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# LA VOZ DEL PASEO BORICUA



lavoz@prcc-chgo.org



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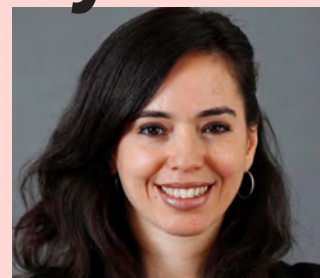
## Humboldt Park's Very Own IRIS MARTÍNEZ Wins Big

**1.2 Million Votes -- 72% of Votes Cast**  
Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

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## Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas Poised to Become State Senator

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NMPRAC

Raíces Gala: "Las Navidades"  
In Puerto Rico with  
José Feliciano **PG14**



PRCC's Business  
Development Center  
Opens WEPA **PG14**  
Mercado del Pueblo

**CELEBRA CON SABOR BORICUA VIRTUALMENTE:**

**PARRANDA NAVIDEÑA  
EN PASEO BORICUA**  
SAB. DIC 19, 4PM **PG.20**

**DIA DE LOS TRES SANTOS REYES MAGOS**  
MIER. 6 DE ENERO 3PM **PG.20**



### ABOUT LA VOZ:

The most recent manifestation of Puerto Rican journalism in Chicago, La Voz del Paseo Boricua proudly continues in the legacy of our community's previous newspapers. Founded in 2004, La Voz del Paseo Boricua, or simply 'La Voz' as it is affectionately called by our readers, is a grassroots bilingual periodical published by the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center. We report on stories relevant to our community on a monthly basis, disseminating news about local events, programs, resources, and developments. As an alternative source of media, we seek to acknowledge the achievements of the Puerto Rican community at large and to advocate for the preservation of the heart of our barrio in Humboldt Park - our "pedacito de patria" in Chicago.

### SOBRE LA VOZ:

La más reciente manifestación del periodismo puertorriqueño en Chicago, La Voz del Paseo Boricua continúa orgullosamente el legado de nuestros primeros periódicos. Fundado en 2004, La Voz del Paseo Boricua, o 'La Voz' según se le conoce cariñosamente por nuestros lectores, es un periódico de pueblo, publicado de manera bilingüe por El Centro Cultural Puertorriqueño Juan Antonio Corretjer. Mensualmente, divulga historias relevantes de nuestra comunidad, diseminando noticias sobre acontecimientos, programas, recursos, y progresos locales. Como fuente alternativa de medios, intentamos reconocer los logros de la comunidad puertorriqueña al igual que abogar por la preservación del corazón de nuestro barrio Humboldt Park - nuestro "pedacito de patria" en Chicago.

### MEET OUR PRODUCTION TEAM



Roberto Sanabria  
EDITOR IN CHIEF  
robertos@prcc-chgo.org



Xiomara Rodríguez  
DIRECTOR,  
DIGITAL MEDIA  
xiomara.rodriguez  
@prcc-chgo.org



Luis Alejandro Molina  
SENIOR ADVISOR  
alejandrom@prcc-chgo.org

Xavier Claudio  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
xaviera@prcc-chgo.org



## COMMUNITY AS A CAMPUS / PRCC DISTRIBUTE FOOD AND TURKEY AT AREA SCHOOLS

by Marvin Garcia



At Richard Yates Elementary, 11-21-2020



At Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos H.S., 10-1-2020



Erie House Charter Parent Coordinator  
preparing to make deliveries.



West Park Academy Parent receiving a turkey  
and produce.

## ALDERMAN LASPATA AND COMMUNITY AS A CAMPUS CO-SPONSOR FREE COVID TESTING AND FLU SHOTS



In conjunction with the 1st Ward Alderman LaSpata's office, the Illinois Department of Public Health, Walgreens Pharmacy, and the Yates Sustainable Community Schools initiative, the Community as a Campus/ PRCC participated in a free COVID testing and flu shot event on Friday, November 6, 2020, which drew 372 people for COVID testing and 131 flu shots.

The event was held at the Ricard Yates Elementary School with the participation of many volunteers who directed traffic and distributed PPE's. Thanks to all who provided food to the volunteers and families that participated in the event.

## DR. PACIONE-ZAYAS POISED TO BECOME STATE SENATOR



by Jessie Fuentes, Co-Chair,  
Puerto Rican Agenda of  
Chicago

Next week history will be made as Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas is slated to be selected by the Committeemen of the 20th District to serve as

that district's State Senator, thereby replacing our trail blazing leader - Iris Martínez. For the first time in the Senate, there will be a seamless, organic transition between two generations of powerful Boricua women. I am honored to watch a friend, colleague, and mentor take a seat in the Illinois Senate.

Dr. Pacione-Zayas and I have served five years together as Co-Chairs of the Puerto Rican Agenda. During our tenure, the Puerto Rican Agenda has become a political force in the Latino community of Chicago and throughout the Puerto Rican Diaspora. It has been with Dr. Pacione-Zayas's leadership that the Puerto Rican Agenda launched the 3 R's (Rescue, Relief, and Rebuild) Campaign that provided aid to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Irma and Maria and then earthquakes devastated our island. The deep solidarity of the Puerto Rican Diaspora was on full display when the Puerto Rican Agenda landed its first plane in San Juan, Puerto Rico with \$100,000 worth of supplies and returned to Chicago with 300 stranded passengers. From that moment the Puerto Rican Agenda has been at the forefront of relief and policy efforts to rebuild a new Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican Agenda is indebted to Dr. Pacione Zayas for her dedication and inspired leadership through these tumultuous events.

(Continued on page 8)

## Humboldt Park's Very Own Iris Martínez Wins Big!

### 1.2 Million Votes -- 72% of Votes Cast

#### Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

#### EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

*After her record-setting victory in the General Election, Iris Martínez talks with La Voz Del Paseo Boricua's Editor in Chief, Roberto Sanabria.*

*On December 1, 2020, Appellate Court Justice Jesse G. Reyes, swore in Iris Martínez as the first Latina to assume the role of Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Ms. Martínez sat down for a socially distanced interview midway between her landslide victory and her assumption of this new and critical role.*

*RS. You received about 1.2 million votes, which makes you the highest vote getter of all Puerto Ricans, everywhere in 2020. In fact, you received 30,000 more votes than the top four candidates in the election for Governor of Puerto Rico. There is no doubt you are one of the most widely known and influential Puerto Rican officials today. Does that surprise you? What do you say to that?*

*IM. No, I didn't know that. I'm excited. I was shocked*



seeing those numbers coming in on Election Night. I was following the Biden numbers, too, because of how important that election was to all of us, and in some places I got a higher percentage than he did. I said, Wow! There are a lot of expectations, but I am honored and I am ready for the challenge.

*RS. What do you plan to take on during your first term? Priorities? Your wish list?*

*IM. First and foremost, as I campaigned I continually fielded complaints about the unprofessionalism of the Clerk's Office. This was something that was said over and over. To me*

it's important to bring customer service to the Clerk's Office. When people come in with serious needs like an order of protection, our customer workforce needs to be friendly. When people come in with problems, our frontline staff needs to be empathetic. They need to authentically want to dig in and help them find solutions. That means retraining that workforce. The leadership up to now has not been invested in this. We need to lift the cloud of corruption and patronage. My goal is to remake the office. It is the second largest county clerk's office in the nation. We have to remake it into a professional operation.

