

FALL 2005

A NEWSLETTER OF ESPERANZA USA

# Esperanza

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The Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr. at the 2005 National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast

## ¡Saludos y Bendiciones!

### A Special Letter from the Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.

Although the storm has passed, many in our country are still feeling the effects from the devastation Hurricane Katrina caused in the United States Gulf Coast.

As heartbreaking as it was to witness the displacement of thousands and the separation of families by the hurricane, it was equally heartwarming to see the outpouring of support and donations to the affected regions. It is now reported that donations for relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina are among the highest in our history.

Such facts clearly illustrate that even in difficult times, there is still hope. We at Esperanza USA are working to help spread hope during this tragic period of history.

Through participating Hispanic Capacity Project organizations and Esperanza regional staff, much needed supplies and donations from World Vision were sent from Seattle, Washington to areas affected by Katrina.

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# President Bush Praises Work of Esperanza USA

## Hispanic Capacity Project Luncheon Highlights Event

The Hispanic Capacity Project (HCP) of Esperanza USA wrapped up the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast, a three-day event in Washington, DC, where President George W. Bush praised Esperanza USA for its compassionate work in the community.

### COAST-TO-COAST PARTICIPATION

The luncheon included over 100 participants from 86 organizations from Philadelphia, New York City, Orlando, Miami, Los Angeles and Seattle and featured a presentation of the HCP's evaluation results with regional awards to organizations that have made considerable achievements over the past two years.

The six organizations who were recognized for their work and improvements in HCP's program were Manna of Life Ministries from New York City's Bronx Borough, Women's Shelter of Hope from Hialeah, Florida, Bethlehem Christian Training Center from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Orange County Christian Charities from Anaheim, California, Women in Action from Seattle, and Refugio de Amor (Refuge of Love, Inc.) from Orlando.

### HISPANIC CLERGY & NATIONAL LEADERS UNITE

The National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast, held at the Mellon Auditorium on June 16, brought together over 650 members of Hispanic clergy from a diversity of denominations, faith and community-based organizations, representing a broad spectrum of the national Hispanic community together with

prestigious business professionals, such as the president of the Federal Home Loan Banks, and several congressmen.

Invited speakers at the Breakfast event included President George W. Bush, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, the Hon. Tom Ridge, Former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Hon. Vivian Fernández de Torrijos, First Lady of Panama and Abraham Hirschson, Israeli Minister of Tourism.

### CAPITAL HILL VISITS & WORKSHOPS

In addition to the Breakfast event, workshops and visits to Capitol Hill took place during the

two previous days. Also, two important studies that address issues directly affecting the Hispanic community were introduced: one about the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the other on the state of Hispanic housing.

A dinner was held on June 14 for Esperanza USA's national HIV/AIDS awareness initiative, Pacto de Esperanza, which included special recognition for two HCP participating

organizations: Sembrando Flores of Miami received a \$25,000 grant to continue their work with the HIV/AIDS community, and Rev. Rosa Caraballo, founder of the Bruised Reed Ministry in NY, received the Esperanza Spirit Award for exemplary ministerial service over the last 25 years.

As Esperanza USA's HCP program draws to an end, accomplishing its goals in just two years instead of the projected three years, many of the groups are now confident and better positioned to provide much needed services.



President George W. Bush is introduced at the 2005 National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast by Rev. Danny Cortés, senior vice president of Esperanza USA

# Good News in the “Badlands”

Changing Lives in North Philadelphia Neighborhoods Through Photography

## HCP Teams Rush to Help Katrina Victims

Recently, the network created through the Hispanic Capacity Project helped contribute to relief efforts to areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Before hitting the Gulf Coast, the hurricane blew through the Miami area, causing floods and considerable damage to properties and crops.

After hearing the reports of damage in Miami, Tito Hinojos, HCP Seattle field coordinator contacted Guillermo Luna, HCP's Miami field coordinator to ask what he could do to help the Latino communities affected by the storm.

