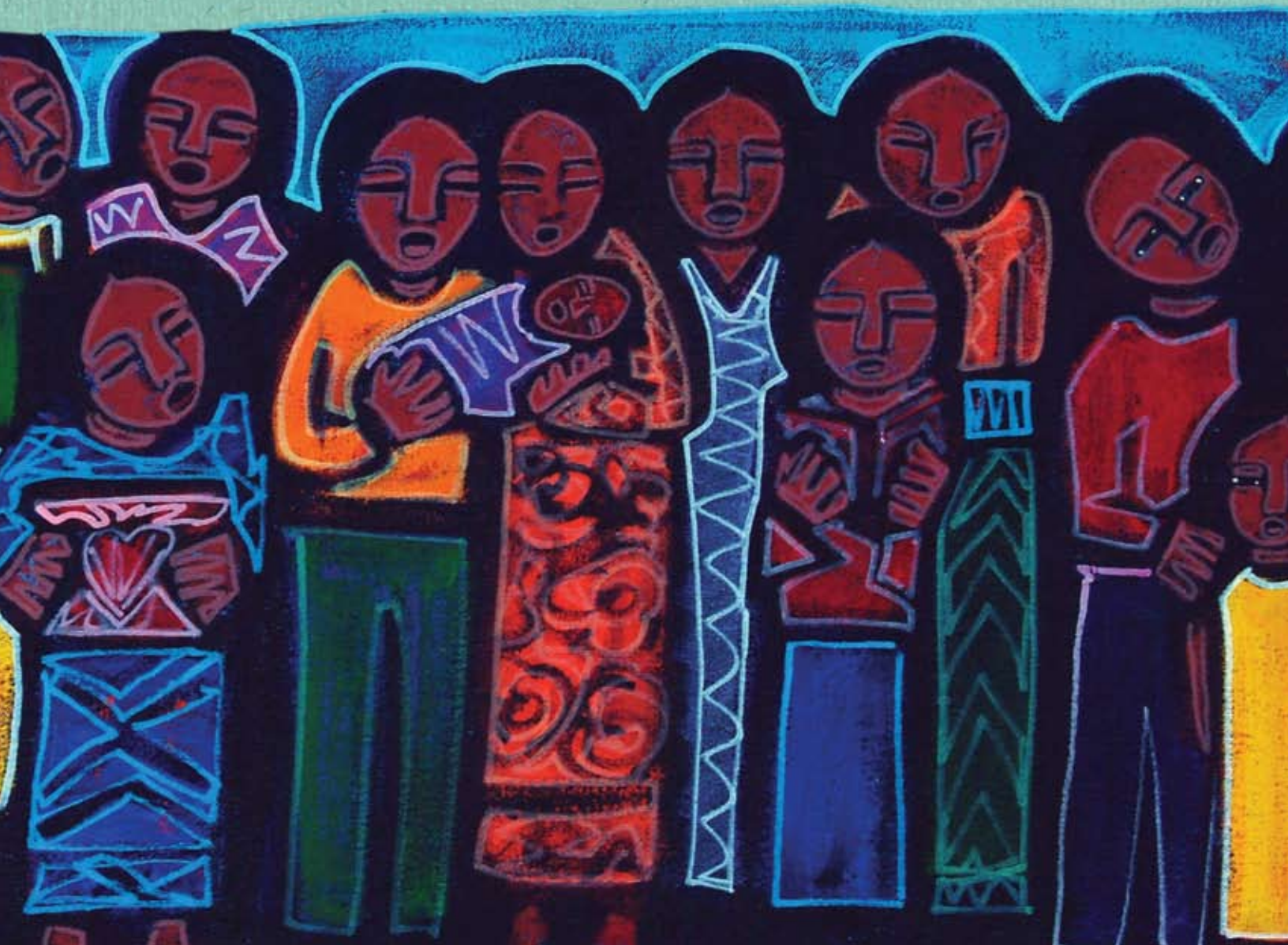


BIENNIAL REPORT  
2005~2007

# *Alianza*

Strengthening Communities  
for Children, Youth and Families



## ALIANZA QUICK CONTACT LIST

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Best Beginnings Home Visitation Program  
2410 Amsterdam Ave. 3rd floor, New York, NY 10033  
1-212-923-5440

Center for Health Promotion and Education  
2410 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10033  
1-212-740-1960

Community Relief Disaster Stations  
2410 Amsterdam Ave. 2nd floor, New York, NY 10033  
1-212-740-1960

CREO Preventive and Substance Abuse Treatment  
Programs  
2410 Amsterdam Ave. 4th floor, New York, NY 10033  
1-212-740-1960

La Familia Unida Day Care  
2340 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10033  
1-212-795-5872

Family Center / Mental Health Child, Adolescent and  
Family Support Clinic  
715 West 179th St., New York, NY 10033  
1-212-795-4226

HOPE Program/HIV-AIDS Services  
2340 West 176th St., New York, NY 10033  
1-212-927-6810

Hunt's Point MS 201 Beacon and Preventive Services  
730 Bryant Avenue, Bronx, New York 10474  
1-718-842-8289

MOSAIC Beacon School-Based Community Center  
PS 11, The Highbridge School, 1257 Ogden Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10452  
1-718-590-0101

La Plaza Beacon School-Based Community Center  
IS 143, 515 West 182nd St., New York, NY 10033  
1-212-928-4992

### SCHOOL BASED PROGRAMS

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Attendance Improvement Drop-Out Prevention Program  
(CAPS) at HS of Medical Science and PS 153

21st Century Learning Academies PS 132, PS 115, IS 143

Out-of-School Time Programs at IS 143, PS 132, PS 115,  
Polo Grounds, Highbridge and J Hood Wright Parks, and  
Martin Luther King, Jr. HS

## ALIANZA, INC.

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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2410 Amsterdam Avenue 4th Floor, New York, NY 10033  
Tel. 1-212-740-1960, Fax 1-212-740-1967  
Email: [info@alianzaonline.org](mailto:info@alianzaonline.org)  
[www.alianzaonline.org](http://www.alianzaonline.org)



*Alianza children enjoying camp*

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## *Alianza's Milestones*

**20 Years of Excellence**

1982

•A group of young professionals initiate a discussion about needs in the Washington Heights community.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Now on my second tour of duty with the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation I can appreciate more than ever the importance of strong partnerships with communities if we are to truly impact on the health and wellbeing of our city. It is for this reason that I accepted the challenge of heading the Board of Directors of Alianza, one of the leading community based institutions in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx.

