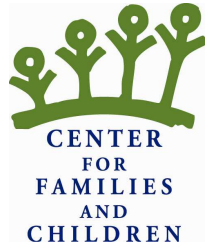


News Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER HOSTS MAYAN THEMED FUNDRAISER
Nonprofit Raises Funds to Help Individuals Obtain Employment

CLEVELAND (January 10, 2012) — The Mayan calendar may be ending in December 2012 so El Barrio Workforce Development Center is going to party like there's no tomorrow when it hosts its fourth annual *Taste Latino: Party Like It's 2012*. The benefit, presented by title sponsors The Home Depot and Dollar Bank, kicks off at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2012 at Nighttown, 12387 Cedar Road in Cleveland Heights.

El Barrio is a program of West Side Ecumenical Ministry, a subsidiary corporation of Center for Families and Children. Proceeds from the event benefit El Barrio, which for more than 20 years has helped individuals in need from all backgrounds obtain self-sustaining jobs through supportive services, free training and/or educational programs.

At the event, nearly 300 attendees will party like the Mayans while enjoying deliciously authentic Latin cuisine featuring the flavors of Mayan countries, such as Mexico and Guatemala while listening to live music by Noel Quintana's Latin Crew. Attendees will also take in the artwork of renowned local Guatemalan artist Hector Castellanos.

"This year's event is a fun take on the Mayan end of the world craze," explained Ingrid Angel, director of El Barrio. "The Mayans didn't really believe the world was going to end, but that 2012 would signal a new era and a time of change. Likewise at El Barrio, we believe that 2012 can be a new era for

job growth in Cleveland, but we need the support of the community to help our fellow Clevelanders in need secure self-sustaining employment by supporting this event.”

In the past year, El Barrio has seen positive gains in employment and an increasing number of participating companies, said Angel. Despite economic fluctuations, El Barrio helped nearly 400 individuals secure employment and provided case management services to more than 800 in 2011.

“Every two weeks, we have a new group of students going through our program in hopes of obtaining employment so I know the need still exists,” said Angel. “Luckily for them and for us, we have the support of some amazing corporate partners that believe in the quality of the job candidates we produce and some come exclusively to El Barrio when hiring for their companies.”

El Barrio corporate partners and presenting sponsors for the event are The Home Depot and Dollar Bank. Other sponsors include Time Warner, Third Federal, KeyBank, Frantz Ward LLP, University Hospitals and Cuyahoga Community College.

Event admission is \$75 and includes authentic Latin cuisine, such as paella and empanadas, sangria and live music. For more information, or to reserve your ticket(s), please call Ingrid Angel at 216- 961-2965 or iangel@wsem.org .

About our Combined Organization

The Center for Families and Children (CFC), West Side Ecumenical Ministry (WSEM) and El Barrio have joined together to increase their impact on the community. CFC is the parent corporation and WSEM is a subsidiary corporation. Our combined organization has core strengths in early learning, food centers, behavioral health, youth development and workforce development.

Our newly combined organization provides opportunities and hope for children, adults and families living in poverty in our community. With 14 locations in the greater Cleveland area, our focus remains on preserving and enhancing critical services, giving greater voice to the issues that impact the people we serve, and helping align and focus our community’s best thinking, assets and collective action on our toughest challenges. To learn more, please visit c4fc.org or www.wsem.org.

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