*RS. In your opinion, what does the Democratic Party need to do to reach out more effectively to Latino voters?*

*IM. Until you have Latinos in decision making positions in the Democratic Party, you will not be effective. Our Latino residents want to hear from us about issues important to them.*

(Continued on page 5)

## OVER THE COURSE OF 4 DAYS, PRCC DISTRIBUTES TURKEYS, FOOD STAPLES, AND PREPARED MEALS TO MORE THAN 400 FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY

by La Voz Staff



On Saturday November 21, PRCC's Community as a Campus initiative joined Yates Elementary School in distributing turkeys and food to 85 of its students' families. On Monday, November 23, the PRCC, Ald. Maldonado, Municipal Food Market and the sponsoring Committee of the Palestinian Scholarship Student Fund distributed turkeys and food to 100 families at the PRCC's newest economic development initiative, el Mercado del Pueblo, next to Municipal. On Tuesday, Nov. 24, the PRCC, Ald. Maldonado and the Municipal Market, gave away 100-125 turkeys and foodstuff boxes at the above location to families for Thanksgiving dinner.



## COMMUNITY RALLIES AROUND FRANCISCA LINO

by La Voz Staff

Francisca Lino has lived in the sanctuary of Adalberto Church for 38 months. This church is in the heart of the Paseo Boricua, and is regularly attended by Mexican and Puerto Rican worshippers. Yesterday, Tuesday, Oct. 27, just one week before the presidential election, an ICE agent called Pastor Emma Lozano, who is a longtime friend and spiritual advisor of Francisca Lino, and demanded to know her whereabouts. By 5:00, Pastor Lozano had organized a press conference in front of Adalberto Church.

With her 3 children and husband behind her (all US citizens), and a row of Mexican and Puerto Rican flags to her side, Francisca Lino addressed the crowd and media gathered. She explained that it was important that she remind ICE where she was. She did want federal agents to harass and detain others while supposedly search-

ing for her. She insisted she was not a fugitive, but an asylum seeker. Through her attorney, ICE was



kept up to date on her location. Francisca Lino described how her application for citizenship was rejected because of a simple error written on the form. Her attorney spoke to the press and confirmed that. Moreover, we learned that his client had never run afoul of the law – not so much as

a parking ticket. Pastor Lozano told those who gathered that a deranged racist can murder scores of Mexicans in a Texas Walmart at the border while Trump does nothing, but this law-abiding mother and wife somehow attracts his attention. Puerto Rican Cultural Center Executive Director, José E. López questioned, “why now?” Then he answered – this is what Trump's base desires. López argued that Trump's base supporters are a racist group inspired by a racist ideology. He decried any Latino who would vote for Trump.

All who spoke urged the crowd to vote. They agreed that the current harassment was a politically motivated ploy, a last-minute desperate attempt by the President to get his followers excited and to the polls. Francisca Lino proudly pointed to her children and to her husband, and let everyone know that her family is voting in this election.

# MAYOR LIGHTFOOT SUPPORTS CITY COUNCIL FUNDING FOR NANCY FRANCO MALDONADO PASEO BORICUA ARTS BUILDING TO BREAK GROUND IN EARLY 2021

By Eduardo Arocho, Contributing writer

The long anticipated Paseo Boricua Arts Building project has taken a major step forward toward groundbreaking. In a press release issued November 16, Mayor Lori Lightfoot's Office voiced its support for a Bond Ordinance to fund the Paseo Boricua Arts Building. The Bond Ordinance would authorize the City to amend an existing ordinance and issue an additional \$6 Million in bonds for a total not to exceed \$12 Million in tax-exempt housing revenue bonds to Paseo Boricua Arts, LLC. The Finance Committee approved the ordinance the following day. A follow-up hearing of the Finance Committee will be held on December 14th. Once approved, this ordinance will go to the full City Council for final approval on December 16th.

The Paseo Boricua Arts Building has been a major project of The Puerto Rican Cultural Center since it purchased the properties of the former Ashland Sausage Company in 2013. The project suffered delays due to rising costs of building construction, which quickly surpassed the original construction budget. Now with the new financial commitment from the City of Chicago, The Puerto Rican Cultural Center and its partner Brinshore,

LLC, look to initiate the groundbreaking by early 2021.

The five-story building is designed by UrbanWorks Architects and will feature a spacious common area and office for building operations on the first floor, as well as two commercial retail spaces including a black box performance theater that will be leased by The UrbanTheater Company. The 2nd through 5th floors will include 24 affordable, Live/ Work units for artists and their families and will be a mix of studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units for tenants



Credit for the image provided by UrbanWorks, Ltd.

with incomes at 30% to 60% of the area median income.

The Project was renamed The Nancy Franco Maldonado Paseo Boricua Arts Building, in honor of 26th Ward Alderman Roberto Maldonado's late wife Nancy, who was an ardent supporter of the project before her untimely death due to cancer in 2016.

(Interview IRIS MARTINEZ continued from page 3)

COVID is one of the biggest problems they see now. Also problems with education. The Democratic Party is standing at the forefront. It needs to look for ways to support more Latino candidates. In Illinois they don't. The Chairman needs to step down. Our Supreme Court Justice was not retained. They ran attack ads against him tying him to the Speaker of the House,



alleging corruption, and we failed to respond effectively. We need to start a conversation. We need new progressive leadership. A leadership where all ethnicities, Black, Latino, everyone is represented in the decision making. When that happens, Latinos will feel more at home in the Democratic Party; their support will soar.

## NEW BUSINESS OPENS ON PASEO BORICUA

Alkaline Healing Herbs opened its second store in Chicago at 2455 W. Division St.

Owner Coralee Montes offers a variety of products for detox, revitalizing and nutrition inspired by Dr. Sebi. Other products include fresh teas, juices, and natural skin products among others. Visit their Instagram page @alkalinehealingherbsllc or website [alkalinehealingherbs.com](http://alkalinehealingherbs.com) for more information.



## PRCC CONGRATULATES THE CLEMENTE COMMUNITY AND STUDENTS FIRST LSC SLATE ON WINNING THE LSC ELECTIONS

The entire slate of the Clemente Community and Students First LSC won the recent elections in that school, which included the three parent representatives, Judy Vázquez, Miguel Vázquez, Myriam Manzo, and the two community representatives, Glenda Guzmán, and LeShonne Segura. The purpose of the slate was to ensure that the educational practice at Clemente is guided by the goals and objectives of the Community as a Campus initiative. The Community as a Campus initiative was founded more than a decade ago to ensure that we can harness the social capital of our community around our educational institutions. Presently the Community as a Campus initiative engages in work in 17 of the area schools.



## HAUNTED PASEO BORICUA 2020

by PRCC staff

1,500 children plus their moms and dads safely celebrated Haunted Paseo this year. Thanks to smart precautions and good weather, The Puerto Rican Cultural Center provided a COVID free and inviting alternative to traditional trick or treating during this year of pandemic - even surpassing last year's turnout. Along the Paseo Boricua, 20 stations stretching from West Town Bikes at Division & Campbell to the Lisa Isadora Cruz Trans Health Center on Division & California, offered



socially distanced tricks and treats to the community youth. Glenda Guzmán, who co-organized this year's Haunted Paseo, said the best station was hers - situated at the Casita de Don Pedro, where blindfolded and socially distanced children took turns at whacking candy filled piñatas while screaming for joy.