My commitment to the South Bronx and Northern Manhattan communities began more than 50 years ago with my father, Dr. Nasry Michelen, who was the Executive Director of Lincoln Hospital and the Founding President of Hostos Community College, making him the first Latino in a high level managerial position at HHC as well as the first Latino to head a university in the City of New York. Somehow he also found the time to practice medicine and participate on the boards of a dozen community organizations including the newly established Alianza Dominicana some twenty years ago. A day care he founded on 145th Street in West Harlem several decades ago bears his name.

We are grateful for the opportunity to chart Alianza’s journey as it enters its third decade of dedicated service to the community. Last year was a watershed year for Alianza. Our inaugural gala was a resounding success. We were able to generate over half a million dollars in support of Alianza’s services to the community. We thank each member of the Board of Directors and Corporate Advisory Council for their role in insuring the success of the gala and for guiding our development into our third decade of dedicated service to the community. We especially thank all of the honorees who worked so closely with us in order to insure our success in support of our mission: Oscar de la Renta, Diana Taylor, Omar Minaya, Theodore Kheel, Dr. Herbert Pardes and Lillian Rodriguez-Lopez. Most importantly, we are deeply grateful to Moisés Pérez, his leadership team, and all of the staff at Alianza for their continued dedication and commitment to excellence in the face of adversity that has led to Alianza being one of the premiere community-based organizations in this country.

Sincerely,

Walid Michelen, MD  
Board Chairperson

### 1983-86

- A wide range of volunteer services provided.
- Alianza is incorporated.

### 1987

- Store front office opened at Amsterdam Avenue and 176th Street.
- Initial funding of \$85,000 secured to support a teen pregnancy prevention program.



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

In the spirit of so many immigrants that have contributed so much to our great city, we set out twenty years ago to create a place for the growing Dominican community in Washington Heights. Our call to arms and tag line became, “A Center for Our Community-A Vision for Our Future.” The Center was built and much of our Vision has been realized. Since 1987, Alianza has emerged from a storefront two room, \$85,000 operation to a staff of 350, a multi-million dollar annual budget, eleven sites including a growing operation in the South Bronx and the construction of a 25 million dollar building in the heart of the Washington Heights community.

New York has changed too. In the past twenty years we have undergone one of the most dramatic demographic changes in the nation. The new face of our city is forcing us to learn more about each other and to exercise greater levels of tolerance over our differences. We are learning to find new strengths in our diversity in a world rapidly shrinking as a natural consequence of the process of globalization.

In recognition of these dramatic changes and our longstanding commitment to diversity as so clearly reflected in our staff and client base, Alianza has undergone a face lift and taken on a new name, logo, tag line and website, Alianza: Strengthening Communities for Children, Youth and Families. It is our intent to openly communicate that our commitment extends far beyond the Dominican community, fully embracing the new diversity that is New York City—that is America.

To all who continue to support a most committed staff and Board in advancing our cause and mission, to countless individuals representing City, State and Federal officials, public and private sector advocates, we deeply thank you for your support over the years.

Sincerely,

Moisés Pérez  
President and CEO

•An after school program is established offering homework help, arts education, sports and recreation.

•Alianza youth participate in the National Dominican Day Parade in NYC to protest escalating neighborhood drug trade.

## ALIANZA'S MISSION

Alianza's mission is to strengthen communities and affirm the value of family and community life by forging strategic partnerships, developing and implementing model programs to provide support and protection to those in need and create opportunities for social and economic development.

Alianza values and promotes leadership, self-sufficiency, health, education, and economic opportunities that guarantee the fullest development of children, youth, and families.

## ALIANZA'S VISION

Alianza is a community-based organization born from the determination of the Dominican-American community to emerge, flourish, and contribute to the development of American society. The struggles of day-to-day living give rise to our purpose and challenges us to succeed. We see a future where Latinos, immigrants, women, youth, working families, and the poor are valued contributors to the culture and essential life of our nation.

To this end, we work both directly and in partnership with others to initiate and implement programs and services that respond to the full spectrum of community needs, and that utilize community assets to provide opportunities for growth and development. Alianza advocates for social change, responds to local crises, and is steadfast in its commitment to family strengthening and neighborhood development.

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1988

•Alianza organizes first community anti-drug march, over 1,000 marched throughout Northern Manhattan.





*Alianza children dancing salsa during our 2007 presentation "Raises Africanas en La Música del Caribe" at Hostos Community College*



*Alianza youth marching with a message against youth-on-youth violence*

## ALIANZA'S ROOTS

**“Alianza works to strengthen families, to create opportunities for youth and to respond to community needs in times of crisis.”**

Founded in 1982 and incorporated in 1985, Alianza was established to give voice to and advance the quality of life of the growing Dominican/Latino immigrant community in New York City. Alianza works to strengthen families, to create opportunities for youth and to respond to community needs in times of crisis. Sharply focused on the needs of children, youth and families, Alianza emphasizes an integrated approach to service wherein individuals, families, the larger community, and public and private institutions work collectively to improve family and community life. This commitment to partnership is central to Alianza’s mission.

As a testament to this commitment, Alianza has emerged as one of the most dynamic and responsive non-profit organizations in the United States. In just over 20 years, Alianza has gained national and international attention for developing high-quality, creative programming that serves to strengthen families, and to promote youth and community development.

### 1989

- AIDS Rap Information and HIV/AIDS referral hotline is initiated by Alianza youth.
- Family Assistance Program (FAP) launched on a volunteer basis.
- Establishment of a Community development Agency funded anti-drug education program.
- Alianza’s Day Camp for 100 children established.
- 2nd Anti-Drug March occurs, more than 2,000 participate.



*Governor Spitzer visits Alianza  
March 2007*

**“...Alianza aspires to promote the development of the Dominican community throughout the United States.”**

### **What makes Alianza special and unique?**

Simply put, Alianza combines a powerful sense of social consciousness, cultural relevance, and program innovation in developing initiatives and services designed to meet the full range of community needs. As a result, Alianza draws the participation of individuals and families from neighborhoods throughout New York City. Whether it is providing child immunizations or health care coverage for the underserved, creating opportunities for youth development, offering support to those living with HIV/AIDS, advocating on behalf of recently arrived immigrants, or organizing citywide relief efforts for families affected by tragedies such as the World Trade Center disaster and the crash of Flight 587, Alianza is at the forefront of efforts to address the immediate and long-term needs of New York City’s children and families.

