

April 2008
Volume 10 Issue 4

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The Alliance

Dedicated to promoting unity, justice, equal opportunity, ethnic awareness, cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for diversity.

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Board of Directors

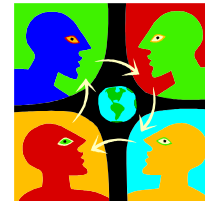
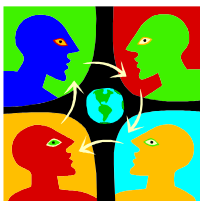
Becky Arenas
Natalie Avila
Liz Barveld
Linda Blaukamp
Janie Briones
Bin Lim
Eleanor Lopez
Kim Romero
Marvin Younger
Mary Yedinak

April 11 ACEH Meeting to Focus on Ireland

John Johnston, a native of Northern Ireland, will speak to the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony (ACEH) on Friday, April 11 on "Peace at All Costs—How to Love Your Enemy." His mother converted from Catholicism to Protestantism when she met Johnston's father; he will speak about the impact of "the Troubles," the religious civil war that affected the country for many years. The meeting, which is open to the public, begins at 7 p.m. at the Center for Women in Transition, 411 Butternut, Holland.

Mr. Johnston attended Royal School Armagh in Ireland and spent three years volunteering with a Christian youth program. He founded a company, William Edwards, named after his father, which manages donor communications and fundraising for nonprofit organizations.

See Page 3 for nominees to the ACEH board; the election will be held at the April 11 meeting.



Register Now for May 20 Summit on Racism

*"Our future depends on inclusion...
and inclusion depends on all of us."*

It's ready—it's open for business. Check the website www.ethnicdiversity.org and be an early bird to register for the Lakeshore Region Summit on Racism 2008. You can pay online through the secure PayPal system. The cost is \$20, including lunch, for the 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. event on Tuesday, May 20, at Hope College. The sponsor is Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance; ACEH is one of the collaborating organizations. Take a day to make a difference!



Join or Renew Your Commitment to ACEH

This month we thank renewing member **Victor Orozco**.

Please consider joining with Victor and other ACEH supporters as we work together for social justice and appreciation for diversity, to make West Michigan a place where all are welcomed and respected. The ACEH dues structure is as follows:

Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years
Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years
Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year
Business: \$75.00 one year

The ACEH fiscal year runs October 1 – September 30. In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Janie Briones, c/o ACEH, P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. If you want to pay by credit card, please go to the ACEH website www.harmonyalliance.org, click on "Join Us" and use the secure Pay Pal system.

43rd Annual LAUP Fiesta Embraces Diversity and Community

Fiesta! Fiesta! Fiesta!

One of the longest-running events of its kind in West Michigan, the 43rd annual Fiesta (formerly Cinco de Mayo) sponsored by Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) will take place Friday night, May 2, and all day Saturday, May 3, at the Holland Civic Center.

With the theme of "Embracing Diversity; Embracing Community," Fiesta reaches out to all of West Michigan's cultures. A Friday night concert features Tomas Esparaza and the Blues Experience; Esparaza is an outstanding harmonica blues player. Also performing will be the All for One dancers, led by Dominique Vargas.

Saturday events include the Queen and King contest and the awarding of scholarships. A variety of music and dance—including Caribbean and island performances—a lowrider car show, a carnival, and many exhibitors will be part of the day's program. And if you're coming to Fiesta especially for the food—those booths will be open Friday night and Saturday.