Melissa Lewis, Principal of Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos H.S., organized a pumpkin painting station where children were invited to paint the

gourds and carry away with them (with the help of a parent) a box of food, which was donated for this purpose.

Guzmán reported that overall the event was a great success. She touted the community's great capacity and resourcefulness to organize and execute culturally appropriate fun for the community's youth. She added, "I hope that next year the situation improves and that we can bring more joy to our community and to our youth."



# OPEN LETTER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUERTO RICAN DIASPORA: U.S. STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO IS NOT A PROGRESSIVE POSITION

*Editor's Note: Before the November 2020 election, the National Boricua Human Rights Network issued an open letter on the status of Puerto Rico. Signed by hundreds of individuals across the Puerto Rican diaspora, the letter challenges the idea that the U.S. should make Puerto Rico a state. The imposition of statehood is not, contrary to some positions, a progressive political position; it is a colonial one. Proponents of statehood continue to spin the results of the recent plebiscite, claiming without evidentiary proof that the majority of the Puerto Rican people support annexation. Instead, progressives and allies of the Puerto Rican people should support the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act, introduced by Congressional Representatives Nydia Velázquez and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The bill recognizes that the future of Puerto Rico should be decided, above all, by the Puerto Rican people through a transparent, honest, and fundamentally democratic process. In the coming weeks and months, La Voz will further explore why Puerto Rico needs a genuine path to self-determination and an end to colonialism.*

Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony. It became so, as illegal war booty of the Spanish-American war in 1898. Contrary to pronouncements after the 1952 establishment of “Estado Libre Asociado,” known in English as Commonwealth, Puerto Rico’s political status has never ceased to be colonial. In 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged this fact. One hundred years after it had designated Puerto Rico as “foreign in a domestic sense” and inhabited by “alien races” unfit for self-government, it concluded that “the ‘ultimate’ source of prosecutorial power remains the U.S. Congress.” In other words, Puerto Rico has no sovereignty, other than what

Congress grants.

For 122 years, equivalent to five generations, this island-nation has been a colonial possession. Its land, labor, resources, and bodies have been

## DEMANDS FOR PUERTO RICAN SELF-DETERMINATION GROW IN THE DIASPORA

- In **Delaware**, Puerto Ricans demand Biden support self-determination.
- In **Pennsylvania**, Councilwoman María Quiñones introduces resolution to Philadelphia City Council calling for support of HR 8113
- In **Massachusetts**, Springfield City Council adopts resolution presented by Councilman Adam Gómez supporting self-determination for Puerto Rico bill.
- In **Illinois**, Puerto Rican Agenda is organizing efforts for resolutions to be adopted in The City of Chicago and State legislatures to support Nydia Velázquez and Alexandria Ocasio Cortez bill.

exploited and its clamors for self-determination and independence repressed. As a result of this long and tormented history, the majority of Puerto Ricans today reside outside of the island. Yet, al-

though separated by space, the connection between the diaspora and the island remains strong, as seen in its mobilization of aid after the ravages of Hurricane Maria and the willful neglect of the Trump administration.

Today, many of us in the Puerto Rican diaspora are troubled by growing expressions of support for Puerto Rico becoming the 51st state of the U.S. among liberals and progressives. Statehood does not have overwhelming support among Puerto Ricans. Although figures from the most recent plebiscite in 2017 are widely touted by statehood proponents, 77% of the island’s electorate boycotted the vote. It is clear to us that many U.S. progressives do not know that the Puerto Rican Statehood Party (PNP) is among the most socially conservative parties on the island, boasts Republican leaders, has a long history of corruption, and has spent millions to woo congressional officials.

Statehood is not a progressive position for Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is not Washington, D.C. Puerto Rico is a nation. It has its own identity, history, and aspirations. Under international law, Puerto Rico’s colonial status cannot be resolved through the imposition of statehood. Under conditions of colonialism and increased demographic substitution, this will only lead to the intensification of domination. For this reason, we consider legislation proposed by NY Representatives, Nydia Velázquez and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez as a promising step. It recognizes that Puerto Rico’s future can only be decided by Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican diaspora. In short, our decolonization rests on the human right to self-determination.

## COMENTARIO

## ¡LA ANEXIÓN SALIÓ TRASQUILADA!

*A pesar de campañas financiadas con dinero extranjero, la estadidad pierde terreno. El PNP llega a su punto más bajo de la década.*

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 4 de noviembre de 2020- El apoyo a la estadidad ha llegado a su nivel más bajo en esta década. Los datos son claros e irrefutables: De un 61.16% que obtuvo en el 2012 y un alegado 97% en 2017, ahora se reduce a 50.5% cuando se consideran las papeletas echadas en blanco. Esto, a pesar de contar a

su favor con una ley de “plebiscito” claramente diseñada para favorecer el voto por la anexión y de lanzar, además, una campaña de miedo financiada con millones de dólares de dudosa procedencia. El liderato del Partido Nuevo Progresista (PNP) escogió el terreno de juego e impuso las reglas para torcer los resultados y NO lo logró.

Los puertorriqueños y puertorriqueñas hemos hecho una nueva expresión de reafirmación nacional, de orgullo de nuestra identidad cultural, caribeña y latinoamericana. Queremos ser un pueblo con proyección en el mundo y NO diluido y disperso en un país cuyo sistema de gobierno NO respeta a las minorías, a

los pueblos originarios, a los negros, a los latinos, a los puertorriqueños y a tantos otros más.

La reducción de apoyo a la anexión y las casi 40 mil papeletas echadas en blanco, son un rechazo también, al chanchullo y a la pretensión de imponer la corrupción en la solución responsable del estatus colonial de

nuestra Patria. Mediante el voto por el NO nuestra gente se ha expresado y ha dicho, basta ya de consultas y plebiscitos que nada han resuelto.

En este plebiscito la estadidad

ha salido trasquilada lo que hace ineludible la convocatoria a una Asamblea Constitucional de Estatus. La realidad no se puede esconder. En el plebiscito del 2012 el actual estatus territorial fue rechazado por el 54% de los y ahora la estadidad obtiene una cantidad de votos menor a las pasadas consultas. Ni el ELA (la colonia), ni la anexión son opciones viables, nunca lo fueron, pero ahora han recibido el rechazo del pueblo puertorriqueño. Las únicas opciones posibles y dignas son las que se sostengan en la soberanía de los puertorriqueños. Esa es la ruta viable, que no debe postergarse más.



(PACIONE-ZAYAS continued from page 3)



Dr. Pacione-Zayas has become the only Puerto Rican political commentator on WGN. She has advocated, organized, mobilized, and inspired people to fight for what is right. She has been a powerful voice in her role as a member of The Illinois State Board of Education, and as the Associate Vice President of Policy at the Erikson Institute. It is Dr. Pacione-Zayas's tenacity and commitment to a more just world that ensures us that she is the most qualified candidate for the position.