Over the years, Alianza’s growth has paralleled that of the Dominican community in the United States. Initially funded with a seed grant to help reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy in Washington Heights, it subsequently attracted support to offer dropout prevention, after school, substance abuse prevention and treatment, employment and training, neighborhood improvement, and HIV/AIDS prevention and health related services. From two employees and a budget of \$85,000 in 1989, Alianza grew to employ 150 people with an annual operating budget of \$5 million by 1995.

Since then, expanded childcare, foster care prevention, Beacon School initiatives, health care services, and promising economic development initiatives have augmented Alianza’s core services in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx. Today, Alianza employs 350 individuals and manages an annual operating budget of \$12 million.

### **1990**

- NYS AIDS Institute funds AIDS Rap, an AIDS prevention and education program for youth.
- The Family Assistance Program to prevent child abuse and foster care placement is established.
- Alianza begins distributing meals to homebound Persons Living with AIDS (PLWA).



*Alianza children enjoying camp*

Alianza is proud of its many accomplishments. Many of our programs are national models. Best Beginnings is the flagship home visitation program in New York State with the highest retention in the entire country. Our La Plaza Beacon Community School program has been replicated in many cities including San Francisco, Oakland, Denver, and Kansas City. It was one of the first ten Beacons to be established in the United States.

Alianza is also excited about the possibility of replicating its experiences in other communities where there are sizable concentrations of Dominicans and other Latinos. Working with the Dominican American National Roundtable, Alianza seeks to play a pivotal role in helping emerging Latino communities in

developing programmatic responses to the challenges they face. Alianza's experience is relevant. Dominicans experience similar problems wherever they are. They share the same cultural background and can be found in every state of the union. Sizable Dominican communities exist in cities like Boston and Lawrence, MA; Washington DC; Providence, RI; Miami, FL; Hartford, CT; Haverstraw, NY; and Paterson, Perth Amboy and Hudson County, NJ.

Alianza believes it can play an important role in helping these emerging communities organize to more effectively address the challenges they face and to promote their development. In this way, Alianza aspires to promote the development of the Dominican community throughout the United States.

•Alianza partners with Children's Aid Society to offer after school programs at IS 143.

•Office of the Manhattan Borough President honors Alianza with a Proclamation of Excellence.

•Alianza partners with the US Census Bureau to recruit over 100 community residents as enumerators.

ALIANZA:

# THE DOMINICAN AND LATINO COMMUNITY

Dominicans are among the newest and largest immigrant groups in the United States. An estimated 1.2 million Dominicans (natural born and immigrants) now live in our country. According to the 2000 census, at least **554,638 Dominicans** live in New York City alone. Of those recorded in the census, 367,145 or 66% live in either Manhattan or the Bronx. These figures represent an increase of more than 22% since the 1990 census and identify the Dominican community as the major source of new arrivals to New York City. Washington Heights in Northern Manhattan is home to the largest concentration of Dominicans in the United States. Dominicans in the United States are an industrious, entrepreneurial people who are best supported by strengthening the infrastructure of community life, including the institutions and neighborhood commerce that generate local opportunity.

Currently, the national Latino population numbers more than 35 million and represents one of the most dynamic and diverse racial/ethnic groups in the United States. While today one of every eight residents of the United States is Latino, it is projected that Latinos could account for one of every five residents by 2035, one of every four by 2055, and one of every three by 2100. New York City's Latino population increased from 23.7% of all New Yorkers in 1990 to 27% in 2000. If growth rates between 1990 and 2000 continue for the remainder of the decade, Latinos will make up over 30% of the total NYC population in 2010.

Latinos are already having a significant impact on the various societal institutions and on all segments of society in the United States. The increase in buying power of the Latino population is expected to be greater than that of the white, African American, American Indian, and Asian populations. The political muscle of the Latino population is being increasingly recognized especially where the group's concentrations are highest—such as New York.

Dominicans/Latinos contribute much to the vitality of life in New York City. They do so through initiative, hard work, and consistent and cohesive efforts to foster family and neighborhood development in those communities in which they live. Immigrant groups have historically survived and advanced by creating organizations that support their social, cultural and economic needs. In this regard, Alianza is an organic expression of the community's hopes and aspirations, established to resolve many of the social problems that stem from the displacement and economic hardships faced by many within the growing Dominican/Latino community in New York City.

1991

• La Plaza Beacon Community School at IS 143 is established.

• Center for Rehabilitation, Education and Orientation (CREO), a drug treatment program for addicted mothers, is established.

“...Alianza gave me a direction and purpose that I wouldn't have had otherwise.”

### AN ALIANZA FAMILY PORTRAIT

“It was either Alianza or the streets”. Leydis De La Cruz painted the stark choice facing her and other youth coming of age in Washington Heights. Youth had become sacrificial lambs in the crack-cocaine wars of the late 80's and early 90's. Luckily she, her sister Pierina, their two brothers Yeydy and Richard and their mother Gloria chose Alianza, and rather than becoming statistics instead became the vanguard of a determined community's response to the drug epidemic sweeping the neighborhood.

To understand the De La Cruz family saga is to understand the essence of Alianza, how it converts principles into direct action, how by helping and healing families it aims to heal whole communities. Pierina and Leydis were just 12 and 13 years old when in 1990 they enrolled in Alianza's Folkloric Dance Group. Soon after, their mother Gloria became involved in Mothers Against Violence (MAV), a grassroots support and advocacy group formed by mothers advocating for an end to drug violence. Brothers Yeydy and Richard took advantage of recreational and other activities.

Leydis and Pierina's involvement in dance led to their becoming After School tutors in Alianza's newly opened La Plaza Beacon Community Center at IS 143. Soon after, they joined Alianza's Youth Leadership Core Group. Partnering with MAV, the Core Group launched its first big event: a Basketball Clinic with Harlem Globetrotter star Michael Douglas that attracted over 300 youth. It is also a prime example of Alianza's faith in community members' ability to transform themselves, and by extension their own neighborhood, given the proper direction, motivation and resources.



