

LATINOS IN THE DEEP SOUTH

program
report
2011-2013



LATINOS
THE DEEP
SOUTH

4	8	22	24	25	26	28
Welcome	Program Overview Goals Leadership Unity Knowledge Action	Expanded Reach of the Deep South	Your Feedback	Looking Forward The Future	Commission Mission Statement and Executive Leadership	Spanish Section

The Latino Commission on AIDS would especially like to acknowledge the Ford Foundation’s support since the beginning for the Latinos in the Deep South program, our groundbreaking initiative in the Southern region of the US. We would also like to recognize our national, regional and local partners and participants who contributed to our advocacy efforts, leadership development institutes, individual coaching sessions, awareness campaigns, media & visibility efforts, capacity building training sessions, and webinars. We would also like also to thank the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Office of AIDS Research (OAR) at NIH and ViiV Healthcare for their contributions and guiding support.

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**THE "LATINOS IN THE DEEP SOUTH"
PROGRAM WORKS TO ADVOCATE AND MOBILIZE
COMMUNITIES, BUILD HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE, ADDRESS STIGMA,
AND NURTURE EMERGING LEADERSHIP TO HELP GROW AND SUSTAIN HEALTHY
LATINO COMMUNITIES IN ALABAMA, GEORGIA, LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, NORTH
CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA AND TENNESSEE.**

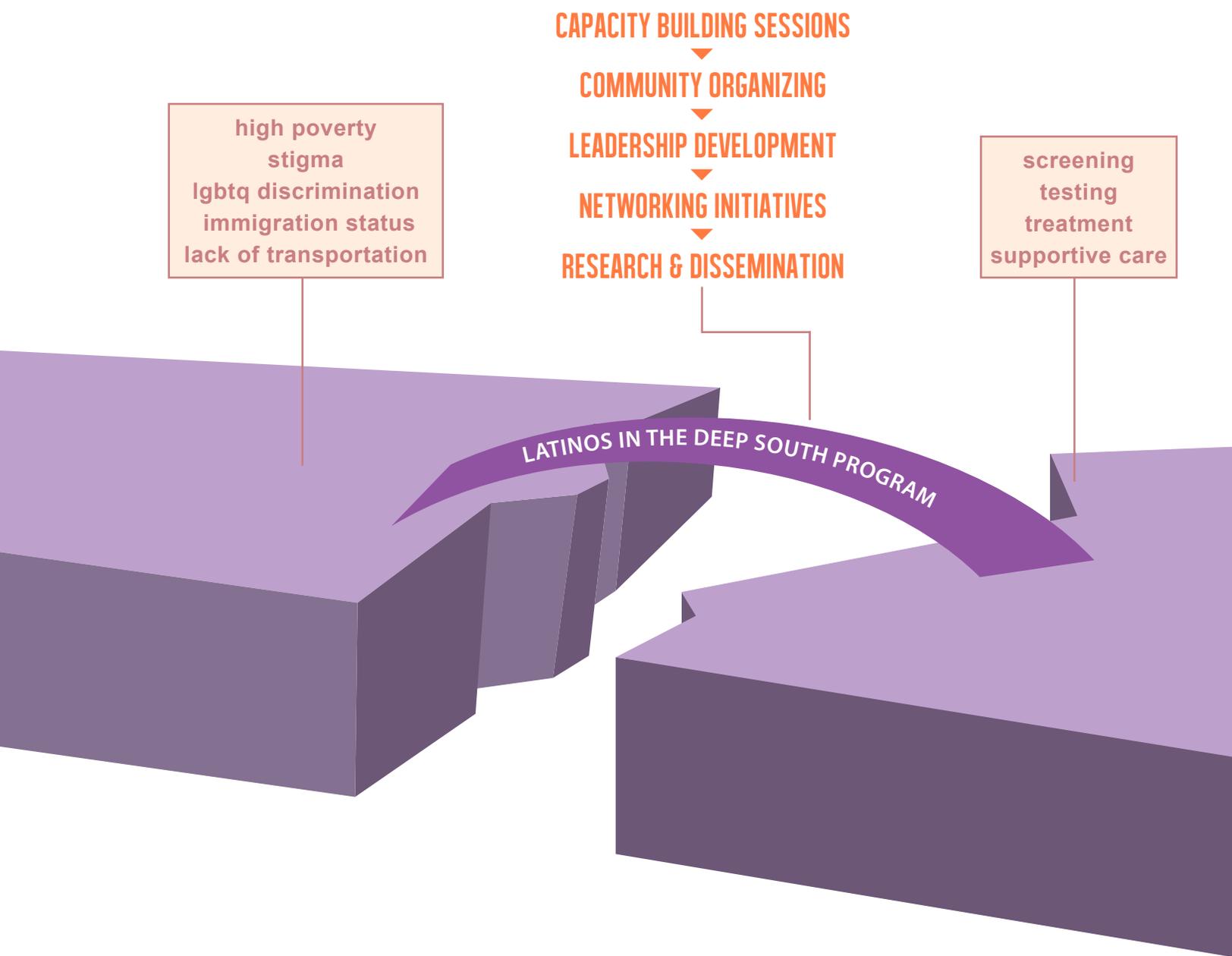
WELCOME

Dear Friend, Partner and Colleague:
We are pleased to present the Latino Commission AIDS' 2011-2013 activities report for "Latinos in the Deep South." Our Deep South program works to advocate and mobilize communities, build healthcare infrastructure, address stigma, and nurture emerging leadership to help grow and sustain healthy Latino communities in seven key states: **Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.** One of the programs primary goals includes **the commitment to implement a unique community engagement model** as well as the desire to help develop an informed public and media on particular health access issues for Latinos in the south in order to reduce health disparities and promote policies that will produce better health outcomes.

The last three years have seen significant shifts in the national discourse around healthcare, Hispanics and HIV. Accordingly, there are three national issues requiring our joint attention: HIV remains a serious public health challenge across the nation and in particular the south; health disparities in the US are widening in general, and geographic disparities are stark with 15 of the top 20 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) for HIV incidence being in the south (Reif, et al., 2013); and lastly despite the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) aims to expand access to affordable health coverage and reduce the number of uninsured Americans, healthcare coverage will continue to vary significantly across the country, with the south having grand variance in the ACA implementation. Furthermore, Hispanics remain one of the largest groups of the uninsured. These challenges all impact the overall state of Latino health in the south.

In such times, it is more important than ever to not only take direct action but to build lasting and dynamic partnerships with community-members-at-large, service providers, researchers, government administrators and community leaders. The Latino Commission on AIDS has been blessed with key partners, collaborators and networks of committed individuals. Through these partnerships and collaborations, the Commission has continued to hone its Deep South efforts through four key areas of strategic focus, which we refer to as the LUKA Principles: Leadership, Unity, Knowledge and Action.

