

N.C. Hispanics contribute billions to economy, according to new study

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

CHAPEL HILL — North Carolina's rapidly growing Hispanic population contributes more than \$9 billion to the state's economy through its purchases, taxes and labor, while costing the state budget a net \$102 per Hispanic resident in health care, education and correctional services, according to a new study by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

If recent migration trends continue, the total economic impact of Hispanic spending in the state could increase to \$18 billion by 2009.

These were among the key findings and conclusions of the first major comprehensive study of the state's Hispanic population and its economic impact, conducted by the Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise at UNC for the N.C. Bankers Association (NCBA), in cooperation with the Mexican Consulate of Raleigh. The study assessed the economic



impact of the state's growing Hispanic population and identified potential business opportunities provided by this fast-growing market.

"This study quantifies for the first time the enormous

economic contributions made by our state's Hispanic population, as well as pointing to a wide range of public policy issues and business opportunities to be explored," said Thad Woodard, NCBA president

and chief executive officer. Among the study's findings:

- North Carolina's Hispanic population totaled 600,913, or 7 percent of the state's total population, in 2004. The average Hispanic household contains 3.7 people (compared with 2.4 people in the average non-Hispanic household) and earns about \$32,000 annually (compared with \$45,700 for non-Hispanics).

- Hispanics filled one in three new jobs created in North Carolina between 1995 and 2005, with significant concentrations in the construction industry (29 percent of the labor force).

- Hispanics annually contribute about \$756 million in taxes (direct and indirect) while costing the state budget about \$817 million annually for K-12 education (\$467 million), health care (\$299 million) and corrections (\$51 million) — for a net cost to the state of about \$61 million, or \$102 per Hispanic resident.

Martinez

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school.

Martinez spent 19 years at Chicago State University as a professor and administrator, where he established a national reputation for academic leadership in diversity and multilingual education issues. He also developed and taught education courses at the Chicago Urban Skills Center of Malcolm X College, Governor State University in College Park, Ill., and Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

"I look forward to helping Chancellor Martin and the WSSU leadership team advance the university's clear strategic plan to become a nationally recognized center of excellence in health services, teacher education, science and technology, and financial services," Martinez said. "Our faculty and staff will inspire academic innovation and attain leadership by listening to all voices, considering all ideas, and working together with the common goal of creating the highest quality learning experience."



Martin

Throughout his career, Martinez has conducted research and published extensively, focusing on diverse educational issues. Much of this work has been funded through grants awarded by the National Institutes of Health, public school districts, the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors and the federal government's Teacher Training Project, among other organizations and programs.

Martinez has earned wide public recognition, including participation in several highly selective

fellowship programs: the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AACSU) Millennium Program, the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund, and the Kellogg Foundation. He was also named Teacher of the Year by the Latin American Student Association in 1982.

Martinez is married to Mayra Alvarez, an elementary education school teacher and certified school psychologist. They have two children, Karissa, 13, and Adriel, 9.

Exhibit

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wounds through art and spirituality. This is the first time that all four art galleries have come together on an artistic project at one time.

"The curators, Vicki Kopf, Dianna Caesar, Belinda Tate and Kim Vernadoe, envisioned a citywide exhibition that celebrates the true racial and cultural diversity of our community," McNabb stated, "a diversity so rich and so broad that no one institution could capture it alone."

Artists' participating come from all over the Triad area. Artwork will include paintings, sculptures, installations, and other mediums. The event is sponsored by Crossing 52, an organization formed to enhance racial relations by eliminating racial barriers throughout the area. Through the Winston-Salem

Foundation, an ECHO grant was given in the amount of \$16,000 to help fund the project.

The Diggs Gallery will feature the works of 41 artists, including artwork by the late Earnestine Rainey Huff. Other artists include Raul Montero, Mona Wu and Ann Bonner.

Referring to herself as a newcomer, Bonner feels that the event is an opportunity for local artists to come together of one accord about such an important topic. She believes that the artwork alone will generate conversations among the different

racers that will view the exhibit. "Visual art evokes thought. It evokes conversation," Bonner said. "Visual art is there. It's in your face, and you have to choose to communicate with it, by looking upon it. You have to choose to embrace the thought or you could

just walk away and ignore it, but it's hard to ignore something that's visually present."

Her artwork featured at Diggs is a mixed medium titled "Consolidation." It's a piece based on her interpretation of the history of the Christian faith.

There will be other activities, such as games, that will be used as devices to get individuals to converse with one another. In fact, the exhibit will eventually coincide with SECCA's Community Day Celebration in May.

Although the exhibit is centered around racial topics, Kopf explained that doesn't mean the topics discussed have to be ones of heated debate and controversy.

"I think the biggest thing is just getting everybody in the room together, where they can get to meet one another and shake hands, talk, and enjoy looking at artwork together. I surely think that's a beginning of developing a real relationship with one another," Kopf said.



Bonner



Anne Kesler Shields' Towers 9/11 Abu Ghraib will be part of the show.

Photo courtesy of Diggs Gallery

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