

The Hispanic Pulse



August 7, 2010

Hispanic Police Officers Association



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bill Hernandez

SCHOOL IS IN!!!! My friends we are in the middle of summer and I am sure you are all enjoying time off with your families; however, it's time to start thinking about going back to school. The HPOA is proud to announce that we have signed an agreement with Lynn University to start Co-hort 3 and a possible Co-hort-4 in the near future.

Here are some of the highlights of the Master in Science in Administration with a specialization in Emergency Planning and Administration program. Students in the program will be given credit for two training courses as follows:

1. Middle Management Training –MS 500 – Management and Administration
2. Intermediate ICS 300 & Advanced ICS 400 (Incident Command System) – EPA 640 Planning Processes for Emergency Administration

This also means that each member will only need to take 10 classes as opposed to 12. You will save time and a great sum of money. In addition, these classes will be delivered on an 8 week schedule using a combination of on-line and on-ground instruction. On-line classes will be enhanced with on-ground instruction, presented intermittently throughout the term by a Miami-Dade Police administrator (with earned doctorate) who will focus on practical application of theory. Classes will be held at the Hispanic Police Officers Association headquarters located in Doral, FL.

Additionally, if HPOA enrolls a cohort of at least 20 students, Lynn will offer two scholarships of \$2,000 each designated to go to members of the cohort. Students must apply for the scholarships through Lynn's scholarship process.

Tuition

Lynn University will also offer a discounted tuition rate of \$125 per credit, approximately 20% of the regular tuition rate to members of the law enforcement community. Lynn will also agree to waive the application and registration fee for the cohort. The HPOA will purchase all the books needed and pay for all additional fees. The only item needed to be paid is the remaining balance of the tuition and with the County reimbursement plan (50%) I can't imagine a better deal.

Any HPOA member that has at least three years with the association and is willing to sign a commitment to be an HPOA member for an additional two years after the program will be eligible. The first 20 people who contact me and sign a letter of commitment will be part of Cohort 3 and will be eligible for the additional scholarship. Please do not hesitate to call me at 305-594-1173.

Don't Forget...

Just a quick reminder to everyone that has played in our golf tournaments in the past that this year the tournament will be held at the Miami Springs Golf and Country Club on November 5, 2010, shotgun at 12:00 pm. For those of you that have not had the opportunity to participate in our tournament, you are missing out on a GREAT event. Keep checking the website and newsletter for more information in the upcoming months. See you there!

Hispanic Police Officers Association

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The Hispanic Pulse

We are on the Web:
www.hpoadade.org



Hispanic Police Officers Association

HPOA Meeting

August 30, 2010
@ The HPOA Office

Board Members



Executive Vice President
Alex Alfonso



2nd Vice President
Eric Garcia



Treasurer
Willy Gonzalez



Secretary
Marcos Martinez



Sergeant at Arms
Bobby Fortich

FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are still up for grabs! The HPOA will also be awarding three (3) Florida Prepaid College Plan scholarships in the amounts of \$500, \$300, and \$200, for the upcoming enrollment period in October 2010. Eligibility requirements and program guidelines have been made available in previous newsletters, and can be viewed online at our website, www.hpodade.org. Additional information and entry forms will become available to members sometime around August, two months prior to the annual open enrollment in October. Members can obtain more information about the Florida Prepaid College Plans at their website: <http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/index.asp>

HPOA REACHING OUT

The HPOA maintains its commitment to supporting community organizations and helping those in need.

Following the Domino Tournament and Dance fundraiser, the Association continued to show support for one of our own by contributing to the City of Miami Hispanic Officers Association Fundraiser benefiting Officer Castillo, who, we are exceedingly happy to say, is doing remarkably well!

In addition, May and June were very busy months for the Association, as it contributed to a wide variety of worthy causes, including the POAT Motorcycle Toy Drive for Children and the Miami Elite Volleyball Club 2010 Girls Junior National Championship. The HPOA also supported the fundraising efforts of the Kiwanis and ASIS International Miami Chapter. On a celebratory note, the HPOA supported the Progressive Officers Coalition Annual Scholarship Ball, 2010 PBA Gala, and the 2010 Florida Police and Fire Games.

THE HPOA NEWSLETTER IS GOING GREEN

In an effort to support green initiatives, and to save some money while we're at it, we will be phasing out the printing and mailing of hard-copy newsletters to members over the next three months. Instead, the HPOA will be utilizing e-mail transmission of the newsletter to keep everyone informed of deadlines, activities, and events. The savings we realize as a result of this initiative will go towards additional scholarships in the future.

Make sure you don't miss out on getting your newsletter! Most members receive HPOA correspondence at their work e-mail addresses. However, if you are not receiving our e-mails, or if you simply wish to change your address on file, be sure to update your HPOA member profile with the e-mail address you prefer. In addition, if you wish to continue to receive your newsletter in print form, you can still do so by request. You can accomplish both of these by sending Amy an e-mail at amy@hpodade.org.

KUDOS & CONGRATS

We are pleased to extend special congratulations to former HPOA President, Bernie Bestard, and his wife, Liz, on the birth of their very first grandchild, Lincoln Maximo Day. Baby Lincoln was born in Albany, NY, to parents Lizbeth and John Day on June 17, 2010. He weighed 8 pounds and was 21 inches long – a beautiful bouncing baby boy and, needless to say, the pride and joy of the family.

