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Latinas Unidas celebrates and uplifts women, girls

Daisy Rivera Algarin
guest essayist

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(September 20, 2007) — Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated nationwide from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. In Rochester, Latinas Unidas celebrates our Hispanic heritage all year long.

Since 1993, Latinas Unidas has celebrated the accomplishments of 44 Latinas in law, medicine, education, business, homemaking and other fields. Each March, we bring together more than 200 girls to celebrate and confirm who they are and can be.

In 2000, Latinas Unidas set up the Latina Woman Scholarship Fund to aid Latinas ages 25 and older with college, skill training and other resources to help them advance in the workplace.

Latinas Unidas is led by the best hermanas (sisters) a Latina could have: Elisa DeJesus, Ibero American Action League and a native of Puerto Rico; Vilma Burgos Torres, state Labor Department and a native of Puerto Rico; Kelly Mullaney, Working Art Media and a native of Venezuela; Shirley Rivera, City School District and a native of Puerto Rico; Iveth Reynolds, TriMar Consulting and a native of Nicaragua; and Blanca Mastbaum Kane, Conxion food writer and a native of Cuba.

These ladies have successful careers and yet find time to lead and inspire local Latinas. As we prepare to celebrate our 15th annual Reconocimiento Awards Oct. 26, I want to extend my thanks to the Rochester community for its support, and especially to my Latina sisters, whom I respect and admire. What good fortune. Que Dicha!

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