



Florida Institute for Community Studies, Inc.

EL INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS COMUNITARIOS DE LA FLORIDA,

INC.

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Spring has sprung in Tampa! ¡Bienvenidos a nuestro boletín de la primavera! FICS has been busy since our last newsletter, given that we have:

- * Convened the first statewide **One Goal, Many Voices Symposium** at Disney's Coronado Springs Resorts in November with eighty participants
- * Partnered with the TC Nenas to hold the **First Annual Latino Food Festival** in November (*1st Place Salsa Dance Competition winners were Geo and Ana at right*)
- * Held our **3rd Anniversary Party and Auction** in December
- * Celebrated **Fifth Annual Día de Los Reyes Magos in Wimauma** with over 400 families in January
- * Organized and facilitated a **Town N Country Community and Youth Forum on Violence** in March



Nadia Palomino and **Alayne Unterberger** attended the CADCA Conference in Washington DC as part of our Proyecto Prevencion grant. While there, we met other Florida-based grantees,

pictured at left. We hope to work more closely with them in the future. This February trip also marked the first time that Nadia, born in Miami, experienced the joys of snow, all 11 inches that fell on DC! **Can you say...FRIO?** *Notice the coat Nadia is wearing!*

Here are the upcoming events we want to let you know about.. If a location is not specified, the event will take place at the Multicultural Family Center, 6704 Hanley Road, Tampa, 33634.

April 2006

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

6-8 PM **Community and Youth Forum on Violence: Part II.** Town N Country Recreation Center, 6039 Hanley Rd., Tampa, FL 33634.

Saturday/Sunday – April 15, 21 and 22

1-5 PM **Spring Cleaning @ FICS** – Saturdays and Sundays . The Multicultural Family Center needs cleaning and painting. Volunteers welcomed! We need you! ¡Los necesitamos!

Friday, April 28, 2006

1-6 PM **Multicultural Family Center Anniversary and Open House.** YES, it has been a year! Stop by and say hello! Free snacks and lots of information!

Sunday, April 30, 2006

All day International Children's Day Día del Niño in Mexico: La Ley 760 celebrates at La Fresa, Plant City.
7 PM FICS families are going to see a baseball game at the **NY Yankees Stadium** on Dale Mabry.

May 2006

Saturday, May 13, 2006

2-4 PM **Mother's Day Celebration**, sponsored by Vivir Mejor and Pocos Hijos Para Darles Más, Ruskin Recreation Center, 901 6th Street, SE, Ruskin, FL 33570

June 2006

Saturday, June 17, 2005

2-4 PM **Father's Day Celebration and Recognition of Exemplary Fathers of the Year**, Wimauma Civic Center, 5705 Hillsborough Street, Wimauma, FL 33598. **Nominate Now!**



Project Prevention News by Nadia Palomino: Proyecto Prevención is on the move! Greetings from Proyecto Prevencion staff and participants. First, I want to say welcome aboard to our new Teen Coordinators, **Nina Lopez** and **Jacqueline Seward**. We are very fortunate to add them to our team. We have been very busy these last couple of weeks recruiting youth and meeting with our Proyecto Prevencion classes. Proyecto Prevencion is an HIV and substance abuse prevention program that helps youth make good decisions. We have done many activities including going to **Univision** and watching a live news broadcast. Our youth have also discovered talent within themselves by reenacting television talk shows in front of their peers and families. We have "hosted" Maury-like shows on underage drinking, the dangers of unprotected sex, sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancy and drugs. These topics lead to conversations between parents and their children.



We want to thank our partners at **Leto High School** (the picture above shows our Leto class, with guest speaker **Joseph Lennox-Smith** of **Positive Education** and Program Leader Nadia Palomino), Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation staff and our volunteers who help with the Proyecto Prevencion classes: **Han Chen**, **Ralph Cruz**, **Jennifer Hernandez** and **Haley Peckett**. We always welcome new positive dedicated role models who are interested in helping our youth. If you are interested please contact us @ 813.249.8100 or ficsnadia@yahoo.com

Update from Multicultural Family Center:



Town N Country youth have accomplished a great deal since our last newsletter. First, the TC Nenas planned and hosted a wonderful **Latin Food Festival** here at the Center on November 11, 2005, with many youth and families in attendance. Besides the homemade foods from countries as diverse as Costa Rica, Panama and Spain, the dance contest was a major hit. At right are **Irma, Geo, Nancy and friends**.



This picture captures **TC Nenas and Multicultural Family Center Youth Advisory Board Members Melina Andino and Amanda Anglada** making the sign for the Multicultural Festival which was held on April 1, 2006. About 55 youth attended, **DJ Juice from Wild Style DEEJAYS** once again entertained

us! Our own **Daniel Rivera** (below) worked very hard organizing twenty countries represented at the Festival.

Youth Violence Roundtables: March – April 2006

On February 20, 2006, two Town N Country males, Sebastian Luengas, 16, and Michael Roberts, 20, lost their lives in a shootout in a nice neighborhood less than two miles from the Multicultural Family Center. FICS, together with the Hillsborough County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation, the Town N Country Youth Council and other groups involved in the Communities That Care project, decided to address the problems related to youth violence and **how to prevent it**.



