



Friday, April 22: UNDERSTANDING

What do we know?

What are key policies?

What can policies and community strategies do?

Friday morning will be devoted to an understanding of the current situation in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is in a prolonged recession that started in 2006 and has resulted in a fiscal crisis, cut of public services and a massive migration to the United States leading to a significant decline in the island's population. Friday afternoon's program will be devoted to an understanding of how the economic crisis in Puerto Rico has impacted the stateside Puerto Rican community.

9:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductory Remarks

Edwin Meléndez, Executive Director, Centro

Plenary Panel A: Policy Options for Fiscal Crisis

Antonio Weiss, Counselor to the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury

Juan González, Columnist for the New York Daily News

Dennis Rivera, SEIU

Moderator: Gretchen Sierra-Zorita, National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts

Concurrent Panels

Unfolding Humanitarian Crisis

Moderator: Prof. Héctor Cordero-Guzmán, Sociologist, Baruch College, CUNY

Prof. José Caraballo Cueto, Director, Centro de Información Censal, UPR-Cayey

Ana María García Blanco, Instituto Nueva Escuela (PR)

Rev. Heriberto Martínez, Coordinador, Coalición Por la Salud (PR)

Energy and the Environment

Moderator: Brenda Torres Barreto, Assistant Secretary for the Environment (NY)

Ruth Santiago, Legal Counsel, El Puente (PR)

Ingrid M. Vila Biaggi, Consultant (PR)

Prof. Efraín O'Neill-Carrillo, UPR (PR)

Economic Development

Moderator: George Herrera, President & CEO, Herrera Cristina Group, LTD (DC)

Jorge Rodríguez, Principal, PACIV (NY, PR)

Mariela Martínez (DC)

Bianca M. Cabán, Founding Partner, Koban Holdings LLC (NY & PR)

Models for Diaspora Engagement with Puerto Rico

Edwin Vargas, Semillas (CA)

Ramphis Castro, Parallel 18 (NY)

Dyanis de Jesus, PRCEI (NY)

Foundations' Responses to the Economic Crisis in Puerto Rico

Moderator: Karina Claudio-Betancourt, Program Officer, Open Society Foundation

Jose García, Program Officer Surdna Foundation

More panelists TBA

- Lunch -

1:30 p.m. Plenary Panel B: Local and State Perspective

New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

Illinois State Senator Iris Y. Martínez

New York State Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo

Philadelphia Councilwoman Maria D. Quiñones-Sánchez

Moderator: Katria Soto, News Anchor, Univision New York

Concurrent Panels: Puerto Ricans

Education

Moderator: Ronald Blackburn, President and CEO, ASPIRA (DC)

Margaret Rivera, President of the Board, ASPIRA Delaware

More panelists TBA

Civil Rights, Human Rights and Civic Engagement

Moderator: Juan Cartagena, President and General Counsel, LatinoJustice PRLDEF (NY)

Jose E. López, Lecturer, Latin American and Latino Studies, University of Illinois

Jimmy Torres Vélez, President Puerto Rican Action Initiative (FL)

Yanil Terón, Executive Director Center For Latino Progress (CT)

Environment and Community Development

Moderator: Luis Garden-Acosta, President El Puente (NY)

Eddie Bautista, Executive Director, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance

Marcos Vilar, Consultant (FL)

Health Disparities

Prof. María Idali Torres, Director Gaston Institute (MA)

Prof. Melissa Fuster, Brooklyn College (NY)

Jose Sánchez, (CEO) Norwegian-American Hospital (IL)

More panelists TBA

Plenary Panel C: National Perspective

Rep. Luis Gutiérrez (IL)

Rep. José Serrano (NY)

Rep. Nydia Velázquez (NY)

Moderator: Sandra Lilley, Managing Editor, NBC Latino

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Reception



Saturday, April 23: ENGAGEMENT

What can we do?

Who is going to do it?

What can Centro do?

The closing program on Saturday will focus on ongoing efforts to articulate a diaspora response to the crisis, an agenda for stateside organizations to move forward with coalition building, and in that context a discussion of the leading support role that Centro may play in the future.