These principles serve as both a guiding path and practical methodology for our continuous efforts in the Deep South to address the health disparities many Latinos therein face. The 2010 US census, and the community survey data that has been released thereafter, point to a very strong growth in the Hispanic population in the Deep South. As a country overall, Latinos make up 17% of the US population. The largest Hispanic populations are in what we refer to as traditional Hispanic places like New York, New Mexico, California and Texas. However, Alabama, South Carolina, and Tennessee had the fastest growing Hispanic population from 2000 to 2011. Out of the top ten fastest growing Hispanic states, nine are from the south. Only South Dakota, which saw a Hispanic population growth of 129% in the past ten years, was from outside the south. Because of the immense rapid growth of the Hispanic population in the Deep South, there is a major need to nurture emerging leaders, bring key collaborators together to leverage resources, enhance knowledge



**“MY ORGANIZATION WAS VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE
WORKED WITH THE COMMISSION IN 2013 ON
COMMUNITY AND BOARD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS,
HELPING MY AGENCY BETTER SERVE THE PEOPLE OF OUR
23 COUNTY SERVICE AREA.”**

**Michael Murphree, LCSW
CEO/Executive Director
Medical AIDS Outreach of Alabama**

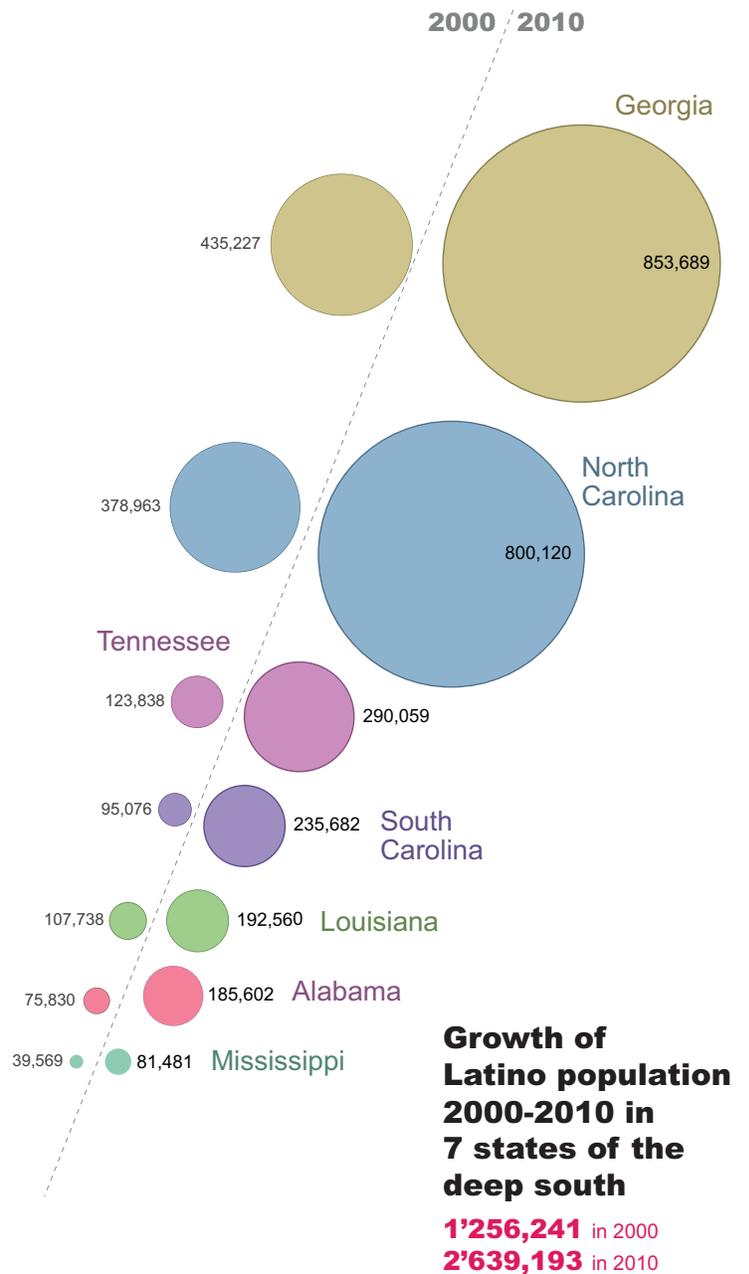


and skill sets to provide culturally competent services, and to spur action for continued policies with a positive impact on the daily lives of Latinos.

We feel it is important to continue to share the program's major activities, initiatives and accomplishments during the last few years, as well as its vision going forward. In the last three years we have:

- Increased the capacity of local leadership to affect policy change
- Increased resources for local advocacy and community building
- Supported local voices to national platforms
- Documented needs of Latinos in the deep south

Going forward in 2014, our goal is to continue to enhance knowledge, unite and develop leaders and build momentum towards an increased consciousness of the emerging Latino population in the Deep South. In the summer of 2014, we will be releasing **The Current State of Latinos in the Deep South**, which will serve as a follow-up to our seminal 2008 regional assessment report. We invite each of you to actively participate in events that will prevent the spread of HIV, address health disparities that impact our communities, and impact the implementation of health care reform and the new National AIDS Strategy. Ultimately, it comes down to the relationships. It's your support that makes us strong and we thank you. It means the world to not only us, but also to a region attempting to address the needs of a rapidly emerging Hispanic population. Let's work together to save lives, mitigate barriers to health care and support healthy communities. Together we can make a difference.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Health disparities across racial and ethnic lines persist in the US. In the US Deep South – consisting of states that share a common history and geography – this is exacerbated by overall lower levels of investment in health care. Specifically, there are structural barriers that impact the availability, affordability and acceptability of screening, testing, treatment and supportive care; such barriers include high poverty (Fox, 2010), stigma (Mahajan, et al., 2008), LGBTQ discrimination (Grant, et al, 2010), immigration status (Bustamante, 2012), and lack of transportation (Heckman, et al., 1998).

The lack of health care infrastructure makes emerging populations particularly vulnerable, as they may have difficulty accessing services due to linguistic or cultural differences, lack of familiarity with the systems, and little to no awareness of the health conditions present in the region. In the last ten years, the Latino/Hispanic population has seen the fastest population growth in seven of the eight Deep South states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi). This is the result of three major factors: a slightly higher Latino birthrate which puts the Latino population at a younger median age than other groups; increase in migrant populations – characterized by the pursuit of cyclical agricultural, meat farms, construction industry and service jobs – and in-migration as Latinos from other parts of the US relocate to the southern states to follow family or employment in other industries. The Latino Commission on AIDS' Latinos in the Deep South program works with Latinos, Latino-serving organizations, local health departments, regional media

outlets, local businesses, and AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) to reduce health disparities, especially around HIV/AIDS.

