

## History of Latino/a Alumni at Yale

Curious about what Latino/a alumni have been up to these past years? Well, wonder no more! Below is a comprehensive summary of alumni activities that will catch you up to date.

### Fall 2001

Latino/a alumni established the Yale Latinos yahoo group and listserv in the fall of 2001. This listserv serves as one of our primary modes of communication. If you are not a member of the group, we urge you to please go to [Yale\\_Latinos-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Yale_Latinos-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) to subscribe.



### 2002

The Association of Yale Alumni and the Latino Cultural Center began making strong, concerted efforts to work with Latino/a alumni in 2002. One of the most significant moves was the assignment of Alisa Masterson, a part time AYA Director, to work with the Cultural Centers on campus and their communities.

In the spring of 2002, AYA encouraged the centers to host receptions during Yale reunion weekends. A reception was held at the Latino Cultural Center that summer and they continue to be hosted annually. AYA provided and continues to provide financial and administrative support for these receptions.



### Fall of 2002

In the fall of 2002, a young group of alumni lead by Li Yun Alvarado '02 began developing the **Latino Alumni Prize** aimed at recognizing the contributions made by graduating seniors to the Yale Latino community. The prize continues to be awarded annually and has at times served as the rallying point for Latino alumni.



### Fall of 2003 and winter 2004

In the fall of 2003, a series of conference calls organized by Marco Davis '92 resulted in the decision to write all Latino/a alumni in an effort to stimulate interest in organizing a Latino/a alumni network. The letter, signed by Marco Davis '92, Billie Gastic '98, Miriam Sargusingh '99 and Joseph Cubas '02, was sent in February 2004 and encouraged alumni to register on the La Casa website as well as respond to a survey that gauged interest. The alumni group had the full financial and administrative support of AYA and the Latino Cultural Center. There was an approximate 11% response rate.\*

The following alumni participated in these conversations and helped with the initiative.

Daniel Acosta, BR '97

Daniel Amaez, JE '01

Alma Ayala, CC '86

Noe Bastidas, MC '99

Manuel Berrelez, DC '00  
Araceli Campos, MC '99  
Orlando Cordero, BK '96  
Joseph Cubas, CC '02  
Marco Davis, JE '92  
Felicia Escobar, SY '99  
Arnoldo Fabela, TD '02  
Lisa Fortuna, MC '91  
Marisol Franco, BR '92  
Billie Gastic, DC '98  
James Gutierrez, CC '99  
Francisco Lopez, TD '02  
Irma Mejia, JE '06  
Francisco Ramirez, SM '02  
Javier C. Rivera, JE '02  
Evelyn Rojas, SY '94  
Nancy Rosas, BR '01  
Cathy Sandoval, TC '84  
Miriam Sargusingh, SY '99  
Marisol Silva-Lopez, SM '03  
Adam Torres, SM '06  
Rafael Trujillo, ES '01

Below is a copy of the letter that was mailed to Latino/a alumni.

*Dear Fellow Latino Alumni:*

*As you may know, many of us have been discussing the need for a dynamic support network for Yale Latino alumni. The development of such a “community” becomes increasingly necessary as our numbers continue to multiply with each graduating class. Previous groups of Yale Latino alumni took the first vital steps towards developing a supportive organization that would specifically address the needs and interests of Latino alumni; however, the university recommended that these activists utilize the alumni association structure that already existed, believing it provided a suitable network for all Yale alumni.*

*Determined to respond to the changing needs of its growing alumni population, Yale is currently facilitating the development of minority and affinity alumni networks. We now have an excellent opportunity to establish an organization that will continue to foster the community we established as undergraduates. Through this network we can support each other and current students at Yale, and ensure a Latino alumni voice in university policies and practices, in the interest of Yale Latinos and the university overall.*

*We have enclosed a “Contact Information Request” form that we ask you to complete. You may return the form via U.S. mail to the address at the bottom of the form, or you can complete our convenient web-based version. Please visit La Casa Cultural’s Web site at:*

*http://www.yale.edu/lacasa, and click on the “Alumni” link to access the online form. After you complete the form, we invite you to tour La Casa’s Web site to learn more about La Casa today.*