Luna put Hinojos in contact with Nancy Rivera, executive director of Sembrando Flores in Homestead, Florida. Rivera reported that due to floods caused by the hurricane many of the crops and fields were completely wiped out.

Although the farm owners would most likely be compensated for their losses with insurance and benefits, the farm workers would be out of work for the season. She estimated that the farm worker community would be impacted by at least 6 months of potential financial distress, directly affecting their families.

Esperanza USA was able to respond to the list of necessities by shipping supplies donated by World Vision to these families in need. The relief supplies traveled approximately 3,500 miles from the regional office near Seattle, Washington to Sembrando Flores in Florida.

In the end, the relief supplies went to helping the more than 800 Latino families that Sembrando Flores works with in their service sites. This collaborative effort between the Hispanic Capacity Project's regional office and participating organizations demonstrated the power that strong networks play when responding to those in need during times of crisis.



One of the Hispanic Capacity Project's goals was to help faith-based and community organizations address social inequities in their communities and to empower them to change lives within their neighborhoods. In the North Philadelphia neighborhoods of West Kensington and Fairhill, Centro Nueva Creación began a photography project, which has not only changed the lives of those who participate in it, but has also changed the perception of their community within the greater Philadelphia metropolitan area.

### INTERPRETING NEIGHBORHOODS

In 2001, Centro Nueva Creación began “The Goodlands Photography Project” (Goodlands) as part of its summer enrichment program, which aimed to build artistic talent in youth and to challenge the image of their community, referred to as “the Badlands.” For the past five years, up to 60 neighborhood youth spend six weeks working with professional photographers to develop their technical skills and explore different ways of interpreting their neighborhood.

### REINFORCING THE POSITIVE

“By putting a camera in the hands of our youth, we encourage and guide the students to focus on the positive aspects of their lives,” said Goodlands instructor Brady Sanders.

### REVERSING PERCEPTIONS

“The image-making process becomes an outlet for exposing countless hidden truths, and our hope is that these images will offer a new perspective on the West Kensington and Fairhill neighborhoods,” she continued.

### THE POWER OF PEACE

That first summer, the youth prepared a photography exhibit entitled “The Goodlands: Youth of West Kensington Look at their Neighborhood,” designed to counter the negative perception of their neighborhood among the media and law enforcement, and by extension the community at-large. In 2002, the exhibit theme was “Shalom,” the Hebrew word for peace, since the young artists explored signs of peace among the cultures present in the community, within their families, and between nature and their urban environment.

### NEIGHBORHOOD OF GALLERIES

In 2003, the theme “Tierra Buena” spoke of the neighborhood's hope as a land of blessing and promise. Centro Nueva Creación further worked toward such hope through the documentary,

**THE GALLERY OF PHOTOS WERE TAKEN BY  
THE CHILDREN OF CENTRO NUEVA CREACIÓN**

“Peace in the Goodlands,” which was part of the Community Visions Program of Scribe Video Center, as well as through the 2004 photography exhibit, themed “iPaz! The Power of Peace.”

