

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
Linda Blauwkamp
Jack Hyde
Bin Lim
Norma Luna
Rev. Angela Taylor Perry
Mary Yedinak
Marvin Younger

“Bridging the Gap” at ACEH on April 10: Hearts, Jelly Beans, and a Snapshot of Your Life

Who’s your neighbor? Who’s your friend? What do you know about people from cultures different from your own? Do you go beyond a smile and saying hello? How often do you interact, share a meal, talk in depth?

At its Friday, April 10, meeting, the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony will offer some ways to help bridge the gap that exists here, as elsewhere, between different cultures and ethnic groups. Two women, Rev. Angela Taylor Perry, pastor of reconciling ministries at Faith Christian Reformed Church, and diversity trainer Eleanor Lopez will lead the presentations and discussion. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Center for Women in Transition, 411 Butternut, Holland,

If you come, please bring a dessert to share, from your own ethnic background if possible.

Rev. Taylor Perry developed the Hearts in Harmony program, which matches people of different backgrounds who agree to meet monthly over a year’s time to share stories, opinions, and frank discussions about race and ethnicity. Several sets of Hearts in Harmony partners will talk about their experiences.

Mrs. Lopez will lead an interactive exercise that uses different colors of jelly beans to illustrate who people have as friends, neighbors, and associates. This will be followed by a Cultural Competency Snapshot, and sharing by participants.

At this meeting, ACEH also will elect new members of its board of directors (See ballot on Page 3).

Here's How to Join the Alliance

At the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony, we warmly welcome all people who wish to 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

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 Bin Lim, c/o ACEH, P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. To pay by credit card, go to our website www.harmonyalliance.org, click on "Join Us" and use the secure Pay Pal system. You may also join at an ACEH monthly meeting or social event. If you are not sure whether your membership is current, please contact database manager Herb Weller at 396-2201 or hpweller@comcast.net

ACEH to Cut Back on Mailing Newsletter

Rising costs for postage and production are forcing ACEH to cut back on sending a large number of copies of its monthly Newsletter by postal mail, as we have been doing.

Beginning with the June issue, the Alliance will send the Newsletter by regular mail just to paid ACEH members who do not have email access. If you now get the Newsletter by mail, here are some options, and we hope you will choose one of them:

- 1) Switch to email. We will always email the Newsletter to you, regardless of whether you are a member or not (though we hope you will consider becoming one!). Through email, you will also receive the weekly In the Community listings of diversity events in our area. Send your email address to hpweller@comcast.net
 - 2) Become a dues-paying member. We will keep sending the Newsletter to you by postal mail. (See membership information on this page.)
 - 3) Access the Newsletter each month at our website, www.harmonyalliance.org
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Summer Potluck to Celebrate 10th Anniversary

The Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony will celebrate its 10th anniversary at its annual Potluck in the Park Sunday, August 9, from 1 to 4 pm. There will be a new site—this year's party will be at Kollen Park in Holland, by Lake Macatawa, at Van Raalte and 10th St. Please save the date. Eleanor Lopez will head a committee planning this special event. If you'd like to help, please contact her at aceh@harmonyalliance.org

The Alliance was founded in January 1999 as a grass-roots, volunteer organization for networking, education, and advocacy. It works for justice and equal opportunity, unity in the community, cross-cultural understanding, and appreciation for diversity. For more information, see the website at www.harmonyalliance.org or call 392-5086.

ACEH Board Ballot, 2009-2011

These candidates will be voted on at the Friday, April 10, meeting.