*We have sent you this mailing because you are recognized in university documentation as Latino alumni. Unfortunately, not all Yale Latino alumni are accurately recorded; therefore, many of your Latino classmates and friends will not be aware of this current initiative. You can help in the effort to reach out by spreading the word to other Yale Latino alumni you know.*

*Through a recent survey that we distributed to a small sample of alumni, we received several recommendations about the association’s potential activities (e.g. networking opportunities, mentorship development, etc.). The respondents reiterated the need for this type of association as a support network for Yale’s current and future Latino alumni. If you are interested in providing your own recommendations for the development of the Yale Latino alumni association, please check the “recent survey” option on the form.*

*While we have your attention, we wanted to inform you that Yale is currently developing an online career-networking database that will serve as an excellent resource for both students and alumni seeking to get or share career advice and/or opportunities. Keep an eye out for an AYA mailing that will discuss the launch of the Web site and what you need to do to participate in this new Yale initiative.*

*We are currently planning a recruitment event at Yale for Latino pre-frosh in the spring, as well as networking/recruitment receptions in several cities around the country. Your support of this effort is the key to building a community for Yale Latino alumni, so please take a few minutes to complete the Contact Information Request Form so that we can send you more information on these and other activities. We look forward to hearing from you.*

*Sincerely,*

*Coordinating Committee for a Yale Latino alumni association*

\* The letter was sent to alumni who are recognized in university documentation as Latino alumni. Unfortunately, not all Yale Latino alumni are accurately recorded; therefore, some of you or your Latino classmates and friends might not be receiving such correspondence from us. If you would like to be formally added to our list of Latino/a alumni, please contact us.



## **2005**

The next significant period of activity began in April 2005, when AYA embarked on its “Connect with Yale” campaign that had Yale administrators, including the University’s President, faculty members and deans travel to different cities in an effort to reconnect with alumni. Special time during the daylong events was designated for Cultural Center Directors to meet with alumni affiliated with their communities. As part of the program, Dean Rosalinda Garcia visited:

Los Angeles, CA, in April 2005  
Washington, DC, in October 2005

Most Latino gatherings were small, bringing approximately 10-20 alumni together.



## **2006**

The “Connect with Yale” events continued on throughout 2006. During that year, Dean Rosalinda Garcia visited the following cities:

Boston, MA, in January 2006  
San Francisco, CA, in February 2006  
Chicago, IL, in March 2006



## **June 2006**

Following one of the “Connect with Yale” events, a steering committee of alumni led by Eve Rojas ‘94 planned a social event at the Harbor House Restaurant in Marina del Rey, CA, on June 9, 2006. The evening included dinner, cocktails, and remarks by Justice Carlos Moreno ‘70, Eve Rojas ‘94, Christina Sanchez ‘05, and Dean Garcia.



## **October 2006**

The largest “Connect with Yale” gathering was in October 2006 in New York City. Approximately fifty-five Latino alumni attended the event.

Mark Dollhopf, director of AYA, committed to hosting a “Connect-with-Yale”-like visit to Texas, a state in which there is a high concentration of Latino/a alumni.



## **January 2007**

Building on the momentum from the New York City event in October of 2006, Dean Rosalinda Garcia appointed an interim alumni board in January 2007 to help develop the New York Latino Alumni Network. Danny Acosta ‘97, LiYun Alvarado ‘02, Stephanie Cabrera ‘01, Roy Cosme ‘77, Francisco Estrada ‘97, Kenneth Figueroa, Rodrigo Fuentes ‘06, Ana Yolanda “Suky” Ramos ‘90, Edgardo Ramos ‘82, Lara Rios ‘02, and Jorge Torres ‘96 graciously agreed to serve on the interim board between January and April 2007. During that time, they met regularly to establish a vision, a mission, an organizational structure, and group bylaws.

New York was not the only community that organized after the “Connect with Yale” events. Alumni lead by Danny Acosta ‘97, Marco Davis ‘92, and Felicia Escobar ‘99 organized a number of activities for Latino/a alumni in the DC area.



## **February 2007**

A final “Connect with Yale” event was held in Los Angeles, CA, on February 2007.



