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NYC Council Discretionary Funding of Latino Organizations, Fiscal Year 2013

By Angelo Falcón (July 8, 2012)

This past week, the New York City Council and Mayor Michael Bloomberg came to [an agreement on a \\$68.5 billion budget for the city](#). An always controversial aspect of the city budget involves the so-called Member Items (or more derisively referred to as "pork") that the individual Councilmembers distribute for both capital and expense purposes.

The Council released its listing of expense Member Items that it allocated to community based not-for-profit and other public service organizations for fiscal year 2013. This 258-page report, "[Fiscal Year 2013 Adopted Expense Budget, Adjustment Summary / Schedule C \(June 28, 2012\)](#)," simply referred to as "Schedule C," provides a complete listing of organizations to which member items and special initiative funding have been allocated. The Member Items are sponsored by individual Councilmembers, through the Speaker's List and by groups of Councilmembers (such as the Manhattan Delegation, etc.).

We provide in this *NiLP Latino Datanote* a summary of the Member Item allocations for Latino organizations from this list. We were able to identify 46 Latino organizations set to receive a total of \$1,527,189, or 3.1 percent of the \$49,701,895 allocated by the Councilmembers in this way. The breakdown by organization, ranked by amount allocated, is summarized in the table below.

NYC Council FY2013 Member Items	
to Latino Organizations, Sorted by Total Granted	
Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, Inc.	\$ 322,250
Hispanic Federation, Inc.	\$ 150,000
Aquinas Housing Corporation	\$ 112,000
Comunilife Inc	\$ 93,750
La Nueva Esperanza, Inc.	\$ 84,875
El Puente de Williamsburg	\$ 51,214
Spanish Speaking Elderly Council-RAICES	\$ 50,000
Puerto Rican Family Institute, Inc., The	\$ 48,500
Southside Community Mission, Inc.	\$ 41,875
South Bronx Concerned Citizens, Inc.	\$ 41,250
Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc., The	\$ 38,500
Washington Heights-Inwood Coalition	\$ 37,100
Amigos del Museo del Barrio	\$ 36,000
Centro Altagracia de Fe y Justicia	\$ 28,500
Casita Maria, Inc.	\$ 25,000
Latin Souls Baseball Organization, Inc.	\$ 24,500
Dominico-American Society of Queens, Inc.	\$ 23,500
Pregones Touring Puerto Rican Theater Collection, Inc.	\$ 22,875
Mixteca Organization, Inc.	\$ 21,000
Latino International Theater Festival of New York, Inc.	\$ 20,250
East Harlem Employment Services, Inc.	\$ 20,000
East Harlem Tutorial Program, Inc.	\$ 20,000
El Regreso Foundation Inc.	\$ 19,000
Spanish Theatre Repertory Company, Ltd.	\$ 18,500
Eugenio Maria De Hostos Community College Foundation	\$ 15,000
Latin American Cultural Center of Queens, Inc.	\$ 15,000
Grand Street Settlement, Inc.	\$ 13,500
Latino Pastoral Action Center	\$ 13,500
Voces Latina Corp.	\$ 13,500
Dominican Medical Association Inc.	\$ 12,250
Centro Comunitario Y de Asesoría Legal Inc.	\$ 11,000
Casa de Pan Y Esperanza Inc.	\$ 10,000
Community Association of Progressive Dominicans, Inc.	\$ 10,000
Dominican Women's Development Center, Inc.	\$ 9,000
Iglesia Arca de Salvacion ACM	\$ 7,500
Minerva Mirabal, Inc.	\$ 6,500
Washington Heights-Inwood Preservation and Restoration Corporation	\$ 6,500
El Taller Latino Americano	\$ 5,000
Garifuna Coalition USA, Inc.	\$ 5,000
Mex-Ed Mexican Educational Foundation Of New York Inc.	\$ 5,000
Visual Arts Research and Resource Center Relating to the Caribbean	\$ 5,000
Art Loisaida Foundation	\$ 3,500
Fundacion Profesor Juan Bosch	\$ 3,000
Panamerican Musical Art Research Inc.	\$ 3,000
Spanish Dance Arts Company, Inc.	\$ 3,000
Betances Houses Tenant Association	\$ 1,000
	Total \$ 1,527,189

Although it is acknowledged that the Latino population also receives many

services from non-Latino organizations and public agencies that are funded by Member Items, it is nonetheless troubling that only 3.1 percent of these discretionary funds goes to specifically Latino organizations. The Latino population in New York City numbers over 2 million or 29 percent of the city's population, and over 42 percent of its poverty population.

Many of these agencies also receive funds through grants and contracts from various city agencies, but while there are suspicions that significant underfunding occurs in this area as well, no such budget data is currently available on Latino city government funding and research needs to be done to document this aspect of the issue as well.

