

**EL CENTRAL Hispanic News celebrates publishing OVER 33 Years**

*We thank God and our loyal readership who have supported us*

**PENSAMIENTOS Y RECUERDOS**

*Ines DeJesus, Educator and Activist*



By: Ozzie Rivera

You would not know it but Ines DeJesus is supposed to be retired. When you ask her how retirement is going she just smiles and says "Well you know how things have to get done".

Ines, born in Puerto Rico, came to Detroit at the age of 10. Coming to the city at that age deeply impacted her as she soon found herself in an English-speaking environment knowing only Spanish. Given her achievements to date, it's obvious she more than made that transition. In the process though she learned the importance of bilingual education for those children, who like her, came to this country knowing only Spanish.

She would go on to enjoy an illustrious and successful career as an educator and a community and political activist. Among a number of significant achievements, she would go on to become the highest-ranking Latina in the Detroit public school system as the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, a position she held for a significant number of years, many of them during the turbulent times when the district was under the state imposed general manager. During her educational career Ms. DeJesus has been a bilingual teacher, department head, associate

school principal, educational advocate and consultant. Over the years it's been to her credit that she has influenced so many. I have been in many settings where Ines' name would come up and some in attendance would just rave at the influence she had over their lives and how she mentored them.

Her influence has been felt not only within the Latino community but extends to the city's African-American community. As a community organizer and Democratic Party activist she has been known as somewhat of a behind the scenes political force. For a number of years, she was one of the Vice Chairs of the 13th District Democratic Party, would end up becoming a confidant to former Mayor Dennis Archer and would in turn be appointed to the Detroit Police Commission where she served with distinction for a number of years. In that capacity she also developed a close working relationship with then Police Chief Isaac "Ike" McKinnon. I was witness on several occasions to her strong advocacy on behalf of the Latino and immigrant community, yielding critical results. On a few occasions, after the US immigration services rounded up Mexican and Central American undocumented citizens en masse at places like Patton Park during soccer tournaments and as they were coming down the steps of Holy Redeemer

Church in Southwest Detroit after holy mass, she along with other community organizers went directly to City officials and Police Commissioners encouraging the City of Detroit Police Department to avoid being an active partner in these immigration raids the federal government was conducting at that time. As a result, the Detroit Police Department released an official policy stating such.

Ms. DeJesus is a long-time member of MANA, an advocacy group for Latina women, which has a significant scholarship fund. She is frequently sought after to speak, still serves as an educational consultant to a number of national organizations, has a long history as an anti-gang violence organizer, was a leading member of the Puerto Rican Festival Committee among many other roles.

Her activism started during her teen years while as a student at Murray Wright High School. She went on to study at Wayne State University. There she quickly became involved with the newly established Center for Chicano-Boricua Studies. During her time at Wayne State, she gained the trust and confidence of her fellow students and was elected each and every year to be the president of La Union Estudiantil, Wayne State's Latino student advocacy group.

Of historical and political significance, is the fact that when she joined the Detroit Police

Commission she was the first Latina ever in any US major city to do so. She was appointed to the Commission as a result of her activism on police community relations committees of the Detroit Police Department's 3rd and 4th precincts. In discussing her time on the Commission she emphasized she was part of a broader community organizing effort and thus saw her time there reflecting their support and efforts.

As we discussed her efforts over the years, she lit up with pride as she talked about the work she and a number of others did in building a pipeline for the development of bilingual teachers and other educational professionals. Literally hundreds of individuals came through programs built through collaborations between Wayne State, Detroit Public Schools' Bilingual Department among other institutions and community advocates. That even included Bowling Green University in Ohio. She called it a success in "growing our own" bilingual pool of candidates. Many candidates started off as school paraprofessionals, regular community members who would go on to become top notch educators. "A whole generation of bilingual teachers came through our program. Yet as many of them retired we did not keep that pipeline going and now we have a deficit in bilingual teachers and other educational



professionals." After our wide ranging conversation I asked her to sum up what she feels is the challenge facing Latino/a community organizers in Detroit and surrounding areas. Her response-" We need to "step up" and pass along this spirit and legacy. We really have not done leadership succession planning. It is our responsibility to do so. All of us should be educating young people, tell them the truth and pass on an understanding of our community's history and the lessons we learned. We need to help "up and coming" leaders advocate at a higher level. Otherwise where are we at? In a way we have not done this work!. In many respects, as a community we have suffered setbacks. A lot of us don't want to 'get into good trouble!' That thinking has to be challenged." She continued, "This is the reason I am still involved in the struggle, Our work is not done"