10:00 a.m. Action Fair

A diaspora networking and community-building event. Bring your organization information packets, meet and greet community leaders from around the country, exchange ideas about affecting social change for our people, and dream a better future for 8.6 million Puerto Ricans.

- Lunch -

12:45 p.m. Plenary Keynote

Monseñor Roberto González Nieves, Archbishop of San Juan

Concurrent Panels: Engagement

Cultural Activism and Historical Preservation

Moderator Juan J. González, Esq., President, Parada San Juan Bautista, Inc. (NJ)

Lorraine A. Cortés-Vázquez, Chairperson National Puerto Rican Day Parade Inc. (NY)

Natascha Otero-Santiago, Founder of Parranda (Miami)

Dr. Alberto Hernández, Associate Director Center for Puerto Rican Studies (NY)

Federico Pérez, Former President Puerto Rican Day Parade (NY)

Maria Román, Former President Puerto Rican Day Parade (NY)

Youth

Moderator: Christy Marrero, Editorial Vice President, Hola! USA (NY)

Alejandro Manzanares, Stand UP for Puerto Rico (MA)

Dr. Frances Colón, Cenadores (DC)

Miguel Columna, Co-Founder & Executive Director, ConPRmetidos (DC)

Jessie Fuentes, Community School Representative, RCCA (IL)

Legal System and Puerto Ricans (Bar Associations)

Moderator: Betty Lugo, President Puerto Rican Bar Association (NY)

Mark Anthony Bimbela, President Colegio de Abogados (PR)

Anthony Suárez, President, Puerto Rican Bar Association, Orlando (FL)

Oscar González, President, Puerto Rican Bar Association, Illinois (IL)

Veterans

Moderator and resource: Harry Franqui-Rivera

Frank Medina, Captain, U.S. Army veteran, Congressional Gold Medal Alliance (FL)

Lesbia Nieves, Lieutenant Colonel (CT)

Luis Vázquez-Contes, National Vice-Commander, American GI Forum of the U.S. (AZ)

Faith Based Communities

Moderator: Rev. Dr. Raymond Rivera (NY)

Obispo Ángel Marcial, Iglesia de Dios (FL)

Reverend Roberto Luis Lugo (PA)

Pastor Omar Medina, President, Hispanic Pastor's Association (OH)

Reverenda Eunice Santana, Iglesia Discípulos de Cristo, (PR)

More panelists TBA

Women/NACOPRW

Moderator: Deborah López, NACOPRW (Chicago)

Amaris Hernández, Vice-President NACOPRW Philadelphia (PA)

Sara Meléndez, NACOPRW (DC)

More panelists TBA

Visual Artists

Moderator: Miguel Luciano, Artist (NY)

Pedro Brull, Artist (Orlando)

Billy Ocasio, Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture (Chicago)

Marcos Dimas, Artist and Co-Founder, Taller Boricua (NY)

Prof. Juan Sánchez, Hunter College-CUNY (NY)

LGBT

Moderator: Pedro Julio Serrano, Puerto Rico Para Tod@s (NY)

Prof. Luis Aponte-Parés, Community Planning UMass-Boston (MA)

Erika Gisela Abad Merced, Oral Historian Center for Puerto Rican Studies (IL)

Prof. Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, University of Michigan, American Culture Department

Performing Arts

Moderator: Orlando Plaza, Owner, Camaradas El Barrio (NY)

Panelists TBA

Social Media

Moderator: Marlena Fitzpatrick, CEO, Latino Rebels (NY)

Nuria Net, Managing Editor, Fusion (FL)

Gabe González, Flama (NY)

Puerto Rican Academics

Co-Moderators: Prof. Xavier Totti and Prof. Teresita Levy, Lehman College (NY)

Prof. Juanita Díaz-Cotto, Sociology Binghamton University, SUNY (NY)

Wrap-Up Plenary: What have we learned? Where do we go from here?

4:30 p.m. Adjourn