### VOLUNTEER PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

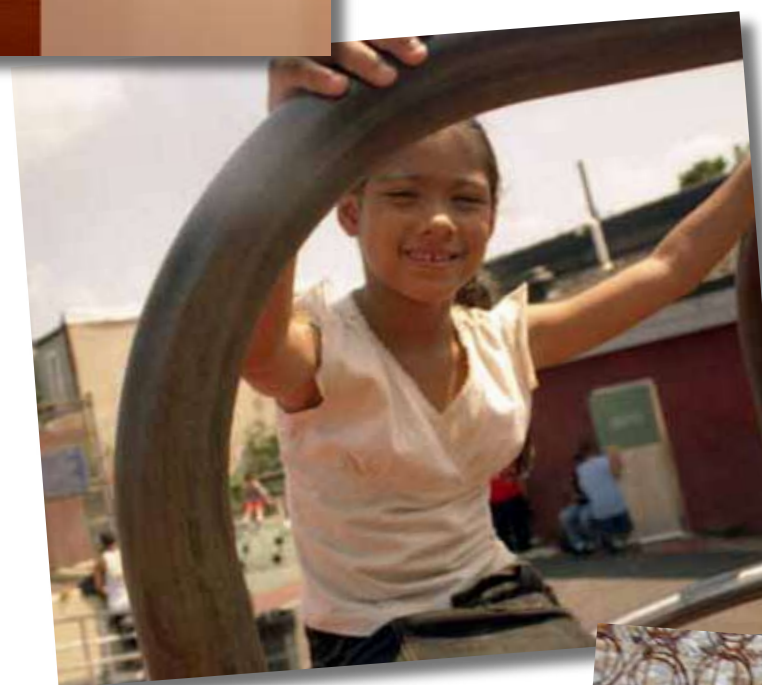
The most recent exhibit on August 5, 2005, entitled “Northern Stars,” reflected a broader summer theme, “All Around the World And Down to Earth.” Similar to past year's exhibits, the “Northern Stars” showing took place at a small gallery as part of the “First Fridays” event in downtown Philadelphia. Each first Friday of the month is reserved as a free gallery night within a neighborhood of galleries near a Philadelphia commercial district, offering considerable exposure for those who have their work on display.

“These pictures are wonderful; I did not even know that the photographers were kids at first,” remarked an anonymous gallery visitor.

### HCP HELPS EXPAND PROGRAMS

2005 has seen the expansion of the program with the addition of the first Goodlands Coordinator, Ms. Nicole Marcote, thanks in part to HCP funding. Since Centro Nueva Creación's participation in HCP, they have been enabled through their grants to purchase much-needed digital cameras for their students. Due to expanded training, the program created an actual class curriculum for their volunteer photography teachers.

Other programs sponsored by Centro Nueva Creación include After School and Summer Enrichment Programs for children, Pre-Work Leadership for pre-teens and teens, Parenting Education and Environmental Awareness.



**Centro Nueva Creación is located at 162 W. Tioga St., in Kensington. For more information, visit their website at [www.centronueva.org](http://www.centronueva.org) or the new Goodlands website at [www.goodlands.org](http://www.goodlands.org).**



Centro Nueva Creación



Dr. Guillermo Luna, Rev. Danny Cortés, Rev. Pedro Martínez, and Rev. Luis Cortés at the 2005 Expolit event in Miami, Florida.

## A Special Letter from Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.

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This cooperation by the Hispanic Capacity Project (HCP) faith-based and community organizations illustrates the benefit of working together to improve the lives of the people we serve.

It is also an example of our belief that Hispanic faith and community-based organizations make a difference in needy communities throughout America.

While needs are being met, the challenges continue in the Hispanic community as it continues to grow throughout the United States.