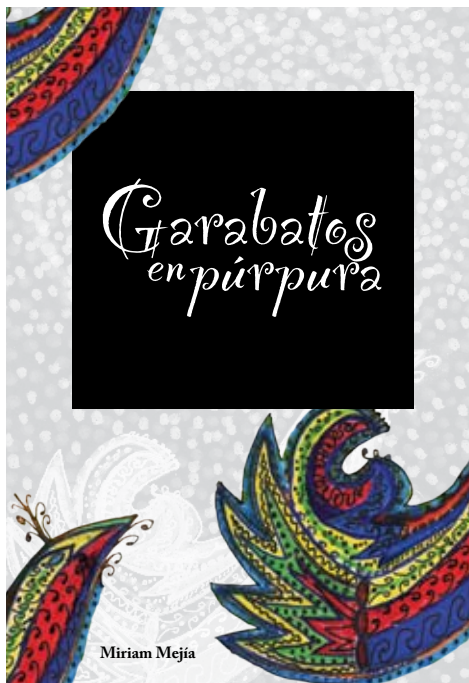
*De La Cruz family portrait. Richard, Leydis, Rycardo, Gloria, Eduard, Pierina, Yeydy (from left to right).*

The community has moved on to other joys and heartbreaks, and the De La Cruzes have moved on, too. Pierina works as a paralegal at a private law firm. Eduard is a New York City firefighter, and Yeydy worked in Alianza's Relief Effort Day Camp. Gloria continues to be heavily involved in Alianza activities and special events. Leydis is currently the Director of Community Outreach Programs for the Community DentCare Network at Columbia's College of Dental Medicine, and is a proud mother to a 3rd generation Alianza participant, her daughter Raven, who has been involved in after school and dance activities.

When asked where they would be if Alianza hadn't existed, Leydis responded, “I was very strong willed as a teenager and found it difficult to express myself. Alianza gave me a safe haven in which I could relate to peers without getting into trouble, but it also opened my mind to wider possibilities for life. I learned how I could grow professionally and spiritually through serving others.” Pierina added: “Alianza involved the whole family in common goals. It makes the growing up process easier when everybody believes and values the same thing.” When asked if she could imagine her past without Alianza, she said, “I can't really imagine where I would be without Alianza. I can't. My peers – some have finished school, some haven't. All are in ordinary jobs. Alianza gave me a direction and purpose that I wouldn't have had otherwise.”

- Alianza moves to a larger facility at 2410 Amsterdam Avenue.
- Alianza partners with Fresh Air Fund's Friendly Town Program.

- Alianza partners with City College of New York to provide student taught ESL classes to community youth.
- Alianza receives first funding from The Charles Hayden Foundation.



"In each of the needs expressed at Alianza there is a story to tell.  
'As soon as my papers arrive, I will buy a ticket home to see my mom'  
'I don't know what to do with my fifteen year old son—all he wants to do is to hang out on the streets'  
'Help me find a school for my pregnant teenage daughter'  
'I am desperate! Tell me, what I should do now? The City has taken my kids away'  
'They sent me to this program. I want to get off drugs.'  
'I lost my husband during the attacks on the World Trade Center'  
'I lost my parents in the crash of Flight 587'  
'I need to get a test to see if I am HIV positive'  
'I came to see if I could register in your English as a Second language course'  
'I need to get help for my kids so that they can do their homework'  
'I need to get help for my friend who is a victim of domestic violence'  
'I need to apply for Medicaid'  
'Congratulate me. Since I stopped doing drugs, I began school and I was able to get my university degree'  
'I am worried that my children will lose touch with their culture and roots. I would like them to join the folkloric dance troupe here.'  
'Despite all my problems my daughter will graduate from high school and be the valedictorian of her class'  
'I am so happy! My kids have finally gotten their papers!'  
'Today I will swear allegiance to this country as a new citizen'  
'I came to register to vote.'"

*Excerpt from Miriam Mejía's book entitled Garabatos en Púrpura.*

*Translated from Spanish.*

*Miriam Mejía is Alianza's Deputy Director and a short story writer.*



## LETTER FROM

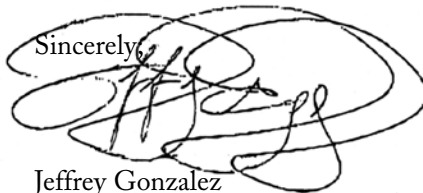
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# A PARTICIPANT

I've decided to write this letter of appreciation for all the work and attention you've placed on my significant other. You have played a major role in the relationship that her and I have today. Although I've met a few of you just recently, I feel as if I've known you for quite sometime now. There isn't a night that goes by where she doesn't mention you. It seems as if her heart, soul, and mind will never leave from Alianza. It's almost as if it's in her blood permanently. Seeing her not involved in some type of way with the company is unimaginable. You've shown her that bright light that leads to success. Without a doubt, you have surpassed all that I could have done to help her be a better person. For that, you are the savior of our relationship. In fact you are the one who has sewn the open cuts and treated the scars with nothing but passion and care. We now do those special things that the average couple should be doing together. This is all the work of a blessing. There aren't too many places where one can find a group of people who are so committed to what they do for a living. When one has that strong feeling of being blessed, that moment must be seized and embraced. Therefore, it is must that I do.

Many people are wrong when they say that there's no one out there willing to help the community. Sadly, people in need have wants, but aren't willing to search. I am very fortunate that my love had found your program, before I came into her life, and took advantage of what you offered to her. You have inspired us tremendously and we now have developed an interest in building a foundation of our Own sometime in the future. Addiction is such a horrible disease whether it is drugs, gambling, shopping, etc. However, it is the most beautiful thing to see a person surrender their addiction and fully recover from it, as you all know dearly. In saying all this, may God bless you and your family for life is so precious and nothing less. Thank you for strengthening that case further.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Gonzalez

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• Alianza receives an award from the NY State Department of Health for leading the most effective child immunization campaign in the state.

• The Dominican Studies Institute recognizes Alianza for it's work in the Dominican community.

# ALIANZA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Since its inception, program development at Alianza has been guided by the same basic principles. First, to provide a *holistic multi-service approach* whereby a complete range of services is made readily accessible to families within their community. Second, to assure that services offered are *comprehensive* in nature; that they connect to the life history and needs of the individual and relate and coordinate one to the other by design. In short, the services consider the total person in the context of the family unit within the larger community through the structural *integration of services*. This integration assures that mechanisms are in place that allow for the formal linkage of services. In this way, Alianza's staff share information and coordinate efforts to provide for the full range of a family's needs. Lastly, services are delivered within a "culturally competent" setting.

