



From the Desk of Hon. Miguel Martinez

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Martinez Celebrates Dominican Heritage Month

Hon. Martinez, Hon. Reyna, Hon. Speaker Miller and the Black, Latino and Asian City Council Caucus observed February as Dominican Heritage Month and celebrated 160 years of Dominican independence with a community event at City Hall on Feb. 26th. Hon. Martinez and Hon. Reyna also presented to Nurys D'Oleo a Proclamation to celebrate Dominican Heritage Month and to recognize the innumerable social, cultural and economic contributions of the Dominican community to the city of New York. Other festivities hosted by Hon. Martinez during this special month included a performance by Repertorio Español, "La Fiesta del Chivo," at Columbia University held on Feb. 19th. This extraordinary play and the impressive acting of the play's caste truly represented the cultural richness of the Dominican community, and the enthusiastic attendance at the play symbolized the importance of theatre and arts to the Washington Heights/Inwood community.

Community School District 6 Fights For a Fair Share

The year 2004 began with Hon. Martinez and the community focused on education and, before the end of February, the community-wide efforts earned an important victory of successfully getting an additional 2 schools, 1,260 seats and \$102.3 million allocated to CSD 6. Council Member Martinez hosted a community breakfast at the Isabella Center to educate the community about the Department of Education's proposed Capital Plan, which determines the City's plans for school construction, capital improvements, technology and funding for the next 5 years. Attending this breakfast with Councilman Martinez were Senator Schneiderman, Assemblyman Espaillat and Councilman Jackson, who all worked together with the community to effectively demand more school funding for CSD 6. There is, however, much more work to be done to ensure CSD 6 gets a fair share and that the schools allocated to this district are built as quickly as possible. The next public hearings regarding the Capital Plan are March 15th and March 16^h at 9:00 am in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Martinez Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Services

Council Member Martinez spoke with immigrant activists at a rally organized by the Immigration Coalition to advocate for immigrant rights and additional funding for immigrant services on Feb. 13th. Hon. Martinez, along with other council members and community organizations such as Alianza Dominicana, is calling upon the City to uphold immigrant rights and to increase budget funding for legal services and ESL classes for immigrants. Hon. Martinez recently introduced Resolution 42, which denounces Pres. Bush's proposal for a temporary worker program that would exploit immigrant workers and the resolution calls for comprehensive immigration reform that would protect the human rights and improve the working conditions of immigrants.

Special Community News: Street Naming for Sgt. Tejada

On Feb. 27th, family, friends and elected officials joined Hon. Martinez to commemorate Marine Sgt. Riayan Tejada, an American hero who died during the early stages of the Iraq war. Sgt. Riayan Tejada's name was placed at the corner of 180th Street and St. Nicholas in Washington Heights, where Sgt. Tejada grew up.



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