

## **Mexican Hometown Associations (HTA) in New York**

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The New York Immigrant Organizations Project is part of a collaborative project with the University of Notre Dame\University of Illinois-Chicago and the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) and is sponsored by the North American transnational Communities Program (NATC) of the Rockefeller Foundation. I appreciate the comments received from James DeFilippis, Sylvia Puente, Nik Theodore, and Abel Velenzuela. I am also grateful for assistance from Ana Calero, Tracy Chimelis, Jessica Conzo, Sarah Cruz, Wendy Garcia, Maciel Gutierrez, Maritza Hernandez, Antonio Ribeiro, Marina Rivera and Yasmin Rodriguez. All disclaimers apply.

**Thursday, November 03, 2005**

## Hometown Associations (HTA) in New York

The Mexican community in New York City has experienced rapid growth during the last decade. The Mexican population tripled between 1990 to 2000 and it is now the third largest Latino group in the City after Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. Mexican migration to New York, relative to migration to other regions in the U.S. such as the Southwest and the West, is not only a recent phenomenon, but the regions of origin of these migrants are not the traditional migratory regions in Mexico (Durand and Massey, 2003:63-96). Mexico's south central region, particularly the state of Puebla, and to a lesser extent some regions of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Tlaxcala and the Federal District (DF) are the primary regions of origin of Mexican immigrant to New York City (Smith, 2001:279; Rivera-Batiz, 2003).

The spur of formal and informal Mexican organizations in the Mexican community is becoming increasingly apparent to students of immigrant communities and the non-profit sector in New York City. As part of our research, for example, we identified 20 Mexican hometown associations in various parts of New York City and six other HTAs in the larger metropolitan area. The communities of origin of these HTAs are quite concentrated in the south central region of Mexico. At least half of the HTAs that we have identified are located in the state of Puebla and particularly in the Mixteca region in the State of Puebla north of the State of Oaxaca and East of the State of Guerrero. Additionally, we have identified a number of Mexican organizations that are incorporated as 501©3 as well as other informal—but not necessarily hometown based—community based organizations. We have observed some level of collaboration between the few formal Mexican organizations and HTAs, but the relations do not appear to be fully institutionalized particularly when compared to other immigrant communities (like the Ecuadorian, Colombian, or Dominican). Studying Mexican HTAs in New York offers us the opportunity to examine cross-border organizing among immigrants participating in a relatively new migration circuit between Mexico and the Eastern United States, particularly New York City.

The development of Mexican organizations in New York City is taking place in a particular context that is also different from other parts of the United States. First, New York is a city with a large and diverse proportion of immigrants and a strong immigrant ethos. Second, New York has a long history of engagement with the non-profit sector and has developed a rich and dense set of community organizations both formal and informal. Third, over time there has been a significant presence of other Latin American immigrants in New York. These communities have their own organizational history and have developed a particular set of both national origin and pan-ethnic organizations that are important actors in the City's non-profit sector. The existing non-profit infrastructure, Latino presence, and Latino organizational landscape have to be taken into account when analyzing the work and development of Mexican organizations in New York.



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