Cristina, it is with great joy to watch you transition into the Illinois Senate. Thank you for your work, your commitment, your friendship and your mentorship. It has been an absolute honor to serve with you. You will always have an organizer in me.

## ADAM GÓMEZ BECOMES MASSACHUSETTS' FIRST AFRO-PUERTO RICAN STATE SEN.

ISSUES SPECIAL THANKS TO PRCC

*State Senator-Elect sends a special thanks to Puerto Rican community for its support in his historic win.*

SPRINGFIELD - On November 3rd Adam Gómez won the election for the Hampden District State Senate seat, becoming both the first Puerto Rican and Afro-Latino member in the body's history. At a socially-distanced election night celebration attended by close supporters, the campaign committee, Rep.



Adam Gómez at Jan. 11, 2017 rally and march to White House demanding freedom for Oscar López Rivera.

Carlos González, Rep. Elect Orlando Ramos, and members of the press, current Springfield City Councilor Adam Gómez outlined his vision for his first term. Later that day, he had a “shout-out” for the Chicago community:

*“I am incredibly thankful for the love and support that the Puerto Rican Cultural Center of Chicago, Puerto Rican Agenda, and the entire diaspora of Puerto Rico has shown for me. This community got me across the finish line.”* said Gómez. *“I am especially thankful to my mentor José E. López, Juan Calderón, Jessie Fuentes, Luis Alejandro Molina, and lastly the Puerto Rican community of Humboldt Park. Making sure that Bandera a Bandera doesn't just begin and end on W Division Street, but rather extends across this country. ¡Que Viva Puerto Rico! ¡Sí si Puede y Sí Se Pudo!”*



# PUERTO RICAN CHICAGO MOURNS PASSING OF ICONIC, GROUNDBREAKING LEADER MARÍA CERDA REMEMBERED

By Aida Giachello



The Puerto Rican community mourns the loss of an iconic leader with national name recognition, María Cerda, who passed at the age of 89. María was married for 60 years to Judge David Cerda who is now 93 years

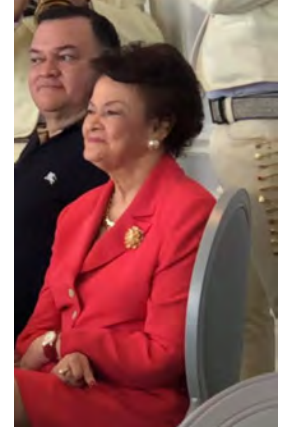
of age. María was the mother and the role model of another great community leader, Marta Cerda, who is currently the CEO of ASI Home Health Care, as well as David Cerda, Jr., who is a distinguished attorney. María died Sunday, November 8, 2020 at Northwestern Memorial Hospital from COVID-19 related complications.

With steely determination, María struggled through the years for Latinos to receive quality education, better housing, dignified employment, and in the defense of our beautiful cultural heritage. She was born in Lares, Puerto Rico, into a huge family-- 20 brothers and sisters. She graduated from the University of Puerto Rico where she earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology, then moved to Chicago to earn a master's degree at the University of Chicago's School of Social Services Administration. María became deeply aware of the social and economic injustices that plagued the poor and the racial and ethnic minorities. She tirelessly promoted an agenda for social action while working for diverse social services organizations. While working in a program for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, María met the man who would become her husband, Judge Cerda, the first Mexican American Judge in the Circuit Court of Appellations of Illinois.

María Cerda's accolades include:

- *First Latino/a appointed to the Chicago Board of Education by the late Chicago Mayor, Richard M. Daley. There she initiated, then expanded bilingual education programs and ensured that sufficient funding was allocated to those programs. She persuaded Board members to visit Puerto Rico and Mexico to recruit bilingual teachers for the Chicago Public Schools.*
- *Always passionate for the education of children, María was one of the founders of Aspira, Inc.*
- *A strong advocate for Latina women's rights, María was part of the Latina Feminist movement of the 70s, and became one of the first members of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, with Miriam Cruz, and other great Puerto Rican women.*
- *María was interviewed on many local and national radio and TV stations. Among them was an interview with Studs Terkel on WFMT where she argued that our youth need to know their culture and to develop a sense of pride in their heritage.*
- *María was a member of the national Board of Children's Television of the Public Television Network where*
- *She provided advice on Sesame Street and The Electric Company.*
- *María marched for civil rights with Martin Luther King when he came to Chicago.*
- *María marched with Cesar Chávez when he visited the Pilsen community.*
- *In 1974, she helped create the Latino Institute, the powerful resource that continues to engage in advocacy, research, and policy on behalf of Latinos.*

- *María was one of the first leaders to support the candidacy of the late Harold Washington, the first African American to run for Mayor for the City of Chicago during the Democratic primaries. She later served on the Transition Team for the Mayor and was appointed to the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training.*
- *María was instrumental for the City of Chicago to become a sanctuary city for immigrants as a result of a negative encounter with the federal Immigration officers in the entrance of City Hall where they were asking her and others for their Green Cards without being aware that she was a U.S. citizen by birth. As a result of those incidents, Mayor Harold Washington declared Chicago a Sanctuary City.*



María was blessed with great wisdom and was driven by her profound love for justice. She had immeasurable courage to take on fights when necessary, but through hard work she created other solutions for complex community problems when that was an option. In all the sense of the word, she was a great lady, who dressed elegantly and impressed everyone who met her. Many of us wanted to be like María. She was a great inspiration and she showed us the way. María, my good friend, we are going to miss you. Rest in Peace!

by Aida L Maisonet viuda de Giachello/Aida L Giachello

# Centerfold

# Centerfold

# PUERTO RICO'S REFERENDUM NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A SELF-DETERMINATION PROCESS

by *Fmr. Rep. Luis Gutiérrez*

On Tuesday, a “yes or no” referendum will take place in Puerto Rico asking voters whether they wish to join the union as a state. Whatever the outcome, the referendum is by no means a process to resolve the island’s commonwealth status, which many Puerto Ricans liken to colonial status.

This latest referendum will be the sixth to take place over decades in the island. As with the most recent one in 2017, it is mired in controversy because it fails to include all of the status options that diverse Puerto Rican voices have rallied for – not

just statehood but also, for more than a century, independence; a free association, similar to the arrangement the United States has with Palau; and a modification of the current commonwealth status.

To argue that Puerto Ricans are being denied their full rights, as the island’s pro-statehood party does, but then make the range of options of all of their compatriots invisible is the worst form of hypocrisy. It does nothing to repair the image of the political party that has been in power for the last four years – the New “Progressive” Party (PNP in Spanish) – the same party of ousted Gov. Ricardo Rosselló.

But don’t take this blatant exclusion from just me – take it from the Department of Justice (DOJ). Citing Obama-era White House reports, the DOJ minced no words when it said that any referendum that excludes other options opposed to statehood would not be legitimate.

Treating the island’s status as if it were a Twitter survey is an insult to the Puerto Rican people. It’s a grotesque mask for the island’s political parties to marshal voters to keep them in power by tricking them into believing they will resolve the island’s

status, when this is another non-binding straw poll. In fact, last summer, during the leak of scandalous chats between Rosselló and his cabinet members, whose circle of associates remain in control, the ex-governor said, “we even play our own for fools.”