_____ **Jauanna Jackson** taught elementary music in West Ottawa for 24 years and says interacting with children, parents, peers, and administrators was "a gigantic lesson in human relationships that I loved." She grew up in Inkster, "where the African American community was on one side of the tracks and the Caucasian community was on the other"; went to Western Michigan University; and lived in a Portuguese neighborhood in California; the move to Holland, she says, was "challenging culturally, socially, and politically given our African American roots." She has 3 children and has been part of many local civic organizations. Jauanna says: *"I want to give time and support to an organization that I admire and respect because it consistently demonstrates the 'right stuff' by sponsoring activities and giving voice to issues that ultimately impact the well-being of a dynamic, culturally diverse Holland area. I can offer human beingness, wisdom, trust, and laughter to the ACEH community and board."*

_____ **Bin Lim** has been an ACEH member from its founding and currently serves as treasurer, completing the unexpired term of a person who resigned. He is an engineer, retired from Herman Miller, and active in the Lakeshore Interfaith Institute. Bin and his wife, Lisa, have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. He says, *"I think ACEH is a unique organization attracting progressive, open-minded, and compassionate people who are trying to dismantle the (sometimes ever so subtle) social injustices and misguided prejudices in our community by getting involved in discussion in a very personal way. We have to educate ourselves and the community, to get rid of our prejudices and unconscious false understanding of others. I have no choice but to be active and hope to attract others to do the same."*

_____ **Victor M. Orozco** retired in 2008 from working at Tiara Yachts. He served on the Holland City Council for 14 years, from 1993 to 2007. He was born in Guanajuato, Mexico; when he was 10, his family moved to Chicago. Victor and his wife, Rosa, have 3 children, 2 stepchildren, and 14 grandchildren, with twin grandchildren expected in June. Victor says: *"I have been part of many social groups that promote good race relations and it has been my personal journey to make this world a better place for justice and equal rights for all people. I will work to do the same on the board of ACEH."*

_____ **Lucia Rios** was born, raised and currently works in Holland. She graduated with a degree in journalism and comparative religion from Western Michigan University in 2002. For the 6 years she has worked for the local non-profit Disability Network/Lakeshore, where she focuses on accessibility and youth with disabilities. She also volunteers in the community and spends time with family and friends. Lucia says: *"I would like to be on the board of the ACEH because I believe in the value of educating our community about all cultures and differences. I think what the Alliance does for the community is beneficial and encouraging and would love to be part of strengthening what has already been put into place."*

_____ **Marvin Younger** taught Holland elementary students for over 30 years, receiving many state and local awards; he also trained teachers for the Federated States of Micronesia. He serves on Lakeshore Area Youth Leadership board, Upward Bound and the City's Human Relations Commission, International Relations Commission, and Multicultural Network. He is involved in the Celebration of Multicultural Connections/South Shore Business Group and the Celebration Freedom Festival: A Taste of American Cultures, sponsored by Christ Memorial Church and JQ99. He has been an ACEH board member for two years, serving as president in 2008-09. Marvin says: *"I hope to continue to give back to the community, by fostering a respect for and acceptance of the diversity that is so much a part of Holland, working to build bridges of communication between ethn groups and the city, and examining ways to involve all stakeholders in the life of this community."*

_____ **Nomination from the floor.**

The Alliance

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*Bringing People
Together from Worlds
Apart*

Fun...Free Books...for Families at Fiesta

Ready, set...Fiesta! And ready, set, Read! Those two themes will be linked this year at the 44th annual Latin Americans United for Progress Fiesta, "Educate Now for a Better Tomorrow!" (¡La Educación para el Futuro Comienza Hoy!), on Friday, May 1, and Saturday, May 2.

LAUP and Great Start of Ottawa County, Ready for School, and InterCare's Reach Out and Read program are teaming up to distribute thousands of free books to families at Fiesta. The aim is to stress the importance of reading to children from infancy in order to prepare them for a successful future.

Fiesta runs Friday night from 6 to 9 pm at the Holland Civic Center, with entertainment showcasing local talent. Starting at 9 a.m. on Saturday, the annual King and Queen Contest takes place, as well as music, dance, and other entertainment; exhibits from; food booths; and carnival rides. Fiesta will welcome back Ballet Folklorico Sol Azteca and the Mariachi Band of Grand Rapids Community College. The LAUP Low Rider car show will be in the Civic Center parking lot from 9 am to 5 pm, with amazing cars, trucks, low riders, and custom bikes.

The Alliance for Cultural
and Ethnic Harmony

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