



"La vida es como la música: debe ser compuesta por el oído, el sentimiento y el instinto, no por la reglas."

Our Vision

It is our intent at the Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury to connect Latinx youth with truthful representations of their cultures. It is difficult for our youth to connect with positive images, in particular minority youth who often see themselves portrayed as negative stereotypes in the news, social media and entertainment industry. However, if we can infiltrate these generalizing messages with one of positivity and success, our Latinx teens will have access to a comprehensive presentation of Latinx cultures.

As such, El Centro Cultural will be host to a variety of exhibits that accentuate Latinx culture and history through the visual arts of dance, paintings and film. Waterbury youth will also have access to cultural development workshops which highlight influential Latinx leaders in addition to a comprehensive education on historical events significant to Latinx communities.



Contact Us

EL CENTRO CULTURAL

30B Church Street

Waterbury, CT 06702

Phone: 203.574.6172

www.thehispaniccoalition.org

www.ctculturalcenter.org

Operation Hours

12:00pm – 8:00pm

Tour Hours

1:00pm – 2:00pm

6:00pm – 7:00pm

Victor Lopez.....Executive Director

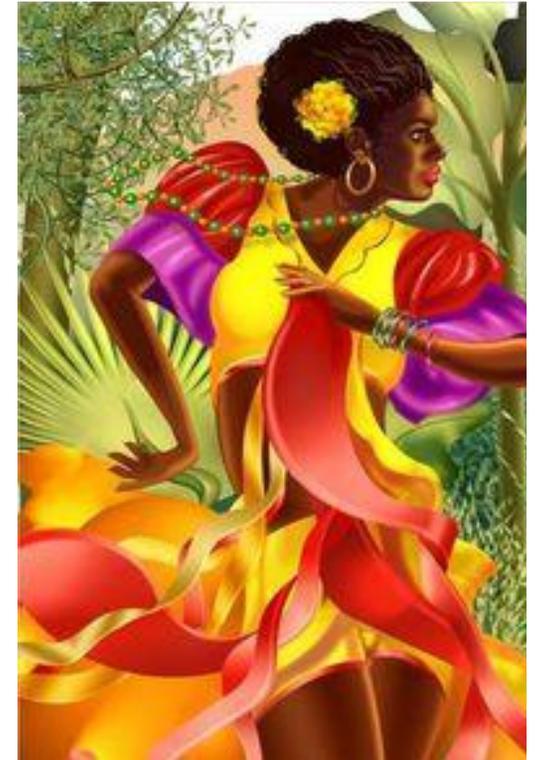
vlopez@thehispaniccoalition.org

Roslyn Sotero.....Site Director

arsotero@thehispaniccoalition.org

Mariah Benjamin.....Assistant Director

mjbenjamin@thehispaniccoalition.org



EL CENTRO CULTURAL

"Peace is not unity in similarity, but unity in diversity—in the comparison and conciliation of differences."

~Mikhail Gorbachev



L.A.C.E. Student, Aracelis Castro, performs spoken word at El Centro's first LGBT Pride Mixer for Waterbury youth.

LGBT Youth Social Events

El Centro Cultural is ultimately a safe space for youth. And because we know that our Latinx youth come in all different forms, we intend to be purposeful in our inclusion of all those forms. As such, in collaboration with Hartford's True Colors – a non-profit that seeks to empower and provide services for sexual minorities – El Centro Cultural is pleased to bring to Waterbury teen social events specifically for LGBT youth. Social events can include spoken word

performances or a simple movie night. The point is to create a safe space for LGBT youth to gather and enjoy themselves.



Cultural Development Workshops

A principal aspect of El Centro are the Cultural Development Workshops. This is a time when youth can engage in discussions about their cultural histories and heritages. Discussions include a basic narrative around race, gender, class and how all three intersect. This provides a nuanced understanding of how we as individuals and as communities experience our cultures in ways unique to our identities.

Though some workshops are discussion-based, many include interactive games to help illustrate more complex topics.

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.”

~Marcus Garvey

Ultimately, Cultural Development encourages youth to reflect on one fundamental question: *What does it mean (to me) to be Latinx?* That answer is different for everyone. Our youth not only have a unique cultural experience in comparison to non-Latinx youth, but in comparison to their own parents and grandparents as well. That experience is valuable to the story of Latinx immigration to the United States. They all have a voice. Now is our time to listen.



Three-year L.A.C.E. student, Kris Suco, explains to guests about el campo de Puerto Rico at El Centro's Grand Opening Event on August 21st, 2015.

Young Voices, Future Leaders

El Centro Cultural is also home to the L.A.C.E. Youth Leadership Program, a mentoring and tutoring program for at-risk teens (11 – 18) in the Waterbury area. Among several services, L.A.C.E. has chosen to incorporate the vision of El Centro Cultural to its initial goal of empowering youth through leadership. Now that leadership will include the opportunity for L.A.C.E. students to facilitate and lead art exhibits as they so successfully showcased at our Grand Opening.

Other venues include:

- ✚ Cultural Development Workshops
- ✚ Film Discussions
- ✚ Discussion Panels on Latinx-Related Issues
- ✚ Spanish Guitar Instruction
- ✚ Salsa Dance Instruction
- ✚ ESL Instruction
- ✚ Cultural Art Exhibits
- ✚ LGBT Youth Social Events
- ✚ Nuestra Familia