

15th, we commemorate the Nation's 33rd Hispanic Heritage Month. In 1968, Congress designated a week to celebrate Hispanic culture nationally. Twenty years later in 1988, the week-long festivity was transformed into a month-long variety of activities aimed at raising national awareness of the tradition and achievement of Hispanics in America.

In that spirit I would like to recognize the initiating force behind this celebration, Gil Coronado. Colonel Coronado envisioned a week-long celebration of culture and pride and as founder and chairman of "Heroes and Heritage: Saluting a Legacy of Hispanic Patriotism and Pride" a non-profit organization, set forth to make his dream a reality. A hero himself, Colonel Coronado enlisted with the Air Force at age 16 and would serve for 30 years in Vietnam, Panama, Germany and Spain before he retired with over 35 awards including the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star. Hispanic Americans like Colonel Coronado, have risen to the call of duty, defending the liberty and freedom the United States stands for, just as they continue to do so today in our armed services.

Hispanic contributions to our culture and society go back almost 500 years, to when Juan Ponce de Leon first arrived in Florida in 1513. His fellow explorers like Alvarez de Pinela and Cabeza de Vaca would traverse what is now the American "Sunbelt." In fact, the arrival of De Soto in Mississippi in 1541 is commemorated in one of the great historical canvases in the Rotunda of the Capitol building in which we work.

Today, Hispanics continue to be pioneers in our society. Fernando Bujones was 19 when he became the first American to win a gold medal at the 1972 International Ballet Competition in Varna Bulgaria. Mari Luci Jamarillo would be appointed by President Jimmy Carter as the Ambassador to Honduras in 1977, distinguishing her as the first woman ambassador of Hispanic descent.

I would also like to make special note of two people affiliated with my home state of Michigan. In 1990, Antonia Novello became the first female Hispanic U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Novello started her medical career at University of Michigan where she was named "Intern of the Year," the first woman to ever receive such an award. Detroit would also be the starting point for Jose Feliciano's musical career. A native of Puerto Rico, Feliciano was born blind, but he mastered multiple instruments like the 6 and 12 string guitars, the bass, banjo, mandolin, organ, bongo drums, piano, harp-sichord, harmonica and trumpet. He would achieve stardom with his Latin-soul version of "Light My Fire." However, he would gain even more popularity with his unorthodox blues-rock

rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" during the 1968 World Series game in Detroit.

These are just a few outstanding examples of Hispanic contributions to American society. It is a pleasure for me to stand today with my Senate colleagues as we continue to recognize the contributions of our Hispanic community during National Hispanic Heritage month.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of this year's Hispanic Heritage Month, commemorated annually between September 15 and October 15. This celebration is an opportunity to honor a community devoted to family, faith, country and hard work. It is also a demonstration of patriotism as we appreciate the diversity from which our country derives its strength.

This month, and all year, we honor the courage, talent, determination, leadership and vision of Hispanic men, women and children who have done so much for our Nation in the face of incredible obstacles. We also honor the rich culture and heritage of the Chicano/Latino community and the tremendous gifts the community has given to our country.

Our greatness lies in the diversity of our beliefs as well as in the strength of our common ideals. The history of our country, its values and beliefs, are thus intertwined with the Chicano/Latino community.

In acknowledging the rich heritage of the Chicano/Latino community, I would like particularly to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of four Chicano/Latino institutions in my State of Minnesota. Their efforts have helped shape the social, economic and political landscape of their vibrant community as well as the community at large.

The Chicanos Latinos Unidos en Servicio, CLUES, has provided critical services to advance the Chicano/Latino community. Founded in 1981 in St. Paul to provide culturally appropriate and bilingual mental health services, CLUES has just opened a new office in Minneapolis that provides mental health, chemical health, education, employment and elder wellness programs.

The Chicano Latino Affairs Council, CLAC, advises the Government and State legislature on issues of importance to the Minnesota Chicano/Latino community. CLAC consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor of Minnesota from all different levels of government. The CLAC educates the legislature, the general public, the media, and agency heads on the contributions of Chicano/Latinos and the issues facing the community.

In addition, Minnesota has funded a bi-lingual charter school, El Colegio, designed to improve the achievement of high school students. Its mission is

to engage students in experiences that help them find meaning and purpose in their lives. This experimental education uses Hispanic, Chicano and Mexican perspectives to study art, environment and technology. The school helps students take pride in who they are and in what they can do for American society. One student, David Juanez is currently helping me with legislation which would allow States to create permanent resident status for undocumented students in good standing, enabling them to receive state funding when applying to college. This is only an example of what these students can do when given the opportunity.

A further great contribution to the Chicano/Latino community has been the opening of Mercado Central in August, 1999 and its ongoing operation since then. The market features 45 Latino merchants offering authentic foods, housewares, gifts, and groceries. The entrepreneurs that have opened this market have changed the face of Minneapolis' Lake Street forever. Its addition is a celebration of the Hispanic, Chicano, and Mexican community here in Minnesota.

At a time when we are faced with national challenge, we must strive even more to continue building a society in which people of diverse backgrounds are valued for the richness of their contributions. I hope that we can use this special occasion of Hispanic Heritage Month to bring the American people closer together.

#### FLIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, ever since the days of the pioneers, when folks would gather from miles around to participate in community barn raisings, the spirit of neighbor helping neighbor has been an Oregon tradition.

I rise today with great pride in my State to tell you that the tradition of neighbor helping neighbor reached new heights these past few days in a remarkable project entitled "Flight for Freedom".

Spurred by New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani's call that New York City was open for business, Portland Mayor Vera Katz and Portland businessman Sho Dozono came up with the idea of sending a delegation of Oregonians to New York City to lend whatever support they could to the residents of the Big Apple.

It wasn't too long before 100 Oregonians signed up, and then 200, and then 500, and then 750, and when all was said and done, over 1,000 Oregonians from every corner of my state boarded planes and traveled to New York City last weekend.

This delegation brought a great deal of business to New York hotels, restaurants and stores. But more important than that, they brought a great