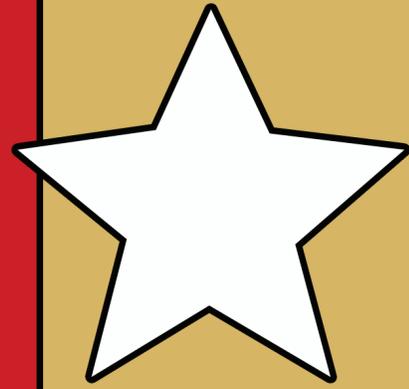


Que Ondee Sola  
April 2012 • Vol. 40 No. 4



**40th**

“Affirming Identity as

**anniversary**

a Praxis of Solidarity”

# “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

## Editorial

When we look back on our lives chances are we won't remember most of it. Yet, there will be memories we will cherish and hold close to our hearts and milestones by which we will measure the value of our contributions to this world. We, the staff at *Que Ondee Sola*, are so humbled and excited to share with you, our readers, such a milestone—the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our organization and publication.

Over its 40 year history *Que Ondee Sola* has been a comforting voice for Puerto Rican and other Latino/a students who are unheard in their issues and struggles at the university. This includes having Latin American and Latino courses and degrees, resources and services, and to have a physical space to call our own. Not only has it fought for better education at the university level, but also in high schools creating programs encouraging Latina/o high school students to continue their education. *Que Ondee Sola* has been the tip of the spear defending Humboldt Park and other Chicago Latino communities against gentrification, political and economic oppression and unfair housing practices. We also lead the fight in many human rights issues, such as the freeing of the Puerto Rican political prisoners and immigration reform. Finally,

our greatest historical endeavor has been connecting the Puerto Rican diaspora to our homeland, reporting on Puerto Rican news and issues that are largely ignored by local and national newscasts.

Keeping this publication alive and evolving has been the privilege and responsibility of a whole host of student activists since its inception in 1972, many of whom have kept on fighting for Puerto Rico, Latin America, human rights, and education long after they left.

In this special edition we have the honor of bringing to you interviews, statements and quotes from some of the stalwarts of *Que Ondee Sola's* past editors, staff, and supporters. They will share with you their experiences and challenges during their time carrying the torch. For several months we have scoured the archives to relive some of the publication's greatest triumphs and highlight key editions that had a memorable impact on NEIU and the Latina/o community.

While doing our research for this edition and preparations for the anniversary celebrations, many thoughts and emotions were shared by the current staff of the significance of *Que Ondee Sola* to the university, Puerto

Rican & Latina/o students, and the Humboldt Park community. We would like to share with you what *Que Ondee Sola* means to us:



Sept-Oct. 1983, Vol 12, No.3-4,

**Katherine “Kat” Padilla**  
QOS has given me the opportunity to learn and grow in the history of my culture. It has allowed me to receive life-long friendships that have shown me what it means to struggle together. Having QOS at the university gives individuals a chance to learn beyond what regular newspapers and magazines write about. It offers a sense of identity that so many people are in search of. When I read it, it says there are issues that must be addressed and

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# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

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Rebecca Medina

Reina Salcedo

Brandon Thomas

### Misión

Que Ondee Sola was established in 1972 and remains the oldest Puerto Rican & Latina/o university student publication in the U.S. Our mission is to provide the NEIU community with a relevant and engaging publication that deals with student issues with a focus on Puerto Ricans and Latinas/os, our communities, and our patrias.

Que Ondee Sola continues to affirm the right of Puerto Rican self-determination, freedom for all Puerto Rican political prisoners, and support for a truly participatory democracy.

### Que Ondee Sola

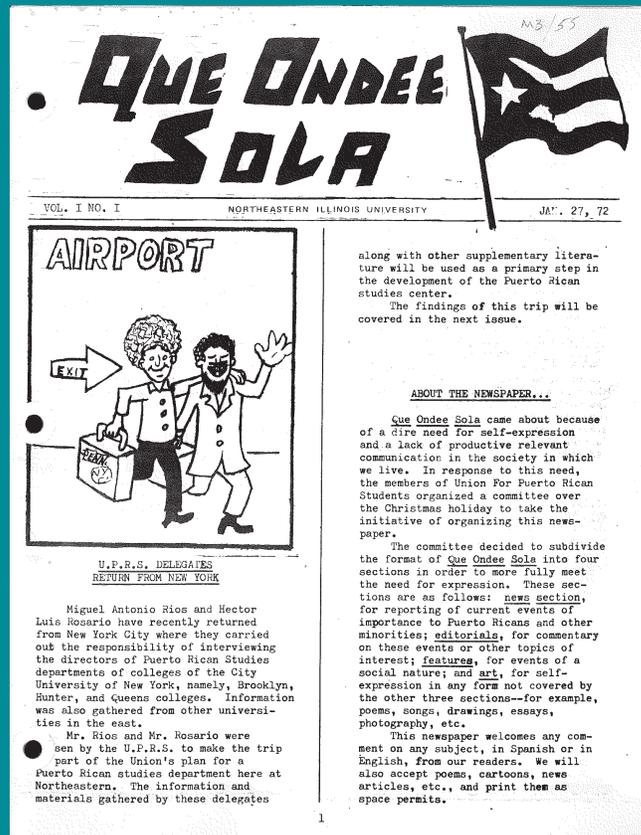
is published at Northeastern Illinois University. The opinions expressed in Que Ondee Sola do not necessarily reflect those of the Administration. Responsibility for its contents lies solely with the staff.

**We appreciate and encourage suggestions and contributions.**

### Que Ondee Sola

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Jan 1972, Vol. I, No. 1

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

### Statements

#### **Sharon K. Hahs**

President, Northeastern Illinois University



*Congratulations on the occasion of your 40th anniversary as a part of Northeastern Illinois University and as the oldest continual Latino student publication in the United States. The University is proud of the work you have done and that you serve as the voice of progressive Latino student activism. Along with the Union for Puerto Rican Students, you have laid the groundwork for the creation of the minor and major in Latino and Latin American Studies, and contributed to the development of the Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs. You count among your members and friends a wonderful array of leaders—including a congressman, an alderman, members of the Illinois General Assembly, and even a member of Northeastern Illinois University’s Board of Trustees.*

*Truly, Que Ondee Sola has added a crucial voice to the rich diversity of the University. We thank you and we wish you a wonderful celebration and a dynamic future.*

“The University is proud of the work you have done and that you serve as the voice of progressive Latino student activism.”

“Congratulations to all the advisers and instructors who have supported Que Ondee Sola”



#### **Marvin García**

Board of Trustees, Northeastern Illinois University, Former Que Ondee Sola editor, Class of 1983

*Congratulations to all the students from the decade of the ‘70’s and to the current students who publish Que Ondee Sola on its 40th anniversary, the longest running Puerto Rican magazine serving all Latinos on the campus of Northeastern Illinois University. Also congratulations to all the advisers and instructors who supported Que Ondee Sola over the past 40 years.*

**Xavier “Xavi” Luis Burgos**  
Immediate Past Editor, Class of 2012



## Speak the Truth and Set the Path

*“Pueblo que olvida su pasado no alcanzará nunca la grandeza de sus fines.” - José De Diego*