Over the years these principles have made it possible for Alianza to successfully develop and implement "model" programs. Alianza's programs provide the highest quality services possible, while efficiently leveraging existing resources in order to maximize benefits. Sometimes the source of a family problem is not readily apparent. For instance, the root of poor health and education may be persistent underemployment. In such a scenario the integration of outreach and enrollment services with employment and counseling services is essential. At Alianza, each program provides its own unique contribution to the overall solution to the often complicated, multi-causal problems and challenges faced by many of our families.

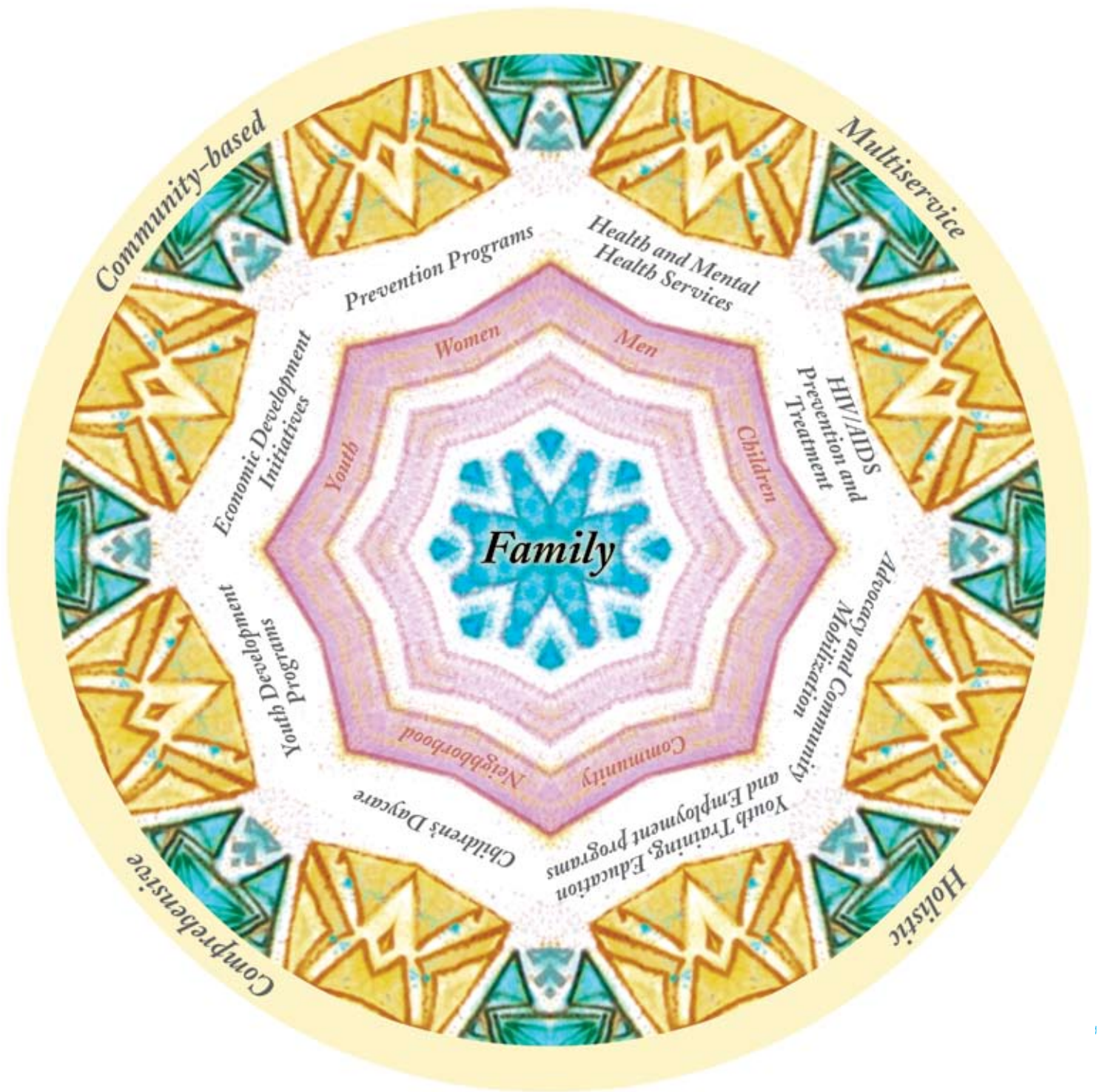
## 1992

- Alianza organizes 200 youth and parents called Peacekeepers to maintain the peace during community social unrest.

- Alianza establishes Center for Employment, Training and Education (CETE) with CLAVE program offering employment training for youths and adults.

ALIANZA'S

# SERVICE AND INTEGRATION MODEL



- Alianza moves to a larger facility at 2410 Amsterdam Avenue.
- Alianza partners with the Fresh Air Fund Friendly Town Program to provide sleep-away camping for youth.

- Alianza partners with City College of New York to provide student taught ESL classes to community youth.
- Alianza receives first funding from Charles Hayden Foundation.



## ALIANZA'S

# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### BEST BEGINNINGS

Immigrant women may delay pre-natal care until well into their pregnancy. Language and cultural barriers inhibit effective health care, often with an adverse impact on birth outcomes. Alianza, in partnership with the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Columbia University, universally screens all pregnant women within designated high-risk census tracts in Northern Manhattan performing complete health and risk assessments, home visits, and assuring effective health care for at-risk pregnant and parenting women. Today, Best Beginnings is widely recognized as the flagship home visitation program in New York State.

### THE CAPS PROGRAM

Educational support services can mean the difference between dropping out of school or graduating and moving on to brighter horizons. Alianza's Community Achievement Project in the Schools (CAPS) encourages students in local public schools to learn, achieve personal goals and experience a sense of self-worth via individual counseling, tutoring, study/test taking skills improvement, career counseling, attendance monitoring, and leadership development.

### 1993

- Alianza establishes Family Mental Health Center funded NYC Dept. of Mental Health and NYS Office of Mental Health.
- La Familia Unida Day Care Center established to service 120 families.
- Best Beginnings program established.
- HOPE a comprehensive program for people living with AIDS, is established.



