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**Advancing a ‘Shared Future’ through Local Latino Leaders  
Chicago Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy Announces Year 2 Participants**

**CHICAGO – June 17, 2010** – Strengthening the Latino nonprofit sector in economically challenging times, the Latino Policy Forum, working in conjunction with the Center for Leadership Innovation, last week announced the 10 local organizations selected to participate in the second cohort of its Chicago Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy.

Two representatives – including an executive-level and an emerging leader – from each organization will participate in the intensive nine-month academy, building personal and organizational leadership skills while exploring their role as leaders in both the Latino community and larger society. Participants will complete a series of three, 2.5-day retreat sessions, scheduled in August, November and February, and will receive one-on-one consulting, tailored to their organizations’ needs. The Academy is estimated to invest \$13,000 per organization and comes at no cost to participating organizations.

“The Academy fills a critical void in leadership development here in the Midwest,” said Sylvia Puente, executive director of the Latino Policy Forum. “Few programs focus specifically on building organizational *and* leadership skills in the Latino community. The Academy is unique in that it engages organizations across a large spectrum of size, budget and mission.”

The Academy invests in leadership to rectify two conflicting trends: the rising Latino population and the decrease in state investment. In FY09, the State of Illinois awarded just 5.5 percent of all grants to 120 Latino contracts. In FY10, that number had dropped to just 85 Latino contracts, who collectively received 13 percent less in actual dollar amounts. Shrinking grant dollars contrast sharply with the community’s rapid demographic growth: Since 2000, Latinos have accounted for a full 90 percent of state growth. The Latino population itself increased by nearly 30 percent during that same timeframe, meaning it currently accounts for 15 percent of the state’s population.

“We are positioning the nonprofit sector to better serve the growing Latino community, even with increasingly-diminishing resources,” said Puente. “Latinos’ demographic growth, along with nonprofit organizations’ capacity to support it, will transform communities – Latino and otherwise – across Chicago, Illinois, and the country. The Academy is creating leaders who will play a greater role in shaping our shared future.”

Organizations participating in this year’s cohort include El Hogar del Niño, Enlace Chicago, Erie Elementary Charter School, Family Focus Nuestra Familia, Healthcare Alternative Systems, Latinos Progresando, Onward Neighborhood House, Grupo SALTO, SER Jobs for Progress of Lake County, Inc, and Telpochcalli Community Education Project. Collectively, these organizations serve the Latino community in areas as diverse as housing, technology, education and immigration, among others, and range from volunteer-led groups to organizations with 100-plus full-time staffers. Participants were selected from a pool of Latino-led, Latino-serving organizations by a panel of past Academy participants and funders, based on their organizational mission and ability to both contribute to and benefit from Academy activities.

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**About the Latino Policy Forum.**

The Latino Policy Forum is the only organization in the Chicago area that facilitates the involvement of Latinos at all levels of public decision-making. The Forum conducts analysis to inform, influence and lead. Its goals are to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and engage diverse sectors of the community, with an understanding that advancing Latinos advances a shared future. For more information, visit [www.latinopolicyforum.org](http://www.latinopolicyforum.org).

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