

Esperanza

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FALL 2006

Collaboration for the Hispanic Community



Several artists collaborated with Esperanza USA to record "Hay una respuesta" and the short film "No te rindas," donating their time and talent. (Left to right) Jez, Daniel Calveti, Lali Torres, Pablo Olivares, Coalo Zamorano, and Alex Campos. Both Jez and Lali Torres appear in the film and Coalo Zamorano wrote the title track "Hay una respuesta."

Esperanza USA proudly announced the release of "Hay una respuesta," an HIV/AIDS multimedia resource for Hispanic churches that includes a short film in Spanish accompanied by a bilingual study guide.

"Hay una respuesta" is a musical video as well as a compilation compact disc of inspirational music. Included with the compact disc is a DVD with the short film "No te rindas" (Don't Give Up), a compelling, educational short film that depicts the

issue of HIV/AIDS from a faith and Hispanic perspective for the first time.

Esperanza USA is screening "No te rindas" in several cities throughout the nation this fall.

"This film will educate the Hispanic church on HIV/AIDS because Hispanics are affected disproportionately by this disease that knows no race, ethnicity or religion," said the Rev. Luis Cortés, Esperanza USA president.

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News from the President

Saludos,

Throughout the summer, there have been heated debates between those who support immigration reform and those who do not.



Unfortunately, the language used in these exchanges has incited xenophobia and caused fear among the immigrant communities.

As people of faith we are called to ground our conduct and treatment of others in our reading and understanding of scripture and what God instructs us to be and to do.

As such, Esperanza USA's views on immigration are grounded and reared in Biblical Revelation as it was written in Leviticus 19:33-34 to "not mistreat the stranger in your midst."

Esperanza USA believes there needs to be comprehensive immigration reform, one that both secures our nation's borders and provides a path to citizenship for the millions of undocumented workers who contribute to our nation's economy.

Please join us in our efforts to promote comprehensive immigration reform and a rational dialogue free of hateful words. Be informed of news in your community and in our nation.

And always keep in your prayers that our nation remains strong and unified.

Que Dios les bendiga,

The Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.
President,
Esperanza USA

Networks of Faith: Reflections and Discoveries

By Lydia M. Hoyo



This Networks of Faith capacity training in Miami included members of The Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) and representatives of 30 organizations representing both Catholic and Protestant faith-based initiatives who shared common faith and experiences as service providers."

On April 15, 200, Networks of Faith held its first training session in Miami at the Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI).

This initiative was an agreement between faith and community based organizations representing both the Protestant and Catholic Church to participate in a two-year program which would provide three major training events per year as well as other activities.

What was this project all about? I really was not sure and was a little nervous, at first. As we shared in training discussions with other participants, we learned about each other's ministry or service, each one fulfilling an important need in our community and abroad. Because of this collaboration, the project and its people began to become a part of me.

The highlight of this past year and a half has been, for me, the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast and Conference and the Capitol Hill visits.

The well-planned event impacted me. It was permeated with the Spirit of faith, love, brotherhood and hope. We truly are "Networks of Faith" in this unique ecumenical experience, only making it clear that we are children of one family.

I am thankful for being a part of Networks of Faith and pray that all of us will be blessed abundantly as we continue to build bridges to enrich our institutions, communities, ministries and the many we serve.

Lydia M. Hoyo is part of SEPI Team of Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry, Catholic Bishops Region Vand XIV.

We truly are "Networks of Faith" in this unique ecumenical experience, only making it clear that we are children of one family.

The Multiplying Power of Partnership

By José Humphreys

The end of a journey, or in this case a project, is always a good time to reflect on successful moments.

The Networks of Faith project in New York saw its share of special moments over the two-year period. These success stories provide our communities with hope along with a snapshot of what can happen when organizations connect around a common purpose.

Adam Friedman (pictured right), the Development Director of Exodus Transitional Community, provided this testimonial, which resulted from one of the Networks of Faith training experiences:



Adam Friedman

“John Krieger, the senior program officer at Achelis & Bodman Foundation, was one of the speakers at an Esperanza USA Networks of Faith training session. He had discussed how the foundation had become interested in prisoner reentry programs.

I told him what we are doing at Exodus Transitional Community where we help those exiting the prison system readjust to life outside through job training and counseling.

He was impressed and suggested that we skip the initial letter of inquiry and submit a full proposal, in which we requested \$60,000. John said that they would proba-

bly not make a grant this large to a first time grantee.

However, he was very impressed when he visited the Exodus facilities, and we received \$75,000—they earmarked \$15,000 to improve our tracking and evaluation. The remaining \$60,000 was for general operating support.”

