

## **The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, CUNY**

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### **Outline**

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- Challenges & Opportunities
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  - Growing Presence of Latinos in the U.S.
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- Where do we go from here?

## **Mission**

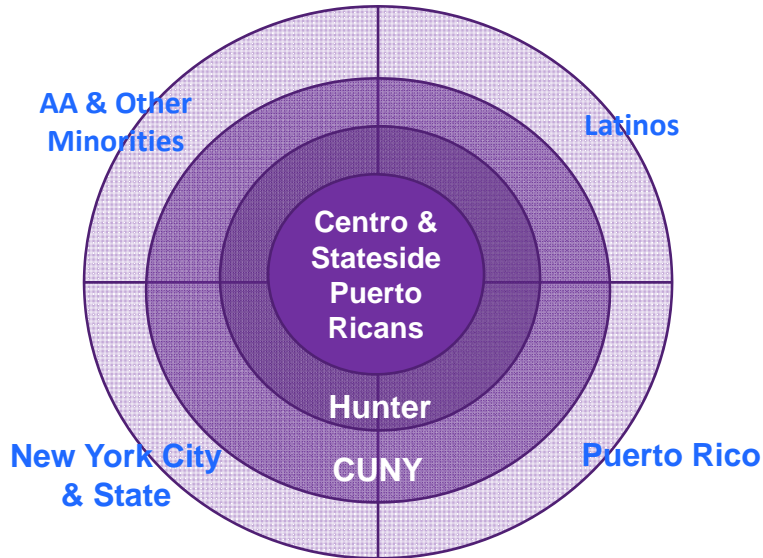
The Center for Puerto Rican Studies' mission is:

- To produce, facilitate and disseminate interdisciplinary research about the experiences of Puerto Ricans in the U.S.
- To collect, preserve and provide access to archival and library resources documenting the history and culture of Puerto Ricans.

## **Vision: Adopting a Multi-Stakeholder Approach**

- Towards a Relevant Research Program
  - Establish and implement effective research agenda responding to community priorities.
  - Strengthen Centro's Research Exchange program with CUNY Puerto Rican Studies Departments and others.
- Towards a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Centro Library and Archives
  - Develop and implement plan to rescue and process in digital form current and future archival collections; and,
  - Engage the Puerto Rican community in the appreciation and dissemination of their cultural heritage.

## Adopting a Multi-Stakeholders Approach



## History

- A CUNY-wide institute.
- Founded in 1973 by a coalition of faculty, students, and community leaders.
- Centro has been housed at Hunter College since 1983.
- A founding member of the Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR) since 1989.
  - IUPLR, with over 25 affiliates, is the largest consortium of Latino research centers in the U.S.

## **Challenges & Opportunities: Changing Demographics**

- Population dynamics: since 2003, population in the U.S. exceeds that on the Island.
- The Puerto Rican Population in the United States grew by 4% in 2011.
  - In comparison, the Total and White Alone population grew by less than one percent, and Latinos as a whole by 2.36 percent.
- Changing destination of migratory flows between Puerto Rico and the U. S.
  - Shift to Florida, but New York still largest.

## **Challenges & Opportunities: Growing Presence of Latinos in U.S.**

- When Centro was founded in 1973, Latinos constituted about 5 percent of the total population, and Puerto Ricans and Cubans were the second and third largest national groups among Latinos.
- Today, Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the country.
- Immigration of Latinos is a contentious political issue that shapes social stratification and discrimination.
- Relations with other racial and ethnic groups are embedded in this context.

## United States Population, 2010 and 2011

Subject	2010	2011	Change	%
Total population	309,349,689	311,591,919	2,242,230	0.72%
White Alone	229,397,472	230,838,975	1,441,503	0.63%
Hispanic or Latino	50,740,089	51,939,916	1,199,827	2.36%
Puerto Rican	4,691,890	4,885,294	193,404	4.12%

