



**AGENCY SPOTLIGHT**

**CENTRO de la COMUNIDAD • Miriam Thornburn • Executive Director**

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 225 Central Avenue  
 Norwich, CT  
 860/886-0001

**Mission:** To promote the empowerment of Hispanics and cultivate active participation by all members in our multicultural community.

**Description of the organization:**

Centro de la Comunidad, Inc., is a non-profit community-based agency serving individuals and families in the New London county, promoting the successful involvement of Latinos in the community. Our constituencies are immigrants and other newcomers to New London and the surrounding area. This population has increased in recent years due to increased local employment opportunities. As a result of this increase in population, there have been newcomers in need of social services, bilingual assistance and job readiness skills.

**Services provided by Centro del la Comunidad:**

**Social Services Program**

- Special needs programs (food, shelter, clothing, medical etc.)
- Mental health care
- Counseling services

**Educational Services:**

- ESOL/English for speakers of other languages
- GED in Spanish
- Certified Nurse Aid (CNA) Trainingz
- Spanish Classes (fee based)

**Job Readiness:**

- Job counseling, resume preparation, referral and placement
- Interview training
- Vocational Training - Certified Nurse Aide
- Small Business Development Workshops
- Proactive community outreach
- Employment Skills Workshops
- Advocacy and Legal Issues Advice

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

**AGENCY SPOTLIGHT 1**  
**CENTRO**  
**de la COMUNIDAD**

**BE PART of 3**  
**THE SOLUTION -**  
**BE AN ADVOCATE**

**MEMBERSHIP 3**  
**INFORMATION**

**MEMBER AGENCIES 4**  
**and PARTNER**  
**ORGANIZATIONS**

**Message from the CAUSA Executive Director:**

Greetings to everyone:

The CAUSA family extends sincere wishes for good health and prosperity to you and your family in the new year. As we all know, our community is evolving and as such we must prepare ourselves for the many challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Our focus on technical assistance to our member and partner agencies over the past few months have provided us with insights as to the many needs we face. The goods news is that there are many resources available for us to continue moving in a positive direction. For example, through a series of community forums this past fall, we are giving people a platform to discuss topics such as racial and ethnic disparities in health and information on how to become an advocate. Our team also provides technology support to agencies with computer labs in order to keep up with the fast changing environment. Customer service workshops are now available upon request and our voter education drive established partnerships with key groups such as DemocracyWorks.

As we move forward, we invite you to join us as a partner agency so that we may be able to build a strong association of agencies with a similar needs and vision. If you are interested, please fill out the form enclosed in this newsletter or call our office to obtain more information. Working in collaboration is the key. We are available to support your goals and move our community in a positive direction.

God Bless,

**Carmen Sierra**



**Carmen Sierra**  
 Executive Director  
 CAUSA, Inc.

# 16 Latino Agencies File Lawsuit Against Union Leader

## Prominent Political Leaders among Witnesses to be called.

Sixteen human service agencies in CAUSA, the Connecticut Association for United Spanish Agencies, Inc., filed a lawsuit in Hartford Superior Court claiming breach of contract by union leader Charles LeConche and members of the Greater Hartford New Britain Building and Trades Union Council. The lawsuit is being filed in response to LeConche and the council's refusal to reimburse CAUSA and its member agencies for the money he and his union caused CAUSA's 16 agencies to lose at a May 2006 fundraising event for the agencies which are located throughout the state. A December 6, 2006 article in the Hartford Courant highlighted several agency directors' frustration with the union leader. George Cruz, Executive Director of the San Juan Center for Sports in Hartford said, "Mr. LeConche should be ashamed of himself." The Sports Center was to receive funding from CAUSA to continue its work with at-risk children and their parents.



CAUSA Member Agency Executive Directors

The lawsuit is based on an agreement reached days before the May 20th event at a luncheon meeting, where a number of prominent political figures and top union leaders were present to try and resolve the matter in hopes of avoiding a protest by LeConche's labor council and other political figures could attend. ING as a sponsor of the event and sponsorship check in exchange and to replace the lost \$40,000. involved in an ongoing dispute with the financial firm which had nothing the check and ING announced on the agreement and held the to replace the sponsorship dollars agencies. Magali Kupfer, President and Executive Director of Casa this one negligent individual led to the loss of critical dollars for small agencies around the state that struggle for funding to survive every day and that serve the poorest of the poor in our community." She added, "His refusal to reimburse us or even make an offer since then to try to resolve this illustrates he never intended to act in good faith, while we did."

LeConche asked CAUSA to repudiate CAUSA agreed to return the firm's \$40,000 for LeConche's agreement not to picket LeConche's labor council has been



to do with CAUSA. After CAUSA returned they had pulled out, LeConche reneged protest anyway and has since refused causing financial harm to the CAUSA of the Board of Directors of CAUSA Boricua in Meriden said, "The act of

Agency Spotlight: (continued from Page 1)

### Centro del la Comunidad Miscellaneous Information:

Centro has offered social services to the Hispanic community and other newcomers for 37 years. Centro is the only Hispanic organization serving the Hispanic community of southeastern Connecticut. Cultural sensitivity and outreach have been constant priorities for Centro de la Comunidad. Centro's bilingual and bicultural staff is familiar with the surrounding community and its resources. Centro inaugurated the concept of an interagency Welcome Center that embraces newcomers of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Centro is a Member Agency of CAUSA, Inc.