It is stories like Exodus that informs Esperanza USA of the multiplying effects of partnership and investment in collaboration. We look forward to our member organizations having brighter tomorrows as they serve with excellence.

José Humphreys is the Esperanza USA New York Field Coordinator.

Overcoming Differences through Networks of Faith

By Melba Novoa, Executive Director NCCHM

Now that the Networks of Faith initiative is completing its final year, it is important to look back and evaluate the work that we have accomplished through partnership. This project acknowledged the important role faith-based organizations play in our society and also gave them the opportunity overcome their limitations and reach goals well beyond their wildest dreams.

For the past two years, Networks of Faith has given these organizations the tools they need to become more efficient and self-sufficient, to better understand their individual challenges as organizations and overcome them using the tools larger and better funded groups have at hand.

In the true spirit of “pastoral de conjunto,” Esperanza USA and the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM) have accomplished much by looking beyond our differences and focusing instead on what will bring a better future to our Hispanic community. On behalf of NCCHM, I salute all the individuals and groups that have made possible such a wonderful endeavor. Your participation made this project a true success.

At the Networks of Faith closing ceremony, I had the opportunity to see Esperanza USA's short film 'No te rindas,' a family-orientated film takes a stigmatized issue and shows that it can happen to anyone. This film is easy to relate to and promotes not only discussion on HIV/AIDS but also encourages the audience to take action.”



Thumbs up for ‘No Te Rindas’

By Rev. Rosa Caraballo



I had the privilege to pre-view Esperanza USA's short film "No te rindas." For me, it was an answer to a long-time prayer request that the Latino church respond compassionately to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Many Latinos and churches have ignored HIV/AIDS, causing rejection, feelings of abandonment and failing to respond to the call of God to minister "to the least of these."

As an HIV/AIDS ministry leader, I applaud Esperanza USA and Grupo CanZion for creating an educational film that delicately and informatively takes on the issue of how HIV/AIDS has afflicted and affected our families and churches.

Of the many films about HIV/AIDS, very few cover Latinos and their faith in the manner that "No te rindas" does.

The film also covers themes such as HIV testing/diagnosis, disclosure, family and spiritual interventions, end of life and death.

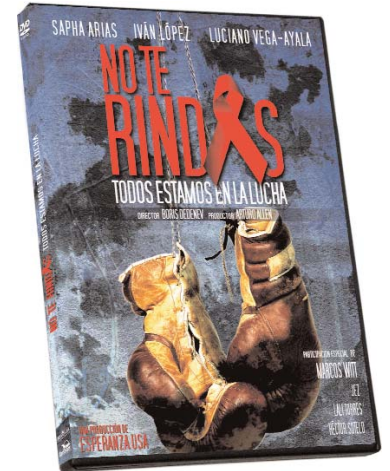
I want to thank Esperanza USA for opening our eyes and providing a tool and resources to become involved in the battle against HIV/AIDS! ...Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

Rev. Rosa Caraballo and her husband, Hermes, founded the Bruised Reed Ministry in the Bronx, New York to minister to families and church members dealing with HIV/AIDS.

Rev. Caraballo wrote the book "Covenant of Hope: A Woman's Healing Journey in the AIDS Epidemic." Through her two decades of AIDS advocacy, Rev. Caraballo has broken the silence and demonstrated a truly compassionate spirit in Christ's example.



Esperanza USA President Rev. Luis Cortés is joined by "No te rindas" Producer Arturo Allen of Grupo CanZion, leading actors Saptha Arias and Iván López and Marcos Witt who also appears in the film. All were present at CanZion's September advance screening in Houston, Texas.



From page 1

"No te rindas" tells the story of Fernando and Aleida Ortega, a young couple who are active church leaders, whose lives take a sharp turn when it is discovered that Fernando has tested positive for AIDS and that Aleida is HIV-positive.

The couple embarks on a journey of heartache and discovery as their church members and close friends react to the news.

"No te rindas" serves a realistic dramatization of HIV/AIDS in the church, its effect on families and how the church can minister to people with spiritual and emotional wounds caused by HIV/AIDS.

Join Esperanza USA in spreading the word about **"No te rindas."** To learn more about the film and Esperanza USA's HIV/AIDS awareness campaign, visit www.esperanza.us and select "You Are the Answer" under Programs.

“You Are the Answer” in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS

Esperanza USA’s “Tu eres la respuesta” (You Are the Answer) is an education and prevention campaign about HIV/AIDS.

The campaign’s goal is to create communities of support that minister to those living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Esperanza USA invites Hispanic pastors and their congregations join them in this effort to breakdown the myths and taboos associated with this illness.

Esperanza USA announced its first initiative on HIV/AIDS in 2003 with “Pacto de Esperanza” (Pledge of Hope). It is an individual pledge to educate yourself and one other person about the facts on HIV/AIDS.