## **April 2007**

A second tri-state area Yale Latino/a Alumni event was held in April 2007 at the Yale Club in New York City. The social event drew sixty-five attendees. Elections for the official board were held at that time and the following alumni were elected to serve a one-year term.

### **Co-Chairs**

Daniel Acosta ‘97  
LiYun Alvarado ‘02

### **Secretary**

Lara Rios ‘02

### **Webmaster**

Rodrigo Fuentes ‘06

### **At-Large Positions**

Stephanie Cabrera ‘01  
Roy Cosme ‘77  
Francisco Estrada ‘97  
Ken Figueroa ‘97  
Gladys Nieves ‘94  
Edgardo Ramos ‘82  
Jorge Torres ‘96  
Adam Torres ‘06

The group, which ultimately became the **Yale Latino Alumni Association of the Tri-State Area**, includes Chicanos/as, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and many others. It is currently experiencing high levels of activity and has developed a summer internship program that gives current Yale undergraduates a chance to get hands-on experience in a variety of fields.



## **August 2007**

In the summer of 2007, Dean Rosalinda Garcia identified and invited a number of alumni to serve on a National Latino/a Alumni Association Interim Board. Dean Garcia deliberately tried to identify a group of alumni as diverse as our community itself. The following invitation was extended to fourteen alumni who had either been previously active with Latino/a alumni initiatives or had expressed an interest in alumni affairs.

August 7, 2007

*As you know, the Latino alumni community at Yale has seen a lot of activity in the recent years. Our next goal is to establish a National Latino Alumni Board that will be populated by alumni from all over the country and whose charge it will be to help coordinate a more organized structure and strategy for the Yale Latino alumni community.*

*To this end, I am appointing a **National Latino Alumni Interim Board** who among other things will be charged with:*

- 1. Helping to develop a vision for the Latino alumni community*
- 2. Developing a structure for the entire Latino alumni community*
- 3. Identifying the National Board's responsibilities and differentiating between the role of the national board and regional boards*
- 4. Developing the National Board's structure*
- 5. Identifying next steps that will lead to the election of the actual board*

*I'm writing to see if you would be interested in serving on the interim board. I have tried to identify a diverse group of alumni that have been active in the community and who have already shown an interest in alumni affairs.*

*As a member of the board, I anticipate that we would need you to be available for conference calls and able to engage in the string of email conversations that will result. Because this is the first time we will bring such a group together, I am hoping to convene a weekend meeting/retreat in New Haven to begin our work. I am in the process of making arrangements for this and am pretty confident that I will be able to find the financial support to help subsidize the visit for all of our invited board members. The date for this meeting has not yet been set, but we are hoping that it will take place in October. A date will be decided once the list of board members is finalized.*

*I hope that you will seriously consider joining the board, but if the timing is wrong for you, please do not feel obligated to do so. We very much appreciate everything you have already done for the Yale Latino community. Please don't hesitate to call or email me if you have any questions. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.*

*Sincerely,  
Rosalinda Garcia*

Our intention is that this interim board will ultimately be replaced by a board of elected representatives. The election process will be determined by alumni.



### **October 2007**

The following invitation was sent to all Latino/a alumni in August of 2007. This announced the first official meeting of the Yale Latino Alumni Association interim board. The invitation was sent via the

alumni yahoo group listserv. To subscribe to that listserv, please go to Yale\_Latinos-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

*Dear Alumni,*

*In continuing with our effort to develop a **National Latino Alumni Association for Yale**, I invited twelve alumni to serve on an interim board whose goal it is to think about and ultimately develop this formal network. This interim board will meet on Oct. 13 in New Haven to begin their work. I will keep you abreast of any developments and as always, welcome any thoughts you might have.*

*AYA and the Latino Cultural Center will be hosting a reception to welcome the board to New Haven on Friday, Oct. 12th. If you are in the area, we hope you can join us.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dean Rosalinda Garcia*

*The Association of Yale Alumni and Dean Rosalinda Garcia  
invite you to a reception welcoming the  
National Latino Alumni Interim Board to New Haven.  
Come meet our alumni on the eve of an historic  
Latino Alumni Meeting.*

