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Boletín

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Hernandez formally announces run for Dallas city council

Gay Latino wants to represent District 3

On Dec. 27, Joseph Hernandez formally announced his candidacy for Dallas District 3 city council seat. Openly-Gay Hernandez was waiting for openly-Gay Ed Oakley, the current District 3 councilman, to announce his race for Mayor. Hernandez has been busy this winter making the rounds in his district, which he hopes will trust his vision for the future.

“District 3 is a diverse district and a big piece of the economic driver in the Southern Sector of our city,” said Hernandez. “The district is faced with a number of ongoing challenges that include smart economic development, neighborhood preservation, housing development, public safety, education, the environment and the dispersion of basic city services.”

Hernandez currently serves as vice president of Northern Trust Bank. He is originally from New Mexico, where he attended New Mexico State University and the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute as a business major.

Hernandez, 37, moved to Dallas in 1997. With a successful career in business, why does Hernandez want a low-paying city council position?

“It is our responsibility as members of a civilized society to get the quality of public government as good as possible. There are and always have been men and women who stand in the frontline for a better society, especially a better government,” said Hernandez. “I care about Dallas and its tax-paying citizens. I believe that in order to bring positive change to the community you have to have a seat at the table. Today, District 3 and the City of Dallas are on the cusp of great things.”

This will be Hernandez’s first run for office, but he is no stranger to public service.

“I have been dedicated to public service in District 3 for many years and served as past president of my neighborhood asso-



Joseph Hernandez announced his run for Dallas City Council on Dec. 27.

ciation, Wynnewood North. I’m committed to overall community education as I’ve served on the steering committee of the Dallas AIDS Lifewalk, the boards of the Anita N. Martinez Ballet Folklórico and United Hispanic Professionals,” he said.

Hernandez sees many challenges for the city of Dallas.

“I believe the city of Dallas needs to address a number of issues in order to build a strong, vibrant and sustainable city. As one of the largest cities in the country, I believe Dallas has to act in the greater good to address transit development; building a regional system of mass transit will provide a new source of revenue for the city. Secondly, we need to address our water supply; strengthen conservation practices and find ways to finance projects like new water reservoirs. Third, we need to address air quality; our air is seriously unhealthy and remains in violation of federal limits. This will prove to be a larger issue when tied to coal-fired power plants still active in the North Texas region.”

To learn more about Hernandez, write him at JHernandezCampaign@sbcglobal.net. ▽

Group hopes to raise awareness about anti-Gay bullying at DISD

In January's general meeting, Valiente members will hear from the Education Coalition, a group of LGBT community leaders that is raising awareness about the lack of implementation of Dallas Independent School District's nondiscrimination policy which protects LGBT students.

The policy was enacted 15 years ago, thanks to the hard work of the local Parents for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays chapter and then DISD School Board of Education Trustee Jose Plata, an openly-Gay Latino.

Although the policy is in the books, the harassment still continues.

The Education Coalition will send spokeswoman Dr. Kristine Vowels to speak with Valiente. Dr. Vowels has taught at Ursuline Academy, Hockaday and now DISD. She has written a dissertation study about the safety concerns for LGBTQ youth and the lack of knowledge and biases educators have toward this student population.

Boletín: What motivated you to start this coalition?

Dr. Kristine Vowels: "This past summer I decided to put my own fears aside and move forward in my passion to seek inclusion for LGBTQ youth, youth with same-sex parents, and for the same-sex parents. I put together a proposal, and with the support of Lambda Legal (Dennis Coleman and Ben Leal) moved forward. I contacted Bob Ivancic (co-founder of Youth First Texas) and then we came together in a meeting. The four of us began planning, and added another gentleman to our committee Jay Forte."

Boletín: What are some of the common complaints from LGBT students?

KV: "Young male youth who appear to be a little more effeminate are the victims of fights. Young female youth endure verbal harassment more often by their male peers. Recently, a friend who is an administrator at the middle-school level contacted me regarding a female student who was suggesting suicide as a way out. The young girl is struggling with being a Lesbian, and she knows her dad will not accept her. She is afraid her dad will physically hurt her. Many female athletes in DISD endure Gay slurs being yelled at them either at school or games."



Openly-Gay Dr. Kristine Vowels is seeking more inclusion of LGBTQ students and youth with same-sex parents at DISD.

Boletín: What does DISD have to do to be fully compliant with its nondiscrimination policy?

KV: "The district has an inclusive policy, however there is no implementation with staff development, inclusion in the curriculum, forms for parents, and discipline for students who harass LGBTQ youth. I have seen where a student used the 'N' word and that student was suspended immediately. I have also been the teacher who escorted youth to the office who hurled Gay slurs at other youth. These students were 'counseled with' and released back to class. The administrators did not see the Gay slurs as being the same when a child used the 'N' word. Until I provided the information this year, there has not been any college scholarship information for LGBTQ youth. DISD needs to implement ongoing staff development on LGBTQ topics, and this should be done from the general superintendent, board members, educators, staff, parents and students. Schools should provide a safe environment not just for the youth, but also for the teachers who are Gay."