Do you have a happy moment or milestone to share? Drop us a line and let us all help you celebrate! E-mail our HPOA Treasurer, Willy Gonzalez, at willy@hpodade.org, and share your story and we'll post it in our monthly column "Kudos and Congrats!"

MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

In November, HPOA members will vote for new leaders to move the organization into the future as the term for our current board members is coming to a close. Don't be left out! We encourage all members become an active part of this process. Join us at our next meeting and get to know your candidates. Listen, be heard, and make a difference!

The next HPOA meetings will be held on Monday, August 30th 2010. So mark your calendars, get involved, and make a difference. Perhaps it will be you who will lead us to bigger and better things!



Juan “Pancho” Fernandez
Retired MDPD Bureau Commander and Former HPOA President

Juan “Pancho” Fernandez, a first-generation Cuban-American, began his career with the Public Safety Department (PSD) in PSD Academy Class #115 on September 23, 1974, under Sheriff E. Wilson Purdy. He recalls his time in the academy as fun and filled with camaraderie.

“You learn, and you meet friends – your future brothers,” says Fernandez.

Throughout his 30-year career, Pancho Fernandez experienced many facets of police work, from road patrol, to investigations, and later to administration as a member of the department’s Command Staff. Of all of those assignments, however, he enjoyed his time in Professional Compliance Bureau as an Internal Affairs Investigator the most.

“It made me realize all the mistakes and things people do that get them in trouble,” he says. “Everyone, even my friends, would look at me with apprehension during that time. But I was just doing my job – making sure the standards of the department were met. It was a big responsibility.”

As a Hispanic on the department during the ‘70’s, Fernandez was a part of a very small minority. One of the things that he recalls most vividly of that time was that Hispanic officers were very often used as translators for non-Spanish-speaking officers.

“There was a big demand for Spanish-speaking officers at the time, since the Hispanic community was growing. But the department was initially resistant to hiring Hispanics. It was frustrating. We were happy to be doing a service to the community by translating, but we wanted to be the full-fledged officers we were trained and certified to be – not just translators.”

He recalls a time when they were told that “there weren’t enough Hispanics to hire” in order to make the department “representative of the community.” In response to that, recruitment teams were sent to Puerto Rico, a United States territory, to bring more eligible Hispanics to Dade County. As HPOA President in the early 1980’s, Pancho Fernandez, together with Mr. Osvaldo Soto, a Cuban American lawyer and then president of the Hispanic American League Against Discrimination (SALAD), and as several other prominent community leaders and activists, recognized a critical need for even more Spanish-speaking officers. Since the HPOA was never intended to be, and has never been, a bargaining unit, the Association could not negotiate with the department or County administration. So SALAD and our other supporters lobbied for Hispanic causes on our behalf. “Mr. Soto helped us a lot. He was truly instrumental in furthering many Hispanic causes in Dade County,” recalls Pancho.

When asked about his favorite HPOA memories and accomplishments, Pancho laughed and had this to say:

“I remember a time, when we were getting started, when Angel Valguerdi and Luis Piñon had to go person to person asking if members had paid their dues, and trying to collect from individual members. A lot of people didn’t like that.”

They later came to realize that the Progressive Officers Club had been collecting dues from

its members via payroll deduction. It was then, with the help of Sergio Pereira, that Pancho was able to work out the same arrangement for the HPOA.

“We made registration cards and before we knew it, we were getting checks from the County every month. We were finally able to do some of the things we wanted to, but didn’t have the funds to do before.

One of those things was the first HPOA Valentine’s Dance. Mr. Fernandez was a member of the Kiwanis organization at the time, and knew first-hand how important fundraising efforts were to furthering and organization’s cause. Now that the HPOA had a steady source of income, it was finally able to give deposits and secure facilities to put together its first large-scale fundraising event. It was a huge success.

“The Valentine’s Day Dance has become a true HPOA tradition, and it gets better every year,” says Fernandez.

Fernandez had this to say about his favorite career and HPOA memory:

“The best part was all the people I had the opportunity to work with, my friends, my brothers... even though we didn’t always think the same – like families. What was important were the achievements we were able to attain collectively.”

Pancho Fernandez retired from the Miami-Dade Police Department as the Bureau Commander for the Fleet Management Bureau on September 30, 2004. Since then he spent six years consulting for Gus Machado Ford and its Fleet and Government Sales Division. As of June 30, 2010,

Pancho decided to hang it up for good and simply enjoy the rest of his retirement.

He now enjoys spending more his time with his wife, Marina, his grown children Tanya, Frank, and Alyna, and his eight grandchildren. He also exercises regularly, and keeps in touch with friends by meeting them for lunch or a game of golf.

For those of you who love to travel, keep an eye out for him on exotic vacations with the International Police Association. He takes one every year! Now that’s the good life!

NEW MEMBERS

The HPOA is pleased to welcome the new members that have joined the Association:

- Kimberly Y. Guerrier
- Ralph Fratiani
- Chele Victorin
- Osmaly Poveda
- Hector L. Rivera
- Lexy Semino
- Sheri Bernabe

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