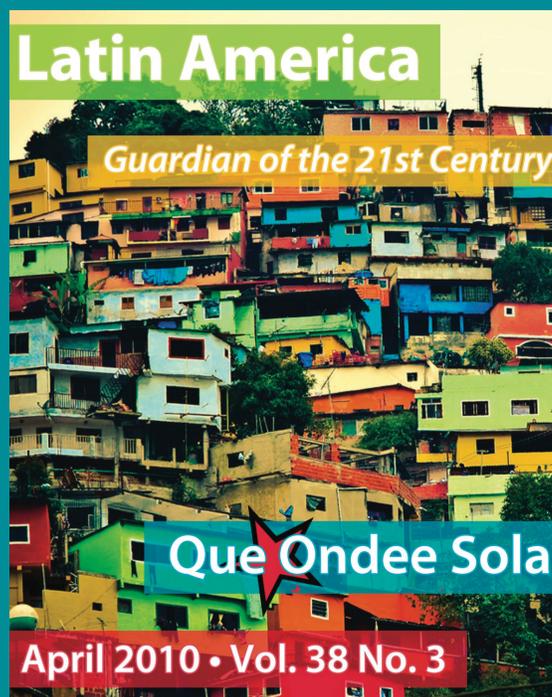
In my life, there is no political work that I have internalized the most than that of taking the leadership of *Que Ondee Sola* (QOS) and the Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS) at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). In high school I dreamed of and aspired to be a part of an organization that actively engaged, head-on, the socio-political issues facing the Puerto Rican community. I also sought-out a space in which critical reflection on inequalities and colonialism was encouraged, celebrated, and discussed. I found this when I walked in the office of QOS in the fall of 2005, which left an undeniable mark on my existence.

Among the staff of the magazine, there were diverse characters and personalities: poets and activists, intellectuals and cultural workers. Above all, there existed a youthful exuberance and zeal. This manifested itself in protests and initiatives designed to build a more humanizing discourse and space for Boricuas, Mexicans, and other Latinas/os on campus. The first activity I participated in with QOS, UPRS, and ChiMexLa

(Chicano Mexicano Latino Student Union) serves as a prime example. A dozen of us organized a silent march, dressed in black and with our mouths taped-shut, through the various public venues of NEIU. Two or more people carried a black-painted cardboard coffin; all theatrics to raise consciousness on the militarization of communities of color and our Latin American homelands. In hindsight, I ask myself: how effective was this in actually changing the situation? Miniscule, of course! Nonetheless, we effectively *confronted* and *challenged* the issue, brought it to the forefront of students' minds, and instilled among us the notion that complacency is not an option. To struggle, to envision, to make a presence - how small a contribution it may seem - can be stepping stones to more tangible goals.

As a publication we thus had

a responsibility to embody the very values that we critiqued our society for lacking. As editor, I ensured the continuation of a legacy of publishing what was rarely published anywhere else:



the voices of the subaltern, the marginalized, the invisible. We did this in subtle ways, such as making it a point to always write “Latina/o” instead of “Latino” or even “Latino/a,”

*continued next page...*

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

### Speak the Truth continued...

as a nonconformist gesture to gendered and sexist language. In more explicit ways, we published yearly an edition - as tradition dictates - dedicated entirely to the experiences and contributions of Puerto Rican and Latina/o women. We also covered the multiple manifestations of Puerto Rico's colonial situation, the campaign to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners, the unfolding events of the immigration movement, and the progressive and left-wing struggles of our Latin American *compatriotas*. In addition - outside of tradition but in accordance with the magazine's philosophical foundation and mission - we dedicated entire editions to the story of Puerto Ricans, Latinas/os, and Latin Americans of African descent. We also reserved editions to highlight the varied contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Boricuas and Latinas/os. This was all done utilizing a critical framework. To the extent possible we sought not to essentialize our cultural identities and historical experiences. We presented them with nuance and complexity, beauty and dignity, but never shying away from affirming our national identity.

Whatever we did in our publication we certainly carried into our organizing work on campus. The two most important QOS-led initiatives - torches set fire by generations

before us - were to transform the Latino and Latin American Studies program (LLAS) into a major and construct a Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center (LCRC). When I entered the university, these topics were rarely discussed outside the offices of QOS or that of sympathetic faculty. I could not count how many times university administrators

**“Thus, to struggle is to envision what seems impossible: a liberated future.”**

personally told me, “no, we cannot have a LCRC, there's no funding or space, and, besides, its exclusionary.” It is *undeniable* that our yearly Plantando Semillas event, campus forums, magazine editorials, surveys, and meetings with faculty, staff, and elected officials made a LCRC possible. I remember an occasion when the university leadership organized a forum to discuss a multicultural center and had to cancel it for lack of attendance while *simultaneously* we organized fifty students - Black, White, and Latina/o - to discuss and gain support for a LCRC. The administration even sent a student representative to hear what we had to say.

We got LLAS to be a major but did not get our full vision of a LCRC. We wanted to concentrate the current Latina/o-focused resources and cultural initiatives on campus in a single space (visible resources beg not to be forgotten or bulldozed, which was the unfortunate fate of the Office for Adult and Women's Services). This included offices for Latina/o-focused student organizations, LLAS, Proyecto Pa'Lante, and ENLACE, with classrooms. We did, however, open a Pandora's box. Students and faculty are now clamouring for a LGBTQ and Women's Center and the main campus has a stronger Black student presence than ever before. It is up to the next generation of QOS and UPRS to ensure that we get a fully realized LCRC, for it is just and right. May the pages of QOS and the historical memory of student struggle, which this organization transmits so well, speak the truth and set the path.

Struggle is never romantic. It is draining, time-consuming, annoying, threatening, but not romantic. It is, however, cathartic, prophetic, and valuable. In an oppressive and dehumanizing context, to struggle is to construct meaning and community. Thus, to struggle is to envision what seems impossible: a liberated future.

## Michael Rodríguez Muñiz

Former editor, Class of 2003. Ph.D Candidate,  
Brown University.



# Our Word is Our Weapon

Forty long years of struggle and resistance, of stubborn defiance, make possible the commemoration of the Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS) and Que Ondee Sola (QOS). When I first entered E-041, as a first semester NEIU student, these organizations were roughly 26-years-old. I was 19. Many years have since passed; I no longer walk the halls of NEIU putting up fliers and re-stacking magazine racks. I am no longer an editor or staff writer. It has been over a decade since I last helped organize a UPRS event or host a bake sale.

Though I miss those days, I am warmed by the fact that another generation, perhaps the fourth since I graduated, has assumed the mantle, as I once had, of investing in a political project initiated in the dawn of the 1970s. There is too much history to recall, memories to share, but there is certainly room to give thanks to the founders and custodians of this project, who labored against adversities I never faced to publish and organize a space of critical praxis on campus. My life's trajectory was irreversibly transformed by my encounter and intimate involvement with this political project.

It is worth sharing that I decided to attend NEIU and join QOS because of a serendipitous experience. While walking towards the cafeteria to visit a close friend,

I noticed, to my surprise, a Puerto Rican flag outside of an office door. The door was closed, but I picked up a copy of QOS featuring a speech given by our late national heroine, Lolita Lebrón. I read it from cover to cover, as I had done a book on Puerto Rican history while in high school. It was in that fateful book that I first came across the name of Pedro Albizu Campos and the concept and ideal of independence. Reading closely, I was angered, probably more deeply than I had known, by the acts of aggression, exploitation, and indignity my people suffered at the hands of foreign colonizers; first, the Spanish and second, the North Americans.

My chance visit to the QOS office would set in motion experiences and ideas that make possible this reflection. It gave me a foundational opportunity, not only to learn more about Puerto Rico and our struggles, but also the opportunity to actively participate in its decolonization, both on the island and in the diaspora. Four movements have touched me the most: the struggle to free our political prisoners, the campaign to demilitarize Vieques, the Latina/o student struggle at NEIU, and the fight against the gentrification and displacement of Humboldt Park. My experiences, at NEIU and later on Paseo Boricua, have been life defining and life edifying.