Nominees for ACEH 2008-2010 Board Election, April 11

_____ **Natalie Avila**, a Holland High School junior, has been a youth representative to ACEH since the fall of 2007 and is now seeking a full board position. She is a graduate of the Neighborhood Leadership Academy, active in choir and a child care volunteer at Resurrection Life church, takes part in Dutch Dance, and has been a cashier at Family Fare. In May she is running for Queen of the Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) Fiesta. Natalie is the youngest in a family of three brothers and another sister. She says: *"I want to contribute to my community and be a link to other young people."*

_____ **Jack Hyde**, a high school special education teacher in New Jersey and suburban Chicago for many years, retired to Holland in 2000. He has a master's degree in special education and is author of "Just Another Brick or How I Survived over 8500 School Lunches," an education memoir and treatise. He writes a weekly column for the Holland Sentinel. Jack says: *When we moved to Holland, my biggest fear was that there would be a lack of diverse population. I have been pleased to learn otherwise; lives are strengthened by diverse people who gather in friendship and trust and learn from one another. Celebrating our diversity in ethnicity, faith, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, and age is a positive option to ignoring differences or trying to fit them into a preconceived mold. ACEH leads in many ways with positive examples and I want to help that continue and grow."*

_____ **Norma Luna** works part-time for a local health agency and as an on-call instruction aide for Holland Public Schools. She was on the Holland Human Relations Commission 1993-95 and has been active in the community, taking part in the Neighborhood Leadership Academy and Holland Citizen Police Academy. She coordinates the All for One dance troupe led by her teenage daughter, Dominique Vargas. Norma also has two adult sons and two grandchildren. She says: *"I want to be part of the board to contribute a little of my past as well as my growing knowledge of working with diverse groups in the community. I can share ideas that we use to continue our diverse dance program and hear how young people feel about barriers that exist because of discrimination. We need to promote unity."*

_____ **Angela Taylor Perry** is pastor of Reconciliation Ministries at Faith Christian Reformed Church, Holland; her Hearts in Harmony program seeks to intentionally create multiracial friendships. An artist, poet, and vocalist, in 2005 she was the first African American woman to graduate from Calvin Theological Seminary. Angela is married, with adult children and several grandchildren, and defines herself as a "22-year survivor of multiple sclerosis." She says: *"I believe my desire to bring people into harmonious reconciliation is also the passion of Alliance people. I have found ACEH to be a group of sincere folk who have a passion and an appreciation for people of all nations. Because I have a need to be connected multiculturally, I want to walk my journey of life with others who have the same need."*

_____ **Mary Yedinak** taught in Holland Public Schools for 29 years, including elementary school physically and health-impaired children and sixth grade science and communications arts students; she retired in 2000 and substitute-teaches at Corpus Christi Catholic School. She was active in the Holland Education Association, serving as treasurer and as a negotiator. Mary says, "As a Catholic, a single person, and with non-Dutch heritage, I have had some interesting experiences in Holland." Mary filled the remaining term of previous board member Dan Cornelissen and is now running for a full term. She says: *"We are diverse in many ways. I believe everyone should be treated equally and with dignity. I wish to help promote that treatment for everyone."*

_____ Nominee from the floor

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Five positions are open on the ACEH Board for 2008-2010. Leaving the board are Liz Barveld, Bin Lim, Eleanor Lopez, and Kim Romero. Continuing are Becky Arenas, Linda Blauwkamp, Janie Briones, and Marvin Younger. The election will take place at the Friday, April 11, ACEH general meeting, 7 p.m. at the Center for Women in Transition, 411 Butternut, Holland.

April 24 Housing Fair to Offer Tips on Buying, Owning a Home

The Alliance

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*Bringing People
Together from Worlds
Apart*

Are you thinking about buying your first house? Would you like more information about what's involved, or ways to get help with a down payment? Do you already own a home but want to know how to prevent a foreclosure?

The City of Holland Human Relations Commission is holding its annual Housing Fair on Thursday, April 24, from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Holland Civic Center, 150 West 8th Street, Holland. The Fair is free.

The Fair is free and there will be experts on hand—mortgage lenders, Realtors, home inspectors, and agencies—to answer your questions. You can learn about the home buying and mortgage process, how to understand your credit report and how to improve your credit score, how to access grants and special down payment programs to help you buy a house, the advantages of buying versus renting a home, and how to prevent a home foreclosure.

If you have questions about the Housing Fair, please call (616) 355-1328.

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