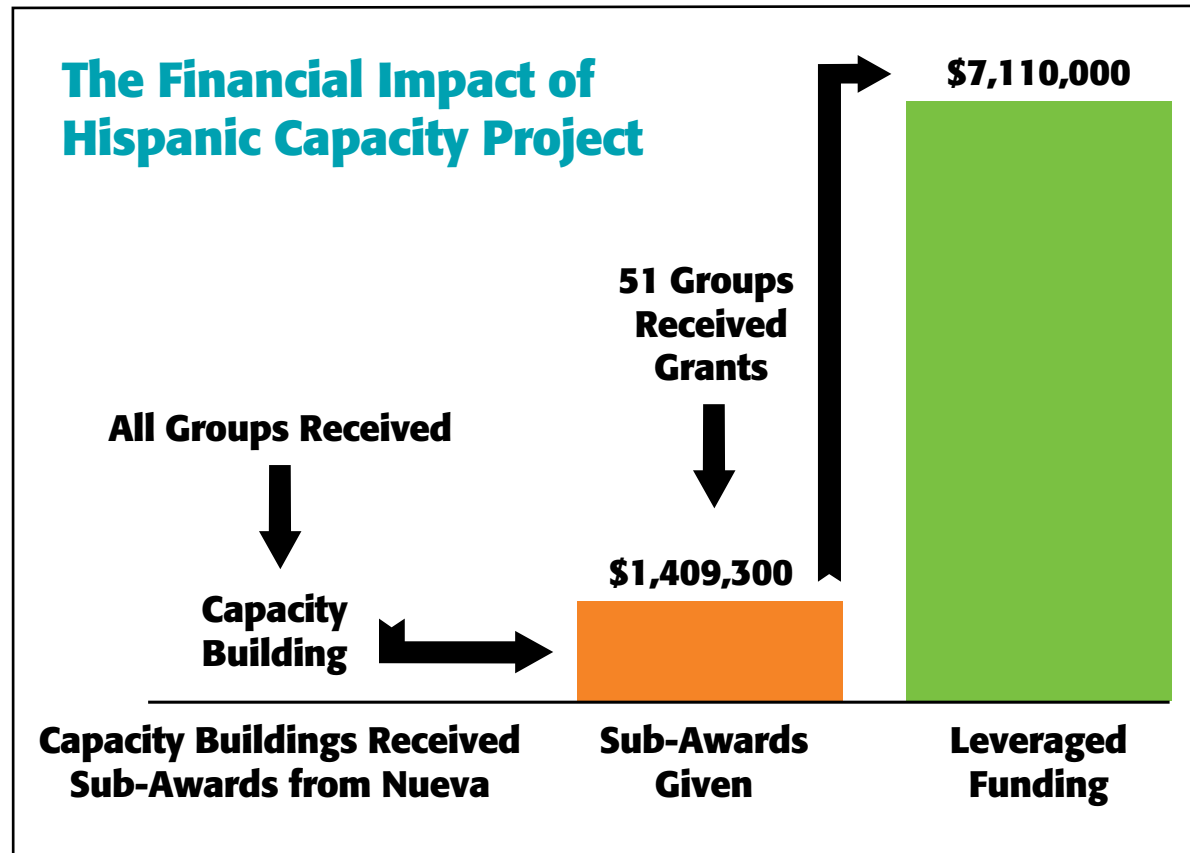
The Hispanic Capacity Project was, as noted by our external evaluators, an unqualified success. We are hopeful, llenos de esperanza, that the additional support we seek will allow us to create networks of cooperation and continue to provide the training and support that growing faith-based and community organizations need in order to create a lasting impact on their communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all of our HCP participating organizations and our regional and national staff on their achievements and to wish them continued blessings in our work of service to others. Their success is our success, and I am thankful for their commitment in strengthening our communities through passionate service.

Que Dios le bendiga,  
Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.