*Alianza's Folkloric Youth Troupe, Conjunto Folklórico*

### THE CENTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION (CHPE)

Community health outcomes are adversely impacted by a lack of access to preventive and health care services and health insurance coverage. In 1998, Alianza partnered with the W.W. Kellogg Foundation, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, Harlem Hospital, NYC and NYS Departments of Health to establish the Center for Health Promotion and Education. The CHPE offers facilitated enrollment in Medicaid, Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus insurance programs. It also offers the community preventive and health care services through the Asthma Project, the Healthy Heart Project, the Start Right Immunization Project and its Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) Project.

### CENTER FOR REHABILITATION, EDUCATION AND ORIENTATION (CREO)

The stresses associated with adapting to a new culture are exacerbated by poverty and substance abuse. Children in single parent households impacted by substance abuse are particularly vulnerable to neglect, abuse and foster care placement. CREO, the first and only substance abuse prevention and treatment program in the community, was established in 1990 to offer substance abuse prevention, education and treatment services, parent training, home visits, entitlement assistance and counseling to families at risk of fragmentation.

- Alianza receives \$500,000 general operating support grant from various foundations to implement a management initiative.
- Alianza selected as lead agency in the Neighborhood Based Alliance.

- Alianza restores formerly blighted West 180th St. neighborhood park.



## THE CHILDREN, ADOLESCENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT CLINIC

Since 1996, the Children, Adolescent and Family Support Mental Health Clinic has provided culturally competent and bilingual outpatient mental health treatment to thousands of youth, children and family members who reside in the Northern Manhattan areas of Washington Heights and Inwood. The clinic provides strategic family therapy, group therapy, family therapy, marriage counseling, psycho educational groups, psychopharmacology, psychiatric evaluation, advocacy, case management, and crisis intervention. The goal of the Clinic is to help participants maintain self-esteem, gain empowerment, and establish positive social and support networks.

## CONJUNTO FOLKLÓRICO

*El Conjunto Folklórico* of Alianza is a group comprised of fifty young people between the ages of six and twenty-three that receive training on Dominican folk dance, Dominican carnival and other popular expressive traditions. The *Conjunto* trains in and performs traditional social dances including Merengue, Pambiche, Valse, Polka, Mazurka, Chivo Samanes, Sarambo, and Merengue Redonde and sacred and semi-sacred dances. The *Conjunto* also receives instruction in Dominican cultural history, including its multi-cultural history, as manifested through its traditional music and dance, an overview of folk and popular music and dance, and methodology for field research. The members of the *Conjunto Folklórico* serve as cultural ambassadors throughout the Northeast. In one year alone, the *Conjunto Folklórico* provided forty distinct performances and educational events, reaching over 11,000 people.

## THE FAMILY CENTER

Recently arrived and other at-risk immigrant families face special challenges in acculturating to their new environment. Since 1996, the Family Center has helped more than 6,000 families effectively integrate to their new surroundings by offering culturally and linguistically competent education, parenting, vocational skills and supportive services in a safe and friendly environment.

## FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FAP)

Parents of children at-risk of foster care placement require special care if families are to be preserved and strengthened. FAP is a general prevention program that offers case management services, entitlement assistance, advocacy, nutrition, and parent skills training to support families with children at-risk of placement outside the home

## THE HOPE PROGRAM

In 1988, Alianza became the first organization in Northern Manhattan to address the issue of HIV/AIDS when it became clear that without planned intervention, the crisis would soon envelop the community. Alianza's Holistic Orientation and Prevention Education (HOPE) Program offers case management, individual, group, family counseling and mental health services, support groups and prevention education to those living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

### 1994

•Alianza collaborates to create the Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship.

•Alianza receives funding to hire ten VISTA Volunteers from the National Corporation for Volunteer Services/AmeriCorps.



*Toddlers at Alianza's La Familia Unida Day Care Center*

## PROJECT FAITH

In cases of domestic violence, timely intervention can literally mean the difference between life and death. Alianza's Project FAITH (Families and Individuals Toward Harmony) supports and protects the victims of domestic violence through its 24-hour information and crisis hotline, emergency shelter assistance, housing, legal and welfare assistance advocacy, court escort services, counseling, support groups and referral services.

## LA FAMILIA UNIDA DAY CARE CENTER

For poor working families, childcare is an essential part of sustaining families, both economically and developmentally. In the absence of quality day care, work becomes impossible for many. La Familia Unida Day Care Center provides 112 slots integrating day care and early childhood education while involving parents as full partners in the child development process.

## LA PLAZA, MOSAIC AND MS 201 BEACON COMMUNITY SCHOOL CENTERS

For too long public schools were underutilized and not seen as local resources for youth, family, and community development. La Plaza Community Center is one of ten original, nationally acclaimed Beacon School Programs opened in 1991 and operating out of IS 143. All of Alianza's Beacon Schools provide comprehensive services to over 5,000 youth and adults each year. Alianza's La Plaza model has been replicated in five cities throughout the United States. Alianza Beacons offer recreation and sports, after school programs, summer day camps, community service activities, GED, ESL and citizenship instruction, video production/media projects, computer labs, and adolescent drug abuse prevention activities. The MS 201 Beacon is one of sixteen Beacons that has an on-site ACS component, with an off-site office at IS 219

## 1995

•The HOPE Program opens an anonymous testing center with support from the NYS AIDS Institute.

•Alianza's HOPE Program is selected to participate in a technical exchange project with AIDS organizations in the Dominican Republic. Staff from Alianza fly there for a week to develop a joint plan action with Dominican AIDS organizations and the county's Secretary of Health.



*Alianza's future Triangle Building*



*Alianza's youth programs offer a range of recreation and leadership opportunities for adolescents and young adults*

## PRESERVING OUR TRADITIONS: CASA AFRO-QUISQUEYA CULTURAL CENTER

Alianza has the conviction that the celebration of and participation in culture and art is essential to the fullest development of a person. Through knowledge of their culture children and youth develop a sense of pride and self esteem. This cultural knowledge and sense of pride is believed to be fundamental in enabling young people to break the cycle of poverty and become productive members of society. As a result, Alianza has established itself as a leader in providing authentic, quality cultural products and services to the community-at-large. *It is the only organization that offers multiple programs in authentic Dominican folk arts traditions within the United States.*

Alianza's cultural products and services are multi-disciplinary in nature and touch upon a wide range of authentic Dominican/Latino artistic customs. All services are informed by the three-fold task of teaching, performing, showcasing and preserving Dominican/Latino cultural traditions. Alianza is currently prepar-

ing to construct a new home for its cultural and artistic programs—*Centro Cultural Afro-Quisqueya*.

