

Perspectiva Latina

The Hispanic Federation — Strengthening Latino Agencies and the Communities they Serve

Federation Leads Coalition's Push for Smaller Classes, Improved Learning

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The Hispanic Federation is playing a lead role in a coalition of parents, community organizations, labor unions, and public school educators advocating for smaller classes for New York City public school students.

The coalition, known as New Yorkers for Smaller Classes, is working to have a ballot question that would create a commission to study smaller class size for New York City schools. The commission's recommendations to amend the charter would be voted on by the public in the November

2004 election.

"Parents know what the research has shown over and over again: smaller

"Parents know what the research has shown over and over again: smaller classes are key to improving learning."

classes are key to improving learning," said Lillian Rodriguez Lopez, the Federation's vice president and co-chair of the Coalition.

In fact, the Federation's 2003 survey found that Latinos in New York City consider smaller classes to be the most important priority for improving public schools. And New York City, where 40% of all public school students are Latino, suffers from the most overcrowded classes in the state.

Last August, the Coalition delivered more than 115,000 petition signatures endorsing the ballot question to New York's City Clerk, the most petitions ever gathered in New York City history. ☀

Ayúdenos a Ayudar: Helping The Federation Help Our Community



Latino Children's Day at the Met is just one of the programs made possible thanks to Hispanic Federation supporters.

Message from HF's President Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez

I'm certain that many of you are beginning to prepare for the holiday season—a time when we renew our ties to families and friends, give thanks for the blessings we have received, and look forward to the New Year.

But while this season is a time of warmth and comfort for some of us, many in our communities continue to face serious hardships—challenges that are felt more deeply during the holidays. In response, the Hispanic Federation began its "Ayúdenos a Ayudar" (Help us

to Help Others) Campaign in 1997 to encourage all Latinos to give what they can to help Latino families in need. Over the years many of you have answered our call and made the Hispanic Federation's work possible through your contributions.

We are pleased to dedicate this issue of *Perspectiva Latina* to the individuals, corporations, and foundations who supported the Federation and the Latino community in 2003. The successes we highlight in *Perspectiva Latina*, like more funding for English language learners, services for recent immigrants, better access to

health care, and HIV/AIDS awareness programs, are made possible by the generous supporters listed in this issue.

But more remains to be done. The weak economy, increasing unemployment, and the rising cost of living has hurt countless Latino children and families. And Hispanic agencies are once again being asked to care for more people in need with less funding from public and private sources.

Fortunately, there is hope. Like the supporters highlighted in this edition of

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