To learn more about this anti-discrimination initiative, come by Valiente's general meeting on Thursday, Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m., at Havana's, 4006 Cedar Springs Rd., Dallas, TX 75219. ♡

News Briefs



Valiente Members Joel Burns (left) and JD Angle (right) pose with Valiente's Person of the Year Monica Greene (center) at Valiente's Holiday/Anniversary Party in December. Jerry Martinez won "Member of the Year" that evening also.

General Meeting on Jan. 18:

Valiente will meet Thursday, Jan. 18, at 6:30 p.m., at Havana's, located on 4006 Cedar Springs Rd., Dallas, TX 75219. This month's guest speaker is Dr. Kristine Vowels, spokeswoman for the Education Coalition.

Valiente welcomes new member:

Valiente received a new membership from Roberto Galvan of Dallas. Special thanks goes to Dallasites Seyd Rios and Chico Segura, who renewed their memberships.

Gay LULAC holds 2007 KickOff Celebration/Auction on Jan. 23:

Valiente members are invited to Gay LULAC's "2007 Kickoff Celebration," being held Tuesday, Jan. 23, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the Fairmount Hotel, 1717 N. Akard St., Dallas, TX 75201. The event will feature appetizers, cash bar and a raffle. For more information, write the council at GayLULAC@aol.com.

Membership & fundraising report:

Cesar Reyna: The winner of the 2006 membership contest is Efren Garcia. Garcia recruited eight new members and will receive a \$100 gift certificate and a garment designed by Valiente Board Member Jerry Martinez. We will kickoff a membership contest for 2007, running from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. To be eligible, you need to recruit at least 10 new members by the end of December. The winner will receive a \$100 gift card and a garment designed by Martinez. ♡

Mundo Latino

LGBT Latinos rallies around immigrant boy needing liver transplant:

He is 13 years old, and he is in desperate need of a liver transplant. His name is Irving Olivas and both he and his mother are undocumented immigrants. Because of his undocumented status, Olivas has been denied any assistance from foundations and government agencies. The young boy needs a liver transplant that costs \$380,000. To date, the Olivas family has only raised \$5,000. In December, Valiente member Mimi Casanova pulled together an impressive lineup of Latino female impersonators to raise funds for the boy at a benefit held at Havana's. Valiente asks members to bring a donation of any size to the next general meeting to help the Olivas family. For more information, contact Valiente Board Member Jerry Martinez at jerrymartinez4@gmail.com.

Texas State Representative submits bill to deny benefits to Latinos:

The 80th Legislature of Texas opens this week with a new bill submitted by State Rep. Leo Berman of Tyler, House Bill 28, that would deny government benefits to American-born children of undocumented immigrants. The Republican's first draft of the bill called for the denial of public school education and health services, but since those are mandated by federal law he revised his bill to deny other benefits such as food stamps, housing assistance and unemployment benefits.

1 in 4 entrepreneurs is a resourceful immigrant, according to study:

A study released on Jan 4, by Duke University estimated that 25 percent of technology and engineering companies had at least one senior executive that was born outside of the United States. These immigrants' companies employed more than 450,000 workers and generated \$52 billion in sales in 2005, according to Duke. Indian immigrants founded more tech startups, followed by the United Kingdom, China, Taiwan and Japan. The study offers a counterpoint to old adage "immigrants take jobs from Americans," by showing how new technologies were invented by these companies, which created jobs that didn't exist before. ▽

10 Questions

with
Jesus
Chairez



Before there was Valiente, there was activists like Jesus Chairez. Chairez and other LGBT Latinos not only had to fight against the homophobic attitudes within the Latino community, but racism in the LGBT Anglo community.

Boletín: What has been your impression of Valiente this past year?: Jesus Chairez: "It kicked nalga in 2006. I most like the visibility of GLBT Latinos, especially in the Anglo-dominated Gay press."

Boletín: What would you like Valiente to tackle in 2007? JC: "More visibility for GLBT Latinos in the media. Though Valiente, especially during Hispanic Heritage Month was more visible, the Dallas Voice is not really covering Latino issues and concerns. They appear to be working from press releases and photos they receive from Valiente, Gay LULAC and me. I think that Valiente should consider working closely with the DFW Hispanic Communicators during their annual scholarship drive to encourage GLBT Latino students to apply for scholarships so we may have more representation in media jobs: print, radio and television."

