

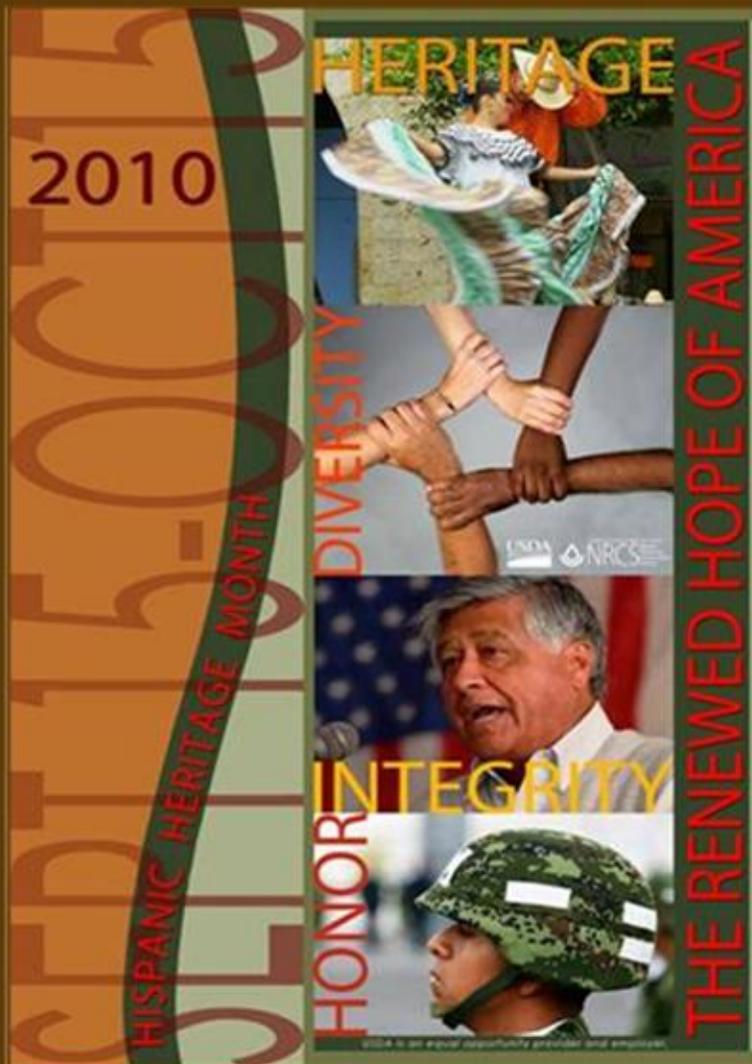


U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Celebrates

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

This is a Department-wide Event



Keynote Speaker

Dr. Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana, Ph.D.



*Assistant Secretary for Elementary and
Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education*

**Thursday, September 16, 2010 from 10-11 a.m.
Jefferson Auditorium – South Building, Washington, D.C.**

Immediately following the observance, there will be a cultural food sampling. For reasonable accommodations, please email Mr. Monshi Ramdass, Acting Director, Diversity and Recruiting Division, OHRM at Monshi.Ramdass@dm.usda.gov. An American Sign Language Interpreter will be provided.



A Sustainable Observance

Do you really need to print this program?

Message from the Secretary

Tom Vilsack



Tom Vilsack
Secretary

September 15th- October 15th Hispanic Heritage Month

I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is recognizing the outstanding contributions to the nation by Hispanic citizens during national Hispanic Heritage Month. The U.S. Congress established a National Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 to honor the achievements of Hispanics in America. In 1988 that annual observance was extended from September 15th through October 15th. These dates encompass the independence days of several Latin American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua on September 15th; Mexico on September 16th; and Chile on September 18th.) In addition, Dia de la Raza, which commemorates the first encounters between Native Americans and Europeans, is celebrated on October 12th.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Nearly 50 million Americans are Hispanic¹ and we mark the rich heritage and wide diversity of Hispanics by celebrating with observances, ceremonies, and activities throughout the country. Hispanics are the fastest growing minority population in the country. There are 10.5 million Hispanic family households in the United States, and 61 percent of those include children younger than 18².