I am humbled by the magnitude of our collective achievement, made not only by editors and presidents, but also by countless staff writers, members, supportive faculty; and administrators, family and friends; and not to mention community activists and organizations, of which, the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center deserves special acknowledgment. Most student organizations emerge and fade within the course of a few years, but these investments are what we celebrate now.

Recently, I was invited to speak about my experience at NEIU and the significance of QOS' 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The event was held at the new Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center, a concrete example of the fruits of consistent student struggle. In the course of a wonderful conversation with current students and faculty, we began to ponder on the future. What would the next decade or forty years look like? What steps and actions need to be taken in the present to ensure not only the permanence but also elevation of these student organizations? These are questions that need to be answered, cautiously, but answered nonetheless. I am inspired by the minds, hearts, and hands that today give life to this project; and I thank them for continuing a path others began ages ago.

*continued next page...*

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

### Our Word is Our continued...

On the anniversary of the founding of UPRS and QOS, we celebrate not just the passing of years, but the triumphs achieved, the lessons learned, and visions inspired. All this effort represents, what Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel calls, the “noble vocation of politics.” As the Zapatista’s affirmed,

early in their fight against oblivion, “our word is our weapon.” For the past four decades, successive generations of Puerto Rican youth and their allies have used our words, whether shouted or printed, to demand a more just, loving, and equitable reality. In the most mundane of ways, we have

celebrated life by struggling for freedom.

I conclude with an extended quote, which I believe captures the ethos of the project we have collectively built:

*“What matters is our eldest elders who received the word and the silence as a gift in order to know themselves and to touch the hearts of the other. Speaking and listening is how true men and women learn to walk. It is the word that gives form to that walk that goes on inside us. It is the word that is the bridge to cross to the other side. Silence is what Power offers our pain in order to make us small. When we are silenced, we remain very much alone. Speaking, we heal the pain. Speaking, we accompany one another. Power uses the word to impose his empire of silence. We use the word to renew ourselves. Power uses silence to hide his crimes. We use silence to listen to one another, to touch one another, to know one another. This is the weapon, brothers and sisters. We say, the word remains. We speak the word. We shout the word. We raise the word and with it break the silence of our people. We kill the silence by living the word. Let us leave Power alone in what the lie speaks and hushes. Let us join together in the word and the silence which liberate.”* (Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatistas, “The World and The Silence,” October 12, 1995)

### Dr. Conrad Worrill

Director of the Jacob Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies



The tradition established by *Que Ondee Sola* over the last 40 years has affirmed student activism and scholarship among Puerto Rican and Latino students, and has elevated the rich culture of the Puerto Rican and Latino people. This is a monumental achievement that we wholeheartedly support and appreciate a long lasting alliance.

“ This is a monumental achievement that we wholeheartedly support and appreciate a long lasting alliance.”

“ I think NEIU is a school everyone needs to follow to learn what is right or wrong. ”



### Billy Ocasio

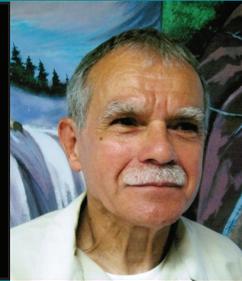
Senior advisor to Illinois Governor Pat Quinn

To me, *Que Ondee Sola* has been the conscience of what society should follow. It brings to light issues that impact everyone all over the world. I think NEIU is a school everyone needs to follow to learn what is right or wrong. There are issues that people often want to ignore but *Que Ondee Sola* continues to speak of them.

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

## Oscar López Rivera

*Decorated Vietnam Veteran, community activist and Puerto Rican political prisoner; serving his 31st year of federal prison for struggling for Puerto Rican independence.*



The fact that we are commemorating the 40th anniversary of *Que Ondee Sola* illustrates how significant the founding of this publication has been for our community and for Puerto Rican and other NEIU students. It also teaches us how important ideas and creativity are, and makes us aware that the need to continue struggling is infinite.

*Que Ondee Sola* is the byproduct of a group of Puerto Rican students at NEIU who saw the need to create it and dared to make it a reality. They saw the need of having a publication that represented their interests and concerns and could contribute to the preservation of their identity and culture. Today we can see how visionary they were, especially seeing how successive generations have followed in their footsteps and have made the publication even better. In order to better appreciate the significance of *Que Ondee Sola* we need to look at some of the history of the relationship between NEIU and the Puerto Rican community.

Many Puerto Ricans don't know that there was a teachers' college in the heart of our community - on Hirsch and Leavitt in Humboldt Park - that

was made part of NEIU when the latter was built. Once the college was closed, the building



*Oscar López Rivera as a US Army serviceman in 1966*

was used to house the freshman class of Tuley High School and later became Sabin Elementary School. The community lost the college without getting another academic institution of higher learning to substitute it. More than a decade later (late '60s and early '70s) a small storefront - close to California and North Avenues - was being used by NEIU for an outreach program in the community. It was such a token program that the person in charge of running it was a man working full-time for a Settlement House, working on his master's degree full-time at Williams College, and even known for being contemptuous and disdainful of his Puerto Rican identity and the

community. Fortunately, there were Puerto Rican students at NEIU who were concerned with their plight and decided to struggle in order to make the university more responsive and relevant to their needs and the needs of other Latino students and the community. They founded Proyecto Pa'lante and joined with other Latino students to force the university to create Latino Studies programs.



*Former political prisoner Carlos Torres arrives in Puerto Rico, July 2010*

What the students did and what *Que Ondee Sola* has become is an example of what tenacity and the willingness to follow ideas with action can accomplish. Their example allows us to appreciate the potential we have to create institutions for the benefit of our community and other Latino communities. Let's put our ideas to work. Let's talk the talk and walk the walk. Let's dare to try to make this a better and more just world.

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

It is with great joy that I congratulate *Que Ondee Sola* on the celebration of 40 years as a formidable publication at Northeastern Illinois University. The celebration of Puerto Rican history and heritage depicted in each volume has provided students, faculty, and staff with reflections and vital information that bring enormous light to the struggles, progress and accomplishments of Puerto Ricans in Chicago and beyond. In the Angelina Pedroso Center, we have integrated important elements of Puerto Rican history in our

**Murrell J. H. Duster**  
Dean of Academic Development/  
Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.



programmatic initiatives that engage all students. One of our signature goals in the Pedroso Center is to expand the importance of understanding culture and identity for all students. *Que Ondee Sola* has contributed greatly to this goal. We applaud the founders and those who carry on their proud legacy

in the pages of *Que Ondee Sola*. On behalf of the Pedroso Center, I wish you the best for your continued success in the future. You have kept the faith and fought valiantly for your core beliefs, which were founded on the sound principles of liberty and justice.”

“*Gracias a su esfuerzo y liderazgo, hoy NEIU es una institución con programas especialmente designados para estudiantes latinos y servicios a la comunidad latina en Chicago.*”



**Dr. Daniel López**  
Associate Vice-President for Student Life

Estamos muy orgullosos de la trayectoria de *Que Ondee Sola* en nuestra universidad. Gracias a su esfuerzo y liderazgo, hoy Northeastern Illinois University es una institución con programas especialmente designados para estudiantes latinos y servicios a la comunidad latina en Chicago. ¡Felicidades!

**Dr. Carlos Azcoitia**  
President, Board of Trustees  
Northeastern Illinois University



“It is indeed an auspicious occasion for *Que Ondee Sola* to celebrate its 40th Anniversary engaging the Northeastern Illinois University community in highlighting significant issues of extreme importance to our daily lives. Thank you for reaffirming identity and recognizing diversity as great assets in order to make democracy work for everyone. I congratulate all the leaders of *Que Ondee Sola* for their tenacity and perseverance with this publication. Thank you for connecting idealism with action.”