### Quotes by the Executive Director:

People can identify with this center as their second home. We are a welcoming agency that is not limited to Hispanic only. Our doors are open to the community. Centro continues to develop quality programs around what is happening in the community and throughout the state.



Centro Tutorial



Miguel Rosario & Tutorial Student



CNA Taking Blood Pressure



CNA Taking Pulse

# BE PART OF THE SOLUTION - BE AN ADVOCATE

## Community Forums Serve as Platform

### There are many ways to be a voice

There are an estimated 44.7 million Latinos residing in the United States – the largest single racial/ethnic minority group in the country. Yet, Latinos are the most uninsured group in the United States. In 2005, one out of every three - or 32.7% - of Hispanics went without health insurance, an alarming statistic that is unchanged from 2004. Latino children without insurance are 23 times more likely of not having a regular doctor and not getting needed medical care than those with insurance. Hispanics are twice more likely to have never seen a dentist than white Americans. Affecting change takes a force of action and advocacy comes in many forms. Programs are desperately needed to meet the needs of the Latino population, as well as the dissemination of information about programs that do exist. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that despite decades of effort, disparities persist, and changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the population have important consequences for the Nation's health.

### Latinos at higher risk

Being Latino does make you more likely to delay treatment – or forego it entirely. While one in four Latinos has borderline high-risk cholesterol levels, it is reported that Latinos check their cholesterol almost 15% less regularly than non-Hispanics – meaning an increased risk in complications due to high cholesterol. More than 10% of Latinos have diabetes and 50% of all Latinos born after the year 200 are likely to become diabetic in their lifetime. The leading cause of death (1 in 3) among Latinos is heart disease and 40% of Latino children are overweight.

The National Center for Health Statistics says that improving the health of racial and ethnic minorities, including Latinos, continues to be a public health priority in this country. There is still work to be done to improve health disparities that affect certain racial and ethnic groups.

### Be Part of the Solution

While the task at hand can seem daunting, there is no wasted effort. Whatever your talent, how ever much time you can give, your help is needed.

The word activist conjures up images of sit-ins and protests. Today, there is the power of one. While advocates are still needed to enlighten and persuade legislators by testifying at hearings, there are smaller and equally important roles to play. Change is prompted by persistence which can also come in the form of letter writing campaigns, phone campaigns and even emails campaigns. Information is power, and there is a need for people to serve as sources of information in neighborhoods, connecting people with existing programs and educating the public about health concerns.



## MEMBERSHIP INFO.....



The Connecticut Association for United Spanish Action, Inc. (CAUSA) was formed in 1975 by Governor Ella Grasso to respond to social services needs of Latinos in Connecticut and to better assist and support social service Latino agencies. In the last five years, CAUSA and its member organizations have served more than 200,000 Latino/Hispanic residents in Connecticut. CAUSA is the largest association of Latino-serving community agencies throughout the state. With a special emphasis on advocacy, research and technical assistance, through and with its member agencies, the have been successful in meeting their objectives.

For More Information on how to become a part of the CAUSA member agency network please contact Adelaida Rodriguez at:  
E-Mail: adelaida@snet.net • Telephone: 860-424-0077

Or mail below form to: CAUSA Inc. • Attention: Adelaida Rodriguez  
555 Windsdor Avenue • Hartford, CT 06120

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

# MEMBER AGENCIES and PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Agency Name	Point of Contact	Phone Number	Address
Casa Boricua	Magali Kupfer	203-235-1082	204 Colony St., Meriden, CT 06451
Casa Otoñal	Patricia McCann	203-773-1847	135 Sylvan Ave., New Haven, CT 06519
Centro de la Comunidad– New London	Miriam Thornburn	860-442-4463	109 Blinman St., New London, CT 06320
Centro de la Comunidad– Norwich	Miriam Thornburn	860-886-0001	225 Central Ave., Norwich, CT 06360
Connecticut Puerto Rican Forum, Inc.	Calixto Torres	860-247-3227	95 Park St., 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06106
Hispanic Center of Greater Danbury	Maria Cinta Lowe	203-798-2855	87 West St., Danbury, CT 06810
Iglesia Bautista	Rev. Jose Luis Carrion	860-560-0420	981 Park St., Hartford, CT 06106
Junta Progressive Action, Inc.	Kica Matos	203-787-0191	169 Grand Ave., New Haven, CT 06153
New Life Corporation	Ariel Martinez	203-777-0313	P.O. Box 7036, New Haven, CT 06519
San Juan Center, Inc.	Aura Rivera	860-522-2205	1297 Main St., Hartford, CT 06103
San Juan Sports Center	Andrea Montero	860-525-0360	180 Pleasant St., Hartford, CT 06103
Spanish American Development Association	Ramon Larracuente	203-333-9332	1057 East Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06605
Spanish Action Council	Miriam Echevaria	203-755-5532	81 West Main St., Waterbury, CT 06702
Spanish Community of Wallingford	Blanca Santana	203-265-5866	284 Washington St., Wallingford, CT 06492
Spanish Speaking Center	Mary L. Sanders	860-224-2651	29 Cedar St., New Britain, CT 06051
South Norwalk Community Center	Daniel Maldonado	203-899-2488	98 South Main St., South Norwalk, CT 06854

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