## Puerto Rican Population by States and Puerto Rico, 2010 and 2011

	2010	2011	Change	%
Puerto Rico*	3,560,838	3,542,571	-18,267	-0.51%
United States	4,691,890	4,885,294	193,404	4.12%
California	196,445	205,340	8,895	4.53%
Connecticut	264,708	271,303	6,595	2.49%
Florida	864,577	883,728	19,151	2.22%
Georgia	73,507	74,321	814	1.11%
Illinois	194,096	183,637	-10,459	-5.39%
Massachusetts	262,804	278,716	15,912	6.05%
New Jersey	430,863	460,551	29,688	6.89%
New York	1,085,307	1,128,843	43,536	4.01%
North Carolina	74,702	80,805	6,103	8.17%
Ohio	88,725	104,291	15,566	17.54%
Pennsylvania	378,312	393,786	15,474	4.09%
Texas	138,136	137,382	-754	-0.55%
Virginia	72,035	78,017	5,982	8.30%

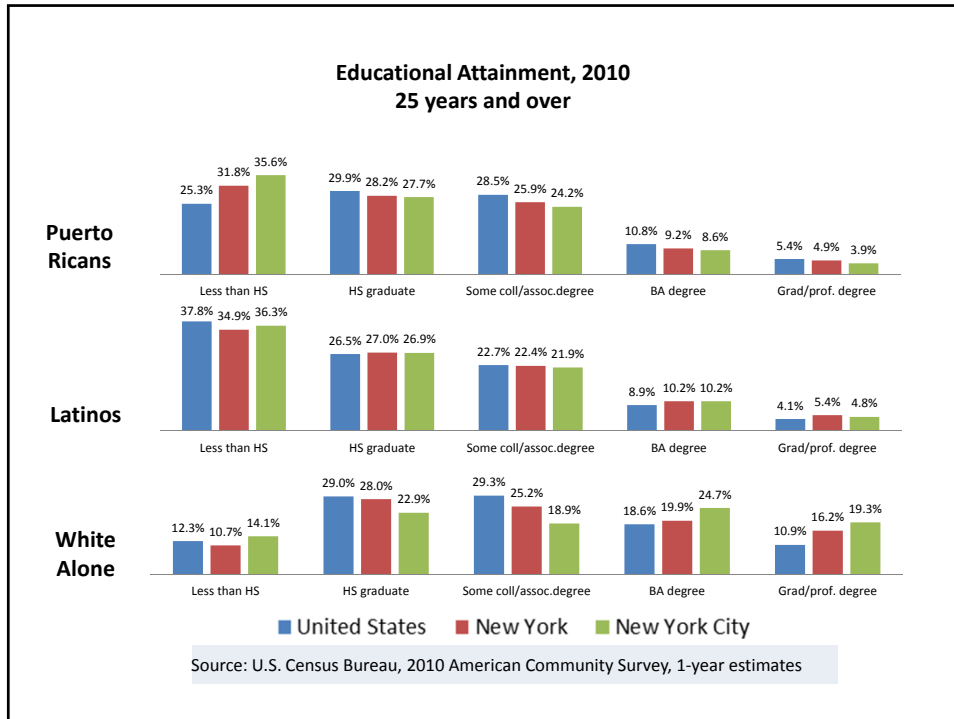
\* Includes only the Puerto Rican population.

## **Challenges & Opportunities: A Social Reality Paradox**

- Have dense network of community organizations and leaders and large number of elected officials; yet, voter registration and turnout rates are the lowest.
- Have made significant gains in household and individual income; yet, have highest poverty rates of all groups (with the exception of Dominicans).
- Recent research suggests that second generations are doing worse in socio-economic terms than first generations.

## **Challenges & Opportunities: A Leaky Educational Pipeline**

- In 2010, Puerto Ricans in NYC that were 25 years or older had a 35.6% high school dropout rate .
- Though graduation rates are comparable to others in NYC, in 2010:
  - Puerto Ricans in NYC had a BA college graduation rate of 8.6%, lower than that of other Latinos (10.2%) and Whites (24.7%).
  - Puerto Ricans in NYC, with a 3.9% rate, lagged both Whites (19.3%) and other Latinos (4.8%) in graduate or professional degrees completion .



## Challenges & Opportunities: Is Puerto Rican Studies Education Valuable and Relevant?

- Many administrators question the value of Puerto Rican Studies.
- Need to answer questions of “why” and “how” is Puerto Rican Studies relevant.
- Need to foster new pedagogies that celebrate and value our cultural and historical heritage.
- Need to demonstrate how knowledge generated by Puerto Rican Studies, and ethnic identity more generally, promote cultural competency and affect social change.