# HCP Strengthens 140 Organizations

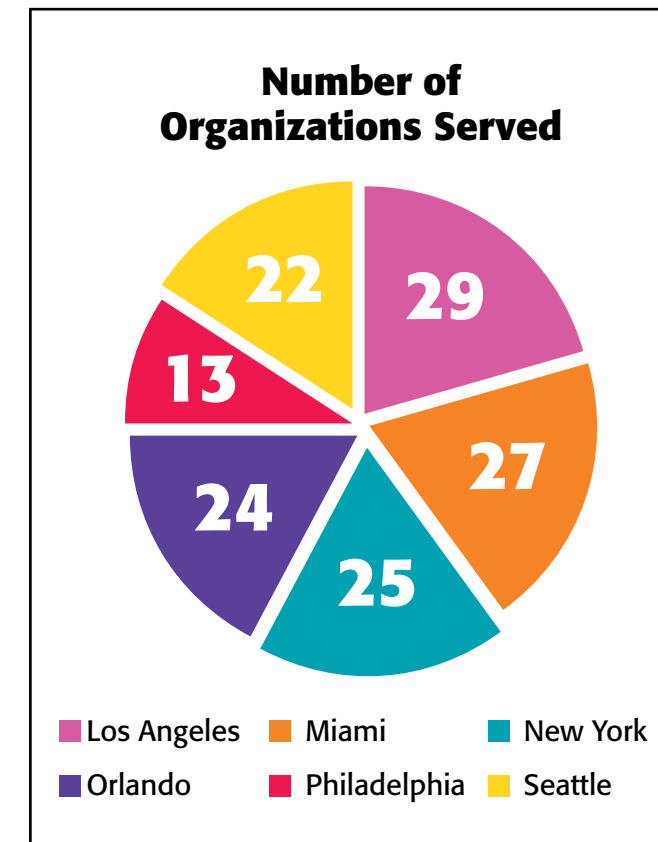
# HCP Fortalece 140 Organizaciones



Esperanza USA awarded grants to participating organizations that demonstrated progress and achievement in each region through two funds: the Capacity Development Fund, designed to support organizations in the early stages of development, and the Strategic Leverage Fund, helping organizations already operating at the highest levels of capacity to leverage funding from private and public sources.

### HCP Statistics and Highlights:

- A total of 438 hours of training
- \$342,986 in technical assistance
- \$1,208,151 in Gifts in Kind
- \$1,409,300 in Sub-Grants
- \$7,110,000 in Leveraged Funding
- 140 organizations empowered in 6 regions



El **Proyecto de Capacidad para Hispanos** provee un marco de trabajo innovador y procesa llamadas de "Capacidad Continua" a organizaciones Hispánicas para fortalecer sus programas a niveles competitivos y efectivos donde sus objetivos puedan ser realizados.

HCP premió con subvenciones a organizaciones participantes que han demostrado progreso y logros en cada región premiada con dos fondos: el Fondo de Desarrollo de Capacidad, designado para apoyar a organizaciones en etapas tempranas de desarrollo; y el Fondo de Estrategia de Apalancamiento, ayudando a organizaciones ya operando en los niveles altos de capacidad para un apalancamiento de fondos mediante fuentes privadas y públicas.

### Beneficios de HCP a grupos de fe y comunitarios:

- Un total de 438 horas de entrenamiento en tres (3) años
- \$342,986 en asistencia técnica
- \$1,208,151 en donaciones dadas
- \$1,409,300 en subvenciones
- \$7,110,000 en recursos financieros obtenido como resultado de las subvenciones.
- 140 organizaciones fortalecidos en seis (6) regiones de la nación.

In 2003, Esperanza USA was empowered through a grant from the Department of Health and Human Service's Compassion Capital Fund to launch the **Hispanic Capacity Project (HCP)**, providing capacity-building support to faith-based organizations working to meet the Hispanic community's immense needs.

Six major cities were targeted due to their significant Hispanic populations and the emerging needs of the Hispanic communities in these areas. They established regional offices in Philadelphia, New York City, Orlando, Miami, Los Angeles and Seattle, where for the past three years they have strengthened 140 organizations.

### Hispanic faith-based and community organizations have been helped to:

**Build Capacity:** Strengthen the organizational capacity, strategic thinking, and program development skills necessary to ensure the sustainability of current and future programs.

- In Year Two, at least 60 of 109 organizations grew to at least the next developmental level on the "Continuum of Capacity."

**Improve Service:** Skillfully design and manage viable, effective and sustainable programs that respond to the immediate and long-term needs of poor and low-income families in targeted Latino communities.

- During the first two years of the project, 32 organizations obtained legal non-profit status, 36 organizations are in the process of finalizing their applications, and 43 organizations had already incorporated when they entered the HCP program.

**Secure Funding:** Develop and implement a sustainable resource development strategy, and identify and successfully pursue funding and other resources from public and private sources.

- Esperanza USA sub-granted approximately \$1.4 million to 51 faith-based organizations over the two-year period, which has resulted in leveraged funding in excess of \$7.1 million for these groups.

The **Hispanic Capacity Project** provided an innovative framework and process called the "Continuum of Capacity." This model helped member organizations to benchmark the strengthening of their programs and to measure their level of competency and effectiveness.

## SAVE THE DATE

**The 2006 National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast will take place June 6-8, 2006 in Washington, DC.**

**Go on-line now and fill out the 2005 National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast survey at [www.esperanza.us](http://www.esperanza.us)**

En el año 2003, Esperanza USA fue emancipada a través de una subvención por el Fondo de Compasión Capital del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos para el lanzamiento del **Proyecto de Capacidad para Hispanos (HCP, por sus siglas en inglés)**, proveyendo apoyo de capacidad de construcción a organizaciones de fe trabajando para cubrir las inmensas necesidades de la comunidad Hispánica.

