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## Exitoso Segundo Gran Picnic Anual para Familias Mexicanas

Por: Isabel Flores, Corresponsal La Prensa

En un ambiente completamente familiar, se realizó con gran éxito el *Segundo Gran Picnic Anual* para Familias Mexicanas en el parque Kensington en Milford, Michigan, el pasado domingo 22 de junio de 2014; organizado por el grupo *Mexicanas en Michigan*, encabezado por *Monique Villegas de Saucedo*, y la colaboración del Consulado de México en Detroit.

“Fue un evento muy importante en donde pudimos colaborar con una aportación y aprovechar para proveer información sobre los servicios que ofrece el Consulado. Además de regalar libros de texto y literatura en general para apoyar a las familias mexicanas en su labor de fomentar nuestra cultura en la educación de sus hijos”, comentó *José Casas*, integrante del Consulado de México en Detroit. “Nos sentimos muy complacidos con el evento y exhortamos a las Mexicanas en Michigan a continuar con esta gran labor de unión y convivencia familiar”.

Todas las participantes quedaron muy satisfechas con el evento, ya que pudieron convivir con sus amistades y conocer a nuevas familias, con quienes pasaron momentos muy agradables. Algunos llevaron platillos para compartir y posteriormente disfrutaron de juegos diversos. “No era un evento muy organizado con una agenda específica, ya

que la idea era la convivencia en general. Teníamos planeado realizar juegos de lotería, pero no tuvimos tiempo; el día estuvo lleno de muchas cosas, todo el tiempo los niños estuvieron corriendo y jugando. Los papás jugaron fútbol con los niños. Las familias disfrutaron al máximo”, informó *Monique Saucedo*.

Se contó con la asistencia de 90 familias registradas y alrededor de 30 a 40 familias no registradas. Se realizaron rifas con diversos premios, hubo mucha participación en la mesa informativa del consulado. Además de aprovechar para festejar a los cumpleaños, a quienes se les agasajo con un delicioso pastel de tres leches.

El entretenimiento estuvo a cargo del *Ballet Folklorico Joyas de México de Lily del Real*, quienes con hermosos y coloridos vestidos interpretaron diversas estampas mexicanas, para que todos pudieran recordar sus bellos Estados. La cantante *Cecy Esparza* alegró el momento con hermosas y emotivas canciones mexicanas.

“Me siento super satisfecha con el evento. Muy contenta. Fue un gran logro, todos se fueron muy contentos”, dijo *Monique Saucedo*. “Agradezco a todos y cada uno de los que lograron hacer este evento una realidad. El siguiente paso es prepararnos para el siguiente año porque las familias mexicanas en Michigan seguimos creciendo”.

### Concurso de Salsas

Por primera vez se realizó un concurso de salsas caseras en el cual participaron 9 personas. “Entregamos premio de primero, segundo y tercer lugar. El concurso era completamente abierto y las participantes tenían que entregar un litro de salsa, la cual se colocó en recipientes de plástico del mismo tamaño y sin etiqueta, todos eran iguales, de tal forma que no hubiera diferencias”, destacó *Saucedo*.

El jurado calificador fue elegido al azar y estuvo integrado por dos chicas del grupo de Mexicanas en

Michigan que no llevaban salsas para concursar, *do s* hombres y *Jesús Gutiérrez*, encargado del Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior del Consulado de México.

Cada uno de ellos probó las diferentes salas y coincidieron en que el primer lugar fuera para: *Araceli Sotelo*; segundo lugar *Nena Espinosa* y tercer lugar, *Malu Collado*. “Felicitó a

cada una de las participantes por su gran labor. El concurso fue todo un éxito”, agregó *Monique*. Cabe destacar que los premios fueron entregados por el *Juan Manuel Solana*, Cónsul de México en Detroit; quien felicitó y exhortó tanto a las concursantes, como a las integrantes de Mexicanas en Michigan, a continuar con esta gran labor.

Por su parte, la ganadora *Araceli Sotelo* dijo sentirse muy contenta por el éxito alcanzado. “Me siento muy contenta por haber ganado el primer lugar, pero sobretodo por haber pasado un gran día de convivencia con gente de mi mismo país. Es increíble que a pesar de la distancia, podamos reunirnos los mexicanos en Michigan y compartir momentos importantes con nuestros hijos”.