There are at least twice as many Hispanic farmers and ranchers in the U.S. than any other group of minority operators.³ The number of Hispanic farm operators surged by 14-percent from 2002 to 2007, going from 72,349 to 82,462.⁴ More than one-third of all Hispanic-operated farms and ranches are classified as beef cattle operations, and another 16-percent are classified as fruit and nut farms, compared to four-percent of farms overall.⁵

The number of Hispanic-owned businesses increased by 44 percent from 2002 to 2007, reaching 2.3 million.¹ And more Hispanics are becoming actively engaged in the democratic process, with 9.7 million Hispanics voting in the 2008 presidential election. That is an increase of two million since the 2004 election.⁶

Join me in celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month by learning more about the important contributions that Hispanics have made—and continue to make—to agriculture, history, social culture, and traditions in the United States.

¹ Source: Population estimates <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/> actual figure 48.4 million

² Source: Families and Living Arrangements <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2009.html>

³ Quote from NASS Administrator R. Ronald Bosecker <http://westernfarmpress.com/news/051031-hispanic-farmers-growing/>

⁴ 2007 Census of Agriculture http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/Fact_Sheets/hispanic.pdf

⁵ Source: Voting and Registration in the Election of 2008 <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p20-562.pdf>

⁶ Hispanic Heritage Month News Release <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/hispanic-heritage-month-2010--sept-15---oct-15-98622924.html>

Origin of Hispanic Heritage Month

In 1988, Congress expanded what was once a week-long observance to a month-long (September 15 to October 15) celebration of traditions and cultures that trace back to Spain, Mexico and Spanish speaking South American countries. Approximately 189,700 Hispanics call Missouri home and will be celebrating their Hispanic descent.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18.

The term Hispanic, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, refers to Spanish-speaking people in the United States of any race. On the 2000 Census form, people of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin could identify themselves as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino." More than 35 million people identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino on the 2000 Census.

Nationally, the population of Hispanics was estimated to be 46.9 million, or 15.4 percent of the nation's population, making Hispanics the largest ethnic or race minority in the United States.



Program

“Heritage, Diversity, Integrity, and Honor: The Renewed Hope of America”

Mistress of Ceremonies	Ms. Judy Canales Administrator for Rural Development Community Programs U.S. Department of Agriculture
Presentation of Colors	Joint Armed Forces Color Guard and United States Air Force Band
Welcoming Remarks	Ed Avalos Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs U.S. Department of Agriculture
Opening Remarks	Dr. Elisabeth Hagen Under Secretary for Food Safety U.S. Department of Agriculture
Keynote Speaker	Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education U.S. Department of Education
Cultural Performance	Maru Montero Dance Company Washington DC’s Premier Latin Americans Dance Company
Closing Remarks and Recognitions	Ms. Febe Ortiz Management Analyst Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. Department of Agriculture

This event will also be broadcasted via TV Lan channel 6 to the local area network (DC, MD & VA) and will be available as on demand weblink at the conclusion of the event. DVD copies will be made available through Mr. Monshi Ramdass Acting Director, Diversity and Recruiting Division, OHRM and/or your Agency’s Hispanic Special Emphasis Program Manager.

Welcoming Remarks

Ed Avalos



Ed Avalos
Under Secretary for
Marketing and
Regulatory Programs

Edward Avalos is the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs at the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. Avalos provides leadership and oversight for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service which addresses animal and plant pests and diseases; the Agricultural Marketing Service, which provides standardization testing and marketing of commodities and specialty crops; and the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, which promotes marketing of livestock, cereals and meats, as well as fair trade practices.

