



Identidad: Second Annual Summit

Introduction

Listening to heart beat of native drumming that echoed through the walls of city hall: On May 19, 2007 the Hispanic Development Council presented the 2nd Annual Latino Youth Summit, IDENTIDAD. IDENTIDAD was aimed for Latino Youth (whose origin is in any country from Central and South America including Mexico) ages 13 +. IDENTIDAD was hosted by The Hispanic Development Council and supported by Parks, Forestry and Recreation- Access and Diversity Unit. This Summit was a collaborate outcome of two events that took place in 2006: the Youth Summit on Latino Engagement Hosted by the Hispanic Development Council and the Latino Youth in The Urban Village Hosted Parks, Forestry and Recreation - Access and Diversity Unit. The central objective of the 2nd Annual Latino Youth Summit was for the Latino youth community to examine our multiple identities through various perspectives such as a social perspective, a gender perspective, an environmental perspective, an educational perspective, an entrepreneurial perspective, an artistic and a cultural perspective.

IDENTIDAD Summit is to promote a safe space where Latino youth and other youth can integrate and critically analyze the diversity of our identity as youth or as young professionals living in Toronto with our complex backgrounds. The central objective of IDENTIDAD was to move beyond; identifying the barriers affecting the Latino youth community and begin a process of projection and strategy development on how to assure social integration, gender integration, environmental integration, educational integration, entrepreneurial integration, artistic/cultural integration. This was successfully achieved through the delivery of 11 workshops that were organized in two different sessions so that so that each participant could participate in 2 workshops through out the day. The workshops delivered were:

1. Environmental Awareness: How to make a difference? Why should you care
2. Popular Theatre: Social Justice and Gender Theatre Workshop
3. Tolerance and Inclusion: Gender, Sexuality, Sexual Orientation, Race, Class
4. Don't give up! Survive School: Volunteer hours, free information, free programs, and free advice
5. Video For Social Change: Integrating Media Artist and Activist

6. The Art of Lyrics: Thought and Words
7. Entrepreneurship: Latinos involved with business
8. Improvisation Theatre: "Improvisation"
9. Volunteer Hours How to get your 40 hours
10. Street Voices: A perspective of living in, with, and amongst gangs
11. Break Dancing: Breaking Barriers
12. Hablando de los Derechos Femeninos: "La Lucha de las Mujeres por sus derechos y el feminismo en America Latina"

IDENTIDAD was organized by a group of Latino and other diverse youth that met every two weeks at the Hispanic Development Council. This group became the Organizing Committee of IDENTIDAD. Members of the committee were invited to organize the summit through a general invitation from last years youth summit list serve and other HDC staff contacts. The organizing committee consisted of 15 members which were divided into working groups whose focus were to design the workshop, do publicity, fundraise and outreach.

In addition to the delivery of workshops, IDENTIDAD presented motivational Speakers and a series of innovative Toronto-based artists:

- * Iron Horse Native American Drumming
- * Ruben Esguerra Cuban Percussion
- * Freelance Rhythms African Dance
- * Paula Gonzalez - "Urban Culture and Youth Engagement"
- * Amanda Martinez Latin Jazz
- * Vincenzo Ceccarelli Peruvian Guitarist
- * Alucine Film
- * Audio Ritual Acoustical
- * 3Krozz Militainment Productions
- * Emcee Grumpy
- * Dynamyt Records

IDENTIDAD focused on the diversity of the Latino youth community in Toronto, however it was not exclusive to Latino youth; in fact some of the facilitators and organizers were not Latino, but individuals that were involved in the Latino community. Even the artistic

presentation demonstrated the cultural diversity within our Latin American origin with the Native Drumming presentation and the African Dance troop.

The summit, was aimed to enrich the futures of Latino Youth in Toronto by creating a place for networking, creating new communities and reaffirming our identity.

The Outcomes:

- * Celebration of the talent and diversity of Latino Youth in Toronto
- * Targeted age group 13- 30: Latino Youth and Young Professionals
- * 300 attendants
- * 11 workshops delivered by Youth. Majority was Latino, but a number of the workshops were facilitated by other diverse youth.
- * Over 20 performances from Africa dance, folklore, percussion, Reggeaton, Latin Rock and much
- * Community Support from other organizations:
 - * The Catholic District School Board
 - * Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples
 - * St. Christopher House
 - * Lula Lounge
 - * Mosaico21

Private Sponsoring

- * Juan Carranza
- * Isamarca
- * Two \$500 certificates (Juan Camargo: Academic Excellence/ Luis Moreno: Artistic Excellence)
- * One \$50.00 certificate Stephany Garcia: Community Involvement Award

Feedback summaries:

1. Successful and Enjoyable event: lots of people surprised of the integration,
2. The workshops were the highlight of the day!!
3. Necessity to make sure these types of Summit are organized as a solution to the loss of

Latino culture,

4. More dancing & more Latino music for the workshops: salsa, merengue
5. More youth outreach so that next year there are 500 participants,
6. Summit be held in the north @ smaller more intimate, more friendly
7. Vamos adelante haciendo notar a que estamos. Latino Power

Why is HDC committed to continue to organize youth summits?

* To create an incentive for Latino youth to integrate amongst themselves in order to begin recognizing and accepting our differences while celebrating our similarities.

* Youth need venues of integration and community support for guidance but primarily to gain different skills and promote their ideas to develop solutions for their own needs.

* Art and Culture are two realms of work that allow the space for many different programs to develop that address the issues of identity, culture shock, acculturation or re-connection with Latin America.

IDENTIDAD AWARD: Toronto Latino/Hispanic Youth Leadership Recognition