

RIVERSIDE PARK COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

CMHA holds third Annual Spanish American Festival

On Thursday, October 14, 2010, the third Annual CMHA Spanish American Heritage Festival was held at Riverside Park Estates Community Center. The event continues to build excitement in the community and bring people of all backgrounds together to celebrate the heritage of Spanish Americans.

“The celebration was highly successful due to the community involvement which allowed volunteers to prepare an authentic Spanish cuisine and decorate the entire community center,” said Maria Hernandez, Interim President of the Local Advisory Council (LAC). “The most impressive part to me was seeing the community participation with ages spanning from 6-75.”

This year more than 200 people came out to attend the ceremony. As a special recognition, the entire group honored George Phillips-Olivier, CMHA Chief Executive Officer and CMHA Police Chief Gonzalez for their dedication and leadership in the Hispanic Community. Awards were presented by Jeffrey Patterson, CMHA Chief of Staff and Operations and CMHA Police Officer Ortiz. In addition, Harold Peguero, AMP Leader of the Far West, presented the community with a national award that recognized CMHA for the Spanish American Heritage Festival.

A “Little Miss and Mr. Spanish American Contest” was held and the winners were given a crown and golden sword along with bags of candy. The event also provided great music and food for residents and their families.

“I was very proud as a parent to see my children become so involved in the community,” said Jahira Gonzalez, Riverside Park resident and mother of five children. “I was so honored when Michael Burns [CMHA Self Sufficiency Coordinator] asked me and my family to part take in the candle lighting ceremony, which honored our culture’s past, present and future. The Spanish American Heritage Festival makes me so proud to be who I am!”