

PRESS RELEASE

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**The Children's Home Society of New Jersey Hosts
10th Annual Latino Parenting Conference**



Pictured Left: (front row, left to right) Clara Gregory, Donna C. Pressma, Ana B. Angel, Sandra Fuentes, Juana Aranda, Rosaura López, Mayreny Gonzalez; (back row, left to right) Flor López, Leily Morales, Evelyn López, Edwin Simón, Henry Linton, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski.

Pictured Right: Rev. Pozo, Moderator at the Latino Parenting Conference, speaks to program participants.

Trenton, NJ (October 6, 2016) – The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSofNJ) proudly hosted its 10th Annual Latino Parenting Conference, "The Impact of Spirituality in the Lives of Latino Immigrant Families Living in the U.S." on Saturday, September 17 at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in the heart of Trenton. The event was presented in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15), a time when Americans celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors hailed from Spain, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

The event was free to the public thanks to a number of community sponsors, and included lunch, raffle prizes, special activities for children, and performances by the Foundation Collegiate Academy Music Quartet, Recordando Mi Tierra Folkloric Dance Group, and a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem by Katherine & Elizabeth Kelly of Our Lady of Sorrows – St. Anthony. Throughout the day, roughly 225 attendees participated in thoughtful discussions focused on the impact of spirituality in the lives of immigrant families living here in the United States and the important role spirituality may play in our ability to parent, the way we perceive discipline, how we promote civic engagement in our children and youth and how difficult or challenging it may be to live with multiple cultural expectations. Attendees were also given an opportunity to learn about a variety of community resources available to them and their families including free health screenings, pre-school enrollment and nutrition through the WIC program.

Mr. Abraham López (Deputy Chief of Staff for the New Jersey Lieutenant Governor, Executive Director for the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development, Committeeman & Deputy Mayor of Westampton Township) served as keynote speaker. Additional speakers included Edwin Simón (CHSofNJ's Parent Advisory

Committee and Asamblea de Dios Church Representative), Rev. Rene Rory John (Dean of Trinity Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of NJ), Rev. Dr. Canon Francisco Pozo (Rector at Christ Church - Cristo Rey & Chairperson of the Hispanic Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of NJ), Donna C. Pressma (President & CEO, CHSofNJ), and Tim Ryan (Chairman of CHSofNJ Board of Trustees).

This year's panel discussion, "The Impact of Spirituality in the Lives of Latino Immigrant Families Living in the United States," was offered separately to adults (presented in Spanish) and youth (presented in English). Rev. Cardenas Neiser (Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption in Trenton), Rev. José C. López (Jersey City Medical Center), and Father Ramon Canon Ubiera Torres (Canon Missioner for Hispanic Ministries, Episcopal Diocese of NJ) offered their insight during the adult panel discussion, while Cindy Raíces (CHSofNJ Kinship Navigator and Legal Custody programs), Mansoor Rizvi (Catholic Charities, Practical Islamic Spirituality Facebook Group), Abiezel Raíces (Assembly of God Church in Trenton), and Juanita López (Hudson County Evangelical Pastors' Association, Hudson County Children's Parade) spoke candidly with our English-speaking children and teens at the youth panel discussion.

"We are grateful for this year's partnership with the local and statewide faith community as we celebrate a decade of hosting this unique conference focused on the needs of our Latino community in the City of Trenton," said CHSofNJ Director of Maternal/Child Health, Family & Community Support Services Maritza I. Raimundi-Petroski. She continued, "We listen to our families and try to be responsive to their needs by providing them with a safe and welcoming environment where they can discuss current issues impacting their parenting skills and their lives as immigrants. For the first time this year we were able to provide a workshop exclusively in English in an effort to be responsive to our English-speaking youth. To see two and three generations participate in this conference makes me extremely proud of the work we do at CHSofNJ, and it's definitely a testament to our ability to establish long-lasting, trusting relationships with our families."

The conference concluded with the presentation of CHSofNJ's Ana Belen Angel Volunteer Award to Rosaura Lopez of CHSofNJ's South Ward Parent Advisory Committee in recognition of her tremendous contributions as a volunteer.

About the CHSofNJ South Ward and North Ward Family Success Centers

CHSofNJ's South Ward Family Success Center (SWFSC) is located at 635 S. Clinton Avenue in Trenton. The SWFSC is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and on Thursday from 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM. The North Ward Family Success Center (NWFSC) is located at 1554 Princeton Avenue in Trenton and is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and on Wednesday from 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM.

Services available to participants include fatherhood enrichment programs, parental support groups, job readiness and life skills education, parent child and parent education activities, concrete goods donations, and much more! For more information, call 609-695-6274 or visit our website at www.chsofnj.org.

About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by ensuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit our website at www.chsofnj.org.

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