

LLDP 2010 Graduating Class



There is never any shortage of news pointing to the ills suffered in our Latino neighborhoods. Statistics lend credence to the fact that our Latino students, high school teens in particular, lag in high school graduation rates. Only 30% of our students are graduating from high school and math and reading scores are still under par compared to African American, Asian and White students.

So it is noteworthy to acknowledge outstanding students who are moving toward improving our community by their progressive thinking and contributions in the community. Albert Algarin is one such individual. He is currently a Bilingual Representative for 311 where he responds to any community concerns. Most notably, he is the 3rd generation in his family to graduate from the Latino Leadership Development Program sponsored by the United Way.

As the Class Representative, Albert was the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony held at Mario's Via Abru-

zzi on Monroe Ave earlier last month. He follows a legacy of success including his mother, Daisy Algarin, whom many recognize as the President of Latinas Unidas and Sr. Marketing Specialist and Sr. Loan Processor for the City of Rochester, who also graduated from LLDP in 1988. Her father, Enrique Rivera, Pastor of the Spanish Church of the Nazarene, graduated in 1983, a testament that the apple truly doesn't fall far from the tree.

Albert is passionate about his Latino roots and wants to be a role model for Rochester young men to help them achieve their fullest potential. Albert has another legacy he would like to imprint in the Latino community. Like his mom, he already has plans underway to start a male Latinas Unidas as a network for professional Latinos to commiserate and encourage education, ambition and an entrepreneurial spirit within young Latinos. Latinas Unidas was an organization that was formed to unite Latinas in Rochester. Daisy Algarin was among the original founders

of the women's organization over 20 years ago and today is the largest in Monroe County.

When asked how being a part of the LLDP affected his thinking the most his response was, "it boosted my level of community awareness. It made me realize that in order to make a difference you need to step up and use your talents, get in the trenches and be a leader."

Albert graduated from New Jerusalem High School after years in the Brighton School District. Apart from his demanding involvement with the inception of Latinas Unidas, Albert plans to attend either St. John Fisher College or Roberts Wesleyan in the upcoming spring semester for a degree in Political Science or Business Management. He sees himself heavily involved in community leadership, implementing policy through politics and enabling more Latinos to attend college through his nonprofit organization. He also hinted at a yen for the presidency.

"Education is very important. Although you do not need a degree for some careers, next generation leaders need to go the extra mile so that we can be noticed out there. Higher education is the key," are his pearls of wisdom.

The Latino Leadership Program was developed in 1983 by the United Way in an effort to strengthen the Latino voice in the Rochester community. Its goal is to empower Latinos with a heightened awareness of professionalism and community issues necessary to lead. Applicants from a myriad of socioeconomic backgrounds are encouraged to apply. They must be at least 18 years of age, have employer approval or sponsorship from an organization, attend all sessions, and complete assigned coursework. Applicants must also commit to serve on a board or committee following completion of the program.

For more information about the LLDP program contact Tabita Torres at 242-6467