*Friday, October 12, 2007*

*7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.*

***Rose Alumni House, Yale University***

*232 York Street*

*New Haven, CT*

*Please RSVP to lacasa@yale.edu  
by Wednesday, October 10, 2007*

***National Latino Alumni Interim Board***

*Daniel Acosta '97*

*Melvyn Colon '77*

*Roy Cosme '77*

*Marco Davis '93*

*Yalina Disla '07*

*Felicia Escobar '99*

*Manuel Escobar '76*

*Billie Gastic '98*

*Catherine Kisse-Sandoval '84*

*Mark Reyes '98*

*Eve Rojas '94*

*Sara Salvide '76*



**Tuesday, December 4, 2007**

On December 4, 2007, the following letter was sent to alumni who are recognized in university documentation as Latino alumni. Unfortunately, not all Yale Latino alumni are accurately recorded; therefore, some of you or your Latino classmates and friends might not be receiving such correspondence from us. If you would like to be formally added to our list of Latino/a alumni, please contact us at [yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu](mailto:yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu).

*Dear Fellow Latino Alumni:*

*Over the years, several efforts have been made to create a support network for Yale Latino alumni that would address our mutual needs and interests – from the Chicano and Puerto Rican efforts in the 80s and 90s to the activities of alumni in the past few years that accompanied the university’s recent encouragement of the development of shared interest groups. With the support and assistance of the Association of Yale Alumni (AYA), the Yale College Dean’s Office and the current Latino undergraduates at Yale, several Yale Latino alumni from across the country met this past October to formally discuss the creation and structure for a national Latino alumni organization.*

*It is with great excitement that we are pleased to announce the official creation of the Yale Latino Alumni Association. As a first step to the formation of our organization, we established an Interim Board of Directors at the October 13-14 meeting and are developing a procedure to elect a National board. We are also planning a Latino alumni reunion at Yale for the 2008-2009 academic year, and have drafted a mission statement for the organization. The mission statement for the organization is currently as follows:*

***The Yale Latino Alumni Association (YLAA) serves as an umbrella organization supporting the diverse communities of Latinos joined by their connections to Yale University. Reflecting the interests and needs of Latinos from different national origins and Yale schools, YLAA functions as the principal link to and advocate with the University for the YLAA network. To facilitate a continued bond among all Yale Latinos, YLAA provides a flexible structure that both respects and encourages the shared interests of its affiliates.***

***Collectively, YLAA and its affiliates are actively involved in: creating networking opportunities for alumni, mentoring and supporting current Latino students, advocating for progress at Yale in areas such as Latino recruitment and faculty and curriculum diversity, and maintaining consistent and continued collaboration and communication with the University.***

*Your support of YLAA’s mission is key to building a community for Yale Latino alumni. Please take a few minutes to provide us with any feedback you may have that can help guide the Interim Board as we move forward in creating an alumni association that meets your interests and the needs of all Yale Latinos. You may provide your feedback by email at:*

***YaleLatinos@gmail.com***

*From planning our Latino alumni reunion for the 2008-2009 academic year to the development of a strategic plan to create a viable and stable non-profit organization, we are in need of assistance to help determine how the organization and its committees will proceed. If you are interested in getting involved on the ground floor of our present and planned activities, we graciously welcome your participation. To become an integral component of the development of YLAA, please contact the appropriate committee chair listed below.*

*We look forward to hearing from you, and reconnecting!*

*Sincerely,  
National Interim Board  
Yale Latino Alumni Association*

***Communications Committee Chair***

*Contact: Eve Rojas, Class of 1994*

***Fundraising Committee Chair***

*Contact: Sara Salvide, Class of 1978*

***Governance & Legal Committee Chair***

*Contact: Manuel Escobar, Class of 1976*

***Program Committee Chair***

*Contact: Roy Cosme, Class of 1977*

***Regional Organization Outreach Committee Chair***

*Contact: Danny Acosta, Class of 1997*

***Student Relations Committee Chair***

*Contact: Yalina Disla, Class of 2007*



**March 2008**

Kameka Dempsey '99 was named Director for Shared Interest Groups at the Association of Yale Alumni. Ms. Dempsey is responsible for working with a number of Shared Interest Groups (SIGS) including the Latino alumni group.