Mr. Avalos grew up on a family farm in the Mesilla Valley of Southern New Mexico. Prior to his appointment at USDA, he served as Director of Marketing and Development at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture. He has over 30 years experience in livestock and agriculture marketing in both the domestic and international arenas. Mr. Avalos has spent considerable time working closely with producers to address industry demands; with distributors to ensure timely and feasible delivery of goods; and with retailers to showcase, promote, sell, merchandise, and inform the consumer utilizing numerous promotional and educational tools.

In addition, Mr. Avalos has worked on “buy local” initiatives, Indian agriculture and numerous promotional and trade activities with industry organizations and other stakeholder groups. Mr. Avalos holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Agriculture from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D.



Dr. Thelma Meléndez
de Santa Ana

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana was confirmed as assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education at the Department of Education by the U.S. Senate on July 24, 2009. In this position, she plays a pivotal role in policy and management issues affecting elementary and secondary education. She directs, coordinates and recommends policy for programs designed to assist state and local education agencies with improving the achievement of elementary and secondary school students. She helps ensure equal access to services leading to such improvement for all children, particularly children who are economically disadvantaged. She fosters educational improvement at the state and local levels, and provides financial assistance to local education agencies whose local revenues are affected by federal activities. She also serves as the principal adviser to the U.S. secretary of education on all matters related to pre-k, elementary and secondary education.

Prior to arriving at the Department, Meléndez served as superintendent of the Pomona Unified School District (Calif.), since 2006. During her tenure in this very diverse district serving 31,000 students, three-quarters of whom were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and 44 percent of whom were English language learners, she was directly responsible for the three highest increases in the Academic Proficiency Index in the district's history as well as the second highest gain in the API for all California school districts. Two high schools in the district were ranked in 2007 by *U.S. News & World Report* as among America's top 500 high schools out of 18,000 nationwide. She also designed and launched a mathematics and science magnet school and a charter school for grade 7 through 12 at-risk students. She created a health sciences and an engineering academy as well as a partnership with California Polytechnic University, among other universities, to create a health career pathway. In 2009, her success as an education leader was recognized by the American Association of School Administrators, which voted her California Superintendent of the Year.

From 2005 to 2006, Meléndez worked on district-level reform in her position as program manager at the nonprofit Stupski Foundation. Here she focused on creating high-performance learning organizations to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps. Her portfolio included the 23,000-student Pasadena (Calif.) School District and the 40,000-student Illinois School District U-46. She also served on the foundation's Executive Leadership Team.

From 1999 to 2005, Meléndez served as deputy and assistant superintendent and chief academic officer at Pomona Unified, where she redesigned instructional services to increase student achievement and support to school sites. In these positions she achieved a 50-percent decrease in the number of low-achieving schools as measured by California accountability standards.

Prior to her work at Pomona Unified, Meléndez was director of school-family initiatives at the Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project, where she oversaw grants for the Annenberg Foundation and implemented school wide accountability reform in 15 Los Angeles County school districts. From 1992 to 1997, she served as an educator in the Montebello and Pasadena Unified School districts, assuming the positions of director of instruction, principal, assistant principal and

teacher. And from 1990 to 2002, she served in various faculty positions at universities in California.

Meléndez has been recognized frequently for her educational leadership. In 2007, she was named Latina of Excellence, a national honor accorded to six Latinas "of great distinction in their fields" by *Hispanic Magazine*, receiving the Educationalist award. In 2006, Meléndez was selected to be a Fellow in the Broad Superintendents Academy, a national honor awarded to 18 "outstanding, dynamic, entrepreneurial" public school leaders. In 2005, she was recognized as an Outstanding K–12 School Leader & Distinguished Partner for Educational Excellence by California State Polytechnic University at Pomona. And, in 2003, she was named Outstanding Educator of the Year by the Los Angeles County Bilingual Directors Association.

Meléndez earned her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, where she was in the Rossier School of Education program specializing in language, literacy and learning. She earned a bachelor's degree *cum laude* in sociology from the University of California at Los Angeles. She is married to Otto Santa Ana, a professor in the Department of Chicano Studies at UCLA.