If this disdain of the island’s elite wasn’t clear to the Puerto Rican people, we wouldn’t be seeing the emergence of new political parties and movements on the island that cross status lines and are focused on principles of good government. Existing parties have been forced to scramble and there is a realign-



ment in the works, according to most observers.

As with the previous tainted referendums, this latest one also won’t trigger any action on the part of Congress. Instead, Puerto Rico needs a transparent, fair and inclusive process that would bind Congress to what Puerto Ricans – no one else – choose as their future.

There is a concrete path to this process. The Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act of 2020 introduced by my former colleague Rep. Nydia

Velázquez (D-N.Y.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) recognizes the inherent, human right of the people of Puerto Rico to call a Status Convention or Constitutional Assembly to directly elect delegates who would negotiate with an official Congressional commission.

Contrary to past proposals, this commission would ensure that voters on the island are aware of the implications of their status vote, including transition plans and policies affecting reparations, citizenship, federal funding, language, international representation and other vexing issues that

have not been addressed in past island referendums. These are all critical questions that must be thoroughly discussed and answered if we truly want to have a democratic process.

The bill respects Puerto Rico’s right to self-determination and is set up in such a way that the people’s democratically elected assembly and the congressional commission cannot be dissolved until a status option is chosen by the people and ratified by Congress.

When Puerto Ricans en masse took to the streets in the summer of 2019, it was a clear statement that our people were done with conniving, corrupt leadership on the island and in Washington. Puerto Ricans are fed up with a U.S.-imposed unelected fiscal control board. More intrusion by self-interested political parties

and players, both here or there, is simply not welcomed. No matter how well-disguised, Puerto Ricans will see it from a mile away.

The way to express support of the island’s people is by backing the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act of 2020. Puerto Ricans can lead for themselves. It’s time to respect that.

Luis Gutiérrez is a former Democratic congressman who represented Illinois’s fourth district. This article was previously published in *The Hill*, and, the views expressed by contributors are their own and not the view of *The Hill*.

## In Memoriam

*Benito Reinosa Burgos*

*Hay vibración de tambores  
que nacieron africanos  
y hoy resuenan en las manos  
de un mundo de mil colores;  
Llantos, rezos y dolores  
de una Patria agradecida  
mientras pasó a mejor vida  
un boricua hasta en la luna  
y su Atabal entró en una  
dimensión desconocida.*

*No hay tribunal ni prisión  
ni marina todavía  
que tengan la valentía  
de Carlos "Tasó" Zenón  
hoy que él trasciende,  
su acción y su yola de pescar  
se van immortalizar  
en la Patria, en la Isla Nena,  
en cada grano de arena  
y en la inmensidad del mar.*

*A Carlos Taso Zenon  
-Eduardo Villanueva Serrano.*

*A Héctor (Atabal) Rodríguez Medina  
de Eduardo Villanueva Serrano.*

*Por Eduardo Villanueva Serrano*

*"Umbrío por la pena, casi bruno, porque la pena  
tizna cuando estalla, donde yo no me hallo, no se  
halla, hombre mas apenado que ninguno"* Miguel  
Hernandez

Queridos compas: Nadie se atreva a llorar, dejen  
que ria en silencio. No se fue Benito, siempre  
digo que se transformó, eso ocurre con el espiri-  
tu cuando abandona la capsula que es el cuerpo.

• **HECTOR FRANCO, ACCLAIMED COMMUNITY LEADER AND ALD. MALDONADO'S FATHER-IN-LAW**

The Puerto Rican Cultural Center Mourns the physical loss of a pillar of our community, and father-in-law of Alderman Roberto Maldonado, Hector Franco. Hector Franco became a highly respected and admired leader in Chicago's Puerto Rican and Latino community. Following his training as a community organizer, he would create a very effective multicultural multiracial advocacy group. Allies for a Better Community-ABC. He was an effective leader in addressing many issues relating to the quality of life in our marginalized communities.

The PRCC joins The Franco and Maldonado families in their bereavement on the loss of another family member during the holidays. Nearly 5 years ago, they confronted the unexpected and untimely death of Nancy Franco Maldonado, Hector Franco's dear daughter, and Roberto Maldonado's beloved wife.

• **JAMES CORTÉS, BELOVED BROTHER OF OUR PATRIOT EDWIN CORTÉS**



We, at The Puerto Rican Cultural Center, are deeply saddened by the passing away of James Cortés. James, beloved brother of our Patriot Edwin Cortés, a valued member of a distinguished family that has made many contributions to our Collective work. The family will receive friends at Kurtz Memorial Chapel, 65 Old Frankfort Way, Frankfort, IL 60423 on Sunday, November 22, 2020, from 11:00 AM until the time of service at 2:00 PM.

• **JAIME CRUZ, LONG TIME BUSINESS OWNER**



Jaime Cruz, long time restaurateur and President of the Cocineros Unidos de Humboldt Park, died unexpectedly on Tuesday, December 8th. For 20 years Jaime was the owner of Latin American Restaurant on Paseo Boricua and for many years was a member of the Division Street Business Development Association. He owned several popular food trucks in Humboldt Park, and he gave back through his generous support of many activities in the Puerto Rican Community. La Voz del Paseo Boricua expresses its deepest condolences to Jaime's wife Yolanda, his children, grandchildren as well as the entire Cruz family. He will be sorely missed.

## ELEGIA A BENITO REINOSA BURGOS



Pienso que nuestros espiritus son desprendimientos del espíritu Supremo, que le llamamos Dios. Esa energía es infinita y de ahí salimos en soplo, a habitar un cuerpo y una mente, que luego se entrena, se socializa para ser y para vivir en sociedad. Los que como Benito, se doctoran en dar amor y no piden nada materia para ellos, son los

que iluminan la larga noche oscura, aveces de lo que son injusticias constantes. Los soles que pintan el amanecer y la esperanza del fin de la opresión y de la esclavitud, son seres de luz, de verdad, son los que nos alumbran en la lucha. Son los que a veces nos produce una vergüenza íntima, por no alcanzarlos o apreciarlos en su grandeza. Es un imperativo ético quererlos y respetarlos. Eso se ganó Benito y desde allá y acá nos enseña y nos lega su ejemplo...

## RAICES GALA CELEBRATES “LAS NAVIDADES” IN PUERTO RICO

The Annual Raíces Gala at The National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture (NMPRAC) in 2020 was an extraordinary occasion from start to finish: The museum celebrated 20 years since its founding, and the Humboldt Park community celebrated 25 years since the public art project of the steel Puerto Rican flags on Paseo Boricua, known as “Banderas,” was installed. Moreover, the celebration was distinctive for yet another reason. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s gala was celebrated virtually, and, for the first time, it took place in Puerto Rico. Notably, the 2020 Raíces Gala was moved to December so as to kick off the holiday season in Puerto Rico, known as “Las Navidades.”