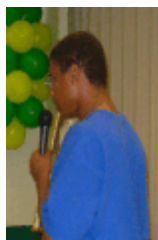
Youth facilitators convened roundtables and Mike Trepper facilitated a community and youth discussion that included two school board members, local principals of elementary, middle and high schools, Sheriff's office personnel and County Commissioner Kathy Castor's aide. While the Sheriff's office and the press



continue to cite these deaths and TC gangs, our participants are looking ahead to reach out to youth and prevent tragedies, loss of life and improve the well-

being of youth and families in TNC. Our next event will be held at the Town N Country Recreation Center, April 19, 2006 at 6 PM. Join us!

Our Vice President of the Youth Advisory Board, Daniel Rivera, spoke at the Forum, and later typed up the following testimonial for this FICS Newsletter:



Daniel Rivera: I'm Daniel Rivera and I'm here tonight to tell you how Alayne and the Multicultural Family Center changed my life. I once wanted to join a gang, I once thought that being in a gang would give me power but that's when I met Alayne and the staff. I told myself, "Ha, they can't help me with my

problems that I have" but as I started to come more often and join Project Prevention I started to change a little. But one day something happened that really had me thinking what I'm going to do with my life. A group of kids were sitting in the conference room when Alayne decided to make the youth board for the youth. I thought to myself, "I'm not going to join; I'll never succeed in anything" but Alayne had me run for treasurer so I went along and ran I and when it came time for electing the winner I walked in the room about to sit down cause I knew that I lost but when they announced the winner and that winner was me. And ever since that day, I've been really working hard trying to make the community a better place by stopping gang violence. I know what some people think, "what can one person do to make a difference?" Well I'll tell you what one person can do, that one person can make an impact on a lot of people that person can come together with other people that believe in him and fight the great fight that police officers have been fighting and really make the community a better place.



Volunteers Needed! FICS wants YOU!

The TC Nenas (l-r), **Nancy, Gen, Irma and Rosa**, thanked Alayne at the Latin Food Festival in November 2005. The Nenas, like Daniel Rivera (above), are FICS Volunteers! As our Multicultural Family Center has grown, so have our need for volunteers. **We want and need talented people of any and all backgrounds to help us achieve our**

mission: to partner with communities across Florida to help them achieve their goals through research, service, training and educational programs. We offer community service hours to those who qualify. Call Daniel or any staff at the Center at 813.249.8100 to sign up.

APRIL 28 IS OUR KICKOFF!

FICS has embarked on our very first **Yearly Capital Campaign**. This will be our annual fund drive, from April 28 through May 28, 2006, with a goal of raising \$10,000. **We will be contacting you and following up on previous donations.** FICS has never had a strong funding base and, increasingly, we need local dollars to match our federal and other funds. **Please help us! 100% of your donation goes to our programming! Our Federal Identification Number is 59-3712006 and we**

are listed on *Guidestar* as a reputable non-profit organization. Checks can be made out to any amount and mailed to: **FICS, PO BOX 16745, TAMPA, FL 33687.**

Thanks....¡Mil Gracias!

\$500-\$1000 Donors in this Quarter



Wal-Mart on Waters Avenue, Tampa

La Mega Communications

CoNgratulations – Si Se Puede Shout OUTs

FICS could not be prouder of our friend **Gilberto Cruz**. The son of our staff member **Lizanahi Cruz**, Gilberto, age 9, won the **Young Author’s Award** from Hillsborough County School District for his short story about “Morphing.” ¡Felicidades a Los Cruz!



Liliana “Lily” Mejia, 18, is our Teen Coordinator and a Senior at Alonso High School. Lily is a true inspiration to all of us. She and her parents emigrated from Colombia to the US only six years ago when Lily was 12, not speaking much English. Today Lily is completely trilingual and she is the President of Alonso’s French Club. For her high academic standing and her excellent SAT scores, Lily has received a scholarship to the University of Florida and starts in August. She is truly a role model to all youth. ¡Felicidades, Lily!

Thanks to Our “Other” Volunteers:

The FICS Board!

FICS is governed by a volunteer board of 10 members, as follows: Alvin Wolfe, PhD, Chair; Matilda Garcia, Tony Jenkins, Jack Levine, JD, Sandy Marquez, Domingo Noriega, Maria Antonieta Riveros Revello, Richard Ryan, and Pablo Sierra.

Currently, we have one vacancy on the board.



[Alayne Unterberger](#), Executive Director and a Founder of FICS, received her PhD in Anthropology from the University of Florida in December 2005. Only three years behind schedule, this degree took eight years to complete. Her dissertation, “[The Guanajuato- Florida Connection: A Binational Study on Health Status and United States-Mexican Migration](#),” can be accessed electronically via Webluis at www.ufl.edu or http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0012480/unterberger_a.pdf. Doctor Unterberger is continuing to focus on immigrants and health while also taking working vacations!



**Stay Tuned...Our Newly Designed website Is
Coming....www.ficsinc.org**

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