Sign “Pacto de Esperanza” today and invite a friend or colleague to do the

same. This is the first and easiest step in joining Esperanza USA’s “Tu eres la respuesta” campaign.

Esperanza USA’s “Pacto de Esperanza” (Pledge of Hope) is now available on the internet at www.pacto.us.

Join Esperanza USA in the fight against HIV/AIDS and make the pledge to strengthen your community today!



Tu eres la respuesta en la lucha contra el VIH/SIDA

Esperanza USA te invita a unirte a nuestros esfuerzos de educar a la comunidad de fe sobre el VIH/SIDA.

La campaña de educación y prevención “**Tu eres la respuesta**” es la culminación de muchos años de trabajo e investigación sobre las actitudes, barreras y necesidades de la comunidad de fe hispana en cuanto al VIH/SIDA.

El “Pacto de Esperanza” fue la primera iniciativa referente al VIH/SIDA de Esperanza USA en el 2003 cuando el Rvdo. Luis Cortés, Jr. y un grupo de mi-

nistros y líderes cristianos confirmaron su compromiso de educarse junto con sus iglesias firmando este pacto.

“**Tu eres la respuesta**” continúa los objetivos iniciales del “Pacto de Esperanza” de crear comunidades de apoyo que ministren con amor a aquellas vidas que han sido afectadas por el VIH/SIDA.

Sé un agente de cambio al unirte en la lucha para derribar los mitos y tabúes asociados con esta enfermedad firmando el “Pacto de Esperanza”. Está disponible electrónicamente visitando www.pacto.us.

No te rindas (HIV/AIDS Educational film)

Pastors who are interested in seeing this film and learning about how to show it in their church should contact the Esperanza USA field coordinators listed:

Philadelphia and Washington D.C. Region

Vicente Díaz
4261 North 5th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
(215) 324-0746
vdiaz@nueva.org

Boston Region

José Nora
8 Ramson Rd Apt 17
Brighton, MA 02135
(857) 540-2760
jnora@nueva.org

Chicago Region

Tomas Ivens
4600 Ivanrest Avenue, SW
Grandville, Michigan 49418
tivens2002@yahoo.com

Los Angeles and Tacoma Region

Walter Contreras
4878 Cambridge Street
Montclair, CA 91763
(951) 675-6851
mcmymusa@aol.com

New York City Region

José Humphreys, MSW
199 Lincoln Ave, Suite 318
Bronx, NY 10454
(646) 319-8123
jhumphreys@nueva.org

Tampa and Orlando Region

Rosa Prieto
2608 State Rd 557
Lake Alfred, FL 33850
(863) 956-1106
rprieto@nueva.org

Tucson Region

Jaime Oviedo
9961 E Paseo San Bernardo
Tucson, AZ 85747
(520) 399-5700
oviedoja@gate.net

Mujeres de Esperanza Motivates and Affirms Women in Dallas



PHOTOS BY GABRIELA

Top left: Marcos Witt presented a Mujeres de Esperanza Concert of Worship and Praise on Sept. 8 at Ministerios Bethania USA. **Top right:** Damaris and Rev. Luis Cortés joined Marcos and Miriam Witt on stage for a moment of prayer. **Bottom left:** Mujeres de Esperanza Co-Chairs Damaris Cortés and Miriam Witt lead a group of women in prayer before the women's leadership training at the Covenant Church. **Bottom center:** Over 300 women attended the Mujeres de Esperanza Women's Leadership Training on Sept. 9 at the Covenant Church in Dallas. **Bottom right:** Rebecca Contreras, who gave a moving testimony of her personal journey, was one of the featured speakers at the Mujeres de Esperanza Women's Leadership Training.



Crossing the globe and cultures: Philadelphia Students Travel to Israel

By Minerva Olivo, a Junior at Nueva Esperanza Academy

The Nueva Esperanza Academy Charter High School trip to Israel from May 27 – June 10 was one filled with countless joyous memories that I will treasure.

Our travels took us throughout many sights in Israel starting with Tel Aviv-Yafo, the main part of Israel's largest and most populous metropolitan area, and ended in the holy land of Jerusalem.

In addition to sightseeing, we also had great experiences with students our age, including a visit to the Yemin Orde School, a school for new immigrant students.



Overall, I loved the trip and the opportunity to get to know my classmates and teachers better. It was a great opportunity to learn about Israel, their people and their unique culture, and I thank Nueva Esperanza Academy for letting me have this experience. While we were there, we saw a peaceful Israel and felt safe at all times. We all send our prayers so that Israel and its neighbors quickly return to that peaceful coexistence we had the chance to see.