



## Series of cultural, educational and social events to celebrate LGBT and Latino culture

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ULP celebrates with week of events starting Monday, June 4, 2012

CHICAGO, IL -- United Latino Pride is celebrating its third year of showcasing all that is LGBT and Latino in Chicago with a week of fun, and almost entirely free, cultural, educational and social events. United Latino Pride Week starts Monday June 4 and culminates with ULP's big blowout party, Unite for One Night, on Sunday June 10.

ULP is a collective of individual community members, organizations and business that identify as Latino and LGBTQ. The group seeks to "create awareness, support and celebrate the duality of queer and Latino identity" through the workshops and events of United Latino Pride Week. ULP was founded in April of 2010 when planning committee member Jessica Carillo brought together a group of local activists, leaders and community members at Pilsen's Efebina's Cafe.

"We wanted to have everybody in the community come together and celebrate all that is going on in Chicago with the LGBTQ and Latino communities," Carillo told ChicagoPride.com. "It was only supposed to be coffee and conversation, but people got excited."

Within six short weeks the fledgling group planned and executed the first United Latino Pride Week, which included panels, a film screening and a youth summit at the University of Chicago Illinois. While the event was small, Carillo holds that "nobody can take away that it happened." The interest the week created within the community was enough to signal to ULP that there is both a need and desire in Chicago for events celebrating the city's growing LGBTQ Latino community.

ULP has grown dramatically since its inception only three years ago. The organization recently developed a new logo that Carillo says was designed very intentionally to represent who ULP is. The sunburst pattern is rainbow colored and while the rays don't mix they do cross, which symbolizes the group's focus on the intersecting identities of both queer and Latino in an individual. ULP has partnered with local groups and businesses including the Latino LGBT online publication xQsi Magazine, Chicago Community Bank, Vida/SIDAS, the [Association of Latino Men for Action](#) (ALMA) and many others.

"It's mind blowing how in the span of a couple years it's growing and growing, building and building and I think will only continue to grow and build," Carillo said.

Incorporating what they've learned over the past two years, ULP is sure that United Latino Pride Week 2012 is going to be the best yet. This year, ULP is focusing on one or two events on any given day, allowing them to channel their strength into making the events truly worthwhile and well-attended. This year's events will be similar to ones they've had success with in the past and also continue ULP's tradition of expanding the definition of gay-friendly spaces beyond the North side's Lakeview and Andersonville neighborhoods. Instead, United Latino Pride Week will be held mostly in Pilsen, Little Village and Cicero, where there is a strong Latino population.

United Latino Pride Week 2012 kicks off Monday June 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. at Pilsen's Efebina's Cafe, 1640 Blue Island, where the group was founded three years ago. The evening features noted lesbian Latina activist and Chairman and Commissioner of the City of Chicago Department of Human Relations Mona Noriega as the opening speaker and spoken word by Ashley Black. The spacious Pilsen cafe will also serve as an art gallery highlighting both known and up and coming local Latino artists from across the LGBTQ spectrum.

"Art is central to our identity as queer Latinos -- we are a very visual culture," Danny Olvera, ULP's press organizer, told ChicagoPride.com. "We're also creating a platform to spread the word about some of the amazing talent within our community."

Olvera is the moderator for Wednesday's screening of "Inspired: The Voices Against Prop 8," which starts at 5:30 p.m. at Little Village High School. A panel discussion on race held afterwards features one of Chicago's most noted gay Latino activists, Rick Garcia. United Latino Pride Week's most popular event, Loteria Joteria, returns on Thursday at Cathedral Cafe, 2500 S Christiana St, in Little Village. Drag artist La Mas Mejor will host this fun night of Mexican bingo gone gay. Loteria Joteria runs from 6 to 9 p.m., is BYOB and will feature a photobooth, prizes and fun for participants of all ages.

Organizations from across Chicagoland are coming together on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the United Latino Pride Community Summit. This resource fair is meant to showcase the great work that is already being done within the Latino LGBTQ community of Chicago and will include workshops, discussions and other ways for people to get involved with the community.

"The workshops help to expose the community organizations both to people and each other, so they can get to know one another and build important partnerships," Carillo said.

Immediately following the information sharing at the summit, ULP is celebrating with their Summerdance at the nearby Chicago Community Trust Bank at 1800 S Halsted in Pilsen. Scheduled from 3 to 8 p.m., the event will include dancing to music spun by local Latino DJs, salsa lessons, a community potluck and a guacamole competition. The following day from noon to 3 p.m. LGBTQ Latinos, their allies and their dogs are invited for an afternoon of sun and fun at Montrose Dog Beach in Uptown.

United Latino Pride Week culminates Sunday night with "Unite for One Night," a spectacular event that is the first of its kind. For one night 24 LGBTQ promoters will come together under one roof to promote a single cause: the celebration of queer Latino identity. This is the only pay event of the week and at \$7.50, with all the proceeds going to ULP, it is a steal. The night features 15 DJs, gogo dancers and multilevel dancing until 4 a.m. at [Excalibur Nightclub](#) in downtown Chicago.

For more information about United Latino Pride and this week's event schedule, please visit the group's website: <http://www.unitedlatinopride.org>.