Boletín: You have been an activist for several decades. Are you still seeing some of the discrimination you were fighting against two decades ago? JC: "YES! The checking of ID's for some Latinos at Caven Enterprise bars. If it is not a Texas Drivers License or a state of Texas approved ID, which most undocumented Latinos don't have, they don't get in! Station 4 only allows the Mexico ID only after 2:00 a.m. Funny how in August 1980 I was denied entry to a Caven bar though I had an ID. As I was walking out the door, the cashier said to his friend, well that's another Mexican down. The Dallas Gay Alliance would not get involved, too afraid. But this got me into action, so I only hope that this continued practice burns a flame of activism in another soul. And then we still have discrimination in the straight community -- but things have improved."

Boletín: Are you surprised by the many active Gay Latinos that have sprung up in 2006? Or do you think there should be more? JC: "Though I am pleased to see more participation now than in past recent years, I am disappointed there isn't more. I mean the numbers are not really any more different today than in 1982 when the Gay & Lesbian Hispanic Coalition was established. Today we have personal computers that can do wonderful graphics, digital cameras, e-mail, web pages, e-lists; etc to get the word out and the participation isn't much different now than before the Internet."

Boletín: Let's talk about your passion: art. What musical artist do you recommend Valiente readers listen to this year? JC: "Wow!! There is so much talent out there and it is all for grabs. When I started Sin Fronteras (Chairez' former LGBT Latino radio show) we did not have reggaeton so things are always changing! When I retired from Sin Fronteras, I stopped keeping up with Latino musical artists. I now mostly listen to classical."

Boletín: What painter do you like? JC: "I am into photography. Check out Annie Leibovitz's new book 'A Photographers Life 1990 - 2005.' Andy Hanson a Dallas photographer has a nice show at the moment at the Hall of State at Fair Park. I most like photos of Nicklos Muray, his not seen before pictures of Frida Kahlo, with letters from Frida, can be found in 'I will Never Forget You' a new book written by Dallas author Salomon Grimberg."

Boletín: And what writers do you recommend? JC: "I think people should check out 'Bésame Mucho - New Gay Latino Fiction.' This book is an anthology of 17 gay Latino writers."

Boletín: Are you religious? JC: RF: "Yes. I thank God every night and morning for my blessings and good health. I also value the Virgen de Guadalupe and Lord Ganesha."

Boletín: What is your new year's resolution? JC: "Well, to take care of myself more (lose 20 pounds too) and to get published more."

Boletín: For those aspiring LGBT Latino activists out there, any word of advice? JC: "Take care of yourself first. You cannot fight the fight with one foot in the grave. I know this from personal experience!" ▽

Human Rights Campaign group looking for diversity

Dr. Jose Gomez is looking for a few good Latinos and Latinas.

He is a member of the local Human Rights Campaign committee, which is looking for members of color to serve in leadership positions.

"I am looking for someone, preferably a Hispanic female. The reason for this is that we are very interested in gender parity when we staff our committees and subcommittees," Dr. Gomez said. "As co-chair of diversity, I would like to create a subcommittee in which we can plan and strategize future events and come up with ideas about bringing more of the Hispanic community to the front lines of reaching out for equality for Latinos/as."

Dr. Gomez hopes anyone that is interested in this opportunity will contact him at (817) 233-8021.

The position requires a monthly commitment.

"We would meet once month or more if we are planning an event," said Dr. Gomez.

Dr. Gomez hopes to bring his diversity numbers up this year.

"Our local Latino HRC involvement is probably less than 10 percent. This is unacceptable, given the gay Latino population in Dallas," said Dr. Gomez. "I met with Joe Salmonese, the President of HRC about two weeks after the Valiente/HRC 2006 Salsa Cocktails event and he was very excited about the turnout. I would like to make this grow. Perhaps have an HRC Latino happy hour (every month, every other month or quarterly) to keep everyone engaged and possible another event during the year."

Dr. Gomez also hopes to dispel rumors about the organization.

"My biggest push about all this is to introduce Latinos to HRC and to clear up the notion that Federal Club is just a level of membership of HRC. That there are other levels at which individuals can get involved," he said. "Naturally, hoping that at some point they would (without anyone's pressure) want to get involved at



Valiente Member Dr. Jose Gomez (left) and Vanessa Benavidez are members of the Human Rights Campaign. The two Latinos sit on the local HRC steering committee.

a higher level of giving. Always remembering that HRC is the largest and most effective GLBT Political Action Committee. I would encourage everyone to log on to HRC.ORG and follow what is being done in the realm of immigration. ▼



DFW LGBTQ LATINO/A ALLIANCE
VALIENTE

Valiente

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****Remember:

Valiente General Meeting
Thursday, January 18, 6:30 p.m.
Havana's on 4006 Cedar Springs Rd.
Featured guest: Education Coalition