Each year as part of the gala, NMPRAC selects major artists to receive the prestigious Ceiba Award, the only national award granted to Puerto Ricans for their artistic and cultural accomplish-

ments and contributions. This year, the awards went to the museum’s longtime collaborator, theater company Y No Había Luz; to the national organization, Hispanic Federation, for their contributions to help the arts of Puerto Rico and



the Diaspora; to José Feliciano, who celebrates 50 years of the classic song “Feliz Navidad”; and to Lucecita Benítez, who is considered “The National Voice of Puerto Rico.” Aside from allowing viewers

to be present as this year’s honorees receive their awards, the gala video transports viewers to the Isla Del Encanto, welcoming them with a performance by Y No Había Luz, interspersed with tributes to the culture of the pueblo of Loíza, and ending with a musical performance attended by none other than the Three Kings.

The Raíces Gala helps to raise the funds required for NMPRAC to continue to thrive as a cultural anchor in the City of Chicago as well as become the preferred destination for all those wanting to learn about the rich history, art, and culture of Puerto Rico. As the only self-standing Puerto Rican museum in the United States, the NMPRAC’s vision is to collaborate with other institutions to harness the necessary resources in order to expand programming, exhibits, and visitor experience.

## ¡WEPA! MERCADO DEL PUEBLO: A PATH TO COMMUNITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*By Nadya Henriquez, PRCC’s Economic Development Administrator*

On Saturday, December 5, 2020, The Puerto Rican Cultural Center’s (PRCC) Business Development program opened the doors of the new ¡WEPA! Mercado del Pueblo initiative and incubator. This innovative platform provides an indoor space to the Paseo Boricua ¡WEPA! Community Pop Up vendors during the winter season. The Pop-up and the market are the first two stages of The PRCC Community Business Development Model. This model has three stages: the first is our Pop-Up, where startups and businesses in their embryonic stage can get a sense of the market, start earning money, and reinvest that money into their businesses. The second stage is our new project ¡WEPA! Mercado del Pueblo, where business owners that demonstrate commitment, growth, and the desire to formalize their businesses, can sell their

products in an indoor space during the weekends. The third stage will be to support our Weperos to transition, after they are prepared, into a store front or co-working space.

The ¡WEPA! Mercado del Pueblo is located at 2559 W. Division St., next door to La Municipal Supermarket. With the help of La Municipal and the City of Chicago’s Small Business Investment Fund (SBIF) award to La Municipal, the space was completely remodeled to house our market, which has turned into the “go to place” for shopping on Paseo Boricua.

The ¡WEPA! Mercado del Pueblo showcased 12 local entrepreneurs that are part of the incubator project, which is supported by the Neighborhood Business Development Center (NBDC) and through the business, advising, and training they receive from the Small Business Development Center



(SBDC) of the PRCC. These aspiring small business owners will go through a training program to formalize their business structure, and learn how to manage business finances, marketing and promotion, among other essential business concepts.

We invite you to come to our new ¡WEPA! Mercado del Pueblo, and meet our WEPA vendors (Weperos) who have unique and affordable gifts for your holiday shopping. Support our local entrepreneurs and our community!

The market is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:30 am to 6 pm.

## CRISTIAN ROLDÁN:

# LA PINTURA MURAL COMO INTERVENCIÓN POLÍTICA

*Nacido en Puerto Rico, Cristian J. Roldán reside en Chicago desde el 2014. Cursó su maestría en educación del arte en The School of the Arts Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Su trabajo está influenciado por el uso de los espacios públicos para la preservación de la memoria colectiva, el dialogo y la representación cultural de la diáspora puertorriqueña y latinoamericana en los Estados Unidos. una verdadera alternativa de descolonización para el país.*

*Xochipilli Magazine presenta el trabajo del artista Cristian Roldán, en donde nos propone la aspiración de lograr fundar una conciencia social y política a partir de la pintura.*

*A continuación compartimos una breve entrevista, en donde nos comparte su visión y una muestra de su mas reciente obra.*



¿Cómo nace tu proyecto artístico y por qué elegiste la expresión mural?

Me involucré en el muralismo por pura casualidad. Cuando me establecí en Chicago, comencé a trabajar con el Centro Cultural Puertorriqueño, en Humboldt Park, les pedí que me proveyeran una pared para pintar un pequeño mural. Así comenzó todo. Un mural me llevó al próximo y del próximo al otro. Cuando llegue a Chicago me dí cuenta que muchos de los problemas sociales que veía en la isla, se repetían en la diáspora Puertorriqueña en Chicago. Fue entonces cuando decidí crear conceptos con temas sociales. Más que para llevar una narrativa, el mural se convirtió en el medio más accesible con el cual preservar la memoria colectiva en la diáspora Puertorriqueña.

¿Cómo es que surge tu proceso creativo, es decir, el paso de una idea a plasmarla en la obra?

El génesis de todo proceso creativo es la incomodidad. Si hubiese sido una persona conforme con la sociedad jamás hubiese creado algo artístico. La inspiración surge al querer imaginar una realidad alterna, del deseo de querer ordenar y reconstruir tanto el interior como el exterior, o al querer denunciar los entornos como productos de una

construcción social. Las ideas comienzan a nacer desde esa incomodidad, es ahí cuando nace la narrativa, la crítica y el proceso explorativo.

Una vez llega la idea, la creación se convierte en un problema en evolución constante con cada trazo o con cada pincelada, con cada capa de pintura sobre capa. Las imágenes van mutando como las ideas. Primero es una superficie en blanco, luego es emburujado o garabato, cuando vienes a ver todo va tomando forma de a poco a poco es entonces



cuando lo dejo todo y lo retomo al otro día.

¿Crees que la creatividad en cualquiera de sus manifestaciones artísticas provoque un cambio social?

Absolutamente. Habrá quien argumente que la acción creativa no ejerce una fuerza directa sobre las estructuras sociales. Sin embargo, las manifestaciones creativas estimulan la imaginación, un paso esencial para el pensamiento crítico, y de ahí partir hacia la acción. A través del cultivo de la imaginación se llega a la empatía con el prójimo, a la búsqueda de alternativas a los problemas sociales y a la exposición de narrativas que de otra manera

pasarían por desapercibidas. El arte sirve para concientizar a las masas y crear diálogos sobre asuntos sociales que de otra manera pasarían desapercibidos. Ejemplos del uso del arte como una fuerza social son el movimiento de muralismo mexicano en los años 30.

¿Como consideras el panorama del arte latino en Chicago? González

Hace seis años, cuando llegue a Chicago, observe que el arte público latino ha sido muy influenciado

por las condiciones que se vive como inmigrante. No obstante, pienso que hoy en día se está profundizando más en las raíces sociales y causas globales que han llevado tanto a la migración como a la marginalización de los inmigrantes. El racismo ya no es un asunto que se pueda ignorar, la migración ha sido tema central de campañas políticas y la desigualdad social se discute hoy más que nunca. Dichos problemas sociales surgen a raíz de una colonización tanto interna como externa, en el caso de Puerto Rico. En el arte se vuelve cada vez más resonante el asunto del colonialismo como causa principal de un desorden social que históricamente ha beneficiado al eurocentrismo nutriéndose

de la marginalización de los grupos marginados. Producto de ello, ha surgido un discurso que aboga por la descolonización de las instituciones de arte. Hoy en día se reclama de una manera más abierta y directa a través de, y para el arte, la descolonización institucional y la creación de espacios inclusivos donde las realidades de los latinos y de los inmigrantes sean visibles tanto en el mundo artístico como en la esfera social.