Seis grandes ciudades fueron específicamente escogidas, debido a la significativa población Hispánica y las emergentes necesidades de las comunidades Hispánicas en éstas áreas. Estableció oficinas regionales en Philadelphia, New York City, Orlando, Miami, Los Angeles y Seattle, donde han fortalecido a 140 al finalizar el programa de tres (3) años.

### Las organizaciones de fe y comunidad han sido mejoradas a:

**Capacidad de Construcción:** Fortalecer la capacidad organizacional, estrategias de pensamiento, programa de desarrollo de destrezas necesarias que aseguran el sostenimiento de programas presentes y futuros.

- En dos años, por lo menos 60 de 109 organizaciones crecieron por lo menos al próximo nivel en "Capacidad Continua."

**Mejora de Servicio:** Diseñado hábilmente y viablemente dirigido, programas efectivos y sostenibles que responden a las necesidades inmediatas y a largo plazo de familias pobres o de bajos recursos en comunidades Latinas específicas.

- Durante los primeros dos (2) años del proyecto, 32 organizaciones obtuvieron el estado legal de organizaciones sin fines de lucro, 36 organizaciones están en el proceso de finalizar sus aplicaciones y 43 organizaciones ya estaban incorporadas cuando se unieron al programa de HCP.

**Financiamiento Seguro:** Desarrollo y puesta en práctica de recursos sostenibles de estrategias de desarrollo, identificación y búsqueda exitosa de financiamiento y otros recursos mediante fuentes públicas y privadas.

- HCP otorgó aproximadamente \$1 millón a 51 organizaciones de fe en un periodo de dos (2) años, el cual ha resultado en un apalancamiento de financiamiento de más de \$7 millones para estos grupos.



At the Recording Studio in Miami, Florida during the recording session for "Hay Una Respuesta": Marcos Witt, Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr., Yuri, Rodrigo, Julissa, Ricardo Montaner, Maria del Sol, and José Luis Rodríguez ("El Puma")

## "Hay Una Respuesta" at El Premio de la Gente

"Hay Una Respuesta" (There is a Way), the first Spanish-language song written about the faith community's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, will be performed at the 2005 El Premio de la Gente Award Show, broadcast from Inglewood, California's Great Western Forum on Saturday, October 29, 7:00-9:00 p.m. EST on the Telemundo network.

Esperanza USA produced the song in February of 2005 and filmed its music video simultaneously, featuring several major Hispanic Christian recording artists, including Latin Grammy award winner Marcos Witt, José Luis Rodríguez (also known as "El Puma"), Yuri, Ricardo Montaner, Julissa and Maria del Sol.

The full-length CD for "Hay Una Respuesta" is slated for release in 2006 and will contain the music video as well as a short film that dramatizes a Hispanic couple faced with HIV and the varied responses they experience through their faith community.

Educational materials that will help ministries educate their congregations about the HIV/AIDS epidemic will accompany the short film. As part of Pacto de Esperanza, "Hay Una Respuesta" will help to raise awareness and promote HIV/AIDS education within the Hispanic community.

# A Closer Look at the National Programs of Esperanza USA

**Esperanza Trabajando** In 2004, Esperanza USA initiated Esperanza Trabajando to provide education and training services to Hispanic youth involved with the criminal justice system or at-risk of involvement. Esperanza Trabajando will build a network that includes faith-based and community organizations, the local public workforce investment system, the juvenile system and the business community. This network will ensure that targeted Hispanic youth receive education, workforce development and supportive services that lead to jobs and productive lives.

**Hispanic Capacity Project** A three-year grant from the Department of Health and Human Services' Compassion Capital Fund in 2002 established the Hispanic Capacity Project (HCP). HCP provided technical assistance to over 140 Latino community and faith-based agencies and congregations in metropolitan New York, Philadelphia, Orlando, Miami, Los Angeles and Seattle to enable them to identify and better serve the needs of their communities.