**May 2008**

Elections for the second Tri-State Area Latino Alumni board were held on May 7 at the law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP in New York City. Elected board members include:

**Co-Chairs**

Li Yun Alvarado '02

Juan Carlos Salinas, Drama '03

**Secretary**

Lara Rios '02

**Treasurer**

Rodrigo Fuentes '06

**At-Large Members**

Stephanie Cabrera '01

Roy Cosme '77

Victor Deupi, MA '89

Carlos Malvestutto '96

Victor Mejia '95

Edgardo Ramos '82

Alex Traverzo '96

Ezra Vazquez-D'Amico '03



**August 2008**

The Yale Latinos of LA and the AYA Shared Interest Group Team hosted a **Summer Fiesta** in August of 2008. The following invitation was sent to alumni.

*SUMMER FIESTA  
The Yale Latinos of LA  
&  
The Association of Yale Alumni  
present the  
2008 Yale Latino Alumni Summer Fiesta  
August 9th, 2008  
5pm - 10pm  
Chichen Itza Restaurant  
2501 W 6th Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90057  
Valet Parking included  
Program to begin at 6pm.*

**August 2008**

In the summer of 2008 a call for volunteers to serve on the reunion committee was sent via the alumni group listserve. The alumni listed below have volunteered, but we will welcome new committee members and volunteers up until the day of the reunion! If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our committee chairs, Araceli Campos and Sara Salvide at

yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu (If you are not on our yahoo group listserve, please go to Yale\_Latinos-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Volunteering is a fantastic way to meet new folks and share your input!

### **Reunion Committee Members Announced**

We welcome new committee members and volunteers at any time!

Manuel Berrelez, DC '00 / J.D. '05

Valerie Calvillo

**Araceli Campos MC '99, Committee co-chair**

Roy Cosme, TD '77

Alegria De La Cruz, ES '97

Karen Diaz, BR '79

Reny Diaz, SY '08

Felicia A. Escobar, SY '99

Billie Gastic, DC '98

Julio Gonzalez, CC '99

Felix Lopez, J.D. '91

Diana Mendez, MC '00

Carolee Montanez-Allman, MC '01

Maricela Oliva, TD '80

Stephen Pitti, ES '91

Ana Y. Ramos, '90

Tahia Reynaga, BR '98

Richard Rico, SY '76

Eve Rojas SY '94

Augie Rivera, BR '98

Monica Russel y Rodriguez, TD '88

**Sara Salvide, PC '78, Committee co-chair**

Christina Sanchez, '05

There are four Subcommittees under the umbrella of the Reunion Planning Committee. They are:

1. Logistics
2. Communications
3. Fundraising
4. Program



### **October 2008**

The following "Save The Date" was sent to all Latino/a alumni on October 16, 2008. The email announcement was sent to alumni who are recognized in university documentation as Latino/a alumni. Unfortunately, not all Yale Latino/a alumni are accurately recorded; therefore, some of you or your Latino/a classmates and friends might not be receiving such correspondence from us. If you would like to be formally added to our list of Latino/a alumni, please contact us at yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu.

*The Association of Yale Alumni, the Yale Latino Alumni Association and La Casa Cultural are pleased to invite you to*

*Save the date!*

***The Yale Latino Alumni Reunion***

*April 3 - 5, 2009*

*New Haven, CT*

*\* A gathering for all Latino Alumni from all Yale schools*

*\* Reconnect with friends and meet new friends*

*\* Reconnect with the Yale Latino community*

*\* An opportunity to hear about the formation of the Yale Latino Alumni Association*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!**

*Hotel and Registration information will be sent at a later date.*

*Interested in helping to organize?*

*Send an email to [yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu](mailto:yalelatinos@aya.yale.edu)*



**October 2008**

Araceli Campos '99 and Sara Salvide '78 volunteered to serve as the new Co-Chairs of the Reunion Planning Committee.



