



## Carlos Rosario International PCS Newsletter

Winter 2012

### In This Issue

[Awards](#)

[Workforce Development](#)

[Community Service](#)

[Cultural Celebrations](#)

[GED Successes](#)

[Professional Development](#)

[Classroom News](#)

### Upcoming Events

Black History Month Celebration  
Feb. 24, 2012

Asian Pacific Islander Spring  
Festival  
May 24, 2012

Carlos Rosario School Graduation  
June 14, 2012

### Quick Links

[Course Registration Information](#)

[School News](#)

[About the School](#)

### Congratulations to Boubacar Ould-Brahim



With the holiday season recently behind us, we are happy to share with you news from Carlos Rosario School as we welcome in the new year!

### An Award Winning Fall

In fall 2011 Carlos Rosario School CEO and Founder Sonia Gutierrez (pictured right with Hon. Pedro R. Pierluisi, Puerto Rico's Resident Commissioner) received the Ana G. Mendez Excellence in Education award in recognition of her exemplary leadership and strong support of educational initiatives that benefit the Latino community nationwide.



Also Brahim Rawi, Carlos Rosario School alumnus and Board of Trustees member, earned the Bank of America Neighborhood Excellence Initiative Volunteer Service Award, a \$5,000 grant for a nonprofit organization of his choice. Mr. Rawi (pictured left with Jorge Delgado, Ms. Sonia Gutierrez, Allison R. Kokkoros, Mandy Toomey, Patricio Sanchez, and William Couper, Mid-Atlantic President, Bank of America) chose the School saying, "Carlos Rosario is an ideal example of an organization that really gives back to the community and makes a difference in peoples' lives every day."

Boubacar, Carlos Rosario School ESL and Workforce graduate and current teaching assistant from Mauritania, became a proud U.S. citizen in November 2011.

**To read more about these stories and others happening at Carlos Rosario School visit [www.carlosrosario.org/news](http://www.carlosrosario.org/news).**

### Great Job to Berta Cruz Perez!



Berta, a native of Guatemala, was recently promoted to the position of IT Specialist at ESF Charter School. Berta is an A+ certified graduate of the Carlos Rosario computer support specialist (CSS) 100 career training program and current student of CSS200.

**If you'd like to learn more about what's happening at Carlos Rosario School, please check out our Facebook page!**

Like us on Facebook 

## Rolling Out the Red Carpet



The school welcomed various esteemed visitors during the fall/winter semester. In December we hosted a validation team from the Middle States Association as part of the Excellence by Design re-accreditation process. As a result of the visit, the school has been recommended for full re-accreditation for the next seven years.

Eight representatives from the National Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) visited classrooms in mid-December. These education professionals travel around the country visiting exemplary programs to learn what is working in the classroom. The OVAE representatives had great things to say after the visit: "The level of energy of your teachers was impressive... The teacher did a great job of pulling students out of their comfort zone and engaging them."

In the fall dignitaries from Latin American countries including Ecuador, Mexico, and Nicaragua met to learn more about the School's Plazas Comunitarias program, which offers certificates in basic elementary and middle school education through a partnership with the Mexican Consulate. The meeting ended with dignitaries from the consulates of Honduras and Ecuador committing to establish Plazas programs.

## Preparing Washington, D.C.'s Diverse Workforce

Carlos Rosario School was awarded a two-year, \$250,000 grant by the Walmart Foundation for workforce development programs. We've already started putting the funds to work by increasing enrollment numbers, enhancing the culinary arts training program to include more basic math and technology, expanding ServSafe certification courses, and creating a retail career training program.



## Giving Back to the Community

The Carlos Rosario School students and staff were hard at work in the community this past semester. Highlights include a toy drive organized by student government representatives which resulted in more than a truckload of toys to be donated to families at CentroNia; a food drive with donations going to Neighbor's Consejo and Martha's Table;



and the Help the Homeless mini-walk organized by the student government which helped to raise \$15,000 for L'Arche, an organization that provides support services for people with disabilities.





## Best of Luck to Pactole Alison



Pactole, a Carlos Rosario School ESL alumnus from Madagascar, is competing along with 700 other exemplary students across the nation for one of 60 \$30,000 Jack Kent Cooke Scholarships.

Pactole, we're rooting for you!

**Click on the donate button below if you are interested in supporting Carlos Rosario School's initiatives for 2012!**



## Securing Essential Building Blocks

This past semester 18 students passed the GED test and 24 students earned diplomas from the Plazas Comunitarias program, which allows students to earn elementary and middle school diplomas in part thanks to a partnership with the Mexican Consulate.

Also the GED program had a widely successful open house with more than 150 participants.



## Celebrating Diversity Through the Arts

Last semester students and staff came together for two cultural events: Hispanic Heritage Festival and a holiday sing along.

The Hispanic Heritage Festival featured various student-led performances including Puerto Rican Salsa, Bolivian Cueca, Dominican Merengue, a Chilean dance, and Brazilian capoeira. After the festival, students



were treated to traditional Latin American food prepared by the culinary arts class.

On December 21st students and staff presented two holiday shows at which classes of ESL and GED students performed traditional holiday songs. The musical numbers were accompanied by the school band, and the show concluded with a merengue dance performed by students in the extracurricular Intermediate Latin Dance class.



Students and staff are looking forward to Black History Month workshops and the cultural festival happening soon!

## A Culture of Continuous Learning

Teachers have been using small Flip video cameras to record themselves in the classroom to facilitate reflection. Reflective conversations with the Instructional Coach help to identify teaching strategies based on the teachers' own observations. ESL teacher Bart Pogue explains, "Observing the video we took ... gave me a unique opportunity to reflect on my teaching... You identify quirks, repetitive words and phrases, inequitable distribution of attention, strengths, as well as weaknesses in your teaching and planning processes."



The Web 2.0 Study Circle has been tackling the issue of peer collaboration across three teaching sessions and between two teaching sites. To meet the challenge, teachers in the study circle have been meeting both face-to-face and virtually, through the Wiggio platform, which offers a private space to exchange ideas, share links, and use video conferencing.

## **Black History Month: Lessons Learned Inside and Out of the Classroom**

Teacher Sarah Mittelholzer and her ESL 7 class spent time this fall learning about the history of slavery and civil rights in the U.S. The class studied the life and work of Frederick Douglas, took a field trip to Douglas' house, and visited the new MLK Memorial. Sarah said, "The goal was to hopefully give students a better idea of the complexity and courage in our nation's fight for equality."



ESL teachers Chris Ladd and Sally McElroy have been helping students improve reading skills using the Spark3000 website. Students log in to complete related activities, and Spark3000 keeps track of their progress. Student material is automatically adjusted to each individual as they progress - making for a truly differentiated educational experience.

We at the Carlos Rosario School are excited about all that has happened over the past semester, and we are looking ahead to an exciting eventful new year in 2012!

**Sincerely,**

The Carlos Rosario Educational Foundation  
Carlos Rosario Int'l PCS

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