VIII. Online Poster


Latinos and Philanthropy: Recommendations for Success for the Latino Federation of the Greater Washington Area

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Specifics of the Thesis Project
In order to develop a comprehensive recommendation for what it takes to become a successful philanthropic organization for the Latino community here in the D.C. Area, my research covers various aspects of philanthropy, including:
- The history of traditional philanthropy and how it has
My Interest in working with the Latino Federation (LFW)

Through the D.C. Project course, I was given the opportunity to choose a non-governmental organization to work with throughout the course of the school year. It was an easy choice to work with the Latino Federation because of my ties to the Latino Community and because of my hope that my experiences there would help prepare me for working in community leadership positions in other organizations in the Latino Community.

Even after only interning at the Latino Federation for a short time, the importance of non-profit and non-governmental organizations in the Latino Community has become incredibly evident. For various reasons, the D.C. government, as well as many of the surrounding area's governments on both local and federal levels, fail to respond to the Latino Community's needs and rights. The fact that the Latino population of D.C. and the surrounding metropolitan area continues to grow only intensifies the need for attentive and responsible governance that recognizes Latinos as a significant part of the area's constituency and a group that is very much so an integral part of the community. However, the responsibility of attending to the Latino Community's needs ignored by city governance falls to the various non-profits and non-governmental organizations that have been created to compensate for these inequities.

The large and diverse group of NGOs and NPOs serving the Latino Community in the D.C. Area need a front organization that will serve as the center for attracting and distributing resources, as well as doing research on and promoting the Latino Community's needs. The Latino Federation was created with the objectives of supporting, developing, and promoting the Latino Community through research, advocacy, fundraising, and organization strengthening. This thesis project has the goal of demonstrating the need for a Latino philanthropic organization in the D.C. Area, as well as identifying strategic areas for the LFW to develop in order to be successful.

Community Profile, Updated January 2006
Profile of the D.C. Area Latino Community, generated for my thesis

Community Impact
As previously stated, this study intends to generate recommendations for the Latino Federation of Greater Washington based on similar philanthropies' development experiences. The study is primarily being done to serve the Latino Federation in its development as a successful philanthropy for the Latino Community of the D.C. Area, but also to open up discourse between philanthropies serving communities with unique cultures of giving - How other philanthropies have developed in non-mainstream communities and established themselves successfully within their own communities.

Recommendations for the specific Latino community in the D.C. Area

Biography of the Researcher
I was born in San Francisco, California and spent most of my time growing up in the Bay Area. I attended Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland and upon graduation, entered the Georgetown University College class of 2008. I have spoken Spanish since I was younger and have lived and worked for significant periods of time in Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. At Georgetown, I have studied Spanish and minor in Sociology with a concentration in Social Justice. Because of my experience at Georgetown and in the areas where I have grown up, work in Social Justice has always been important to me. At Georgetown, I have worked with the D.C. Schools Project here in D.C., as well as completing a community engagement internship program while studying abroad in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. I enrolled in the D.C. Project course my senior year to continue developing my experience in Social Justice work and plan to enter a job either in education or non-profit development after my graduation in Spring 2009. Please feel free to...
Challenges for this Thesis Project

Fortunately, obtaining the most of information and support that I need for this project has not been difficult. Especially with the help of the staff of the Latino Federation, I have been able to access a variety of resources that have helped to develop my understanding of the topic and furthered my research.

However, with this understanding has come the realization of the difficulties that the Latino Federation faces. First of all, the Latino community here in D.C., as in most large cities, is incredibly diverse. As such, the Latino Federation is not able to model itself directly after any other organization because our constituency, our Latino community, is unique to our area. This means that our community has unique circumstances, unique needs, and the Latino Federation has to represent and attend to this unique community as best as possible. As demonstrated in my Community Profile and in documents of the Latino Federation and the D.C. Office on Latino Affairs, the Latino Community of the D.C. Area is especially unique for the large numbers of recent immigrants and Central Americans, which are not usually the majority numbers in the Latino Communities of other large cities in the U.S.

This is not to say that there are not lessons to be learned from other similar organizations; on the contrary, taking an extensive look at how other organizations have recognized and appealed to their community’s unique qualities will greatly serve the Latino Federation in understanding how to best serve ours. Still, how to best engage and serve an incredibly diverse community (and a large number of non-profit and non-governmental organizations serving this community) represents a significant challenge for the Latino Federation, and a challenge to be taken into consideration in the recommendations generated by this thesis as well as future studies.

Contact me with any comments or questions.

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Resume (English)

Resume (Spanish)

Additional Resources

D.C. Latino Economic Development Corporation

D.C. Office on Latino Affairs (OLA)

Spring Semester

Table of Results

Results from Interviews with Jewish Federation and the National Center for Black Philanthropy (NCBFP)

Op Ed Piece

Additional Resources

D.C. Latino Economic Development Corporation

D.C. Office on Latino Affairs (OLA)

Hispanics and Philanthropy Online

Georgetown University Project D.C. Course Description