La siguiente pieza narra las múltiples olas migratorias de Puerto Rico hacia Estados Unidos después que la isla fuera transferida a Estados Unidos en

*(Vease la próxima pagina)*

## HPYEEP USHERS IN YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Humboldt Park Youth Employment and Empowerment Program is a 12-week workforce development initiative that supports youth ages 16-24 from the Humboldt Park community. This program provides youth with meaningful work experiences, supplemented by work-readiness classes, to prepare them for entry into the professional world. If you have no prior work experience, or need some help developing skills, then you might just be the ideal candidate.

Through our partnerships with various local organizations, we introduce the youth to diverse fields of work, including customer service, retail, agriculture, and mechanics. Working within this environment, they will build connections with places of employment along Paseo Boricua, gain valuable work experience, and develop or refine transferable skills, all while earning a livable wage. This work experience is supplemented by a 12-week work readiness class to teach youth about various aspects of the professional world, including resume building, interview tips, and budgeting workshops.

The program also offers case management ser-

vices to all youth on a weekly basis. Participants will meet regularly with their case managers and build strong connections with them as they move forward through the program. Case managers will assist the youth with college or job applications, help them apply for public aid service like SNAP or Medicare, and answer any questions they may have about the program or their worksite. Case managers can also refer youth to additional services that they may need for themselves or for members of their household.

It is the Humboldt Park Youth Employment Empowerment Program's goal to provide youth with permanent places of employment, re-engagement with their academic pursuits, or enrollment in college or technical programs. We are excited to work with youth and to help unlock their full potential. These young community participants are our future community leaders.

For more information, please contact Samantha Toledo: [samanthat@prcc-chgo.org](mailto:samanthat@prcc-chgo.org) or 872-829-2662.

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• Case Management/ Counseling

**Contact Us!**  
[luism@prcc-chgo.org](mailto:luism@prcc-chgo.org)  
773-697-3369  
2425 W. Division st

THE Puerto Rican Cultural Center

(Viene de la página 13)

1898. Inmediatamente Puerto Rico fue etiquetada como una colonia, que pertenece pero no es parte de los Estados Unidos.

El cambio impidió el desarrollo económico y financiero del territorio colonizado, al convertirle en un territorio que produce lo que no consume y consume lo que no produce, creando así un proceso de contante desconcentración espacial de los puertorriqueños. El desplazamiento constante

ha creado un espectro de mutaciones de una iden-



idad que lucha por encontrar y definir un lugar en los nuevos espacios, sin perder la esencia y el

deseo de autodeterminación.

Las imágenes, en este mural, representan las olas migratorias de Puerto Rico a los Estados Unidos,

por mas de un centenario, buscando crear conciencia sobre el impacto negativo de a pérdida de población en la isla. Cada imagen en el mural representa un contexto histórico que ha fomentado a la identidad puertorriqueña a convertirse en una nación nómada o como Jorge Duany diría "Una nación en vaivén".

Publicado el noviembre 16, 2020 por Xochipilli Magazine



## EN TRIBUTO A CARLOS ZENÓN

# TASO VIVE. ¡QUE VIVA TASO!

por Ramon Figueroa Sorrentini

Carlos "Taso" Zenón fue uno de los grandes de esta Patria. Triunfador en muchas batallas contra la marina de guerra de los Estados Unidos que dominaba y abusaba de la isla querida, Vieques. Guerrero incansable batallaba en mar y tierra. Organizó la Asociación de Pescadores Viequeses, y junto a un grupo de sus miembros se tiraba a la mar cada vez que los barcos de guerra venían a bombardear su tierra. Muchos bombardeos fueron parados por aquellos intrépidos guerreros, que liderados por su Comandante Taso, se ponían al frente y a los costados de esos barcos y a pedradas lanzadas con hondas o con sus manos hacían imposible muchas veces, y cuando menos dilataban, los bombardeos, permitiendo así a los y las viequeses en tierra buscar protección.

Conocimos a Taso en 1999 durante la etapa de lucha que culminó en la salida de la marina de E.U. de Vieques el 1.º de mayo de 2003. Fundó el campamento Monte David, cuna de los campamentos de resistencia que luego proliferaron en los terrenos restringidos. El Comité de Trabajo en Apoyo a Vieques, que poco antes se había fundado en Mayagüez, se dedicó a colaborar con Taso y su tropa, además de apoyar los esfuerzos que se hacían por la paz



en Vieques tanto en la Isla Nena como en la Isla Grande.

Cuando la tierra de Vieques reciba sus cenizas, ni pandemias, ni atrasos de lanchas, que para ese día podrían ser atrasadas a propósito, impedirán que lleguemos a la Isla Nena. Allí de pie, como siempre estuvo, y nos enseñó a estar Taso, rendiremos tributo al "pescador y guerrero legendario". Confiamos en que un pueblo agradecido se una, en la forma que permita la situación actual, recordar a quien nunca dudó en arriesgar vida y hacienda por su Vieques amado.

Nuestras condolencias y fuerte abrazo a Leidi, a Pedro, Cacimar y Yabureibo, (nada extraño que un guerrero diera nombres de guerreros a sus hijos), a sus hijos mayores, a los nietos y nietas de Taso y Leidi, a otros familiares y a la pléyade de sus compañeros y compañeras de lucha.

Taso entró al paraíso de los inmortales. Rindamos tributo a ese guerrero que nunca permitió que nada ni nadie le impidiera luchar y combatir, por todos los medios a su alcance, por la libertad y el disfrute de su Vieques amado.

Originalmente publicado en Biekésí, revista de el Festival de Reyes Magos en Vieques, edición especial diciembre 2020.

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## CONG. “CHUY” GARCÍA SPONSORS THE LONG-AWAITED “COMMUNITY DRIVEN RECOVERY FOR PUERTO RICO ACT.”



*U.S. Representative for Illinois's 4th District Jesús G. "Chuy" García will be introducing a bill "To establish the Office for the Equitable, Transparent, and Accountable Puerto Rico Reconstruction, and for other purposes" or*

*the "Community Driven Recovery for Puerto Rico Act."*

In 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated the island of Puerto Rico. The federal government allocated 18.5 billion dollars in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery for recovery purposes. But the Governor's Plan titled "Transformation and Innovation in the Wake of Devastation," which was required to obtain federal funds showed that the lack of government accountability and transparency was one of the biggest challenges to Puerto Rico's recovery and future re-

siliency. This report named the central government as a slow-moving and ineffective management structure. Meanwhile, the recovery scenario often is characterized by a "time-compression" where decentralization has the flexibility needed to respond to a rapid change and a fast-paced decision-making environment.

Disaster recovery research has demonstrated time and time again that grassroots organizations and nonprofits (e.g. the civic sector) are much more flexible, agile, and responsive to the needs of communities. Evidence from across disasters worldwide also shows that local organizations are better able to serve vulnerable populations. They are often characterized by high housing informality levels, lower-incomes, a high percentage of older adults, people with limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities. The local knowledge that these organizations, their cultural competency, commitment to equitable development, and ability to conduct authentic community engagement could not match outside "helicopter" organizations.

