

# Family First

Maria Elena Girone  
President and CEO  
PRFI, Inc.



A PUBLICATION BY THE PUERTO RICAN FAMILY INSTITUTE, INC.

Summer, 2010

## Celebrating Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### PRFI 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA

This has been an extraordinary year for The Puerto Rican Family Institute. The Institute celebrated its 50th Anniversary on June 3, with 400 friends and supporters at the Plaza Hotel. The Institute was honored at the Puerto Rican Day Parade which took place on Sunday, June 13th along Fifth Avenue in New York City; and Mrs. Maria Elena Girone, President and CEO of the Institute was designated as the Parade's New York City Civic Godmother "Madrina".

The 50th Anniversary Gala was a huge success; much needed funds were raised to support PRFI's many programs. The Gala Sponsor, Hope for Families and Children Foundation, presented an award to Mrs. Maria Elena Girone for her many years of outstanding leadership in providing services to the community. Ms. Marilyn "Penny" Joseph was presented with the Corporate Community Leadership Award, for her relentless support of not for profit organizations and the community throughout the nation; and Lin-Manuel Miranda was presented with the Raul Julia Award, for his many accomplishments and magnificent talent.

The Master of Ceremonies was PRFI's loyal friend Ernie Anastos, WNYW, FOX 5 News Anchor. For more photos and information, go to [www.prfi.org](http://www.prfi.org) on news and events page.



Marife Hernandez, Honorary Chair, presenter of the Leadership Award to Maria Elena Girone.



Ernie Anastos, 50th Anniversary Gala Master of Ceremonies, Milagros Baez O'Toole presenter of the Corporate Community Award to Marilyn "Penny" Joseph, standing alongside Migdalia R. Taratunio and Dr. Mildred Allen.



Merel Julia presents the Raul Julia Award to Lin-Manuel Miranda, standing alongside Lorraine Cortéz Vázquez, NY Secretary of State, and Ernie Anastos

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The 2010 summer will be a special time to remember for the Puerto Rican Family Institute leadership, staff, friends, supporters and the community we serve. As you may know, on June 3, we celebrated the Institute's 50th Anniversary providing quality services to the community of New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico. You may also know that the 2010 Puerto Rican Day Parade was dedicated to the Puerto Rican Family Institute in honor and recognition of the services we provide to our community and as one of the oldest community based organizations in the Nation.

As the Parades' designated NYC Civic Godmother "Madrina", I was very proud to be part of this important tradition in our City and to ride along 5th Avenue waving to all that were present and watching the proceedings throughout the world to salute them for their participation and energy.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the great honor of having become better acquainted with the leadership of the Puerto Rican Day Parade. It has been a pleasure to observe their commitment to the community of New York and Puerto Rico. I congratulate Mrs. Madeline Lugo, President of the Puerto Rican Day Parade and the members of the Board of Directors for their dedication to the community and thank them for the honor they bestowed upon the Puerto Rican Family Institute.

With the help from our supporters we were able, once again, to provide a unique experience to some of our program children this summer at Ballard Farm in Maine which provides fun, games and leadership in a farm environment.

As we finish the summer, we look forward to planning and providing essential services, in a difficult financial climate, to our children and youth as they start school in the coming month. In September, we hold our Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser which helps our programs to be sustainable. We also look forward to your continued support at our Food Tasting event on October 29 which will benefit PRFI New Jersey programs. We would like to express our deep appreciation to the Hope for Families and Children Foundation for their magnificent support in our efforts to provide critical services to our community.

Yours truly,

*Maria Elena Gironi*

President and CEO

## SUMMER CAMP AT BALLARD FARM IN MAINE

Photos of children at Ballard Farm. PRFI extends its appreciation to BASICS/Promesa Systems, Inc. and United Social Service Board for their support in providing services to the children in our community.



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## PRFI MARCHES UP FIFTH AVENUE IN PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE



Staff and Friends from PRFI getting ready for the Puerto Rican Day Parade.



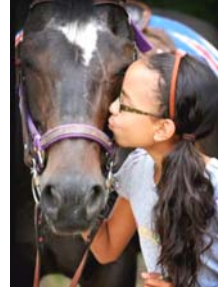
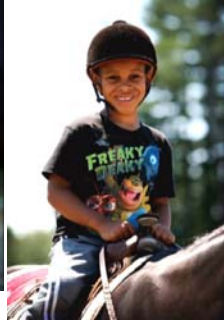
PRFI contingency Dancers pose for photographs before Parade march on Fifth Avenue.