Through these last three years, there have been five key goals for the Latinos in the Deep South program:

1. Heighten awareness of the emerging Latino population in the south
2. Increase awareness of the needs of the Latino population
3. Enhance the ability of communities to meet these needs
4. Support enfranchise and empower Latino communities to address local needs
5. Assist create overall healthier communities

Thus, we hope to have the following long-term program impact:

- Create environments where barriers to Latino health care become a topic of conversation and an opportunity for advocacy work
- Increase Latino leadership at health service policy and stakeholder tables

As such, the Latinos in the Deep South program is a regionally focused program coordinated by the Latino Commission on AIDS (the Commission). The program aims to build local leadership, support networks and coalitions, enhance knowledge and cultural competency, and spur actions to address the needs of the emerging Latino populations in the Deep South, specifically in the



states of: **Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.** We aim to accomplish these goals through Specifically, we provide trainings, toolkits, regional institutes and webinars on the latest state of the science biomedical information and reported Hispanic needs.

Below we highlight the activities, events and overall efforts in the four key strategic areas of focus: Leadership, Unity, Knowledge and Action.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Throughout our regional assessment process from 2007-2008, we found that leadership development was a key component of the addressing the needs of Latinos in the Deep South. In particular, many of our partners have noted that there is a need for leaders to spring forward and help create a sense of shared purpose amongst the various stakeholders that are working towards alleviating the health disparities faced by Latinos in the south. There was also a noted to need to help identify community resources and strengths as well as gaps. This concern resonates within the National HIV/AIDS Strategy in which there is a call for leadership development.

As such, as we created **The Dennis deLeon Sustainable Leadership Institute** in 2011, posthumously honoring our visionary founding leader. The Institute consisted of a 6-month webinar-based series that met bi-monthly, with homework assignments related to the session topic. There were sessions on: *Medicaid redesign, Affordable Care Act implementation, HIV criminalization, and anti-immigrant policies.* Specific

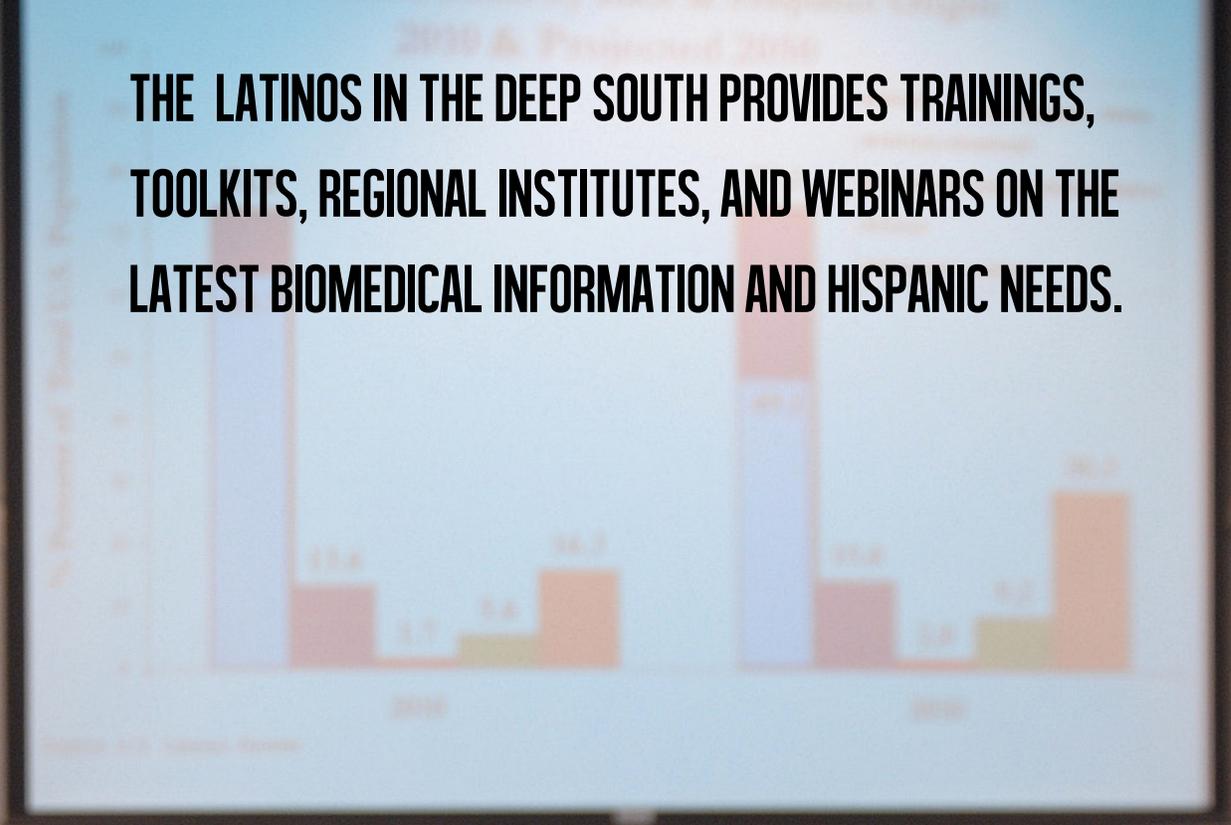
strategies to address these barriers at the local and regional level were introduced and practiced such as media relations, message framing, policy analyses and advocacy 101.

The Institute helped participants get comfortable and develop expertise with web-based learning environments, develop collaborative activities on a range of policy-issues locally, and serve as a sounding board amongst peers to share lessons learned. Following this distance-learning period, each cohort was brought together for a Summit in which they further solidified their leadership, as well as shared purpose in addressing health disparities in the south. As of December 2013, we have conducted three cohorts of Dennis DeLeon participants. As a result of our success with these three cohorts, we also created a Georgia-specific component of the Institute in partnership with the state health department - the **Georgia Latino Leadership Initiative.** The Georgia cohort developed as its capstone project, a website for the Latino community called *informatemejor.wordpress.com* to help keep the emerging local Georgia Latino population informed regarding the latest HIV information.

UNITY

The second strategic area of focus of the model is to unite communities for a SHARED PURPOSE through coalitions or other venues of unifying possibilities. Coalitions are diverse groups that combine their resources to create change by setting goals, jointly raising their voices and garnering attention. As a result, coalitions can be powerful catalysts within communities to achieve desired outcomes. Based on previous work in

**THE LATINOS IN THE DEEP SOUTH PROVIDES TRAININGS,
TOOLKITS, REGIONAL INSTITUTES, AND WEBINARS ON THE
LATEST BIOMEDICAL INFORMATION AND HISPANIC NEEDS.**



the region, the Latino Commission on AIDS recognizes that different states in the Deep South have different levels of community readiness to include diverse stakeholders, be it organizational type, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or HIV status to name a few. This being the case, we see different levels of community readiness around coalition building. To increase community readiness (which is a long-term process), the Latinos in the Deep South program has partnered with and remains committed to partnering with other national and regional HIV organizations doing longtime work in the South: Southern AIDS Coalition, ACRIA, AIDS United, Delta AETC (AIDS Education and Training Center), North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition, American Institutes for Research, Human Rights Watch, American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi and A Brave New Day; to name a few.

