

## ***¡Hola Comunidad!***

### *Who we are...*

United Way of Delaware (UWD) seeks to maximize community resources to help all Delawareans. With that in mind, Latinos Unidos (LU) was formed in 2013 to engage the Hispanic Latino community in this work - which has always been focused on three main areas: Education, Income, and Health. Latinos Unidos is led by three co-chairs: Tabatha Castro, Esq.; Dr. Rosa Colon-Kolacko; Anabel Pineiro and supported by the United Way of Delaware staff, Wanda Lopez and Jamee Boone.

Based on a survey of the LU network in November 2013, it was determined in a 2013 meeting that education issues relating to the Hispanic community were to be LU's primary area of concern. Most importantly, LU's strategic goal was to work collaboratively with all Hispanic-serving organizations, associations, and corporate employee networking groups, to leverage resources for collective impact.

### *What we did...*

On March 15, 2014, Latinos Unidos held a strategic retreat which focused on education gaps/needs as they relate to this Hispanic community. By utilizing the appreciate inquiry methodology of "Discovery, Dream, Design, Destiny," the participants engaged in a highly productive discussion. Over 40 multi sector representatives, predominantly of Hispanic origin, participated in the retreat that was framed around the four education groups – early child education, elementary, middle and high school. Through a structured data-based process, the information gathered was prioritized using the Impact to Community/Effort Required/Control matrix, a six sigma methodology. All the data has been compiled into an excel spreadsheet entitled "Latinos Unidos Goals Prioritization Final", and is available upon request. The Latinos Unidos team captured through this analysis, the education gaps and needs in our community that we, as an affinity network working with Hispanic-focused employer resources groups and the community, will have high control to change. For this reason, those goals were shared with the Delaware Hispanic Commission for inclusion in their final Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda report, the goal of the Latino Summit they spearheaded in November 2014.

As a result of this process, six (6) main goals were identified:

1. Enhance developmental milestones and school readiness amongst Latino students.
2. Increase reading on early grade level amongst Latino students.
3. Increase on-grade promotion and successful middle school transition.
4. Increase graduation rates and job/career readiness HS.
5. Raise the level of parent engagement.
6. Partner with education services to promote diversity, cultural competency, and inclusion.

### *What's happening next...*

We applaud the Delaware Hispanic Commission for the successful summit held on November 13, 2014. United Way of Delaware staff participated in the various break-out sessions targeting Education, Health, and Economic Empowerment. We'll continue to work closely with the commission and look forward to the Delaware Public Policy Agenda that will be the final product of those robust discussions with over 300 total participants.

The LU education team designed a Career Exploration Program spearheaded by the DuPont HisNet employee network group, and in partnership with Christiana Care, and The Castro Firm., The goal is to help students identify their passion and career path. The pilot will begin January 2015 and will include career coaches and mentors for a small group of Hispanic students at McKean High School. Those students will be linked to SPARC, a new UWD initiative to ensure students connect with local employers to help them discover their talents and plan their career.

We're currently exploring a parent leadership train-the-trainer evidenced based model, with the hope of making it available to Delaware's Hispanic serving organizations free of charge in the fall of 2015. The two-generation approach builds parent leadership skills and knowledge to promote positive education outcomes for children.

#### *How to get connected now...*

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- Share the SPARC information with your Human Resources department to register as an employer [www.sparcdelaware.org](http://www.sparcdelaware.org)

As always, thank you for ALL that you do to support our work at United Way of Delaware and Latinos Unidos. We invite you to pledge a donation to Latinos Unidos online today by visiting [www.uwde.org](http://www.uwde.org) and referencing book number #550. Your contributions help support initiatives geared towards a brighter future for our Hispanic youth.

*¡Vive Unido! Live United!*