Maria Elena Girone, New York Puerto Rican Day Parade's Civic Godmother "Madrina", greets Parade participants, along 5th Avenue.



Over 100 PRFI staff members, representing our programs, and friends marched in the Parade.



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**Save the Dates**

1. **Golf Tournament  
September 20, 2010**



2. **Food Tasting Celebration  
Benefiting  
PRFI Jersey City Programs  
The Westin Hotel, Jersey City  
Friday, October 29, 2010  
6 to 10pm  
Contact [mrivera@prfi.org](mailto:mrivera@prfi.org)**



3. **51<sup>st</sup> PRFI Anniversary Gala  
June 16, 2011**

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## Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR VISITS PRFI'S HEADSTART PROGRAM

Justice Sonia Sotomayor visited PRFI's Head Start Program during her first official trip to Puerto Rico in December 2009. Justice Sotomayor was accompanied by her mother Celina Sotomayor. For their special visit the children prepared a presentation expressing pride in Justice Sotomayor's appointment and showcasing their singing and dancing talents; she in turn read stories to the children, and spontaneously played games with them.

Justice Sotomayor expressed her long standing support for the Puerto Rican Family Institute and admiration for the services provided to the families, children and the communities in New York and Puerto Rico.

Justice Sotomayor was the first nominee to the Supreme Court of the United States by President Barack Obama. Her nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate in August 2009 by a super majority 68–31 vote. Since her appointment, Justice Sotomayor has been celebrated throughout the world in recognition of the historic nature of her appointment to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Sotomayor has the distinction of serving as the first Hispanic Justice and third female, after retired Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and current Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to sit on the Supreme Court.

She is the first Latina to sit on the Supreme Court. Born to a Puerto Rican family, she grew up in a public housing project in the South Bronx. She is an important role model who will have a lasting effect on the Latino community and its children. In parting Justice Sotomayor stated that her visit to the PRFI Head Start Program and the children will be a treasured memory for her. It was indeed an honor for PRFI and a visit we will never forget.



Justice Sonia Sotomayor Talking and inspiring our children at PRFI Head Start Programs in Puerto Rico.



Celina Sotomayor with daughter, Justice Sonia Sotomayor.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We made it! Our 50th Anniversary has arrived and we are celebrating this magnificent milestone by not only holding our event at the Plaza Hotel but also by being honored at the Puerto Rican Day Parade on June 13<sup>th</sup>. I am very proud to not only march and wave our flag but to enjoy all of our accomplishments of PRFI for the past 50 years. One of those accomplishments is described below which demonstrates how young and vulnerable Latina teens can pick themselves up and morph into their next level of actualization of self.

Although our programs took some setbacks this year with the city and state budget cuts, we will rebound to make sure we can provide the vital services needed for our community. We still have some major tasks ahead as we prepare for the immediate future but it is a pleasure to have these achievements. For instance, one of our next activities is sending our youth to summer camp as we have in the past few years.

As always it is with your help and contributions that we can afford some of these programs. I trust you will have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you at our future events.

*Maria Elena Girone*  
President and CEO

### PRFI BRONX CLINIC OPENS METAMORPHOSIS THRIFT SHOP

During the past year and half, the Bronx Mental Health Clinic in conjunction with its volunteers, staff and teen clients of the METAMORphosis program initiated and coordinated a series of flea markets which allowed them to raise funds for program and client activities. As a result of this initiative and with the guidance of the Bronx Mental Health Clinic, the METAMORphosis program composed of Latina teens engaged in seeking funds and to realize their dream.

The project literally transformed from a cocoon to a butterfly (“Mariposa”) (hence the Metamorphosis), which is their signature emblem, and opened a thrift shop near the clinic. With the help from the PRFI central administrative office and the Bronx Mental Health Clinic, the thrift shop is now open for business. It is also a learning work experience for the teens and other volunteers in the program.

What can you find at the Thrift Shop? High-quality, gently used items such as: Clothing for men, women and children, Shoes, Jewelry, Outerwear, Purses and Belts, Linens, Dishes, Glassware, Tableware, Assorted House wares, Seasonal decorations, Books, Magazines, CDs, DVDs, Toys, Games, Luggage and Collectibles, etc. So if you have any knick knacks or decorative household items or any other small to medium size items, please donate by calling: 718-799-3045.