“*Thank you for reaffirming identity and recognizing diversity as great assets in order to make democracy work for everyone.*”

## Eduardo Arocho

Former Editor, Class of 1993.  
Executive Director, DSBDA



## “El Poeta de la Division”

By Abraham Esparza

*A poet, activist, and community leader are some of the roles that Eduardo Arocho plays in the neighborhood of Humboldt Park. He currently serves his community as the Executive Director of the Division Street Business Development Association (DSBDA). From that position he takes care of services needed to maintain Division Street clean and safe. Arocho was born and raised in the Humboldt Park area. Although his job keeps him quite occupied, he always finds time to write. Poetry is an essential part of Arocho's life and has been ever since he was young. His poetry led him to activism and it continues to inspire him. He is currently working on a book: Nació Maestro.*

**QOS: Could you please describe NEIU during your time at the university. What were the major issues or most memorable student and community struggles during that period?**

EA: Well, when I went there I was very excited to be going to college because that's what I was always raised to do. It was not a dream; I always knew I was going to go to college after high school. I went in through Proyecto Pa'Lante and when I was there I had a work-study job with them. I was the receptionist and I worked with Max and Miriam, who are probably not there anymore. The school was not

as grand as it is now. Now they have a lot of new buildings. When I was there they didn't have as many computers.

One of the most memorable community struggles I remember occurred in 1992. I was on the bus reading the Chicago Sun-Times and I came across an article talking about the controversy over the Pedro Albizu Campos Statue. Something was said that I will never forget by the women who wrote the article, “The first statue [of Pedro Albizu Campos] should go to Puerto Rico and not the dirt of a Chicago park.” This really impacted me because I was from Humboldt Park, but I didn't know who Albizu Campos was. So, I decided to go to the library and pick up a book on him. After I finished the book I started working on a poem about the statue. I read the poem at the [Puerto Rican] cultural center that was on Milwaukee [Avenue] at the time. Mark, who was a student at NEIU and worked with UPRS and QOS, liked the poem and said he wanted to publish it in the magazine. I later went on to read that same poem at the unveiling of the statue.

**QOS: What challenges did UPRS and QOS face and how did you try to address them? What alliances were important?**



Sept 2010, Vol. 38. No. 7

EA: As a student it was hard to know how to manage a newspaper. For every student organization the challenge is to get a person to come in and meet and organize. To do so is usually a real challenge when you're a full-time student. Often you have to have a part-time job. That was a challenge for me and it is probably still a challenge for students today. I saw a lot of things I wanted to change. When I

*continued next page...*

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

### *El Poeta continued...*

became co-editor, then editor, one of the things that I saw that QOS had an outdated look. QOS had a standard way of looking and, to make matters worse, it was starting to reprint a lot of articles it had previously printed. As a result the magazine was not appealing and was not being read. So what I wanted to do was change the layout of the magazine to make it more appealing. To do that I had to go through the administration. To work with the administration was, for the most part, a constant struggle because we were known as the rebellious group. So the administration did not approve a lot of our requests. It was really stressful and tedious going through all the paperwork but eventually they caved in. So, I was finally able to get more funding for the magazine. This meant that we could afford simple things like staples. Before the magazines weren't stapled together, so getting staples was an accomplishment. And we were able to have a unique cover for every issue of the magazine after that.

We made an important alliance with the group ChiMexLa [Chicano

Mexicano Latino Union]. I recall that we worked together on a big march from the university all the way to the Chicago Sun-Times. The group was composed of students, professors, and protesters who were just furious about the articles written about Clemente and Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High Schools, which said that these schools supported terrorists. It was such a memorable event that I will never forget it!

### **QOS: What is the importance of a Latino and Latin American Studies major and the recent building of a Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center?**

EA: This is very important, because it was something that we've been struggling to achieve for a long time. It wasn't until my senior year that I really began to make these two projects a priority. I made a couple of calls to organize a meeting to pick up the issue again. Dr. [Angelina] Pedroso put a lot of effort into getting this academic major initiated at NEIU and thanks to her support it was a little easier to deal with the administration. I actually haven't been inside the the

center but I hope to go because it's an immense triumph to have place on the campus where Latino/a students can go and not be ignored.

### **QOS: Are there any ideas or experiences you would like to share with the present membership of these organizations and the broader Puerto Rican and Latina/o community?**

EA: Well it's important to maintain QOS because it's vital for Puerto Rican students and all Latino/a students to have a voice when you're invisible. That was the issue back then. It's important to recognize that you are not invisible among your peers. Puerto Rico is small, when it is compared to other countries. So our ability to do the work we do and achieve what we have achieved is really important. Our ability to win these victories is a mighty tool that should be handed down to each generation with great pride. Knowledge about your past at the university creates a sense of belonging which can be important in the career of all students.

### **Dr. Christina Gómez**

*Asst. Professor of Sociology and Coordinator,  
Latino & Latin American Studies Program*



*Que Onde Sola*, the longest Latina/o student publication in the country, provides a significant historical document for our community. For over 40 years, this publication has documented the voices of Latina/o students and the major debates of the decades. Each issue is remarkable in its thought provoking content and passion. Students should be very proud of the work they have done and their inspired and forward-thinking articles. Bravo! We all look forward to another 40 years of extraordinary work.

“For over 40 years, this publication has documented the voices of Latina/o students and the major debates of the decades.”

## Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

*“Through this newsletter writers have inspired other students to be aware of social issues and to become engaged in effecting societal change.”*



**Angelica Rivera**  
*Director of Proyecto Pa'lante*

*Que Ondee Sola* has been an educational and inspirational newsletter for NEIU students, in general, but for Latino students, in particular, during the last 40 years. Students have been very dedicated to maintaining the newsletter while at the same time balancing their own college education. Stories range from getting to know administrators and professors at Northeastern Illinois University to exposing challenging issues that the Puerto Rican community is faced with in Chicago's Humboldt Park. Through this newsletter, writers have inspired other students to be aware of social issues and to become engaged in effecting societal change. Another purpose of *Que Ondee Sola* has been to document history while at the same time to share beautiful poetry inspired by every day struggles. For all of these reasons I would like to congratulate the staff of *Que Ondee Sola* and wish them a happy 40th Anniversary!"



**Brett Stockdill**  
*Associate Professor of Sociology,  
Women's Studies, and Latino &  
Latin American Studies*

I think that *Que Ondee Sola* and UPRS have accomplished some amazing work on this campus. One of the most important things they have done has been to push for and obtain space where Puerto Rican and other Latino and Latina students can meet. They have been the central force that has pushed for the Pedrosa Center, which they first began to struggle for forty years ago. Also, QOS and UPRS were very important forces in getting the LLAS program [Latino and Latin American Studies program], which started as a minor and will be a full-fledged major next year. This will be important because it will prepare both Latino students and non-Latino students to go out in the world and do meaningful work as social workers, lawyers, professors, and teachers, etc. Furthermore, this major will be really useful in developing students' critical thinking, research, and writing skills. It will also make students more aware of the history of Latino communities and their respective political struggles, such as, for instance, contemporary patterns of marginalization and resistance to that marginalization.

*“One of the most important things they have done has been to push for and obtain space where Puerto Rican and other Latino and Latina students can meet.”*

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

Editorial continued from p2...

dealt with. There are triumphs that should be celebrated and struggles that need to be fought for.