The Schedule C report also lists organizations receiving funding for special initiatives. From these, we were able to identify the following Latino organizations who are recipients:

Center for Puerto Rican Studies (CUNY)
\$250,000 to archive, preserve and record Puerto Rican culture

Dominican Studies Institute (CUNY)
\$250,000 to archive, preserve and record Dominican culture

Latino Commission on AIDS
\$97,000 for HIV Prevention - Evidence-based Behavioral Intervention

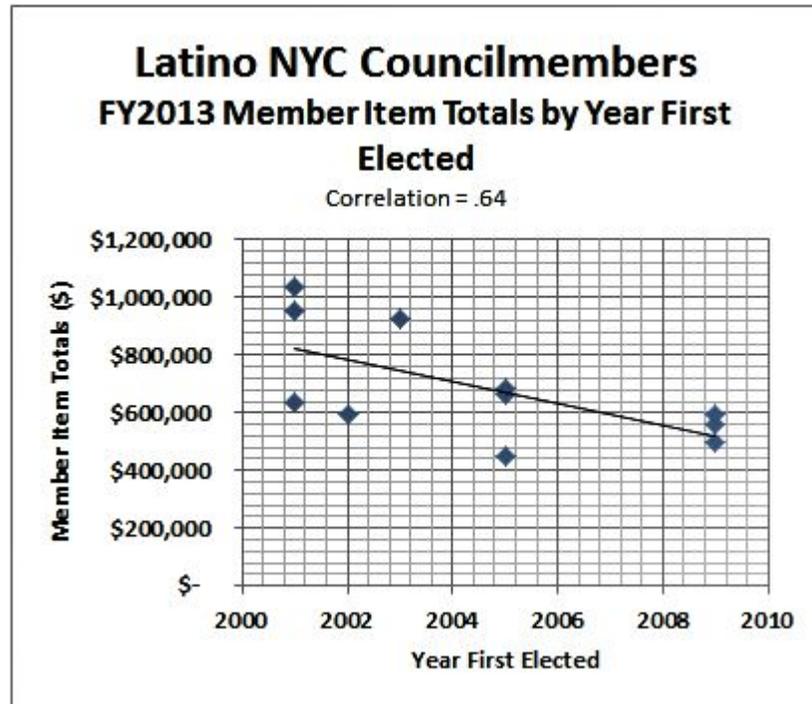
Dominican Women's Development Center
\$81,333 for the Domestic Violence and Empowerment (DoVE) Initiative

Finally, we list below the individual Member Item allocations made by the current 11 Latino Councilmembers. Please note that this does not include allocations by groups of Councilmembers of which the Latino Councilmember may have been a part, but only of those items sponsored by the specific legislator alone.

Latino NYC Councilmembers				
FY2013 Individual Member Items				
Councilmember	Total	Average	Items	Year Elected
Hon. Maria del Carmen Arroyo - District 17 (D-Bronx)	\$ 687,651	\$ 10,579	65	2005
Hon. Fernando Cabrera - District 14 (D-Bronx)	\$ 557,651	\$ 10,139	55	2009
Hon. Erik Martin Dilan - District 37 (D-Brooklyn)	\$ 955,464	\$ 27,299	35	2001
Hon. Julissa Ferreras - District 21 (D-Queens)	\$ 598,321	\$ 7,479	80	2009
Hon. Sara M. Gonzalez - District 38 (D-Brooklyn)	\$ 593,964	\$ 8,999	66	2002
Hon. Rosie Mendez - District 2 (D-Manhattan)	\$ 449,664	\$ 4,684	96	2005
Hon. Annabel Palma - District 18 (D-Bronx)	\$ 928,151	\$ 8,362	111	2003
Hon. Diana Reyna - District 34 (D-Brooklyn)	\$ 637,464	\$ 11,383	56	2001
Hon. Joel Rivera - District 15 (D-Bronx)	\$ 1,034,651	\$ 13,265	78	2001
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez - District 10 (D-Manhattan)	\$ 500,464	\$ 5,958	84	2009
Hon. Melissa Mark-Viverito - District 8 (D-Manhattan)	\$ 662,964	\$ 6,196	107	2005
Totals	\$ 7,606,409	\$ 9,131	833	

As you can see, there is significant variation in the total amounts assigned to different Councilmembers, ranging from a high of \$1,034,651 to Joel Rivera of The Bronx to a low of \$449,664 to Rosie Mendez of lower Manhattan. There is some debate about the reasons for these variations, but it appears

that seniority is an important factor. There is a relatively high correlation of .64 between amount of total Member Item allocations and the Councilmember's length of service. There are, obviously, other factors, probably mostly political, that account for the unexplained variations.



There are [many issues involved in assessing the nature and desirability of Member Items](#) on the New York City Council ([also see](#)), which we do not discuss here. For a full discussion of these issues, we recommend the recent report by the Citizens Union of the City of New York on this subject, "[Creating A More Equitable And Objective Discretionary Funding Process In New York City \(May 2012\)](#)." More detailed and a broader analysis of this issue from a Latino point of view remains to be conducted as well.

For more detailed tables from those in this *Datanote*, please contact me at afalcon@latinopolicy.org.

Angelo Falcónis President of the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP), for which he edits *The NiLP Network on Latino Issues*. He recently authored the NiLP report, "[Latinos and NYC Council Districting, 2012: An Introduction](#)" (June 2012). He can be reached at afalcon@latinopolicy.org.