## **Hogares de Esperanza (Homes of Hope)**

Esperanza USA, Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, Lowes Home Improvement, and National Association of Home Builders collaborated in 2003 to assist low and moderate-income Hispanic families in becoming homeowners. In 2004, as part of HUD's Reaching the Dream Initiative, Esperanza USA prepared faith and community based agencies to

provide homeownership counseling in Atlanta, Albuquerque, Chicago, Nashville and Portland, Oregon.

**Pacto de Esperanza (Pledge of Hope)** With HIV/AIDS being one of the leading causes of death in the Latino community, Esperanza USA initiated Pacto de Esperanza in 2003 to educate clergy about the epidemic, breaking down its taboos and the barriers to accessing treatment and critical social services. Outreach efforts include providing technical assistance and small grants to Hispanic faith-based organizations with existing HIV/AIDS programs, developing culturally appropriate literature to inform and educate the Hispanic community, and designing specific educational programs for Hispanic clergy and lay leadership, utilizing local and national media.

**National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast** The National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast, founded in 2002 and hosted by the President of Esperanza USA, Rev. Luis Cortés, has raised critical awareness of civic education to Latino clergy nationwide. At this annual event, 650-700 Latino clergy and community leaders from 38 states mobilize

and hold meetings with their government representatives to discuss policies that affect the Latino community.

## **PROGRAMAS DE ESPERANZA USA**

### **Esperanza Trabajando**

En 2004, Esperanza USA inició Esperanza Trabajando para proveer educación y entrenamiento para jóvenes hispanos que han tendido alguna situación con el sistema judicial criminal o que están en algo riesgo de estarlo. Se creará una red entre organizaciones de fe y comunitarias, el sistema público de fuerza laboral, el sistema juvenil y la comunidad de negocios para asegurar que los jóvenes hispanos reciban educación, desarrollo en el área laboral y servicios de apoyos que resulten en trabajos y vidas productivas.

**Proyecto de Capacidad para Hispanos** Una subversión de tres años del Departamento de Salud y Servicios de Compasión Humanitarios otorgó, en el otoño del año 2002, a Esperanza USA para establecer el Proyecto de Capacidad para Hispanos (HCP, por sus siglas en inglés). HCP provee asistencia técnica a la comunidad latina, a más de 140 agencias cristianas y a congregaciones en las ciudades de Philadelphia, New York City, Miami, Orlando, Los Angeles y Seattle para facilitarles la manera de como identificar y servir, de una forma más eficiente, las necesidades de sus comunidades.

**Hogares de Esperanza** Esperanza USA, el Banco Federal de Préstamos Hipotecarios de Pittsburgh, Lowes, Home Improvement, y la Asociación Nacional de "Home Builders" colaboraron en el 2003 para ayudar a



## **MÁS DE CERCA**

familias hispanas de bajos o moderados recursos a convertirse en dueños de hogares.

### **Pacto de Esperanza**

Esperanza USA inició en el 2003 el Programa Pacto de Esperanza para educar sobre la epidemia de VIH/SIDA al igual que los temores y barreras existentes para conseguir los tratamientos y servicios sociales necesarios. Nuestros esfuerzos van dirigidos a proveer asistencia técnica y donaciones a ministerios hispanos que tienen programas establecidos sobre el SIDA, desarrollando una literatura apropiada para informar y educar a la comunidad hispana sobre el VIH/SIDA y diseñando programas educativos específicos para el Clero hispano y para el liderazgo secular, utilizando medios masivos.

**Desayuno Nacional Hispano de Oración** El Desayuno Nacional Hispano de Oración fundado en el año 2002 y presentado por el Reverendo Luis Cortés, presidente de Esperanza USA, ha aumentado una conciencia crítica de educación social al Clero Latino en la nación. En este evento anual alrededor de 650-700 clérigos latinos, de varios estados, estarán reuniéndose con sus respectivos representantes de gobierno para dialogar sobre las pólizas que afectan a la comunidad latina.



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