### **Allysa Villegas**

QOS means a generation of students that understand the oppression Latina/os and other marginalized peoples face every day, especially in higher education, and refuse to settle for an education or a university that doesn't represent them. QOS is the representation for Latinos all over Chicago at the university level. The members of QOS are extremely involved in organizations in the Humboldt Park community and stand in solidarity with other communities that face similar struggles. The magazine gives a voice to the community and really shows that Latinos are more than the ghetto hoodlums slanging drugs the media likes to portray.

### **Juan “Nito” Morales**

QOS is the voice of Oscar López Rivera and our work around his case; at the same time giving people a look into who he is as a person and not just as a political prisoner. It has given me the ability to relate to him as a Puerto Rican and the question of what does it mean to be a Puerto Rican. QOS is the connection between the work we are doing here at the university to what is being done in the community, such as building relationships with high school students and

improving the community. It is about creating critical thinkers, so students can question the status quo and identify who they are as a person and a student. It lends itself to be used for extraordinary things. QOS has helped me become a better student and activist. It has helped me develop a consciousness.

### **Abraham Esparza**

For me QOS is the voice of the Puerto Rican/Latino students at the university, as well as the voice of the community of Humboldt Park. It touches on the issues that need to be addressed at the university and community, creating a link between both atmospheres; the magazine represents this connection. QOS is the people who work the magazine and their commitment to be in two places. What attracted me to QOS was its struggle, whether to better the Humboldt Park community or to free Oscar López Rivera. This idea of *struggle* is a commonality we share as Latinos at the university because often we feel invisible; even though more and more Latinos are coming in we don't have a clear voice at the university and I feel like it's important to branch out in that sense. I think *Que Onde Sola* can be the encouragement for other Latino cultures at the university to organize themselves and to create a voice for their students and community.

### **Jessica “Jessie” Fuentes**

QOS to me is a platform to be able to express myself through writing. This magazine has provided me with the tools necessary to build critical consciousness and identity. QOS has provided me with a space to explore my puertorriqueñidad and be proud of it. To other Puerto Rican and Latina/o students at NEIU, QOS has been a resource for people to read and explore the realities of our Puerto Rican and Latina/o communities and Latin America. QOS has been a movement to expose the inequalities and injustices that are happening currently. This magazine has provided a space for every Puerto Rican and Latina/o student to gain a critical consciousness and build an identity.

### **Josue Contreras**

QOS is education. I have always been proud of my heritage and native language, but sadly I was misinformed or ignorant of Puerto Rico's history in the context of its political status and relationship with the United States for most of my life. One of the legacies of QOS is its fight for Latin American Studies. I was fortunate enough to take one of these courses and because of it I was enlightened to history from the point of view of the Latino. I quickly understood that there were many wrongs that needed to be made right. If it had not been for previous and current QOS members

continued p23...

# Que Ondee Sola 40th Anniversary Program

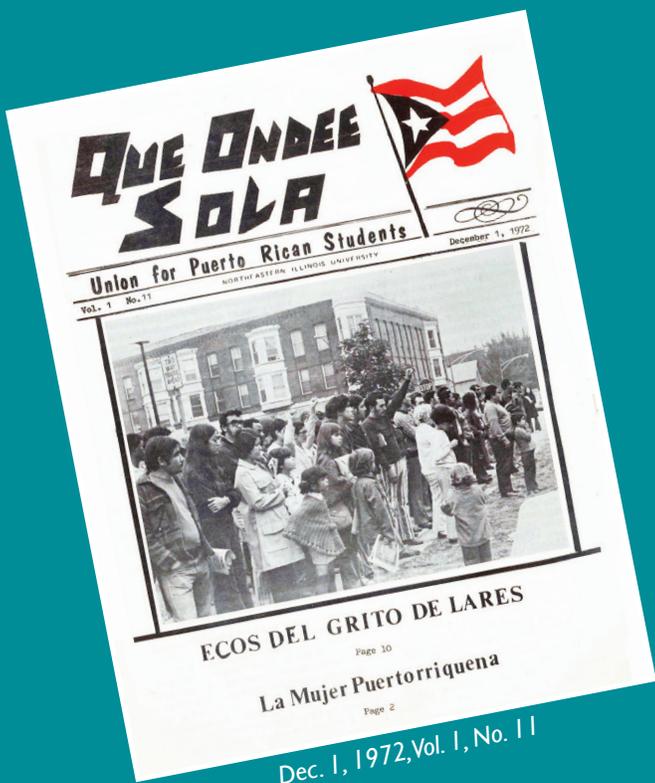
**The University is proud of the work you have done and that you serve as the voice of progressive Latino student activism.**

**Sharon K. Hahs  
President, Northeastern  
Illinois University**



**Gracias a su esfuerzo y liderazgo, hoy NEIU es una institución con programas especialmente designados para estudiantes Latinos y servicios a la comunidad Latina en Chicago.**

**Dr. Daniel López  
Associate Vice-President  
for Student Life**



# “Affirming Identity as 1972- 40<sup>th</sup> Ann



Now in his tenth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez has established himself as an effective legislator and

energetic spokesman on behalf of his constituents in Illinois' Fourth District in the heart of Chicago. At the same time, Gutierrez' tireless leadership championing the causes of the Latino and immigrant communities has led to greater responsibilities within the U.S. Congress and has earned him widespread acclaim throughout the country.

As the first Latino to be elected to Congress from the Midwest, Gutierrez sought opportunities to address long-standing needs facing Latinos and immigrants in his diverse Congressional district, which is home to large and established communities of immigrants from Eastern Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere. During his first term in office in 1992, he led the fight to expand citizenship education and English language proficiency programs for newly-arrived immigrants. In Chicago, he has held citizenship workshops offering comprehensive assistance to prospective citizens that have helped more than 50,000 people take the first steps toward citizenship.

He has been at the forefront of the effort to pass historic, bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform legislation and helped guide the Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act to passage in the House of Representatives in 2010. In 2009, he led a multi-city tour to raise the visibility of the toll of mass deportations on immigrant families and communities.



## Que On Celeb

April 20, 2012 • North

### Reception at Vi

We

Juan Morales, Editor-in-  
Jessica Fuentes, Vice-Pre

*Unveiling of Art Installations:*  
Patricia Pérez, artist and student

### Program at A

We

*Mistress of Ceremonies:* Jessica Fuent  
Dr. Sharon K. Hahs, President o  
Dr. Carlos Azcoitia, President of the Board

Refl

*The Intersection of the*  
Marvin García, Member of the Board o

“Forty Year

Juan Morales, Editor-in-

Key

*Que Ondee Sola: In m*  
*A Forty Year Legacy that Def*

Mode

Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz, Ph.D. Candidate

*A Conversation between*

- Luis V. Gutiérrez, United Stat
- former member of Unio
- Antonio Martorell, Disti

*Silent Auction of an Original Charcoal Poster o*

Closing

José E. López, Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Cen

# ...s a Praxis of Solidarity” ...niversary -2012

## ...ndee Sola ...oration

...easter Illinois University



**...illage Square: 5-6PM**

*...elcome*

...-Chief of Que Ondee Sola  
...resident of Que Ondee Sola

*... Forty Years of Que Ondee Sola  
... at Northeastern Illinois University*

**...umni Hall: 6 - 8PM**

*...elcome*

...tes, Vice-President of Que Ondee Sola  
... of Northeastern Illinois University  
... of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

*...ections*

*... Community and University  
... of Trustees, Northeastern Illinois University*

*...s and Beyond”*

...-Chief of Que Ondee Sola

**...note:**

*...y Memory, In My Practice  
...ines Who I am and Who We Are*

*...erated by*

... and former Editor-in-Chief of *Que Ondee Sola*

*... Two Puerto Rican Masters:*

...ces Representative for Illinois and  
...n for Puerto Rican Students  
...nguished Puerto Rican artist

*...f Rep. Luis V. Gutiérrez drawn during the program*

*... Remarks*

...nter and Instructor in the Latino and Latin American Studies Program



Antonio Martorell  
born in Santurce,  
Puerto Rico in  
1939, lives and  
works in La Playa

de Ponce. He has been artist-in-  
residence for more than 27 years  
at the University of Puerto Rico in  
Cayey. He keeps workshops in Hato  
Rey and El Barrio in New York.

