



Friday, September 14, 2001

## Celebration highlights Hispanic contributions

Look at us! In English, that's the meaning of ¡Miranos! the theme of Oakland University's Hispanic Celebration 2001.

This year's celebration runs from Saturday, September 15, through Friday, October 5. Activities include a tastefest featuring a variety of ethnic dishes; a craft night where you can design your own set of maracas; discussions on Latinos in high education and Latin politics; a presentation on children who grow up in bilingual homes; and a panel discussion on what the term "Hispanic" means to students.

New to the celebration is the Latin Rhythms Night, where traditional dance performances, a dance floor and live Latin music will be featured. A student essay contest with a first prize of \$500 also has been added.

In the last few years, Hispanic Celebration has become a tradition at OU. Held in conjunction with national Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 through Oct. 15), the event has brought Oakland students, faculty and staff together to celebrate the influence of Hispanic culture in our communities, to recognize the achievements of Hispanics and to deepen our appreciation for diversity.

Organizers of this year's event hope the celebration will show the growing presence of Hispanics on campus and the contributions Hispanics have made to the world throughout history.

Lisa Westfall, CAS '99, advising assistant for the Office of Equity, led a committee of OU students and staff whose goal for the 2001 celebration is to present a creative, exciting event with strong educational components for the entire university community.

Faculty members are involved in a number of ways. Several, for instance, have incorporated the celebration into their courses.

"About eight are including it in their Modern Languages and Literatures classes," says Westfall. "And there are several others from Latin Studies and Political Science."

Others lend their expertise or influence.

"Carlos Borrego was in close contact with State Rep. Belda Garza (D-MI-8) – that's how she came to be invited to deliver remarks at the opening ceremony, and to accept," Westfall says. "She's a dynamic speaker on the subject of Latinos in higher education." Garza made Michigan legislative history in 1998 when she became the first Hispanic Democrat elected to the Michigan Legislature.

### Calendar of Events

#### Saturday, September 15

- 7-11 p.m. in the Oakland Center Gold Rooms – Latin Rhythms Night with special guest DJ Luis Mendoza. The event will feature music, refreshments and salsa dance classes.

#### Monday, September 17

- Noon-1 p.m. in the Oakland Center Fireside Lounge – Hispanic Celebration 2001 Opening Ceremonies with keynote speaker State Rep. Belda Garza, 8th House District. There will be refreshments, giveaways and entertainment by "Folklorico."
- 1:30-2:30 p.m. in Gold Room C of the Oakland Center – A Discussion on "Latinos in Higher Education" with guest speaker State Rep. Belda Garza.

#### Wednesday, September 19

- Noon-1 p.m. in Gold Room C of the Oakland Center – Cultural Showcase – Learn about various aspects of Latino culture from la Quinceañera to Café Cubano. Latino Studies instructor, Ricardo Nuñez, is the guest speaker.

#### Thursday, September 20

Noon-1 p.m. In the Oakland Center Fireside Lounge – A Panel Discussion on “Are Hispanics from Hispania?” Listen as Latino students share what the term “Hispanic” means to them and their experiences identifying as a Hispanic at OU. The discussion will be facilitated by Juan Pablo Spicer-Escalante, assistant professor of Spanish.

#### **Monday, September 24**

- Noon-1 p.m. in the Oakland Center Gold Rooms – Lunch-Latin Style with free lunch samples from local Mexican restaurants. You can enjoy a variety of ethnic dishes and learn about their origins.

#### **Wednesday, September 26**

- Noon-1 p.m. in the Oakland Center Fireside Lounge – A Discussion on Latin Politics: “Expanding ‘Trade’ and Shrinking ‘Democracy’ in the Americas” facilitated by Alan Epstein, special lecturer of Political Science.

#### **Tuesday, October 2**

- Deadline for essay contest. All entries due in 121 North Foundation Hall by 5 p.m.

#### **Thursday, October 4**

- Noon-1 p.m. in Gold Room C of the Oakland Center – Heritage Speakers: Children Who Grow Up in Bilingual Homes, with guest speaker Maria Spicer-Escalante.
- 8-9 p.m. in Vandenberg Dining Center, Vandenberg Residence Halls – Latin Craft Night.

#### **Friday, October 5**

- Noon-1 p.m. in the Oakland Center Fireside Lounge – Hispanic Celebration 2001 Closing Ceremonies with keynote speaker OU President Gary Russi. Essay contest winners will be announced, refreshments served and there will be music.

#### **SUMMARY**

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Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Friday, September 14, 2001

Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Friday, September 14, 2001

Article Start Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2003