



City of Chicago



R2018-1170

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	10/31/2018
Sponsor(s):	Santiago (31)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Congratulations extended to Puerto Rico Arts Alliance on 20 years of art education in Latino community
Committee(s) Assignment:	

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PUERTO RICAN ARTS ALLIANCE CELEBRATING TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, The Puerto Rico Arts Alliance (PRAA) is celebrating a milestone this year; twenty years of arts education in the Latino community. Their programs in art and music give children a chance to learn about their culture; and

WHEREAS, The City Council has been informed of this anniversary by the Honorable Milly Santiago, Alderman of the 31st Ward; and

WHEREAS, Over the past twenty years, PRAA has emerged as a primary cultural resource, offering high-quality music and arts educational programming to 30,000 participants each year. PRAA operates three community centers in Chicago (PRAA Center, Humboldt Park Field House and Latin Music Project Center) and also partners with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and organizations across the Midwest to offer after-school classes and events on-site; and

WHEREAS, Carlos Hernandez is the founder and director of the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance. He feels “There are youth, there are children in our community that are yearning for music classes, they’re yearning for arts. Arts and music is what resonates in this organization. PRAA has been dedicated to fostering community pride through culture and arts education, serving primarily low-income youth and their families, using music and arts as a vehicle to increase cross-cultural and inter-generational understanding. We are growing in a city that is diverse and equity and inclusivity in the arts is important for the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance. “We’re opening up our centers for other cultures to come in”; and

WHEREAS, PRAA offers a Studio Arts Program after school and summer Studio Arts Apprenticeships through collaboration with After School Matters. It provides teens with a safe community space to meet under the supervision of qualified trained instructors and mentors. The Studio Arts Apprenticeship is a job-skill building program for teens ages 14-18. They are challenged with a creative project led by an instructor who will help teens develop skills, including: time management, group work, oral presentations, critical thinking, self and group critique and more; and

WHEREAS, The Puerto Rican Arts Alliance also offers the Latin Music project, allowing children from ages 4 to 18 to learn about music, history and instruments of Latin culture. They learn about music from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Brazil and elsewhere in South America, getting the children involved in their own culture by teaching the background of the music, and the people who write the music; and

WHEREAS, PRAA granted its first annual Felisa Rincon De Gautier Distinguished Woman Award during the twentieth anniversary year. The awards honor prestigious women for their contributions to the broader Puerto Rican / Latino community. Felisa Rincon was the first woman to be selected as the Mayor of a capital city in the Americas and her contributions have widely inspired and affected generations of change; and

WHEREAS, The twentieth anniversary of PRAA has also showcased the El Archivo Project, originally established in 2014 to document, preserve, and share the history of Puerto Ricans in the Midwest. This project seeks to acknowledge the historical presence of the community, whose narratives have often gone unrecognized a mainstream cultural institutions. Their growing digital archive consists of photographs dating from the 1920’s to the 1990’s. PRAA’s partnership with the University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago History Museum, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago Cultural Alliance and others offer access to the project. The six week, state-standardized curriculum addresses themes of migration and

immigration to the Midwest United States and Chicago for children / youth of all backgrounds (grades 3-12); and

WHEREAS, To Commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, to commemorate PRAA has numerous special events planned, including: three concerts; a Latin Music Project Spring Scholarship Concert, El Caribe Clasico Concert, in partnership with Lyric Unlimited, and Noche Caribena Concert at Navy Pier; six exhibitions; Arte al Rescate, El Archivo Exhibition: “The Face of Puerto Rican Migration”, Teens of the Studio Arts Apprenticeship Program, La Primera Parada” and The Spirit of Puerto Rico on Parade. Also they presented for the first time the Felisa Rincon de Gautier Distinguished Woman Award. Two festivals were held: the 20th Anniversary National Cuatro Festival, and the National Cocuito Festival; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved, That the Mayor and the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this thirty-first day of October, 2018, do hereby congratulate the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance on their twentieth anniversary, thank them for their many achievements and wish them continued success for many years in the future; and

Be it Further Resolved, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance to commemorate this outstanding milestone, and as a sign of our honor and respect.

MILLY SANTIAGO
Alderman, 31st Ward