**Spring has sprung; City of Detroit yard waste collection has begun**

Detroit - The City of Detroit Department of Public Works curbside yard waste collection is underway and will continue for the next 36 weeks. Residents are asked not to set out yard waste bags prior to the scheduled collection day.

Residents can place grass clippings, leaves, and small twigs that are no more than two inches in diameter in biodegradable paper bags on their bi-weekly scheduled bulk collection day. Branches and twigs that are up to four feet in length and no more than four inches in diameter, should be bundled and tied securely and placed at the curb. Please note, individual bundles should not weigh more than 60 pounds.

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When placing bagged yard waste at the curb, it should be at least six feet from the city garbage container or in a personal garbage container that is clearly labeled "yard

waste" on two sides of the container. The City's contractors, Waste Management and GFL Environmental, will not collect yard waste in plastic bags. DPW also offers affordable paid curbside pickup for bulk and yard waste that exceed the City's collection limits. Call 313-876-0004 to request a quote.


If yard waste must be disposed of immediately, residents are encouraged to take their yard waste to any of the free drop-off locations below:

- LOCATION/HOURS OF OPERATION**
- Southfield Yard, 12255 Southfield Service Drive Mon - Sat, 8am-6pm
  - Davison Yard, 8221 W. Davison Ave. Mon - Sat, 8am-6pm
  - J. Fons Transfer Station, 6451 E. McNichols Rd Mon - Fri, 8am-4pm; Sat 8am-1pm

Residents can find out their next yard waste collection date by visiting [detroitmi.gov](http://detroitmi.gov) and typing their address into the "My Home Info" search field.

For additional information about collection schedules or to report concerns, residents should call their assigned contractor:

East and Southwest Detroit residents should call GFL Environmental at (866) 772-8900.



**Mexican Patriotic Committee of Metro Detroit**  
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**CINCO DE MAYO FIESTA**  
**VENDOR APPLICATION**

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The Cinco de Mayo Fiesta will be held on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1st at Plaza del Sol, 3041 W. Vernor Hwy. (near 21st Street) from 12pm-7pm. All Vendors should submit this application and booth fee by check/money order made payable to Mexicantown CDC. This year, vendors may also submit fees through Paypal using the email: [MPCdet1930@gmail.com](mailto:MPCdet1930@gmail.com). Additionally, sales permits are \$115 additional from the City Licensing Department that must be mailed or dropped off in person to complete the application.

**Booth Fees:**

Food Sales Booth w/Health Dept. Permit	\$300+\$115 check made payable to City of Detroit
Commercial/Arts & Crafts Sales Booth	\$250+\$115 check made payable to City of Detroit
Non-profit Sales Booth	\$150+\$115 check made payable to City of Detroit
Informational (Non-sales) Booth	\$150
Informational (Non-sales) Non-profit Booth	\$100

Checks, money orders and applications must be received by April 26<sup>th</sup> at one of the following locations:

- ❖ Xochis Gift Shop, 3437 Bagley St DETROIT MI 48216 (10am to 5pm daily)
- ❖ Plaza del Sol, 3041 W Vernor Hwy Detroit MI 48216 (M/W/F 5pm to 7:30pm)
- ❖ Mexicantown C.D.C. Office 2835 Bagley, Ste. 895 2<sup>nd</sup> flr (10am to 4pm weekdays)

PLEASE DO NOT MAIL CASH

Type of Booth \_\_\_\_\_ Size of Booth \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Paid \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

VENDOR \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: HOME \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEMS TO BE SOLD:**

1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	6. _____

Type of Booth \_\_\_\_\_ Size of Booth \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Paid \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

FOR INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS CONTACT THE PARADE COMMITTEE AT (313) 518-4354.