

THE LATINO SOCIAL WORK COALITION AND SCHOLARSHIP FUND (aka Latino Social Work Task Force)

In 2000, the Puerto Rican Family Institute (PRFI), and the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NYC) began a collaboration to address the shortage of Latino social workers in New York City. Both organizations had become well aware that more culturally and linguistically competent professionals were urgently needed to address the complex needs of New York's diverse, largely immigrant, low-income, and rapidly-growing Latino community.

As part of that collaboration, in 2002, the two organizations convened a well-attended public policy forum entitled *Pa'lante* (Moving Forward) which identified key issues including the service needs of Latinos, social policy and social action issues, and the components of social work training and education.

The forum led to the formation of the Latino Social Work Task Force (and now the Latino Social Work Coalition and Scholarship Fund - LSWC). The LSWC has the key goal of heightening awareness of the shortage of Latino social workers needed to serve the Latino community.

Mission

The Latino Social Work Coalition and Scholarship Fund's mission is to increase the number of culturally and linguistically competent Latino social workers serving low income and underserved Latinos in New York

City. This is accomplished by providing outreach, mentoring, education, training and financial support through collaboration with non-profit agencies and graduate schools of social work in pursuit of addressing the social needs of Latino communities in need.

The LSWC enlists the support of a consortium of New York City's eight graduate schools of social work which includes:

- Adelphi University School of Social Work
- Columbia University School of Social Work
- Fordham Graduate School of Social Service
- Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work
- Lehman Department of Social Work
- New York University Silver School of Social Work
- Touro College School of Social Work
- Yeshiva University Wurzweiler School of Social Work



Governor Cuomo and Steve Ramos, Former LSWTF scholarship awardee and Yeshiva University Social Work Alumni



Task Force Members and Scholarship Recipients

The LSWTF goals are to:

1. Provide scholarships to Latino MSW students each school year.
2. Provide mentorship and assistance to empower Latino MSW scholarship students to succeed in and graduate from graduate social work schools.
3. Identify and encourage potential students with a commitment to the field of human services to apply to graduate schools of social work.
4. Provide education and training for the LSWC students and Latino Community.
5. Provide education and advocacy regarding pertinent social service issues.

To facilitate the achievement of this collaborative effort, the LSWC enlists the support of a consortium of New York City's eight graduate schools of social work with a commitment of scholarships and funds raised by the Latino Social Work Task Force. As of 2016, the LSWC has provided funding with \$554,000 in 125 scholarships for 102 Latino social work graduate students which includes the scholarship commitments by the graduate schools of social work.

Additionally, the LSWC has successfully advocated for a loan-forgiveness program in New York State to help human service workers pursue an MSW degree as well as the licensure exam waiver. The LSWC also conducts Round Table sessions addressing current issues in Social Work such as licensing, cultural relevance in passing the licensing test, the impact of the loss of bilingual social workers in communities of color and other current issues.

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LSWTF
Pa'Lante

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