**(A Somewhat Incomplete) History of Yale Chicano/a and Puerto Rican Alumni Activity**

*The following document was prepared for the National Interim Board Meeting in October 2007. Information was provided by former Cultural Center deans, alumni, Yale College deans, AYA representatives, and historical documents. Attempts were made to confirm data as much as possible, but the quick turn around time required might have allowed for some innocent inaccuracies to seep in. We welcome any corrections and encourage alumni to submit additional information that will ultimately allow us to completely and accurately document our history. If you would like to submit information, please contact [rosalinda.garcia@yale.edu](mailto:rosalinda.garcia@yale.edu).*

**Puerto Rican Alumni Activity**

In an attempt to piece together a history of Puerto Rican alumni activity, five former Puerto Rican Cultural Center Deans and two pivotal alumni were contacted. All but two individuals responded to our request for information. Their recollection of events is summarized below.

Both Dean Melvyn Colon (1977-1980) and Dean Carlos Torre (1984-1991) agree that there were no attempts for alumni to organize during their tenures. However, Dean Torre noted, "there was Puerto Rican alumni activity taking place on an on-going basis but not necessarily organized in a 'formal' manner. Whenever influence had to be exerted on the university or other institution or group, one of

the alumni would notify other alumni, students, and myself to strategize and take appropriate action. Many things were achieved in this way: from student recruitment in Puerto Rico and the US, to thwarting attempt to eliminate PROP...”

Dean Colon, Dean Valeriano Ramos (1991-1997) and documents found at the Yale College Dean’s Office clearly suggest that attempts to establish a formal Puerto Rican alumni association were most visible in the 1990s. According to Dean Ramos, there were various efforts made on behalf of Puerto Rican alumni to organize during his years at Yale. Dean Ramos recalls there being at least two significant meetings at La Casa Cultural with approximately 10-20 alumni in attendance—most of them belonging to the graduating classes of the 70s and the 80s. During the first meeting, the notion of establishing a Yale Puerto Rican Alumni Association was discussed; the second meeting focused on organizing this Association. It is believed that this effort to formally organize grew out of the traditional post-Thanksgiving gatherings that Eduardo Padró ’75 has hosted annually at his home in New York City (Colon). It is also thought that the effort may have been a result of meetings/events hosted by Despierta Boricua to which alumni were invited (Colon, Ramos, Letriz).

Out of these efforts, the **Yale Puerto Rican Alumni Association**, a New York based group, was created (Colon) although there are no documents to suggest that it was formally incorporated. Dean Ramos was part of the group. Because of the efforts of several alums, specifically Eduardo Padró ’75 and David Gonzalez ’79, the Yale Puerto Rican Alumni Association, composed of about 20 alumni (mostly from Connecticut and New York City) held meetings in New York from about 1992 to 1997.

Documents from the 1990s found at the Yale College Deans Office show the Association was active in student recruitment efforts (Garcia). Additionally, Mr. Jay Lopez ’78 was listed as the Association’s President at one point. Dean Colon corroborates Mr. Lopez’s role as convener/president.

Dean Edgar Letriz, who became the director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in 1997, does not recall there being a formal alumni network at any point during his tenure (1997-2000) although there were a few exchanges between undergraduates and alumni, particularly around 1999 when Despierta Boricua celebrated an anniversary.

Beginning in 2000, a number of Puerto Rican alumni began working with Chicano alumni to establish a formal Latino alumni network, which brings us to the present. Eduardo Padró has continued to host the post-Thanksgiving gatherings and Despierta Boricua has continued to reach out to their alumni around anniversary celebrations (2002 and 2007). Although a formal active Puerto Rican Alumni Association does not currently exist, a number of Puerto Rican alums are active in the tri-state area group.

## **Chicano/a Alumni Activity**

Chicano/a alumni were formally organized for a number of years. Original incorporation documents provided by Roy Cosme ’77 show that the **Yale Chicano Alumni Association Inc. (YCAA)** was formed in Texas on May 25, 1994. The initial officers listed in these documents were Carlos R. Castro (President), Catherine Kisse-Sandoval (Vice President), Gilberto Ramon (Secretary), and

Frank Baca (Treasurer). The initial board of directors named included: Frank Baca, Carlos Castro, Marco Davis, Manuel Escobar, Mark Gallegos, Liza Grant, Catherine Kisse-Sandoval, Gilberto Ramos, and Jose Rodriguez.

