

OUR PEOPLE, OUR CULTURE, OUR CELEBRATION

CMHA holds second Annual Spanish American Festival

On Thursday, October 15, 2009, the second Annual CMHA Spanish American Heritage Festival was held at Riverside Park Estates Community Center. The event continues to build awareness by bringing families together to learn about and celebrate the heritage of Spanish Americans, with the theme “Our People. Our Culture. Our Celebration.”

“Even though the day was filled with gray skies on the outside, it was a joyful day filled with sunshine on the inside,” said Michael Burns, social service coordinator and program advisor for the event. “Come rain or share this is a time to celebrate. Via Fiesta!”

More than 175 people attended, including vendors such as the Girls Scouts of Northeast Ohio, Project Safe and Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation. Performances were given by Spanish TV personalities, Dora the Explorer and her cousin Diego. They provided educational games for the children along with dancing, photographs, and autographs. The event featured dancing and live music by CMHA’s own Jose Ramirez from Scattered Sites.

“Never forget where you came from and always prepare for where you are going,” said Andres Gonzalez, Chief of CMHA Police Department. The chief was a special guest speaker for the day and received a standing ovation for his words of encouragement.

Maria Hernandez and Sarah Correa, residents of Riverside Park Estates, were co-chairpersons for this year’s event. There was a beautiful candle lighting ceremony in remembrance of Spanish American ancestors, their struggle, and their culture.

The community also featured a “Little Miss Spanish American and Little Mr. Spanish American Contest.” The winners were given a crown and golden sword along with bags of candy. The event concluded with great food, music and families for a night to remember.

“The time has come for all people of Spanish descent to stand up and take on a greater responsibility of our community and country,” said Maria Hernandez, Vice President of the LAC. “It is vital for us to continue to rededicate our time to our children and their education if we want to better their future.”