In February 2011, in collaboration with the Office of AIDS Research, we held a **Deep South Regional Summit** in Memphis, Tennessee where the focus was on biomedical updates and community-based participatory research (CBPR). The goal of said summit was to increase knowledge of clinical trials and their recent findings, to increase awareness of CBPR tenets, to increase understanding of CBPR as a mobilization tool that empowers community members, and to increase collaborations across diverse stakeholders. Participants worked together to arrive at shared CBPR purpose and goals.

As part of helping to nurture the involvement of coalitions and groups dedicated to addressing the needs of Latinos in the south, we participated in, as well as co-facilitated (with local

partners), in over 30 roundtables and community forums in the south from 2011-2013. For instance, in January of 2012, the Commission facilitated a live forum entitled *A Response to HIV in the Latino Community in North Carolina*, bringing together both service providers and community members to discuss community concerns and need around implementing and operationalizing biomedical prevention on the ground.

ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE

The third strategic area of focus has been to enhance and increase not only the knowledge of key stakeholders (policy makers, service providers, academics) of the needs of Latinos but to also enhance the corresponding supporting skills sets needed to address those identified needs. During the period of 2011 to 2013, we honed in on three components: 1) workforce/service provider development; 2) research and 3) community assessments. Below we review each of these sub-components.

1) Workforce/service provider

development: Because of the continuous shifts in community needs, funding streams and workforce staffing, there has been a noted need for workforce/service provider development. As a long-standing provider of capacity building assistance, the Commission took to heart said needs and implemented a focused capacity building initiative directed at the south that included trainings, webinars and workshops both locally in the south and at national levels. Workforce development also included our signature organizational assessments consisting of

three stages: organizational assessment (assessment, feedback, action planning), action plan implementation (coaching, training & TA) and evaluation. We have developed and utilize instruments to assess organizational, regional and cultural competency needs of agencies. These assessments provide organizational baseline data, as well as identify and prioritize specific capacity building needs. From 2011-2013, we **conducted over 15 organizational assessments** in the south. Below we provide a synopsis of our training and webinar activities.

Trainings. From 2011 to 2013 we conducted more than 20 trainings throughout the Deep South in the following core areas:

- Testing, linkages to care and treatment
- Interventions for emerging populations
- Community mobilization
- Organizational development

These four core training areas were delivered to help ASOs, CBOs, health departments and other key stakeholders shift or further enhance their services to align with the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and/or Healthcare reform.

Webinars. From 2011 through 2013, the Commission conducted over 100 webinars that were open to individuals from all states. During this time we have had over 3500 webinar registrants across all sessions. The Deep South relevant topics ranged from *cultural competency regarding Latinos to addressing job burnout to how to work with traditional and social media*. We also produced several webinar series that were meant to

help organizations pivot in this changing landscape. Below are two series examples.

- Program Sustainability:
 - Organizational Readiness & Partnership under the changing landscape in HIV
 - Grant Writing under the guidance of NHAS & ACA
 - Monitoring & Evaluation in the time of High Impact HIV Prevention
- Hepatitis and Disease Integration:
 - Federal updates on hepatitis
 - Hepatitis and Latinos
 - Hepatitis and vulnerable populations

2) Research: In our 2009 regional Deep South meeting held in collaboration with the Office of AIDS Research in North Carolina, participants from across all 7 Deep South states noted that there was a huge research gap on Latinos, Latinos and HIV and Latinos in the south. As one of our goals is to increase knowledge and address those knowledge gaps, we partnered with local and national academics to both increase the number of research projects that are relevant to Latinos in the south and to disseminate said the latest research findings.

Since 2012, we have been working with the Center for AIDS Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin (in particular, Dr. Carol Galletly and her colleagues) on a study that aims to understand how HIV criminalization and immigrants laws impact the health seeking behaviors of Latino immigrants in Tennessee and North Carolina, including HIV testing, access to treatment, and utilization of health and supportive

services. With the dearth of research on Latinos living with HIV and those at risk, particularly in the South, this study will help answer questions needed for informed policy advocacy around HIV criminalization and immigration laws in the South.

In 2012, in partnership with the Office of AIDS Research, Social Scientific Systems and the National Council of La Raza, the Commission also developed and implemented **the first Latino-focused Community Research Forum at the International AIDS Conference**, held in Washington, DC. The forum focused on the latest research regarding Latinos, HIV and access to care. There were more than ten panelists who brought a wide array of perspective, including that of migrants in the Deep South.