Cultural Performers

Maru Montero Dance Company



"The Micro-Monteros and the Mini-Monteros performing at the National Cinco de Mayo Festival '08 at the Washington Monument."

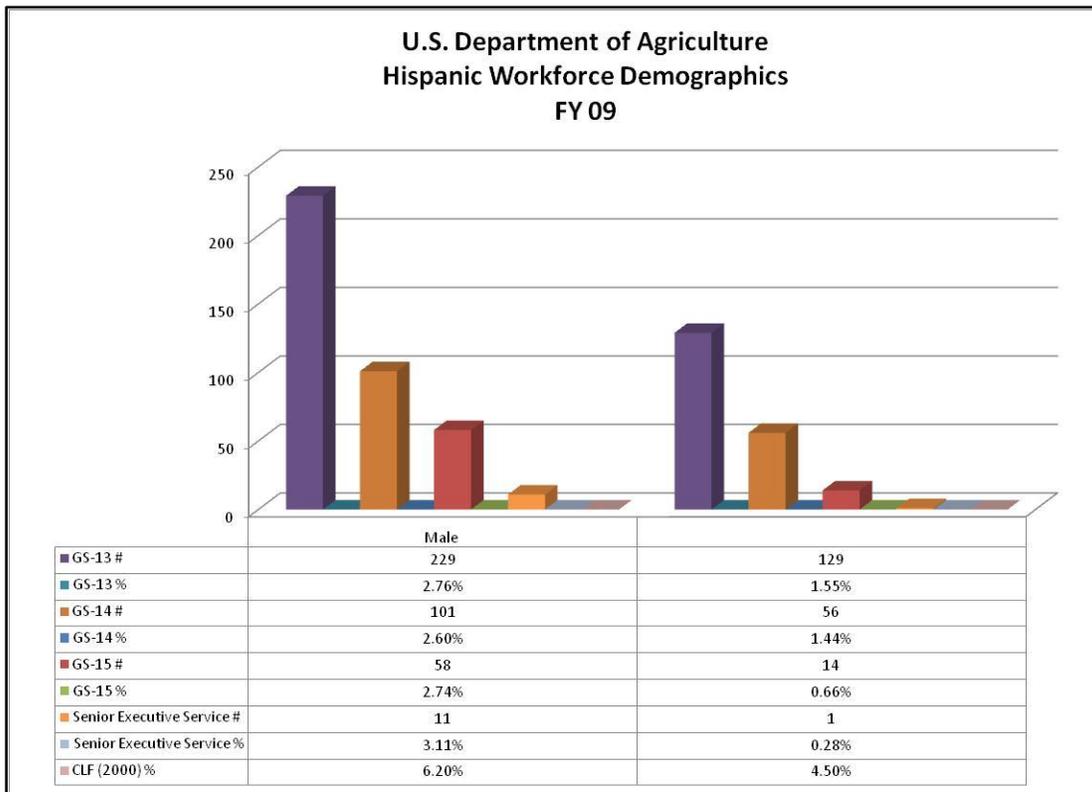
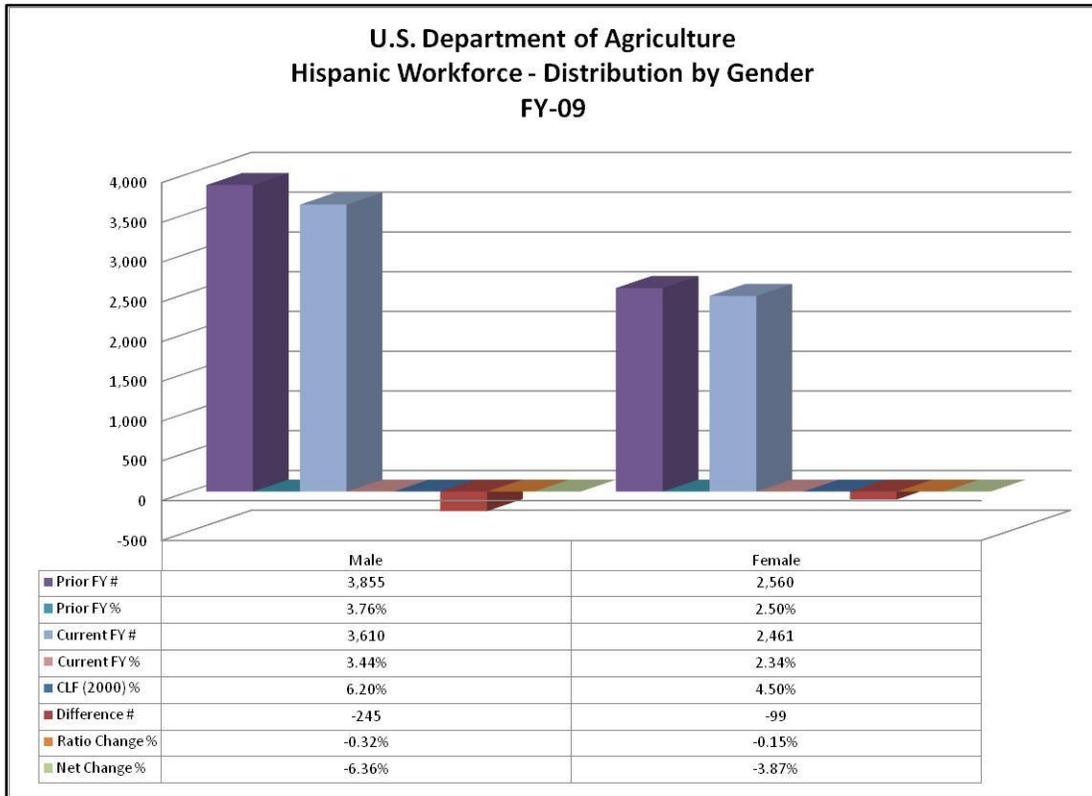
About the Company