**MARIPOSA THRIFT SHOP**  
502A EAST TREMONT AVE.  
(NEAR THIRD AVE)  
BRONX, NEW YORK

## URBAN ANGEL AWARD PRESENTED TO MARIA ELENA GIRONE

On April 20, 2010, the New York Theological Seminary celebrated their Seventh Annual Urban Angel Awards Gala. Attended by over 400 people, the audience was treated to a wonderful performance of the Middle Church Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir for the overture as well as a musical presentation by multicultural classical musicians. Our President and CEO, Maria Elena Girone was presented with an Urban Angel Award by Rebecca Radillo, Associate Professor of Pastoral care and Community Ministries, NYTS.

Other Urban Angel Awards were presented to: Carla A. Harris, Managing Director, Morgan Stanley, Reverend Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A. Prior Provincial of St. Thomas, the Honorable Hazel Dukes, President of NAACP New York State Conference, and the Council of Korean Churches of Greater New York .



Rebeca Radillo and Maria Elena Girone

## LATINO SOCIAL WORK TASK FORCE 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP DINNER

At its major fundraising event, the Latino Social Work Task Force held its 6th Annual Gala Awards Dinner on March 24th, 2010 at the Manhattan Penthouse. Over 200 attendees heard the keynote address presented by Carmen R. Nazario, the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Awards were presented to ten honorees representing members of the nonprofit and academic community for their outstanding contributions to promoting social work as a career choice for aspiring Latinos.

It is a well-known fact that there is a critical shortage of bilingual and bicultural social workers serving the Hispanic community. In response, PRFI and the NASW NYC Chapter have created the Task Force whose goal is to raise scholarship funds in support of Latino social work students currently enrolled in MSW programs in graduate schools across the city. Partners in this venture include seven schools of social work and a score of nonprofit service providers.

The demand for scholarship support increases and the Task Force's fundraising efforts continue. Our next event was a theater party for the matinee performance at Lincoln Center of *South Pacific* on Saturday, May 22, 2010. For more info about the Task Force please contact: [rtoing@prfi.org](mailto:rtoing@prfi.org).



Maria Elena Girone, CEO, PRFI and Robert Schachter, ED for NASW, NYC chapter presenting to Assistant Secretary Carmen R. Nazario.

Leadership Award Honorees: Dr. Ana Paulino, Cheryl L. Franks, Claudia L. Moreno, Dr. Yuhwa Eva Lu, Jose Rivera, Carmen Alvarez, Donald R. Velazquez and Esteban Ramos.



## PRFI CELEBRATES SECRETARY'S DAY

On April 21, 2010, PRFI celebrated Secretary's Day by taking them out to lunch for fine Puerto Rican Food, dancing to a live band and a good old time. A special plaque was awarded to Connie Cosme for over 43 years of service as Executive Secretary. Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to: Carmelina Octubre (34 yrs), Rebecca Velazquez (31 yrs), Altagracia Rodriguez (25 yrs), Carmen Torres (24 yrs), Virginia Rodriguez (21 yrs), Amilda Martinez (14 yrs), Dianela Lewis (13 yrs), Aida Pinkney (13 yrs), Nancy Gallego (12 yrs), Ramonita Latty (11 yrs of volunteer service), Francisca Garcia (11 yrs), Lillian Soto (11 yrs), Neisha Hernandez (10 yrs), and Marysol Vega (10 yrs of service).



### Latest News.....

# HispanicBusiness®

## Top Hispanic Nonprofits

The Hispanic Business Journal in their yearly publication of the Top 25 Hispanic Non-Profits has listed the Puerto Rican Family Institute as No. 10 for 2010.

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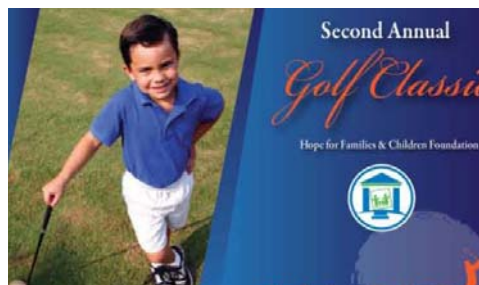
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## Save the Date

### Golf Tournament September 20, 2010



### Fundraiser Food Tasting for PRFI in Jersey City Coming in the Fall

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