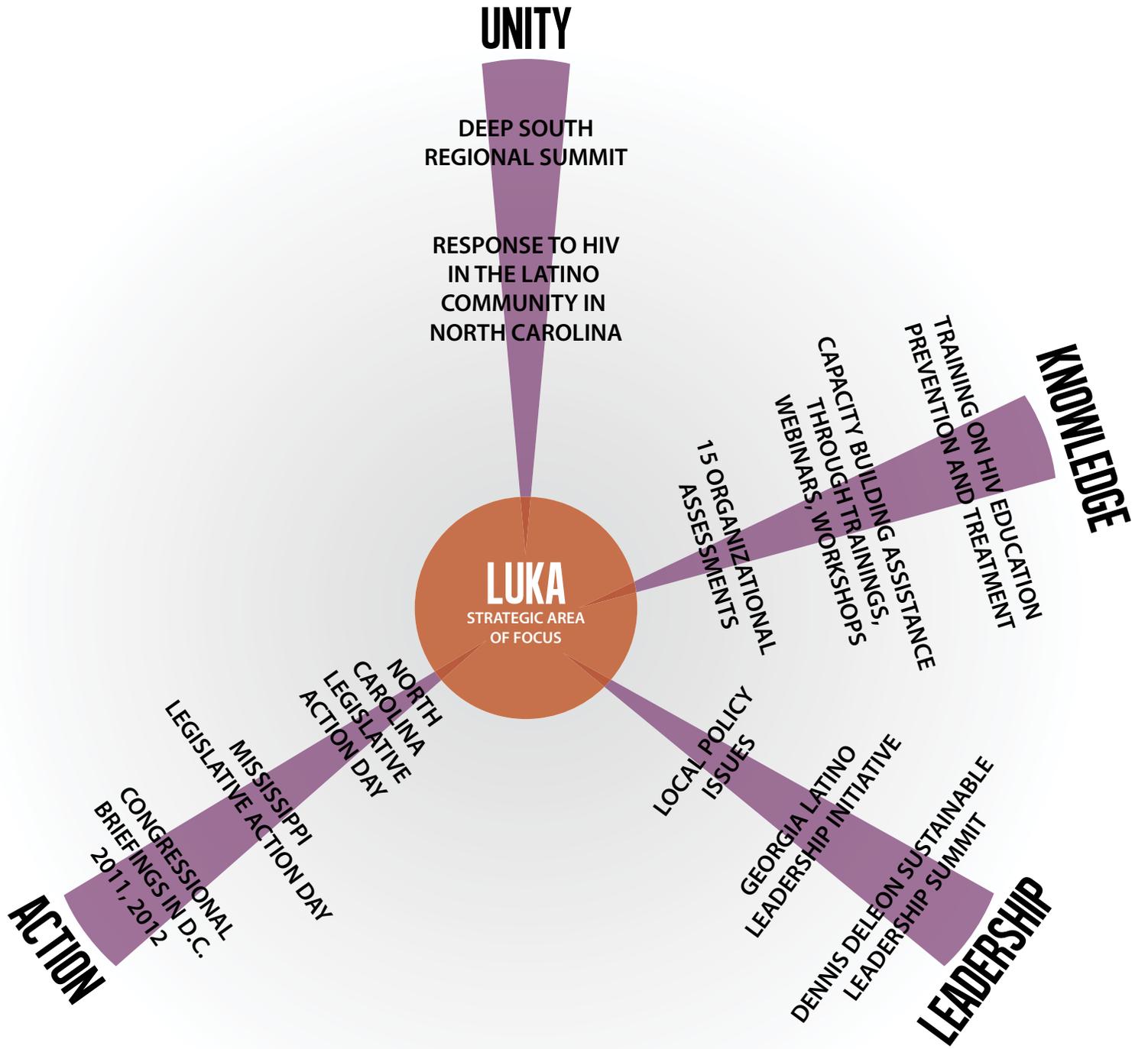
3) Regional Assessments: The Commission has both undertaken, at the request of local stakeholders, individual organizational assessments as well as regional assessments. We have provided guidance to key southern partners on how to do community assessments, including utilizing the method of community mapping. Over 15 organizational assessments were conducted in the South to enhance organizational readiness in the face of a changing landscape. We also helped conduct four large-scale regional assessments in the south. The resulting findings of these assessments will be incorporated into our upcoming regional report.

ACTION

The fourth strategic area of focus is that of Action. Without taking action, the development of leaders, knowledge and

coalitions would not amount to much. In order to meet the needs of the emerging Latino population in the Deep South action-oriented steps with concrete end goals must always be at the forefront. As part of our National Latino AIDS Awareness Day observation, we held **Congressional Briefings** in both September 2011 and 2012 in collaboration with a diverse set of partners. Due to the government shutdown, we were unfortunately, able to hold our annual briefing in 2013. The briefings served to highlight the needs of Latinos in terms of healthcare, Insurance, HIV and Hepatitis. At both of the briefings, there was bi-partisan support and sponsorship. In the 2012 briefing, our Commission staff spoke specifically to the need of Latinos in the Deep South and that there needs to be a sense of urgency to addressing these needs.

At the state level, the Latinos in the Deep South program supported its partners on their various legislative day visits. In particular, we had a very active presence in the Mississippi and North Carolina legislative action days. In 2012, we provided several workshops on “*how to tell your story*” as part of community mobilization efforts. The Deep South staff were able to in April 2013, participate in three advocacy days in North Carolina: HIV Advocacy Day, LGBT Legislative Day and Latino Advocacy Day where we promoted restoration of AIDS Drug Assistance Program funding in the budget proposal, thanked legislators for introducing a Syringe Decriminalization bill, promoted higher education for undocumented students, and opposed anti-immigrant bills including the Reclaim North Carolina Act. The Commission



**THE DENNIS DELEON SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE IS A SPACE FOR EMERGING
COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ENHANCE AND DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN ORDER TO
IMPACT HIV/AIDS LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL HEALTH POLICY AFFECTING LATINOS IN
THE DEEP SOUTH.**



AS OF DECEMBER 2013, WE HAVE CONDUCTED THREE COHORTS OF DENNIS DELEON PARTICIPANTS. EACH COHORT WAS BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR A SUMMIT IN WHICH THEY FURTHER SOLIDIFIED THEIR LEADERSHIP, AS WELL AS SHARED PURPOSE IN ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES IN THE SOUTH.



participated as an organizer for the Latino Advocacy Day through the NC Latino Coalition and served as a panelist at the HIV Advocacy Day through the NC AIDS Action Network. The Commission recruited NC community members to participate in the legislative visits including: Equality NC, LGBT Center of Raleigh, El Centro Hispano and Youth Leadership in Action. We also participated in the South Carolina Hispanic Roundtable in 2011; as well as the South Carolina “*Be the Change*” session in December 2013.

While at the 2012 International AIDS Conference (IAC) in DC, we used our presence to raise our voice on behalf of the Deep South in order to make more readily visible its needs; including participating on the panel for the documentary *deepsouth* premiere at the IAC. We went on to do several more panel appearances on behalf of the *deepsouth* documentary that serves to highlight structural system level barriers that many on the margins face in the south. Furthermore, we participated in the Shine the Light workgroup that has been assembled to bring a national spotlight to the needs of those that are marginalized in the south and to also highlight the health care (especially HIV) infrastructural needs in the south. Additionally, in 2013, as an invited speaker to PACHA’s annual meeting, the Commission presented a major focus on Latinos in the Deep South highlighting the needs of Latinos in terms of the intersection of healthcare reform and Ryan White.

Lastly, a major goal of the program is to make Latinos in the Deep South be visible to a wider group of individuals. One key

group of individuals is that of media. Below are some of our media appearances from the last three years.

*Radio Interview: **How has the Latino Community Changed in North Carolina?***, Latina 102.3 FM with Dennis Escobar, Charlotte, NC June 2013

*Television Interview: **Promoting National Hispanic Hepatitis Awareness Day***, Hola North Carolina, WRAZ-TV, Raleigh, NC, May 2013

*Television Interview: **HIV in the Latino Community, Get Tested***, Hola North Carolina, WRAZ-TV, Raleigh, NC, April 2013

*Radio Interview: **Promoting National Latino AIDS Awareness Day***, La Mega 97.9 FM with Alex Sensation, Charlotte, NC October 2012

*Radio Interview: **Promoting National Latino AIDS Awareness Day***, Latina 102.3 FM with Dennis Escobar, Charlotte, NC October 2012

Newspaper Interview: Latino Memphis, March 2011.

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE HIV TESTING AS A PART OF A HEALTH SCREENING. KNOWING YOUR STATUS IS KEY. I URGE YOU ALL TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH AND GET TESTED."

