

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I recall many years ago, when I was in grade school, my teacher lectured about the requirements for a Presidential candidate. She stated only men could run for President of the United States. Oh how the times have changed. It's an honor and a privilege to live in these times where women and minorities run for President. America continues to be the land of opportunity.

JUNTA continues to strive to help our clients' progress in this land of opportunity regardless of race or ethnicity. We are all human beings with rights and should be treated with dignity and respect.

I want to take this opportunity to ask all adults, parents and grandparents to teach by example. Teach our youth and children about dignity, respect and the endless opportunities America has to offer. Our youth and children learn from us. We ARE their role models. We NEED to invest in them in order to discourage violence, hatred, bigotry, drugs and alcohol. Teach them that education opens many doors. Guide them in the right path.

As many will agree, these times are different. One thing remains the same; youth and children need our support. They need us.



Please continue to support us and our mission as we support all those in need. Please help us make a difference in their lives.

Please stop by when you're in the neighborhood.

*Sandra Trevino, Executive Director*

## FIESTA LATINA DRAWS RECORD NUMBERS



*Jeff Hudson of Rumberos Dance Company leading group Salsa at Fiesta Latina.*

JUNTA once again proved that it knows how to throw a party at Fiesta Latina, the sixth annual collaboration between

the Peabody Museum and JUNTA to celebrate Latino culture and encourage the Latino community to explore the myriad of educational opportunities the Museum has to offer. Despite the rain, an estimated 1700 people came to the Museum on March 8th to see musical acts such as Carlos y Su Momento Musical, Los Melodicos, and the African Arawak Connection; salsa dance performances by Rumberos Studio; and the public premiere of digital stories created by children in JUNTA's after-school program, The Neighborhood Place.

The event also featured Fiesta Latina's first ever "Iron Chef" Competition. Chefs from three Fair Haven restaurants demonstrated their culinary talents by preparing their salsa in front of area celebrity judges and an eager audience, while attendees taste-tested and voted on their favorite salsa throughout the day. El Charro on Grand Avenue won the Judges' Award, while Toral's Restaurant and Mezcal tied for the People's Choice Award, proving Fiesta Latina to be a fun and rewarding experience for all who attended.

## SI AL CINE! YES TO THE MOVIES!

Starting in May JUNTA will launch a monthly Film Series, "Si Al Cine! Yes to the Movies!". Thanks to a generous grant from the International Association of New Haven, the film series will focus on social, political and cultural issues that affect our lives each day. From race

relations and immigration, to healthcare the environment, we will bring the entire New Haven community together to spark interest, intellect and discussion. Join us for the first film on Friday, May 30. We will screen "Crash," a movie that brings out bigotry and racial stereotypes. The movie

is set in Los Angeles, a city with a cultural mix of every nationality. It explores how prejudices affect our perceptions of others. It's a wonderful film and we hope you'll join us. Check our website for updates on screenings.

## MICRO-LOANS ENSURE COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC SUCCESS

JUNTA's Micro-Loan program has given out over ten loans to individuals starting small businesses in the last year. We are now seeing the positive effects of our program's investments and want share one success story with you.



Name: Maria Moret  
Business: Luna Night and Day Care, LLC

Over ten years ago, Maria Moret

came to the grave realization while living in New York that her child's health and well-being were being jeopardized by the day care provider she had hired. Her day care provider did not feed her child adequately and knew little of developmentally appropriate activities. At that point, Maria made the life changing decision to leave her job and start her own informal day care at home so that she could provide better care for her son and other neighborhood children. Since then, Maria has become a licensed home child care provider and a member of the All our Kin network for home child care providers in Connecticut. She regularly attends seminars and lectures on early childhood education to ensure

the highest quality of care for her children.

In the summer of 2008, Maria joined JUNTA's micro-loan program in order to learn how to start and manage a professional small business. Upon completing the course, Maria received a loan of \$1500 to register her company, secure insurance, purchase toys, etc. Her business is called Luna Night and Day Care, LLC. She has been in operation since the fall of 2007 and has operated at full capacity from day one. She hopes to expand from a 6 child day care to a 12 child day care which will utilize the entire first floor of her new home. We wish Maria lots of luck!

## JUNTA SAYS "HOLA" TO SPANISH CLASSES

In the past, JUNTA has been widely known by community members as a place to learn English, or to study for the GED. However, this January, JUNTA forged into new territory, partnering with New Haven Adult Education to offer its first Spanish conversation classes for English speakers. Though JUNTA originally planned one class, interest in the class was so widespread that three courses are now up and running: one in the afternoon, and two at night, with beginner and intermediate levels. Students come to JUNTA from many

different professions, including teaching, healthcare, and business management, and have the unique opportunity to interact and practice their Spanish with English as a Second Language students. The organization hopes to institutionalize the Spanish classes, making them a regular course offering. Those interested in taking a class should contact Hannah Greaves, Coordinator for Education and Community Outreach, at 787-0191.



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