



DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

COMPLETING THIRTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO AMERICAS DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY AND THE HOLIDAY FAIR 2019

December 12th, 2019, Washington, D.C.

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DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY presented its annual **Holiday Fair and Children's Gift Collection** Saturday, December 7th at Washington's **International Trade Center**, whose grandiose and elegant proportions are duly awe-inspiring to even habitual visitors. ITC's management head **Andrew Gelfuso** and program manager **Hosai Rashid** (a native of far Uzbekistan and a Washingtonian through and through), a long-standing Dialogue supporter skillfully mustering the ITC's remarkable repertory of facilities, again put all in place for another successful running of the annual extravaganza. Celebration attendance totaled some 150 persons.

Support for the 2019 Holiday program came from corporate and individual contributors who generously put their resources in service to the children of a (regrettably significant) stratum of economically disadvantaged immigrant and other communities residing in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol and the corporate power centers in the glass office blocks towering on K Street. **New York Life**, with spokesperson **Shirley Leticia Mongelos**, the **American Federation of Teachers**, **Ecco Select**, a small-business IT powerhouse from the Kansas City heartland — these among others again joined in sponsorship. **Dr. Malcolm N. Joseph**, a key supporter and counselor — and a meaningful contributor for the Dialogue's work — has bounced back from a serious medical condition and was on hand in a front row seat. **The U.S. Census Bureau**, with which Dialogue on Diversity is collaborating through a corps of volunteers aiming for a full and accurate count in the looming decennial census, imparted basic info on the essence of its formidable tasks, and with gifts of a handsome White/Blue "tote" reminded attendees of the important mission of the months ahead. **Giselle Lundy-Ponce**, a foremost expert on the urgency of early childhood education and a frequent Dialogue speaker, had worked shoulder to shoulder with our Dialogue in planning the show and powering a mid-week wrapping session to produce a colorful array of gaily wrapped craft sets, games, toys, and books for the visiting children. Topping off the morning session, the **Immigration Mentorship Award** was presented to **Maribel Ventura-Torres** of the **Barbara Chambers Children's Center**.

Budding stylist of American songbook gems, glamorous **Cosette Emmanuelle Rosales** — recipient on the occasion of Dialogue on Diversity's **Millennial Arts Award** — offered compelling renditions of songs from the new version of the film classic **Frozen**. Her parents, **Yicell Martínez** and **Manuel Rosales** of the Department of Energy, proudly on hand, have been versatile aides in a decade of the Dialogue's holiday programs. Peruvian folk dance favorites were shaped by the lithe and charming dance duo **Tyler Brooks** and **Camila Vargas**, both metro area middle school students. Dance again took center stage as **Salay Pasion USA**, the twenty-one-person troupe of elegantly costumed musicians/bailadoraa rendered a wonderfully kinetic sampling of energetic Bolivian dances (while Bolivian politics has monopolized recent news, the real action is unfolding in the arts and the burgeoning economy of this swiftly modernizing South American country).

Ramón Calá and his **CalPro** ensemble again this year supplied a program of music of the season, and a tuneful accompaniment to the series of songs and the dancing exhibitions by the well-rehearsed children's groups. Following a copious catered picnic lunch prepared by the fashionable International Trade Center kitchens, the assembled kids, along with their parents and community service organizations' staff, greeted the chiefly awaited guest, the venerable **Saint Nick** in person, who led off with his own very earnest rendering of *Santa Claus is Coming to Town* and settled down to entertain his clamoring fans with many a confidential interview on the needs and desires of each of these small bundles of seasonally animated expectation and cheer.

Again this year the tired but inwardly contented staff and helpers of our Dialogue headed at the program's close for a well-earned post-event chat at the ITC's Luncheon Court, where Gelatissimo holds forth in the 14th Street Concourse level. When the holidays are winding down, Dialogue on Diversity's 2020 schedule, beginning with the Internet Privacy Colloquium in February, gets into high gear. Watch for flyers with details.