La ganadora confesó que su salsa fue elaborada con tomate, chile chipotle y chile jalapeño; una receta que ella misma elaboró. “Nosotros venimos del Distrito Federal y ahí estamos acostumbrados a comer tacos en

donde encontramos salsas deliciosas; pero cuando llegamos a Detroit, nos dimos cuenta que no había ninguna salsa que nos agradará; así que mi esposo y yo nos dimos a la tarea de realizar diversas mezclas, hasta llegar a crear esta rica receta que es la que preparamos todo el tiempo en casa”.

Con gran satisfacción, *Ara* confiesa que ya tiene varias ideas para el próximo año. “En casa somos bien antojadidos y a mí me encanta la cocina; así que desde ahora empezaremos a desarrollar otras ideas para el próximo año”.

De esa manera, es como las familias de Mexicanas en Michigan lograron compartir y pasar un día inolvidable. Gracias a la participación y apoyo de varias integrantes de este grupo, así como del Consulado de México en Detroit, es como se logró hacer este evento realidad.



Cecy Esparza





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## Detroit Institute of Arts celebrates *Concert of Colors* with Latin jazz, chamber pop, and taiko drum performances

For the fifth year in a row, the *Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA)* is participating in the *Concert of Colors*, metro Detroit's annual free diversity-music festival. On Friday, July 11, 2014 the DIA will host concerts by Latin jazz band *PanaMO* at 5:00 p.m. and the eclectic six-piece band *Cuddle Magic* at 7:00 p.m. The fun continues on Sunday, July 13, with a Japanese taiko drum performance by *Great Lakes Taiko*. Concerts will be outside both days, weather permitting.

*PanaMO* performs original compositions with strong Latin roots and flavor, as well as jazz standards with inventive arrangements. The band is led by *Obed Succari*, a master percussionist from Panama.

*Cuddle Magic* blends traditional and modern instrumentation to create chamber pop. The band's sound comes from blended vocals, guitars and keyboards layered with bass clarinet, trumpet and percussion. Toy-piano virtuoso *Phyllis Chen* will join the band for music from their newly released CD.

*Great Lakes Taiko* brings the excitement and beauty of Japanese Taiko drumming to the DIA. Taiko, which means drum in Japanese, features a wide range of two-sided stick percussion instruments.

This year marks the 22nd anniversary of the *Concert of Colors*. The event, which will take place July 5 and July 10



through July 13 around Midtown Detroit, is produced by the Arab-American National Museum, along with partners *Detroit Symphony Orchestra*, *Detroit Institute of Arts*, *Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History*, *ACCESS*, *Midtown Detroit Inc.*, and *University of Michigan - Detroit Center*, to bring together metro Detroit's diverse ethnic communities by presenting music from around the world.

The festival has become a beloved highlight of metro Detroit's summer festival season and one of the few free-admission local music festivals remaining. For this year's schedule, visit [www.concertofcolors.com](http://www.concertofcolors.com).

**Hours and Admission:** Museum hours are 9 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Tuesdays–Thursdays, 9 a.m.–10:00 p.m. Fridays, and 10 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. General admission (excludes ticketed exhibitions) is free for Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb county residents and DIA members. For all others, \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors ages 62+, \$4 for ages 6–17. *Preguntas? Call 313-833-7971.*

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## Detroit Public Schools' Proposed Fiscal Year 2015 Budget focuses on advancing academic quality, stabilizing enrollment, extending successful programs, and leveraging resources

*Detroit Public Schools' Proposed Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget*, which reflects an anticipated revenue decline of approximately \$49.3 million, is focused on the district's ability to create and offer increasingly relevant programs, undertaken on new platforms, presented to new markets, leveraged by public and private resources, while devoting new across-the-board energy to retention strategies.

Importantly, for the first time in six years the budget does not call for the closure of any schools for the 2014-15 school year, which the district has come to understand can have an extremely adverse impact on enrollment recruitment, retention and revenues.

"Success will be defined by Detroit Public Schools' ability to advance academic quality and raise standards while stabilizing and growing enrollment," said Emergency Manager Jack Martin. "The Detroit Public Schools budget plan is centered on creating high-quality seats for Detroit's children through neighborhood-centered quality schools situated in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments, and an increasingly relevant portfolio of educational services to students from birth through career readiness, adult education, training and retraining of residents."

