and Conference Committee

Voters Registration Drive from August to September

SEPTEMBER LULAC Monthly Breakfast –“Labor-Unions and the Hispanic American and Migrant Worker”

LULAC- Politica Con Salsa Weekly Scholarship Benefit Dance Begins

September 17th –Citizenship Day- New American Citizens Seminar

LULAC Young Adults –College Fair

LULAC Health Committee- Statewide Health Hearings and Fairs

LULAC Women Committee-Latinas Achievement Awards

LULAC Dinner Reception and Networking – “LA NUEVA GRAN UNIDAD PAN AMERICANA: Myth or Reality”

OCTOBER LULAC Monthly Breakfast- “Disabled Latino Americans: Care or Neglect?”

LULAC Youth Committee- Voters Registration Drive from October 1-10 Dance Party

LULAC Young Adults Committee- Anti -Drinking and Driving Awareness Campaign

LULAC Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Committee-

LULAC Presidential Elections Symposium

LULAC Health Committee- AIDS in our Community

LULAC Labor Committee- Labor Diversity in Corporate America

LULAC Education Committee- Commencement of Reading Clubs

LULAC Business Council- Latino Chefs Taste A Thon Fund Raiser

LULAC Arts and Culture Committee- Arts, Music and Cultural Fair

LULAC Women Committee- Domestic Violence Awareness Symposium

LULAC Veterans Committee- Special Events: Statewide Honoring the Latino Veteran

NOVEMBER-LULAC Turkey and Food Drive

LULAC Youth and Young Adults –Get out the votes!

LULAC Women Committee- “Adopting Latino Children Here and Abroad”

LULAC Dinner Reception and Networking “Puerto Rico Political Status Debate”

LULAC Special Event: Dances and Music from Latin American Indians”

DECEMBER-

LULAC Monthly Breakfast- Chavez, Castro, Morales and the United States Latin American Community

INDUSTRY PRESS SYMPOSIUM- “Can a Real Campaign be Built that Will Protect and Advocate for Minority Interests in Local and National Press!”

2009

January- January 6, 2008- LULAC Three Kings Toy Drive

LULAC Monthly Breakfast-“Faith Based Social Programs: Can they survive?”

LULAC Business Council – Mentoring Week for LULAC Youth and Young Adults

LULAC Dinner Networking- “Honoring the Dominican American Diaspora”

LULAC Education Committee- Book Drive

LULAC Health Committee Blood Drive

February-African American History Month, National Dental Month, American