Housed within the Triangle Building, the *Casa Afro-Quisqueya Cultural Center* will be a multi-disciplinary cultural space providing a wide range of cultural activities: art exhibitions of Dominican and other Latino fine and popular arts; cultural and literary conferences; performance arts (dance, music and theatre); cultural/folklore education programs; TV, video and sound recording studio; and investigative research. The presence of the *Casa Afro-Quisqueya Cultural Center* will serve as a focal point from which tourists can launch further cultural explorations of the Washington Heights community and its many untapped cultural treasures. In addition, the *Casa Afro-Quisqueya Cultural Center* will provide an attractive venue through which both diasporic Dominicans and the public at large can appreciate and learn about the rich and diverse tapestry of Dominican and Latino culture.

### 1995

- Alianza's La Plaza Program develops a technical exchange project with organizations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- La Plaza Beacon school starts its first ESL class for Russian Jews.

Alianza sponsors three baseball teams in the local little league.





*Students tutoring at Alianza's Out-of-School Time Program at Martin Luther King, Jr., HS*

### TRIANGLE PROJECT

Business and real estate development, job creation, and neighborhood improvement are critical to the economic vitality of neighborhoods. Alianza, in partnership with The Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, Columbia University, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and federal, state and local government, is in the pre-construction phase of a real estate development project that will convert a vacant lot opposite Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center into a six-story, mixed-use commercial/retail space of approximately 42,000 square feet. The project will provide retail outlets, rental office space, local jobs, and much needed office space to accommodate Alianza's growth. In addition, revenues generated from the initiative will contribute securing the organization's future.

### SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

For many young people, part-time work can sometimes mean the difference in deciding to stay in school or in being able to contribute economically to the quality of family life. Alianza's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provide from 1,000 to 2,000 youth between 14 and 21 years with part-time summer and jobs that help prepare them for the demands of the workplace while offering economic support.

### OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (OST) PROGRAMS

In 2005, Alianza was awarded six OST programs from the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to provide after school services to children from the ages of 5-21. The programs are located in three public schools, two parks, and one NYC Housing Authority facility.

## 1996

- Alianza participates in the Stand for Children March in Washington DC.
- The "Extra Day for Reading" Campaign is successfully organized, the highlight being a Book Giveaway at the

- Alianza Family Center for local school children and daycare centers.
- The START program for at risk youth is launched, in collaboration with IS 143, the 33rd & 34th NYPD Precincts, and the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University.



*Fun and games at Alianza's Summer Camp Program*

## ALIANZA PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

### ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has partnered with Alianza as one of *eight* organizations nationally awarded \$500,000 in unrestricted grants through “Families Count National Honors Program.” The foundation provides ongoing resources and technical expertise to Alianza in support of its efforts to strengthen families. Alianza and the Casey Foundation connect families to opportunities, services, and relationships that contribute to achieving their goals.

### UPPER MANHATTAN EMPOWERMENT ZONE (UMEZ)

The Washington Heights/Inwood community, along with Harlem and the South Bronx, is part of New York City’s Empowerment Zone. The Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone is a groundbreaking effort to resuscitate and rebuild inner city areas that have suffered economically. The program combines tax benefits with federal investment, and encourages the use of private matching funds for individual projects. Alianza played a key role in convening a planning group to prepare the Empowerment Zone proposal.

### BEST BEGINNINGS

Best Beginnings and its sister program, Best Beginnings Plus, offers home visitation services to pregnant and parenting women whose children are assessed at risk for child abuse and/or neglect. Alianza leads this collaboration with the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Columbia University. Best Beginnings screens all pregnant women within specified census tracts, performs assessments, and provides weekly family visits. Best Beginnings Plus offers more intensive services for HIV positive and substance abusing mothers.

### BEACON SCHOOLS COLLABORATIONS

Alianza’s La Plaza, MOSAIC and MS 201 Beacon Schools are collaborations between Alianza, the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and the NYC Department of Education. Beacon Schools are community centers run by community organizations in public schools during after school hours. Alianza staffs services within the school facility. DYCD provides program funding and the Department of Education ensures that schools are open

•DentCare, a program to develop mini-dental clinics in three junior high schools and a comprehensive clinic at a community site, is initiated with the Columbia University School of Dentistry.

### 1997

•“The Dominican Woman: Building a Path Towards the Year 2000”. Annual Dominican Women’s Conference.

and functioning after hours. Alianza MOSAIC Beacon is a founding member of the Bridgebuilder's Initiative, which is one of two Community Partnership Initiatives funded by NYC's Agency for Children's Services (ACS).

### AGENDA FOR CHILDREN TOMORROW (ACT) TASK FORCE ACT

ACT seeks to improve the lives of children and families by making health and human services easier to access and to use at the neighborhood level in designated communities throughout New York City. Services include health, housing, child welfare, job training, mental health, youth services, and economic development initiatives. To achieve its goals, each ACT community convenes service providers, elected officials, coalitions, civic leaders and community residents, in a collaboration that creates community specific plans and strategies which connect families and children to available services.

### THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER INSTITUTE

A collaboration between Alianza, Columbia University and New York Presbyterian Hospital. Community Health Workers (CHW) known by many other names and titles play an increasingly important role in the nation's health care system. Yet this role is largely unsupported with little to no acknowledgement of its importance. In many communities CHWs are the frontline workers of the health system. The overall objective of the Institute is to fully integrate the role of CHWs into our system of health by conducting research, evaluating programmatic initiatives, launching demonstration programs, organizing CHWs and conducting policy analysis and advocacy.



*Elementary school children playing with flashcards at Alianza's after school program at La Plaza Beacon Community School Center*

### TRIANGLE PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The Triangle Project is a ground-up construction project backed by a public/private partnership that includes Columbia University, the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ), the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and HSBC Bank. The Triangle Project will be constructed on 166th Street between St. Nicholas and Audubon Avenues and provide 24,000 square feet of retail/office space including the Casa Afro-Quisqueya Cultural Center, a UMEZ Cultural Industry Fund initiative to provide community residents accessible cultural activities in Northern Manhattan.