The budget plan also includes plans for the launch a new gifted and talented school

program, extension of successful dual immersion bilingual programs into a 9<sup>th</sup> grade collegiate prep setting, expansion of career academy and adult educational regional center programming, support for a K-12 International Baccalaureate program, an additional prep period for K-8 teachers, as well as programs for early childhood families, through reorganizing current programs and securing private and foundation support.

"In Detroit's recent history, there has never been a time when marketplace, technological, social, housing, employment and economic trends shifted at the rate of change witnessed during the past several years," Martin said. "Detroit Public Schools is poised to become a driving force for accelerated positive growth in the city, region and its schools."

In 2013 the district engaged customers and implemented the initial stages of a set of strategic, customer-focused initiatives aimed at halting and reversing market share losses. As a result, Detroit Public Schools increased market share of Detroit school-age children in Fall 2013, while Detroit-based charters and suburban traditional districts' "choice" programs declined in enrollment.

Since 2006 the District has been faced with budgetary and financial challenges. The general fund deficit has ranged from as high as \$327 million to a low of \$76.5

million. The current deficit is projected at \$127,054,101 for FY 2014.

This proposed FY 2015 Budget reduces that legacy deficit to \$125,747,592. Factors contributing to the FY14 deficit increase include general fund charge-backs for planned grant expenses in middle school instruction and special education services, prior year Medicaid services overpayment, enrollment, increases in rates from the Detroit Public Lighting Dept. and Detroit Water and Sewerage Dept., and additional campus security. Overall, DPS anticipates a revenue decline of approximately \$49.3 million.

Detroit Public Schools is in line to eliminate the legacy deficit and show a positive fund balance by the conclusion of the 2017-18 fiscal year. There has been strong progress. For example, over the last five years DPS has reduced expenditures, in areas that will not directly harm its classrooms, by over \$225 million.

There has been substantial financial and operational progress confirmed by external reviews, as evidenced by this past year's action by the United States Department of Education to remove the district from High Risk status, as well as a resolution of \$53 million in audit findings and a sharp reduction in audit findings from 84 in 2008 to 9 this past year.

The school district is committed to constantly review all expenditures for further, responsible reductions. All Central Office Units participated in a Zero Base Budgeting process for the third consecutive year and presented strategies to reduce expenditures by 10-20% for each department.

"Decision packages" were developed and final reductions represented those actions that would not negatively impact the educational programs or result in potential enrollment declines. Through the implementation of Zero Base Budgeting throughout central administration departments, DPS has identified \$20 million in cost savings and a reduction of 41 full-time positions.

The FY 2015 budget is based on a total membership for funding purposes of 47,750, which is a conservative decrease of 2% over the FY2014 Amended Budget.

*Other significant adjustments assumed in FY15 planning include:*

- Revenues:
  - \$50 annual increase in Foundation Allowance: \$2.2 million;



- Increase in Sale of Capital Assets: \$11.7 million;
- Revenue Enhancement Millage: \$14.8 million;
- Expenditures:
  - District Reorganization and Technology Implementation savings: \$4.4 million;
  - Employee Severance Plan savings: \$5.8 million;
  - Restructured Health Care Benefits savings: \$13.3 million.

The proposed budget maintains class sizes for children in the early formative years in grades K-3 (at 25 students), and raises class sizes by 5 students in grades 4-12. The budget provides an additional prep period for teachers in grades K-8 to allow teachers to remain effective and efficient in providing students instruction and support.

From December 2013-February 2014, the district conducted a comprehensive survey completed by 7,271 participants (21% of total families). Insights derived from the results are that districtwide parental satisfaction on program quality, customer service, facilities, parental involvement and safety equates to 4.0-4.1 on a 5.0 scale, with the lowest satisfaction regarding "outside" safety (safe routes to schools).

With individual results by school and level provided to every building, taken alongside data on contacts to the new Parent Help Line and District Ombudsperson, substantial new ability exists to identify areas for improvement and resulting targeted resources and energy. Doing so provides additional substantial opportunity to strengthen the existing customer base and increase retention rates.

"We look forward to continually working with our leadership team, staff, bargaining units and external agencies to put the district on a path of long-term and sustainable fiscal stabilization," EM Martin said.

The Public Hearing for the FY 2015 Budget will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, 2014 at *Renaissance High School*, 6565 W. Outer Drive.

Copies of the proposed budget will be available for public inspection at the Office of Management and Budget located in the Fisher building, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48202 from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and the District's website on Thursday, June 19, 2014 through Thursday, June 26, 2014.

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