Erik Valera, Latinos in the Deep South
Radio Interview: Promoting National Latino AIDS Awareness Day
La Raza 106.1 with Alex Ruiz
Charlotte, NC - October 2012





FROM 2011 THE LATINOS IN THE DEEP SOUTH PROGRAM HAS CONDUCTED MORE THAN 20 TRAININGS THE AREAS OF TESTING, LINKAGES TO CARE AND TREATMENT; INTERVENTIONS FOR EMERGING POPULATIONS; COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION; AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nuestro Cuerpo



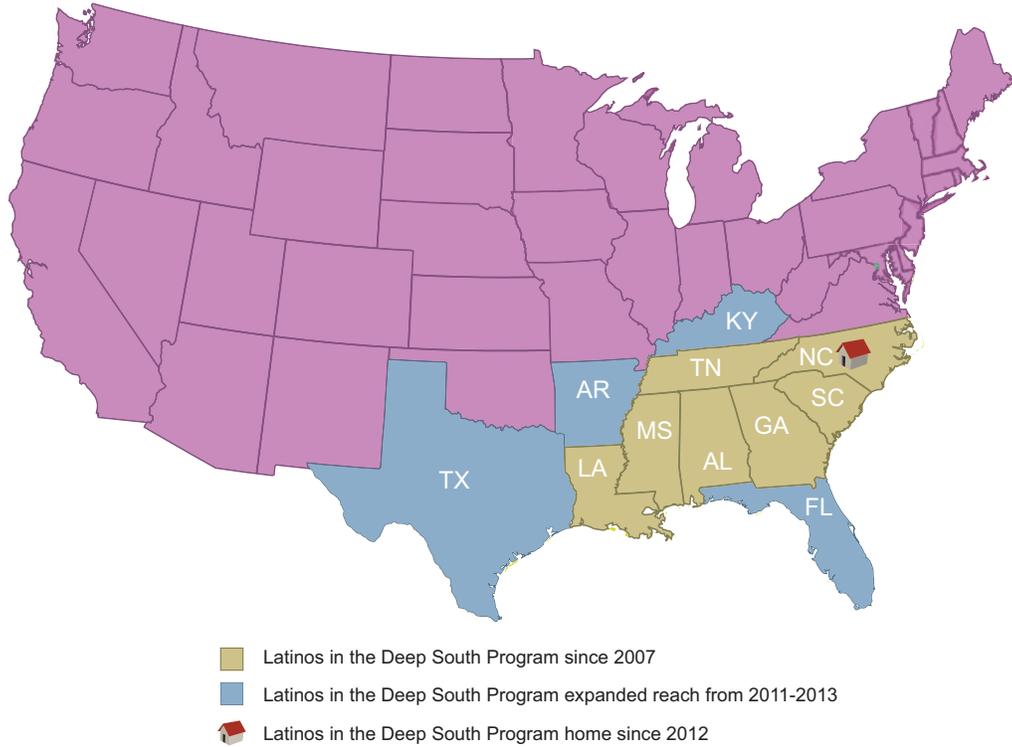
EXPANDED REACH OF THE DEEP SOUTH PROGRAM

When first developed in 2007, the Latinos in the Deep South program specifically focused on the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee And Mississippi. In the last three years, because in part of numerous requests to implement the LUKA principle model in new regions, we have expanded our mobilization efforts to the states of Texas, Florida, Kentucky and Arkansas. Both Texas and Florida are seen as traditionally Hispanic states; while Arkansas and Kentucky are seen as emerging Latino states.

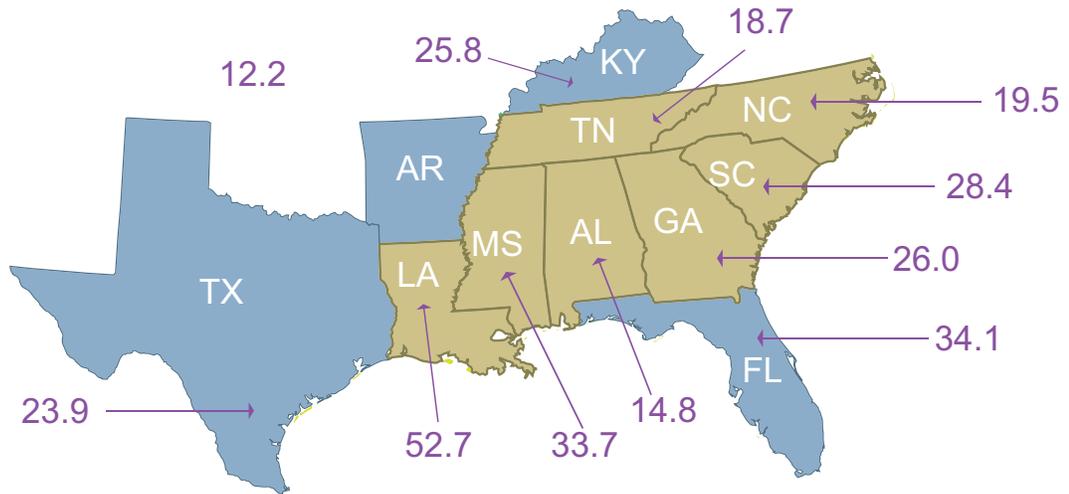
As such, we were able to do extensive regional Training Institutes in the states of Texas and Florida in close collaboration with the local health departments. In 2012, we provided day-long institutes in San Antonio, Dallas and Houston where the focus was on community mobilization, organizational sustainability, staff development (addressing specifically burnout) and the use of social media. In Austin, we convened a community forum to discuss and action plan around structural level barriers towards HIV prevention and care, which was attended by community members, service providers, health department staff and elected officials across the state. In Florida, we helped facilitate the first ever Latino Summit in 2010 as spearheaded by local partners and we have also been recently supporting in the implementation of town halls focusing on the needs of Latino men who have sex with men. Meanwhile, from 2012-2013, in both Arkansas and Kentucky, in close collaboration with the health departments, we have been helping conduct regional assessments to identity the needs of the community as well as the needs of non-traditional service providers.

Furthermore, due to the success of the regional summits that had been previously held in North Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee, we were able to, in collaboration with the Office of AIDS Research, hold a regional summit in Arizona (Utah, Nevada and Arizona participants) and in Missouri (Illinois, Kentucky and Missouri participants). Like the Deep South, these are all states that have seen an influx of Latinos, as well as a need for infrastructure development particularly in terms of helping Latinos access care. While in Kentucky in 2012, we had the great pleasure to participate in their local National Latino AIDS Awareness Day events and met very committed service providers and advocates.