In 2006, his residence at the Univer-  
sity of Puerto Rico was destroyed  
by arsonists. The fire which de-  
stroyed his home, artwork, books,  
photographs and documents served  
Martorell as fuel for further artistic  
creation and a profound under-  
standing that out of the ashes trans-  
formation and grace are born.

Martorell’s artwork is found in the  
collections of the Whitney Museum  
in New York, the Museum of Mod-  
ern Art in New York, the Museo del  
Barrio in New York, the University  
of Wisconsin at Milwaukee Museum,  
the RADO Museum of Art in Swit-  
zerland, the Museo de Douro in  
Portugal, the Library of Congress,  
Washington, D.C., the Princeton  
University Library, the Museum of  
Modern Art in Mexico City, Casa  
Las Americas in Cuba, the Biblioteca  
Luis Angel Arango in Colombia, the  
Museo de Bellas Artes in Caracas,  
Venezuela, the Harvard University  
Fogg Museum, Museo de Arte de  
Ponce, Instituto de Cultura Puer-  
torriqueña in San Juan and the  
University of Puerto Rico Museum,  
among others. His latest exhibition  
“Gestuario/Gestures” is on display  
at the Institute of Puerto Rican Art  
& Culture (IPRAC) here in Chicago.



Dec. 1981, Vol 9 No. 6

**Thank you for reaffirming identity and recognizing diversity as great assets in order to make democracy work for everyone.**

**Dr. Carlos Azcoitia  
President, Board of Trustees  
NEIU**

**This is a monumental achievement that we wholeheartedly support and appreciate a long lasting alliance.**

**Dr. Conrad Worrill  
Director of the Jacob Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies**



June 1982, Vol 10, No. 12

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

**Denise Román**  
Advisor, Proyecto Pa'lante



It is with great pride that the staff of Proyecto Pa'lante honors and pays tribute to the 40th anniversary of *Que Ondee Sola*! Proyecto Pa'lante was created because Latino students composed of members of the Union for Puerto Rican Students came together in solidarity to create a program for student support. Throughout the last 40 years *Que Ondee Sola* has given a visionary voice to the richness of the Latino culture and has been the platform for advocacy, social justice and Latino Leadership on the NEIU campus and in the Puerto Rican community. These values are fundamental to the mission of Proyecto Pa'lante; to promote Latino Leadership through education. We congratulate the staff and writers and everyone who has contributed to the success of *Que Ondee Sola*!

“ Throughout the last 40 years *Que Ondee Sola* has given a visionary voice to the richness of the Latino culture and has been the platform for advocacy, social justice and Latino leadership on the NEIU campus and in the Puerto Rican community.”

“ For a student-run publication, such longevity is an unprecedented landmark.”

**Dr. Víctor Ortíz**  
Assistant Professor, Latino & Latin American Studies Program



For decades of continuous publications is, in itself, a major accomplishment for any journal or magazine. For a student-run publication, such longevity is an unprecedented landmark. Felicidades to *Que Ondee Sola* and best-wishes for the next hundred years. May your exemplary contributions to NEIU be duly supported so your work be as widely recognized as it deserves.

**In Memoriam:**  
Drs. Dan Stern, Ben Coleman  
and Daniel Stern: ¡Presente!

“ *Que Ondee Sola* Honors our allies and supporters who are no longer with us ”

# “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

**Irma Romero**

Former editor, Class of 1982



## Mexican Roots Uplift Puerto Rican Passion

By Reina M Salcedo

Irma Romero, a 72-year-old Mexican woman, has helped shape the lives of not only students from NEIU but in her community as well. Irma realized that helping her Puerto Rican brothers and sisters was of crucial importance during her time at NEIU and afterwards. By the time that Irma got involved with Que Ondee Sola (QOS) and the Puerto Rican community she was already living in Humboldt Park; she felt that as a Latina it was her responsibility to make the community aware of many situations in Chicago and in Puerto Rico. After many protests at the university, Irma was ordered by what she calls the “White Student Legislation” to leave the campus because she was a “danger” to the students. Her peers felt that an injustice had been made and took her case to the Federal level, where a judge ruled in favor of Irma. This allowed her to obtain her Bachelor’s degree. Now a few decades later she has earned her Master’s degree in Educational Leadership from NEIU after serving for AmeriCorps, which helped pay for this accomplishment. She is a woman who has experienced it all, including cancer, and continues to be an integral part of the history of the Humboldt Park community and NEIU. Irma Romero currently serves on the board of the Angelina Pedrosó Center for Intercultural

Affairs and Dr. Pedro Albizu High School and works at Roberto Clemente High School.

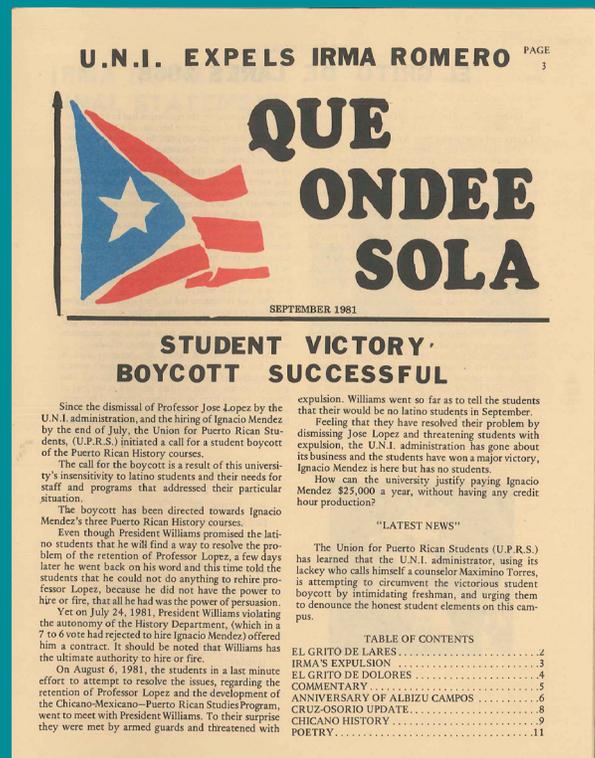
**QOS: Describe NEIU during your year at the university. What were the major issues or most memorable student and community struggles during this period?**

Romero: During my time at NEIU, students were worried about the U.S. Navy bombing routines and training on Vieques, Puerto Rico, which caused cancer among many Puerto Ricans. People protested and Angel Rodríguez Cristóbal got arrested and was killed in Tallahassee, Florida. Angel was a Puerto Rican activist who was part of an organization that protested against the issue.

Another big struggle was and continues to be Puerto Rico’s independence. Since there is no sovereignty, the U.S. and anyone could use Puerto Rico, because

it is a colony. During this time, the students’ mission was not to become rich [individually] but to help their community progress.

**QOS: What challenges did UPRS and QOS face**



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**and how did you try to address them? What alliances were important?** Romero: UPRS and QOS, along with the Chicano-Mexicano-Latino Student Union

continued next page...