The Bill seeks to empower the civic sector by creating an Office for Equitable, Transparent, and Accountable Puerto Rico Reconstruction, which will establish a Puerto Rico Civil Society Task Force to oversee federal funds' spending to ensure accountability. The Task would be composed of 13 members with representation from community leaders, including low-income individuals and non-profit organizations, to mention a few.

Adi Martínez-Román, Senior Policy Analyst - Puerto Rico Oxfam America who partnered with The Puerto Rican Cultural Center to push forward this endeavor about a year ago, said, "Rep. Chuy García's staff and the T&I Committee have done a great job at incorporating the concerns expressed. The Bill will be presented in Congress in the next few days"

To endorse the Bill, contact Adi at [adi.martinez-roman@oxfam.org](mailto:adi.martinez-roman@oxfam.org). Support our efforts for a more transparent, equitable, and efficient recovery for Puerto Rico.

*(Continued from page 10)*

The PRCC has also expanded the geography of its services beyond Humboldt Park to Belmont-Cragin, Avondale, Hermosa, and Logan Square opening a welcoming center for immigrants—El Centro de la Raza—at 6009 W. Diversey to provide direct services to our immigrant and refugee communities.

For the first time, The PRCC provided direct services to community small businesses through our SBDC initiative. This included the development of a series of pop-ups and incubators as well as our latest addition, ¡WEPA!, El Mercado del Pueblo, located next to Municipal Supermarket on Division Street. It is important to note that as we initiate this small business development incubator, we rejoice at the fact that Supermercado Municipal celebrates 40 years of service to our community

as a family-owned business—the Farhan family is Palestinian with deep roots in Puerto Rico.

In terms of our housing development efforts, we plan to break ground on the Nancy Franco Maldonado Paseo Boricua Arts building, which just secured its final funding from the City Council of Chicago with the support of Mayor Lightfoot. Through the bleakness of this pandemic, The PRCC kept true to its commitment to maintain and perpetuate our culture -- as is evidenced by the success of our two acclaimed and large-scale cultural events, which this year were held virtually - the 42nd Puerto Rican People's Day Parade and the 27th Fiesta Boricua. These occurred with the support and co-sponsorship of HITN and our Alderman Roberto Maldonado. We also held our traditional Haunted Paseo Boricua within the limita-

tions of social distancing and other measures. We are planning to conduct our Parranda Navideña and our Three Kings Day virtually and perhaps otherwise. We are definitely looking forward to 2021 as we begin preparations to usher in a new phase of our work by preparing for 2022 when we will mark the 50th anniversary of the launching of our first initiative, the founding of what is today the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School.

May the New Year bring the best to you and your loved ones, and may our Santos Reyes Magos make real our Promesas by ending the imperial rule of PROMESA in Puerto Rico. I hope that we can continue to count on your enduring generosity and solidarity. ¡Feliz Navidad, Prospero Año, y Felicidad!

## PRCC INITIATIVE TO BE HEADED BY XIOMARA RODRÍGUEZ



*The Puerto Rican Cultural Center is excited to announce the newest addition to our team. Humboldt Park native, Xiomara Rodríguez, is now the Director of our Informatics division.*

*Rodríguez has dubbed this new area “The PRCC Digital Presence Initiative”, which includes our website, social media, digital to print, as well as our digital archive.*

*Xiomara melds a highly defined set of skills in the realm of informatics with an equal zeal for social justice informed by a decolonizing mission. Xiomara received her bachelor’s degree from Occidental College in Computer Science, but is deeply rooted in the Humboldt Park community.*

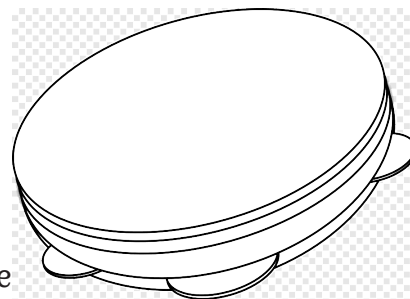
*Her family has been active in this community for generations, and her mother is on the Board of Directors for the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School. Xiomara explains her vision for the Digital Presence initiative*

I am a proud Puerto Rican and lifelong Humboldt Park resident, which is why I am so excited to work with The Puerto Rican Cultural Center! I resonate deeply with our vision to encourage participants to think critically about their reality and promote an ethics of self-reliance based on social responsibility. I have always been passionate about using social media as a tool for building community, especially when we cannot share physical space. In my work with our digital presence initiative I am committed to fostering community by creating opportunities, using social media, podcasts, blog posts, the website, live

lectures, and online skill-sharing, for continuous critical discussion about the issues we confront as a community. I also am a firm believer in the power of collective imagining and organizing, so my intention is for each aspect of our digital presence to also be a generative tool for imagining collectively what we want for the future of our community. However, what is most important to me in my position is to honor and promote all of the work that The Puerto Rican Cultural Center has been doing for decades on our mission to self-determination, self-actualization, and self-reliance. I believe our history must always inform the work of online community building with the digital presence initiative, so I look forward to many conversations, visions, and collaborations!

## ANNUAL PARRANDA WILL GO VIRTUAL: APOYANDO LO NUESTRO

For the past 13 years, Boricuas in Humboldt Park have celebrated “Las Navidades” with an annual parranda on Paseo Boricua. The parranda would start at Teresa Roldán Apartments, then make its way down Paseo as the celebrants sang traditional aguinaldos. This year, it will be different. As we adjust to the jarring impact the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our lives, we become even more creative so we may continue to honor and enjoy our cherished traditions. As such, we continue to CELEBRATE! This year, our 14th Annual Paseo Boricua Parranda will go virtual so as to protect our youth, our elders, and our community. On December 19, at 4pm, head to your computers and go to [bit.ly/Parranda2020](https://bit.ly/Parranda2020) to join the celebration. Keeping with the theme of “Apoyando Lo Nuestro”, businesses on Paseo will be featured throughout the parranda, which will be dedicated to our elders at the Teresa Roldán Apartments.



## CUCA GET WELL



The staff of La Voz joins the Humboldt Park Community in wishing our beloved artist Cuca a speedy recovery.

# ¡FELICIDADES 2021!



**14th Annual  
"Virtual" Paseo  
Boricua  
Parranda**

*with Ivelisse  
"Bombero de  
Corazón"  
y su parranda*

**Apoyando Lo Nuestro  
Dedicated to our elders at  
Teresa Roldán Senior Apartments**

The graphic features a central white circle with a yellow border, containing the event title and host information. To the left are three crowns, and to the right is a colorful mask with wings. The background is red with faint geometric shapes.

*This year,  
our 14th Annual  
Paseo Boricua  
Parranda will go virtual  
so as to protect our youth,  
our elders, and  
our community.*

*Saturday, December 19 at 4pm  
Meet on Zoom at [bit.ly/Parranda2020](https://bit.ly/Parranda2020)*



Sigan apoyando los negocios en Paseo Boricua  
Please continue to support the businesses on Paseo Boricua



**DIA DE LOS TRES  
SANTOS  
REYES  
MAGOS  
MIERCOLES  
6 DE ENERO, 3PM**