## Challenges & Opportunities: Affirming the Value of Puerto Rican Studies

### ■ Education

Cultural identity and ethnic solidarity are important elements in students' intellectual curiosity and social and political motivation;

### ■ Scholarship

Ethnic-centered interdisciplinary approach is important for understanding the individual and its community; and,

### ■ Social Change

Ethnic networks, built on norms of trust and solidarity, are an important form of social organization affecting social stability, economic achievement and political processes that shape access to power and resources.

## Programs: Affirming the Value of Puerto Rican Studies

Centro has four programmatic areas:

- Research & Publications
- Library and Archives
- Education
- Outreach



## Programs: Research

- Staff Publications
  - Current interest include political participation, demographic change and settlements, education and socio-economic status.
- Sponsored Research Initiatives
- Research Exchange
  - Provides support, on a competitive basis, to dissertation, post-doctoral and visiting faculty fellows.
- Seminars & Conferences
- Data Center
  - Repository of data on Puerto Ricans in the United States.

## Programs: Publications

- Centro Journal
  - Founded in 1987, multidisciplinary, bilingual, refereed publication of scholarly articles in the humanities and the social sciences, as well as interpretive essays, interviews, fiction, and reviews.
- Voices
  - Web-based electronic magazine to disseminate scholarly contributions about the Puerto Rican experiences to a general public. The magazine is asynchronous and updated regularly.
- Centro Press
  - New venture, targeting the publishing of three books this year. Based on digital printing technology, which makes feasible to produce books with relatively low market demand at reasonable prices.

## **Programs: The Centro Library and Archives**

The Centro Library and Archives is the world's largest institution solely dedicated to collecting, preserving and disseminating the history of the Puerto Rican diaspora.

- The library collection consists of over 25,000 books, 2,500 thesis, and over 500 films.
- The archives houses over 5,000 cubic feet of documents (manuscripts and printed records), more than 40,000 photos, hundreds of oral histories, and other important resources.

## **Programs: Education**

- **Teaching and learning Puerto Rican Studies**
  - OpenCourseWare-- thematic web-based, online teaching materials such as lecture notes, syllabi, bibliographies, literature reviews, curriculum guides, study notes, and video and sound materials on various subjects.
  - Educational products-- video documentaries, posters, video conferences.
- **Centro Cultural Competence Initiative**
  - Financed through a FIPSE Grant.

## Programs: Outreach

- Web Site [centropr.hunter.cuny.edu](http://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu)
  - Over 1,300 pages as of June 30, 2012.
- Events
  - 8 to 10 events each semester targeting faculty, students and community.
- Social Networking
  - Weekly newsletter blast to over 4,000 addresses.
  - Facebook and Twitter fans and followers.
- CentroTV <http://www.youtube.com/user/CentroPR>
  - 181 videos of Centro events and productions.
  - Live streaming of events.
- Centro Store (forthcoming).

## Where do we go from here?

- The 100 Puerto Ricans Campaign

The 100 Puerto Ricans campaign is a strategy designed to encourage individuals and organizations that have made or are making a difference in our community to record and document their experiences for future generations.
- Centro's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In addition to events celebrating such a significant occasion, we are planning a year-long discussion of "What could be Centro's role for the next 40 years?" Our main challenge is adapting and sustaining programs to the changing reality of Puerto Ricans in the United States.

## The 100 Puerto Ricans Campaign

### Goals:

- Strengthen Centro's archival collections by making them more comprehensive and balanced.
- Engage a broad range of organizations and partners in the implementation of this campaign.
- Design and implement a fundraising campaign to support the implementation of the initiative.
- Community response:
  - Close to 400 nominations.
  - We have sent about 60 letters of invitation.
- Affinity events:
  - 150 participants in each for PRDP, LCLA.
  - Other thematic: military, public service, health, women.
  - Other regional: Florida, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia.

## Centro's 40th Anniversary

### ■ Goals

- To highlight Centro's place in higher education, its role as a leadership organization, and its purpose as a place of historical preservation and as a convener in the community.
- To strengthen and build on its relationships with partners and affinity groups to become more visible to a broader market.
- To broaden its image and services from a CUNY/New York/New York City institution to a national one. And,
- To position Centro as an authority, expert on Puerto Ricans in the United States in the national discourse, including the media and the political world.