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

## Mexican Roots continued...

(CHIMEXLA), helped with any issue that was important to the students. It was not only about helping our Puerto Rican community but any student that felt that their needs were not being met by the university. We did everything from conducting programs to talking with students about the issues occurring at the university. A big issue was women's rights along with helping and opening the doors to immigrant students because of the problems that the U.S. was causing in Latin American. We formed alliances with all of the student organizations such as the Pakistani club.

**QOS: What kind of impact did UPRS and QOS have on campus and the community? What accomplishments were you most proud of during your time?**

Romero: Back then the plan was to design a minor in Chicano, Mexican, and Puerto Rican Studies and hopefully one day making it a major on campus. We fought through the university and brought it up to President Ronald Williams, who then ended the positions of professors teaching Latin American and Puerto Rican history [in an attempt] to eliminate us from campus. At the time, we had two spaces on campus - one for UPRS and the other for CHIMEXLA - and the President had these spaces closed-off, but we managed to still meet.

**QOS: What is the importance of a Latino and Latin American Studies major and the recent building of a Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center?**

Romero: When we fought for the Chicano, Mexican, and Puerto Rican Studies program we aimed to make it a minor

So, the only piece of advice or idea that I can give the students now is to help us as a community fight for the freedom of Oscar López Rivera.

which now I believe is Latino & Latin American Studies but what people don't see is that we have been fighting for this for over 20 years along with a Latino Resource Center. People think that this just came about but it was decades of struggles that we went through.

**QOS: Are there any ideas or experiences you would like to share with the present membership of these organizations and the broader Puerto Rican/Latino community?**

Romero: When I was kicked off campus it was because I was accused of pushing the Vice-

President of Student Affairs when I didn't even touch him. It was really because we took over the Beehive building to demand our rights as students. It was so extreme that the FBI was on the campus. Now, I look at President Hahs and she hears us and is willing to work with us. So, the only piece of advice or idea that I can give the students now is to help us as a community fight for the freedom of Oscar López Rivera. He is still in jail after 31 years because of conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government when that was never his intentions; he just wants to see Puerto Rico free. Not even Nelson Mandela served that long. I'm asking for the justice of our brothers in jail, justice in our community, and justice for immigration. Last piece of advice for students is "one needs to know who the enemy is and have them present."

*My interview with Irma Romero was so powerful, especially when her voice cracked and she came to tears recollecting on what she has been through with the university and the community. The passion that she has for the Puerto Rican community is immense. She says that she is proud of her Mexican roots but has found a home within the Puerto Rican community. This goes to show that in order to make a change you do not have to share the exact background as someone else. My conversation with Irma was so inspiring that we will be continuing our conversation but in a more casual setting.*

# “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

## Jaime Delgado

Former QOS staff, former advisor, Proyecto Pa'lante. Class of 1976  
Program Director, 72 Block by Block Program



## Forty years of an everlasting struggle...

by Brandon Thomas

Being that I am a relatively new addition to the Que Ondee Sola (QOS) team the sheer magnitude of what I had the honor of doing has actually brought a new light to my every day thought process. I was fortunate enough to interview Jaime Delgado, an original founder and member of QOS and the Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS) from 1972 to 1976. He would be at the university until 1988 with Proyecto Pa'lante. In the brief time that we spent on the interview I could clearly tell from his tone and dictation the impact the struggle and the success of his organizing had on him. It was truly a remarkable experience.

**QOS: Describe NEIU during your time at the university. What were the major issues or most memorable student and community struggles during this period?**

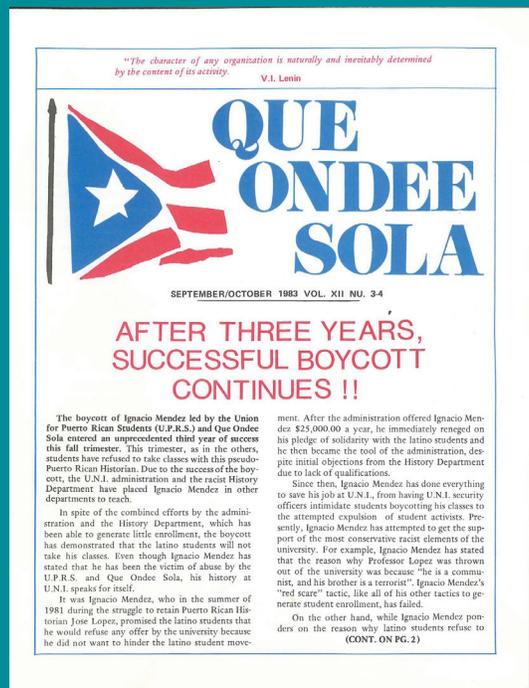
Delgado: We were part of the first students that came in through Proyecto Pa'lante. The university was seriously under-representing the Latino population. It was an unusual climate on campus because there had never really been

a Latino presence. Without the program I may have never been able to get into the university. With this first group came a lot of things like the establishment of UPRS and QOS. I feel like I identified as being Puerto Rican and identified with being part of the struggle. We were instrumental in trying to put pressure on the university to create Latino [focused] classes like Puerto Rican history.

**QOS: What challenges did UPRS and QOS face and how did you try to address them? What alliances were important?**

Delgado: There were issues where there may not have always been consensus. There were struggles with trying to organize different groups of students. We were not trying to force any type of ideas or ideologies on people. There were many barriers that were

even set up against us by the university. We tried even



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setting up English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for people to address the language barriers. There were many instructors that seemed to be unsympathetic towards us. There was definitely administrative challenges and resistance.

continued next page...

## 40 Years continued...

I think at the time the most core alliance was between the Puerto Rican and the Mexican students. The second core was that of us and the faculty.

**QOS: What kind of impact did UPRS and QOS have on campus and the community? What accomplishments were you most proud of during your time?**

Delgado: I think it generally had an impact on helping create changes that were necessary at that time. Most of them were in the name of Puerto Rican students. I believe that we were able to push for a more international curriculum, which was an aggressive push to get change brought on campus. I think it impacted on the future hiring and recruiting processes of the university and also on the administration. For lack of a better term I believe that UPRS was the muscle for Proyecto Pa'Lante who could be used as a recruiting tool for the University.

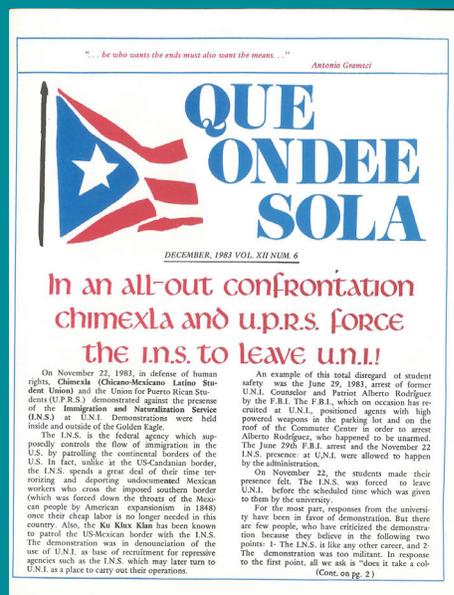
**QOS: What is the importance of a Latino and Latin American Studies major and the recent building of a Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center?**

Delgado: I'm extremely proud [of this accomplishment] that QOS has been working on for forty years. I am also proud that both UPRS and QOS were mechanisms of change for the university campus and community. I have seen the product and the outcome.

**QOS: Are there any ideas or experiences you would like to share with the present membership of these organizations and the broader Puerto Rican and Latina/o community?**

Delgado: I believe that there was a period of time where people were turned off by the idea of working collectively. I think that we need to find a way to get leadership to be better equipped to understand the

idea of collectivity. I feel that we need to find a way to get more people to work harder and work together towards



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collectivity. If there is any failure that I have seen over the last forty years it was that people seem to be more dispersed since time as passed. I think that there really needs to be more collectivity.

negative images non-Puerto Ricans have of our people and community and re-educates them, and at times ourselves, to the beauty of our people and the self-sustaining efforts of our community.