Reach of the Latinos in the Deep South Program



HIV Diagnosis among Latino Adults and Adolescents in 2011 (rate per 100,000)



Source: Centers for Disease Control

YOUR FEEDBACK

In a recently conducted evaluation with past consumers of the Commission's training and mobilization services (N=148), 70% noted they regularly or always use their new skill sets and 89% found our services were useful in the field. Further, 61% noted they went on to develop service protocols; 73% developed partnerships and 64% conducted a community assessment as a result of our services. Respondents noted key high-impact prevention outcomes as a result of our services: 52% noted an increase in their HIV testing positivity rate; 75% note an increase in linkages to care; and 66% noted an increase in client medical adherence. This could be due in part to the fact that 80% noted we successfully incorporated local concepts. Furthermore, over 94% of Deep South participants noted being satisfied with our services.

In terms of what topics for future trainings, Deep South participants noted that going forward they would like to learn more about how to do prevention with HIV positive individuals and more tactics for community mobilization.



LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

During this coming year of 2014, the Latinos in the Deep South program will help position the agenda of Latino HIV issues in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi on structural aspects and barriers to healthcare. The Latinos in the Deep South program will accomplish this by utilizing resources developed by the Commission in each region since 2007, developing opportunities for the Latino community voice to be heard at stakeholder tables, and enhance visibility of Latino issues on barriers. The Latinos in the Deep South program will continue to develop partnerships and nurture the growth of emerging leaders in order to have an expanded pool of Latinos and Latino-serving organizations and their leaders involved in HIV care discussions. Here at the Commission we are committed to renewing, refocusing and reengaging our commitment, energy and passion towards reaching an AIDS-free generation, recognizing that such a path must go through, as well as address the challenging realities of, the Deep South of the United States.



COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

The Latino Commission on AIDS (Commission) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1990 dedicated to addressing the health challenges and responding to the impact of HIV & AIDS in our communities. The Latino Commission is the leading organization coordinating National Hispanic Hepatitis Awareness Day (May 15), National Latino AIDS Awareness Day (October 15) and other prevention, research, capacity building and advocacy programs across the United States and its territories. Today, we operate 20 programs ranging widely in target population, focus and scope – from direct client service to community mobilization to training to research projects. The Commission has expanded its services outside New York to meet the challenge health needs of communities in more than 45 States and territories,

including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Commission's innovative public health model encompasses five core and complementary service divisions, which include:

- Capacity building assistance;
- HIV testing and linkages to care;
- HIV prevention education and health promotion;
- Community mobilization; and
- Hispanic Health Behavioral Research Center.

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1 “THE COMMISSION’S COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH CHALLENGES OF LATINOS IN THE SOUTH IS FIRM. WE WILL ADVOCATE TO OVERCOME ALL THE BARRIERS TO ACCESS HEALTH CARE, PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION.”

— Guillermo Chacon

3 GOING FORWARD IN 2014, OUR GOAL IS TO CONTINUE TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE, UNITE AND DEVELOP LEADERS, AND BUILD MOMENTUM TOWARDS AN INCREASED CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE HIV AND HEALTH CARE NEEDS

— Leandro Rodriguez, MA

2 “Much research needs to be done on creative models for prevention and care for this very mobile population.”

— Miriam Vega, PhD

4 “We are committed to mobilize communities and nurture emerging leadership to help grow a healthy generation of Latinos/Hispanics in the south”

— Karan Itwaru

5 “The lack of health care infrastructure makes emerging populations particularly vulnerable. Our program will work with partners to address those challenges”

— Erik Valera

6 “Our leadership Institute provides participants the opportunity to develop expertise with web-based learning environments, develop collaborative activities on a range of community-issues locally, and serve as a sounding board amongst peers to share lessons learned to further solidify their leadership.”

— Judith Montenegro

BIENVENIDOS

Estimados amigos, socios y colegas: Tenemos el placer de presentarles las actividades de la Comisión Latina sobre el SIDA 2011-2013 referente al programa regional “Latinos en el Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos.” Nuestro programa “En el Sur” trabaja para defender y movilizar a las comunidades, apoyar el desarrollo de infraestructura a la salud, abordando el estigma, y fomentando el liderazgo emergente para ayudar a crecer y lograr sostener comunidades latinas saludables en siete Estados claves: **Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Carolina del Norte, Carolina del Sur y Tennessee.** Uno de los objetivos del programa incluye el compromiso de implementar un modelo único de participación comunitaria, así como el deseo de contribuir al desarrollo de un público y medios de comunicación informados, en cuestiones particulares sobre el acceso a la salud que beneficien a la población latina que vive en los Estados Sureños, con el fin de reducir las disparidades de salud y promover políticas que produzcan mejores resultados relacionados a la Salud.

En los últimos tres años se han visto cambios significantes en el debate nacional en torno al acceso a la salud, los hispanos y el VIH. En este sentido, hay tres cuestiones nacionales que exigen nuestra atención conjunta: El VIH sigue siendo un grave problema de salud pública en todo el país y en particular el sur; las disparidades de salud en los EE.UU. están aumentando en general, y las disparidades geográficas son muy marcadas, con 15 de las 20 áreas estadísticas metropolitanas (MSA) de la incidencia del VIH ubicadas en el sur (Reif, et al, 2013.) y por último, a pesar de que la Ley de Reforma de Salud (ACA por sus siglas en Inglés) tiene como objetivo ampliar el acceso en

cobertura de salud y reducir el número de estadounidenses sin seguro médico, la cobertura de salud seguirá variando significativamente en todo el país, con una gran diferencia muy clara en la aplicación ACA en el sur de la nación. Además, los hispanos siguen siendo uno de los segmentos mayores de la población que no cuentan con seguro de salud. Todos estos retos, afectan en su totalidad el estado general de salud de los latinos en el sur.

En estos momentos es más importante que nunca, no solo el tomar acción directa, sino crear asociaciones más dinámicas y duraderas, con miembros de la población general, con los proveedores de servicios, investigadores, funcionarios gubernamentales y líderes de la comunidad. La Comisión Latina sobre el SIDA es afortunada de contar con los principales socios, colaboradores y redes de personas comprometidas. A través de estas asociaciones y colaboraciones, la Comisión ha continuado afinando sus esfuerzos en el “Sur del Sur” a través de cuatro áreas clave con enfoque estratégico, a las cuales nos referimos como los “Principios LUKA” (por sus siglas en inglés): Liderazgo, Unidad, Conocimiento y Acción.

Estos principios sirven tanto como un guía y como una metodología práctica para nuestros continuos esfuerzos en el sur del sur de los Estados Unidos para abordar las disparidades de salud que muchos latinos ahí enfrentan. El censo de 2010 en EE.UU, así como los datos de encuesta de la comunidad que se ha implementado a partir de entonces, apuntan un crecimiento muy fuerte de la población hispana en el sur de nuestra nación. Como país en general, los latinos representan el 17% de la población de los EE.UU.

Las poblaciones hispanas más grandes se encuentran en lo que nos referimos como lugares tradicionalmente hispanos como: Nueva York, Nuevo México, California y Texas.