From humble beginnings in church basements and school gymnasiums, the company has grown into the premier Latin dance company in the Washington, D.C. area. Although its roots are in Mexican folk dance, the company also performs modern Latin dance, including mambo, cha cha and salsa and dances from many other Latin American and the Caribbean countries.

"Latinos have become the largest 'minority' in the United States, and we come from everywhere in Latin America," says Montero. "Our dances take a little from each place, and we shake it all together into a blend that is truly 'Made in the USA.'"

Hispanic Employment Statistics

Hispanic – A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).



Special Observances

Purpose: Observances are conducted to recognize the achievements, contributions and the diversity to all Americans to American culture and to increase awareness, mutual respect, and understanding.

- √ Observances are designed to enhance cross-cultural and cross-gender awareness and promote harmony among all employees and their families.
- √ These activities are extensions of the equal opportunity education and training objectives.
- √ They are set aside annually to recognize the achievements and contributions made by members of specific groups in our society.
- √ The focus of the observance should be directed toward encouraging interaction and not just recognition.
- √ Success can best be measured by the degree of cross-cultural and cross-gender participation.

Department-wide Special Observances

January	Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
February	African American History Month
March	Women's History Month
May	Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
June	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month
September	Hispanic Heritage Month
October	Disability Employment Awareness Month
November	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month

Acknowledgements

Dr. Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana
Maru Montero Dance Company
Casa Oaxaca Authentic Mexican Cuisine
Executive Services
Sign Language Interpreting Services
USDA HHM Taskgroup
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services: FAS and RMA

Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services: FNS
Food Safety: FSIS
Natural Resources and Environment: NRCS and FS
Marketing and Regulatory Programs: AMS and GIPSA
Research, Education, and Economics: ARS, ERS, NASS
and NIFA
Rural Development: RD
USDA – Office of Human Resources Management: DM

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