Anecdotal information suggests that YCAA reunions were held almost every year between 1986 and 1996, (Escobar, Salvide). Two reunions were held in San Antonio, Los Angeles, and New Haven respectively. Phoenix and Palo Alto also hosted YCAA reunions once. Towards the end of a decade's worth of reunions, alumni decided to hold reunions every other year. Furthermore, it was also decided that a reunion would be held every fourth year in New Haven. This would allow the University's administration to see how the community was growing, and it also allowed the YCAA to connect with each class of undergraduate Chicano students at some point during their Yale careers.

Sara Salvide '76, former director of the Chicano Cultural Center, organized the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Chicanos on Yale's campus in 1991. The celebration included a three-day reunion for Chicano alumni and a pachanga at Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library for current and former students (Salvide). A Chicano Alumni Directory was published for the occasion (Cosme).

The YCAA is currently inactive and has been so for a number of years. Discontinuing the YCAA reunions was not a conscious decision. Most alumni familiar with the reunions agree that organization efforts broke down at one point and they were never revived. Although the formal network is not active, a strong informal network organized around class years still exist (Garcia). A number of Chicano alumni are active in the tri-state area and in California.

## **Latinos/as at Yale Today: An Overview**

### **La Casa Cultural Julia de Burgos, the Latino Cultural Center**

In the fall of 1999, Latino student leaders held town hall meetings to discuss the possibility of uniting the Puerto Rican and Chicano student communities on campus. These two groups had worked independently of each other for the most part, and each had its own cultural center. At the heart of the conversation was the belief that the groups shared considerable common ground and could benefit much from consolidation into a single organization. The conversations also addressed the growing concern that non-Chicano and non-Puerto Rican Latinos had few or no resources available to them. By winter break of 1999, students had collectively drafted a proposal for Latino student unification, which would unite the Puerto Rican and Chicano Cultural Centers. "La Casa Cultural, Julia de Burgos, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center" would become "La Casa Cultural Julia de Burgos, the Latino Cultural Center." That proposal was presented to and accepted by the University and in the fall of 2000 the Chicano Cultural Center moved into La Casa at 301 Crown.

Through the hard work of many individuals, the vision articulated in the students' unification proposal has developed into a thriving community. This is evident in the increase of student participation in the Latino community, and particularly in the growth of student groups. Prior to the unification, there were six Latino based student groups. We now have seventeen active organizations. They include:

1. MEChA (1969)
2. Despierta Boricua (1972)
3. LUL Fraternity\* (1992)
4. Latin American Student Organization - LASO (1996)
5. Ballet Folklorico (1998)
6. SLU Sorority\* (1999)
7. HSF Scholars Fund Chapter (2002)
8. Los Amigos Mentoring Program (2003)
9. Alianza, Pan Latino Student Organization (2003)
10. Yale Mexican Student Organization – YMSO (2004)
11. Cuban American Undergraduate Student Association - CAUSA (2005)
12. Dominican Students Association / QuisqueYalies - DSA (2005)
13. Yspaniola (2005)
14. Amigas Mentoring Program (2006)
15. MAS (Math and Science) Familias (2006)
16. Oye! Performance Group (Est. 2007)
17. Latino Business Coalition (Est. 2008)
18. Por Colombia (Est. 2008)

The Latino Cultural Center also produces a newsletter each semester in which the issues of the day are explored. The Chicano and Puerto Rican Cultural Centers have produced a number of newsletters in the past; our current publication, *La Fuerza*, was introduced in the spring of 2004. The newsletter is solely produced by students and funded by the Cultural Center although different departments and centers have helped contribute to the cost of production in the past. The staff of *La Fuerza* based out of the cultural center is not listed above as they are not registered groups and are organized differently than the other organizations. They are, however, considered a resident group.

\* The 2007-2008 academic year marked the first time the SLU Sorority had no activity or sisters on campus as the last remaining sisters graduated in May 2007. Similarly, the last LUL brother graduated in May 2008.