Sin embargo, Alabama, Carolina del Sur y Tennessee han tenido el crecimiento más rápido de la población hispana desde 2000 hasta 2011. De los diez principales Estados hispanos de más rápido crecimiento, nueve son del sur. Sólo Dakota del Sur, vio un crecimiento de la población hispana de 129% en los últimos diez años. Debido al inmenso y rápido crecimiento de la población hispana en el sur, hay una gran necesidad de apoyar líderes emergentes, unir a los colaboradores claves para aprovechar los recursos, realzar el conocimiento y habilidades para ofrecer servicios culturalmente competentes, estimular la acción y abogar por políticas que tengan un impacto positivo en la vida cotidiana de los latinos y la población en general. Creemos que es importante continuar compartiendo las principales actividades, iniciativas y logros del programa en los últimos años, así como la visión hacia el futuro.

En los últimos tres años hemos logrado:

- Aumentar la capacidad en los líderes locales para influir en el cambio de políticas públicas.
- Aumentar los recursos para la movilización y capacidad organizativa comunitaria a nivel local.
- Apoyar a que voces locales comuniquen sus temas a nivel nacionales
- Documentar las necesidades de los latinos en el “sur del sur”

En el 2014, nuestro objetivo es seguir mejorando el conocimiento, unir y desarrollar líderes y crear un impulso hacia una mayor conciencia de la población latina emergente en el sur de nuestra nación. En el verano de 2014, publicaremos un informe llamado “**El estado actual de Latinos en el Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos**”, el cual servirá como un seguimiento a nuestro informe seminal de evaluación regional del 2008. Invitamos a cada uno de ustedes a que participen activamente en eventos que prevengan la propagación del VIH, afrontando las disparidades en la salud que impactan a nuestras comunidades y que repercuten en la aplicación de la reforma de salud y de la nueva Estrategia Nacional sobre el SIDA. Ultimadamente, todo se reduce a las relaciones para poder avanzar. El contar con su apoyo, nos hace más fuertes y por ello les damos las gracias. Esto afecta a todo el mundo, no sólo para nosotros, pero también a una región que intenta afrontar las necesidades de una población hispana que emerge rápidamente. Trabajemos juntos para salvar vidas, mitigar las barreras en el acceso para recibir servicios de salud y apoyar para avanzar y así lograr comunidades saludables. Ya que juntos podemos lograr nuestra metas.

DESCRIPCIÓN DEL PROGRAMA

Las disparidades de salud a través de líneas raciales y étnicas persisten en toda la nación. En el sur del sur de los EE.UU. son Estados que comparten una historia y geografía en común, esto se ve agravado por los bajos niveles de inversión en el cuidado de salud. Específicamente, existen barreras estructurales que afectan la disponibilidad, accesibilidad y aceptabilidad del acceso a estudios relacionados a la salud pública, pruebas o exámenes clínicos, tratamiento y atención para la salud; (Mahajan, et al, 2008) estas barreras incluyen altos niveles de pobreza (Fox, 2010), el estigma, la discriminación hacia la población Lesbiana, Gay, Bisexual, Transgénero y Queer (LGBTQ, por sus siglas en inglés) (Grant , et al, 2010), el estatus ó condición migratoria (Bustamante, 2012), y la falta de transporte (Heckman, et al., 1998) agravan muchos más los retos para nuestra gente.

La falta de infraestructura de salud hace a las poblaciones emergentes particularmente vulnerables, ya que pueden tener dificultades para acceder a los servicios relacionados a la salud asociado a las diferencias lingüísticas o culturales, la falta de familiaridad con los sistemas de salud, y poco o nulo conocimiento de las condiciones de salud presentes en la región. En los últimos diez años, la población latina / hispana ha presentado el crecimiento demográfico más rápido en siete de los ocho Estados en el Sur del Sur de Estados Unidos (Carolina del Norte, Carolina del Sur, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama y Mississippi). Este es el resultado de tres factores principales: una tasa de natalidad latina

ligeramente más alta, que pone a la población latina en una media de edad más joven que otros grupos, el aumento de las poblaciones migrantes - que se caracterizan por la búsqueda de puestos de trabajo en la agricultura cíclica, en granjas de carne, en la industria de la construcción y en servicios, sumado a la migración interna, como los latinos de otras partes de los EE.UU. para trasladarse a Estados del sur con la finalidad de seguir a su familia o algún empleo en otras industrias. El programa “Latinos del Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos” de La Comisión Latina sobre el SIDA, trabaja con los latinos, organizaciones que atienden a latinos, departamentos de salud locales, medios de comunicación regionales, empresas locales, y organizaciones que brindan atención en SIDA (ASO, siglas en ingles) para reducir las disparidades de salud, sobre todo en torno al VIH y el SIDA.

Durante estos tres últimos años, ha habido cinco objetivos clave del programa “Latinos en el Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos”:

1. Aumentar la concientización de la población latina emergente en el sur
2. Aumentar la concientización sobre las necesidades de la población latina
3. Mejorar la capacidad de la comunidad para responder a estas necesidades
4. Ayuda a garantizar la capacitación en comunidades latinas para afrontar las necesidades locales
5. Ayudar a crear comunidades más saludables en general.

Por lo tanto, esperamos lograr un impacto a largo plazo a través de:

- Crear entornos en los que las barreras a la atención de salud que enfrentan los latinos se conviertan en un tema de conversación y una oportunidad para el trabajo de incidencia que cambie dichas realidades.
- Incrementar el liderazgo latino en los espacios donde se discuten políticas y decisiones que impactan los servicios de salud.

Como tal, el programa “Latinos en el Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos” está enfocado regionalmente y coordinado por la Comisión Latina sobre el SIDA (la Comisión). El programa tiene por objeto desarrollar el liderazgo local, apoyar las redes de colaboración y coaliciones, para aumentar el conocimiento y competencia cultural, y estimular acciones para abordar las necesidades de las poblaciones latinas emergentes en el Sur del Sur de los Estados Unidos, específicamente en los Estados de: Alabama, Georgia, Luisiana, Mississippi, Carolina del Norte, Carolina del Sur y Tennessee. Nuestro propósito es alcanzar estos objetivos a través de las sesiones de capacitación, organización comunitaria, el desarrollo de liderazgo, la mejorar las iniciativas de creación de redes de colaboración, y poniendo como prioridad un enfoque comunitario basado en la investigación y la difusión participativa. En concreto, ofrecemos entrenamientos, herramientas, conferencias regionales y seminarios, información sobre los últimos avances de la ciencia biomédica, así como información sobre las necesidades relacionadas o que impactan la salud de la población hispana.

Todas nuestras actividades en la región del sur que incluyen, eventos y esfuerzos generales se basan en las cuatro áreas estratégicas de nuestra labor: Liderazgo, Unidad, Conocimiento y Acción.



Latinos in the Deep South is a program
of the Latino Commission on AIDS

www.latinoaids.org