

Ben Ruiz, CEO & Creative Director, Adhawks Advertising & Public Relations, Inc.

Recipient, 2014 Lyman T. Johnson Community Leadership Award (along with Dr. Ramsey)

Community Advisory Board Member, U of L's Latin American Latino Studies

Board Member, Louisville Urban League

Board Member, Catholic Charities Louisville

Advisory Board Member, Doors to Hope (Sister of Charity)

Vice-Chair, Diversity Co., American Advertising Federation of Louisville

Founder of The Magnificent 7, Metro Mayor's Office for Globalization

Founder of GLI's Hispanic Latino Business Council

Founder of La Camara @ Wesley House

Board Member, Hispanic Latino Coalition of Louisville

Board Member, Adelante Hispanic Achievers

Media Co. Chair/Trustee, Simmons College of Kentucky

Advertising Community Council, JCTCS

Diversity Committee, Bellarmine University

Board Member, Water With Blessings

January 14, 2015

Latinos: Our Fastest Growing Group Is U of L's Most "Under-Represented"

"According to the Census 2010, in Kentucky, the Hispanic population represented 3.1 percent of the population. Of the 132,836 Hispanic residents in Kentucky last year, 72,897 (121 percent) were added from 2000 to 2010.[i]

For the academic year 2009-2010 Hispanic/Latino(a)s comprised less than 2% of the undergraduate population of the University of Louisville. In 2010-2011 our student population has increase to a 2% of the undergraduate population. [ii]

Some of those who are on campus feel left out or disenfranchised due to low representation.

There are very few Hispanic/Latino(a) mentors for students on campus.

Hispanic/Latino(a)s is the fastest growing under-represented group in this and many other communities. We must provide support for these students and help facilitate a meaningful experience that culminates in their successful graduation."

—University of Louisville Cultural Center

[i] <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf>

[ii] <http://www.louisville.edu/institutionalresearch>

Despite this current report found on the University of Louisville Cultural Center's website, the Latin American Latino Studies (LALS) is the leading game changer for both Latino students and the local Louisville area Hispanic and Latino community during the past seven years. As a member of the community advisory board for U of L's Latin American Latino Studies since 2008, I have had the opportunity to see, first hand, how Dr. Rhonda Buchanan, LALS Director, has developed special initiatives and programs during that same time period in not only the University, but also in the community at large.

The following are highlights of our past history which demonstrate the direct impact LALS has made in our Hispanic/Latino community by:

- Organizing and moderating a panel discussion on The Day of the Dead at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft (KMAC), three years in a row—2008 and 2010. And, since then, at the downtown CRAFTS Art Gallery from 2011 thru 2014.
- Collaborating with KMAC to erect the altar to César Iván Cano in 2008 and later. Dr. Buchanan also had to testify in court on his behalf due to the wide impact that altar had in the community.
- Appearing on the TV show Yo Soy Louisville in October 2008 to help educate the public about the Day of the Dead.
- Helping to direct the Planning Committee for “Day of the Dead Downtown Celebration. Collaboration with LALS, the UofL Arts and Culture Partnerships Committee, the Hite Art Institute, the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft, 21c Museum, Frazier International History Museum, the Muhammad Ali Center, the Hispanic Latino Coalition of Louisville and the Louisville Science Center. Spring - Fall 2009.
- Collaborating with the Kentucky Derby Museum and the Klein Family Learning Center on the “Art and Culture of the Backside” Exhibit. April 16 to December 31, 2008.
- Speaking about the LALS Program and CML Spanish Program, “La Caliente Spanish Radio Program,” February 26, 2008.
- Being the U of L Liaison to Louisville’s Hispanic Latino Coalition. July 2008 to present.
- Setting up a program and providing assistance for LALS students to become interns in both community centers and agencies.
- Assisting the Louisville Fire Department and the Louisville Metro Government Department of Public Protection with the establishment of Spanish language training for Firefighters as first-responders. 2008-2009.
- Serving as a Member of Planning Committee for “Cross Cultural Connections Conference: African-American/Hispanic-Latino Relations; Louisville Metro Government Human Relation Commission. Summer 2008 to present. In addition, currently serving on the Member of the CCC Education Task Force.
- Selecting two of its LALS students to intern with Ben Ruiz, CEO, Adhawks Advertising & Public Relations, Inc. and Co-Chair of Louisville’s Hispanic Latino Coalition and its new committee for Hispanic outreach programs at Wesley House Community Services Center on Jan. 1, 2009.
- Meeting at U of L Cultural Center for Hispanic/Latino Youth Hispanic/Latino Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Meeting on October 7, 2009.
- Initiating collaborations with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kentucky; adding BBBS as

LALS internship site and assisting with UofL Campus Campaign.
Spring 2010 to present.

- Assisting Brown-Forman on their Hispanic Heritage Month Initiative; Filmed video on August 4, 2010. Arranged for LALS Internship at Brown-Forman.
- Serving as a Member of the Hispanic Latino Advisory Board to help provide scholarships for Latino students in the community.
- Participating as one of the Collaborative Community Partners of “Behold 1500 Latinos” meeting

at the UFCW 227 Union Hall Headquarters. Representatives from the following organizations (listed below) in and around Jefferson County were invited to the first collaboration meeting of Jefferson County’s “Behold 1500 Latinos” on May 9, 2012:

55,000 Degrees

Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville

Cabbage Patch Settlement House

PTA

Kentucky Latino Education Alliance

Adelante Hispanic Achievers

Adhawks

ACLU

Americana Community Center

AlDia en America Spanish Language Newspaper

Big Brothers Big Sisters Hispanic Leadership Council

Brown-Forman’s COPA Latino Group

Boy Scouts of Kentuckiana Hispanic Council

Catholic Health Charities

Center for Health Equity

Center for Women and Families

Churchill Downs Backside Learning Center

El Kentubano

El Shopper Latino

Exatec

Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Hispanic Program

GLI’s Hispanic Latino Business Council

Greater Louisville’s International Professionals

Hispanic Connection of Southern Indiana

Hispanic Latino Coalition of Louisville

Jefferson Community & Technical College’s International Dept.

Jefferson County Public Schools

Jewish Family Community Services Center

Kentucky Commission on Human Rights

Kentucky Interfaith Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean

Kentucky Mexican American Relations Institute

Kentucky Refugee MinistriesKentucky State Government, Representative Reginald Meeks

La Camara @ Wesley House Community Services Center

La Casita Center

La Poderosa Spanish Radio Station

Leadership Louisville
League of United Latin American Citizens
Latin American Club of Louisville
Los Aztecas
Los Monitos
Louisville Free Public Library
Louisville Metro Public Health Center for Health Equity
Louisville Urban League
Magnificent7 - Metro Louisville's Hispanic Latino International Council
Metro Louisville's Human Relations Commission
Metro Louisville's Office for Globalization
National Center for Family Literacy
National Society Hispanic MBA's
Passport Health Care's Cultural & Linguistic Services
Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
Salsa Rythms
Seven Counties
Sisters of Loretto
Sysco
St. Rita's Catholic Church
Tri-State Minority Supplier Development Council
University of Louisville's Cultural Center
University of Louisville's Latin American Latino Studies

In conclusion, as a long-standing community representative and proud member of the community advisory board for U of L's Latin American Latino Studies I would like to submit that U of L and its executive leadership maintain their support of LALS continuum because of the significant progress that has been established with our Hispanic/Latino community—the students, the families and the community at large.

Yours cordially,
ADHAWKS ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Ruiz", with a stylized, cursive script.

Ben Ruiz
CEO & Creative Director