

## National Council of La Raza's Public Funding

In January 2009, President Obama named Cecilia Muñoz to the position of Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. At the time of her appointment, Muñoz was the Vice President for Research, Advocacy and Legislation for the National Council of La Raza (NCLR). Muñoz also served on the boards of Center for Community Change (a liberal, pro-amnesty group), the Washington Office on Latin America, the Open Society Institute's U.S. Programs division, and Human Rights Watch's U.S. advisory committee. In all of these positions, Muñoz consistently advocated for liberalization of immigration policies and amnesty for illegal aliens.

In recognition of her work promoting open borders, the Mexican government's Instituto de Mexicanos en el Exterior (Institute for Mexicans Residing Abroad) awarded her the Ohtli Prize, the highest national honor that can be given to a non-Mexican citizen. According to Mexico's foreign affairs ministry, the Ohtli is "un reconocimiento que otorga la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE), por conducto del Instituto de los mexicanos en el Exterior (IME), a mexicanos, mexicanas, latinos y latinas o sus descendientes nacidos en el extranjero que se hayan distinguido por su trabajo durante muchos años en beneficio de la comunidad de origen mexicano en el extranjero, en cualquier ámbito del quehacer humano" (a recognition awarded to Mexicans or other Latinos (or their descendants born abroad) for many years of distinguished work in service to Mexican expatriates in any field of human endeavor". (Former NCLR Chairman Ramon Murguía previously received the award as well).

Since Muñoz joined the White House, federal funding for La Raza has increased significantly. The NCLR received \$2.8 million in federal grants in FY 2008 and \$4.1 million in FY 2009. In FY 2010, the total skyrocketed to more than \$11 million. (Source: USASpending.gov)

Nearly 60 percent of the grant funding to NCLR in FY 2010 was provided by the Department of Labor for employment training and placement. These grants were funded by the Recovery Act; therefore, NCLR was required to report the number of jobs “created or sustained” by the funded programs. A total of 16 direct jobs were reported. In addition, 21 students who received training funded by the grants were reportedly placed in jobs. (Note: These figures are from Recovery.gov, so they are likely to be off due to reporting delays)

Other federal grants awarded to the NCLR during FY 2010 were as follows:

\$2,530,618 from HUD to provide housing counseling  
\$961,682 from the Corporation for National and Community Service to fund AmeriCorps volunteers  
\$793,158 from the Department of Education  
\$250,000 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The NCLR also received a \$1,000,000 earmark in the FY 2010 for “capitalization of a revolving loan fund to be used for nationwide community development activities”. The earmark was sponsored by Reps. Cicero (TX), Olver (MA), L. Gutierrez (IL) and Diaz-Balart (FL).

The Department of Health and Human Services paid the NCLR \$25,000 in 2010 to co-sponsor the Council's annual conference.

The NCLR is the parent organization of five affiliated non-profits: The Raza Development Fund, the Strategic Investment Fund for La Raza, the Farmworkers' Justice Fund, Hogar Hispano and Democracia USA/Democracia Ahora. All but Democracia USA/Democracia Ahora share the NCLR's 1126 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW address.

The Farmworker Justice Fund received \$547,500 in grants from HHS in FY 2010 for HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention efforts— a 25 percent increase over its FY 2009 total and roughly one-third of the organization's total income.

Democracia USA/Democracia Ahora, Inc. is a nominally non-partisan voter registration and legislative advocacy group for Latino issues. Its president and CEO, Jorge Mursuli, was paid \$195,000 by the NCLR in 2008. Mursuli, a gay rights activist, was previously the Florida state director for People for the American Way. In July 2010, Mursuli was arrested in Phoenix during a street protest against SB 1070. The organization is based in Miami and maintains offices in Nevada, Colorado and New Jersey. Its campaigns include stopping legislation modeled after SB 1070, environmental issues, fighting the repeal of Obamacare and legislative redistricting in Florida. In 2010, Democracia USA received \$300,000 in grant funding from the Tides Foundation.

In addition to these sister organizations, the NCLR maintains a network of approximately 300 affiliated groups. Several of these groups have received substantially increased funding since Muñoz' appointment.

El Centro de la Raza, an affiliated social service organization in Seattle, received two Recovery Act-funded grants in FY 2010: \$295,000 from HUD for housing counseling services and \$239,824 from Health and Human Services to provide employment training.

The Gulf Coast Council of La Raza received \$289,150 in federal grants during FY 2010 from the Departments of Education and Agriculture. The Gulf Coast Council the ML Garza-Gonzalez charter school and a runaway shelter, both in Corpus Christi, TX.

Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC), one of the largest NCLR affiliates, saw its federal funding nearly double following Muñoz' appointment. The group received \$11.8 million in FY 2007 and \$13.2 million in FY 2008, leaping to \$24.4 million in FY 2009 and \$18.3 million in FY 2010. In December 2009, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office raided the CPLC headquarters in Phoenix in relation to a public corruption case against Mary Rose Wilcox, a Maricopa County supervisor. (Wilcox accepted nearly \$200,000 in loans from CPLC while voting to award county grants and contract to the organization. She was indicted on charges of perjury, forgery and conflict of interest charges, which were later dismissed). In 2008, the CPLC sued the State of Arizona (CPLC v. Napolitano) to challenge the recently-upheld Arizona Legal Workers Act.

The Youth Policy Institute, an educational and social services organization based in Los Angeles, received HHS grants of \$225,000 in FY 2007 and FY 2008. In FY 2009, it got \$2.5 million (all from the Department of Education), and in FY 2010 the total rose to nearly \$11 million. The 2010 funding included \$5.5 million from the Department of Commerce for computer centers, \$7.75 from Education and

\$3.6 million in Recovery Act funds from the Department of Labor.

NCLR affiliate CentroNia, Inc., a bilingual educational center in DC and Takoma Park, MD, received a \$500,000 Department of Education grant in August 2010. It was the first time the organization received federal funding. The grant was funded by an earmark by Rep. Van Hollen, Sen. Mikulski and Sen. Cardin. In February 2011, CentroNia's CEO, Beatriz "BB" Otero, was appointed DC's Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services.

Hispanic Interests Coalition of Alabama received a \$299,802 grant from DOJ's "Culturally and Linguistically Specific Services Program" on 9/16/2010. It had not previously received federal funding.

Ayuda, Inc., a Hispanic social services and legal assistance organization in DC, received \$600,000 in federal grants in FY 2009 and \$548,000 in FY 2010 (all from DOJ). The organization had received no funding in 2005 – 2008. Ayuda advertises that it provides immigration law services and states on its web site, "the conversations we have with you are confidential. Ayuda does not report undocumented people to immigration officials." The chair of its board of directors, Claudia Crichlow, is an Administrative Law Judge in the District of Columbia's Office of Administrative Hearings.

The National Farm Worker Service Center (NFWSC), a project of the United Farm Workers of America, received \$385,000 in federal grants in FY 2010. \$60,000 was provided via the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program, which is designed to "award grants to states for use by states and units of local

government to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system—with emphasis on violent crime and serious offenders—and enforce state and local laws that establish offenses similar to those in the federal Controlled Substances Act.” NFWSC received the grant for its “Farm Worker Anti-Discrimination Project.”