## 1998

- Roundtable: The Role of the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo and the Community in the aftermath of Hurricane Georges
- La Plaza first summer Day Camp.

- NYS OASAS awards Alianza contract to provide drug treatment services.
- Alianza receives grant from The After-School Corporation to expand after school activities.
- AIDP increases funding to operate in all 4 schools



## RESPONDING TO CRISIS

### COMMUNITY UNREST

In the summer of 1992, government indifference to local conditions contributed to social unrest that led to community disturbances in Washington Heights triggered by the death of a young Dominican male at the hands of police. Alianza organized a peacekeeping group of 200 youth and parents who were out on the streets each day for over two weeks. In the process, Alianza played a key role in restoring calm during this difficult period and in subsequent years led to a closer relationship with the local police precinct, to the degree that today we sponsor joint community improvement programs.

### HURRICANE GEORGES

In November 1998, Hurricane Georges struck the Dominican Republic destroying 40% of all bridges, 5,000 homes, killing 1,200 and directly affecting more than 600,000 Dominicans. Alianza quickly mobilized its staff and community volunteers to secure essential supplies and needed resources. In all, 12 transport containers were filled with food, clothing, tools and building supplies. In an unprecedented “hurricane relief effort”, Alianza helped mobilize government, civic, corporate, clergy, community organizations and hundreds of neighborhood residents in response to this unprecedented disaster.

### 2000

of the George Washington H.S. educational campus.

- Alianza assumes sponsorship of Best Beginnings program.
- Third Community Conference Against Domestic Violence.
- New York Community Trust funds La Plaza Day Camp.

## CRASH OF FLIGHT 587

The tragic crash of Flight 587 - On Monday, November 12, 2001 an American Airlines flight bound for the Dominican Republic crashed in the Rockaway Peninsula killing all 260 people aboard and destroying several private homes. Alianza lost one staff member and five other staff lost family members. Again, Alianza was quick to respond organizing relief efforts to assist hundreds of Dominican individuals and families directly and indirectly affected by this tragedy. Alianza offered bereavement counseling, assistance with funeral arrangements, transportation services, and coordinated access to government services.

## SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 RELIEF EFFORT

The World Trade Center disaster affected about 500 families living in the Washington Heights community including many who had participated in Alianza programs. Immediately, Alianza began organizing relief efforts, reaching out and engaging over 100 families that lost someone directly in the tragedy and an additional 400 families that were displaced through employment. The disaster had a tremendous impact on the community and Alianza played a central role in coordinating relief efforts to many of the victims of the disaster.

## JIMANÍ & HAITÍ FLOOD

Alianza was the first and largest community-based organization in New York to respond to the needs of the flood-ravaged Dominican Republic and its neighbor, Haiti which caused the deaths of more than 2,400 people after a week of torrential rains in May 2004. Consistent with its long history of responding to crisis that affects the community locally and abroad, Alianza quickly mobilized all of its resources, raised awareness about the devastation taking place through its media partners, and established a citywide food, medication and clothing drive that resulted in over 140 tons of donations to the affected regions. In addition, Alianza established a fund to be used for the construction of new housing in Jimaní and Haiti and organized a program for Mental Health Relief in the Dominican Republic.



*September 11th quilt created by Alianza participants affected by the terrorist attacks*



*Alianza staff and volunteers preparing food donations for the Jimaní flood victims in the Dominican Republic*

## 2001

AIDP starts working for the first time in Louis Brandeis High School with two new programs, the PATS & the CAPS.

- Alianza launches CREO YO the first community drug treatment program for adolescents.
- Alianza is awarded a second Beacon School in the Highbridge community in the Bronx.

## RECENT AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

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National Hispanic Medical Association *“Health Leadership Award 2006”*

Center for Community Health Partnership *“Partnerships Make a Difference Award 2005”*

Lawyer’s Alliance *“Award for Distinguished Service in Building a Better New York 2004”*

Johnson & Johnson *Community Health Care Program Award 2003*

Points of Light Foundation 2003 *“Daily Points of Light Award”*

Points of Light Foundation President’s Award in 2002 for *“Excellence in Community Service in Addressing Community Problems.”*

Riverside Church *“Building Community One Family at a Time Award 2002”*

The Community Service Society *Ellen Lurie Community Service Award*

The Harlem Neighborhood Defenders’ *Haywood Burns Justice Award*

First Annual NYS Governor’s Award for *Hispanic-Americans of Distinction*

Annie E. Casey Foundation – *“Families Count: The National Honors Program \$500,000 Grant Recipient 2002”*

Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health – *“The Dean’s Distinguished Service Award for “Outstanding Contributions to the Health and Well Being of the People of Northern Manhattan”.*

State of New York Executive Chamber – *Award for “Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Children, Families and Communities”*

Hispanic Federation of New York – *“Community Based Organization of the Year Award 2002”*

The Riverside Church Festival – *“In Recognition of Dedication to the Empowerment of Families”*

Dominican Baseball Association of the United States, Inc. – *Award for the “Promotion of Dominican Sport in the United States”*

New York City Department of Public Health – *“Award for Excellence in Service Delivery 2001”*

The Harlem Partnership Service; City College Office of Urban and Governmental Affairs; Chase Manhattan Bank – in *“Recognition of Service to the College Community”*

United States Census Bureau New York Region – *“2000 Census Partner Award”*

City Council of the City of New York Proclamation – *“In Recognition and Commendation of the Work of Alianza and its Work with Youth”*

New York State Black & Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus – *“In Recognition of Exemplary Civic and Political Service on Behalf of the Hispanic Community”*

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University – *Casa Start Award (1996-1999)*

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation – *for “Contribution and Ongoing*

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## *Alianza’s Milestones*

- Alianza initiates Community Relief Station in response to September 11th attack on the world trade center.
- Alianza Initiates relief effort in response to crash flight 587.

**20 Years of Excellence**

## ALIANZA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Walid Michelén, MD, Chairperson

Robert Espallat

Mariela Fermín

Rafael A. Lantigua, MD

Angel Mescáin

Nasry Michelén

## AFFILIATIONS

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National Council of La Raza

Hispanic Federation

Healthy Families America

Prevent Child Abuse America

Agenda for Children Tomorrow

Dominican American National Roundtable

The New York Immigration Coalition

## CREDITS AND SPECIAL THANKS

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