## Editorial continued from p14...

clamoring for these courses I would have never been able to grow in my identity as a Puerto Rican and would have remained disengaged from the fight to better our people's quality of life and education. This is but one struggle QOS embodies and I am but one benefactor of her 40 year journey. QOS is hope. Hope that others

will be inspired to take action when they read the stories of injustices being committed in our midst; injustices being done to their friends, family, neighbors, and to the readers themselves. QOS is our collective memory written in ink being passed on from generation to generation as our forefathers did through story telling. It rewrites the

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

**Myra Rodríguez**  
Former staff writer & artist



### A Real Desire to be a Part of Meaningful Work

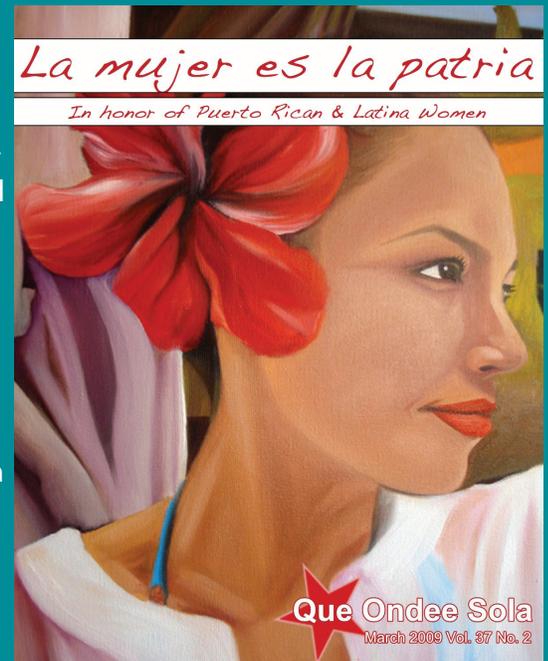
I began attending NEIU in the fall of 2004 and was a full-time student. That first year involved attending class and quickly leaving campus to continue with my life. I felt no real connection to my university outside of the classroom. But, in the fall of 2005 my friend Xavier “Xavi” Luis Burgos transferred over to NEIU and was curious about Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS) and *Que Ondee Sola* (QOS). I recall him asking me to accompany him to the QOS office, just to see what the organization was about. I never imagined how much of my life would change just from stepping into that office.

I was introduced to a group of people that were passionate about making real changes within the university and positive changes for Puerto Rican/Latin@ students. They were fighting for a Latin@ Cultural Center, to make Latin American studies into a major, and how to increase the retention rate of Puerto Rican/Latin@ students. I was introduced to a world I had no idea existed on my campus. I felt a direct connection with the group and a real desire to be a part of meaningful work.

One thing I will always appreciate about UPRS and QOS was the encouragement they gave to get to know one’s history. Before being a part of the organization, I really didn’t know much about Puerto Rican history. But, through cultural events organized by UPRS, community work in Humboldt Park, and Professor José López’s class, I discovered a different type of pride and empowerment. Wanting to continue to connect with my roots, I decided to live in Humboldt Park. My mother had grown up in Humboldt Park after migrating from Puerto Rico, so it meant much more for me to live there. As a community member I had a responsibility to contribute to my neighborhood. I involve myself in community events, support local businesses, and I work down the street from where I live conducting nutrition/health workshops for community residents. I know now what it means to be a part of a community.

I will forever be grateful to UPRS, QOS and the relationships I have built throughout the years because in many ways it

opened my eyes to the realities that exist in this world. And, as I write this I recall something that Professor José López said that will always resonate in me:



March 2009, Vol. 37, No. 2

*“I believe to be human is to be able to engage in the exercise of freedom. By freedom I mean understanding the world about me, acting responsibly upon the world, and -most importantly- transforming that world.”*

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

## J. Marcos Vilar

Former editor, student-at-large



## QOS and UPRS is uniquely prepared to lead...

by Josue Contreras

Marcos Vilar, 48, currently works for *Mi Familia Vota*, a non-partisan national organization that increases civic engagement among Latinas/os in the United States. Born in Ponce and raised in Carolina, Puerto Rico until the age of 14, he lived in several U.S. cities afterwards, including Chicago, from the age of 24 until he was 38. He now lives and works in New York City. While in Chicago in the early '90's he attended NEIU. Subsequently, he worked as a teacher at Roberto Clemente High School and was a national leader of the campaigns to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners and to end U.S. Naval bombing practices on Vieques, P.R.

**QOS: Describe NEIU during your time at the university. What were the major issues or most memorable student and community struggles during this period?**

Vilar: At the time there was the struggle to get Latino Studies at the university. I was involved in discussions with the University President and Provost Marshall to make that happen. QOS [*Que Ondee Sola*] and UPRS [Union for Puerto Rican Students] has always been a bridge between those who went off to college and those still in the community,

but the articles we featured in QOS usually had something to do with issues in the school. So, a big focus of QOS and UPRS was student activism—something that had kind of died-down prior to my arrival. QOS was down to publishing an edition every three months, so those of us still involved with the magazine really pushed for more student involvement so the magazine could get back to being published every month. Another fight was the process of moving the magazine from print to a digital format. At the same time the university was battling through the process of automating certain jobs, like payroll, student enrollment, and tuition payment processing. Things that are standard now, we resisted because many Latino community members didn't have access to the Internet at the time and so we saw it as a disadvantage to Latinos who considered attending NEIU. We resisted through doing presentations on college days and protesting at committee and budget meetings, and one occasion a few of us were actually arrested by campus police.

**QOS: What challenges did UPRS and QOS face**

**and how did you try to address them? What alliances were important?**

Vilar: Well I would have to say Proyecto Pa'lante's Max Torres was a big supporter of QOS and



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Jaime Delgado, before his arrest. However, it was a downtime in activism. It had been ten years since the arrest of the political activists and there was some fear in supporting anything that they were arrested for, so it took some work to get the kind of support QOS had when it first started. Yet, there were a few who stayed strong in their support of QOS and UPRS. Obviously José López (Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center) was a big part of maintaining student activism

*continued next page...*

## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

### **QOS and UPRS continued...**

through education and the editor before me, Félix Rosa - who had been a political prisoner himself - really mentored me. A big non-Latino supporter of our efforts was Kingsley Clark from the Justice Studies Department. He sponsored QOS and would feed us information of changes the university was trying to make, so we could investigate the effect these changes could have on Latino students. Another non-Latino faculty member who was very helpful was Daniel Stern. There were some people in the admissions office that were helpful; one person's name I think was Erica González.

### **QOS: What kind of impact did UPRS and QOS have on campus and the community? What accomplishments were you most proud of during your time?**

Vilar: I think growing QOS and UPRS was a big deal for me given the dwindling membership and participation when I first started. We increased our visibility on campus by bombarding every bulletin board with our fliers and increased our ties to the communities by creating programs that encouraged Latino high school students to attend college, NEIU or otherwise.

### **QOS: What is the importance of a Latino and Latin American Studies major and the recent building of a Latina/o Cultural &**

### **Resource Center?**

Vilar: I didn't know about the Latino/a Cultural & Resource Center. It's really nice to hear that that finally happened because it was something we always asked for; a space for Latinos—Congratulations! The administration, during our time, thought that the QOS space was enough for us. Nothing comes from a void. People who believe that America is threatened by multiculturalism have a pretty myopic view of the world, so I think providing a space for all people to celebrate where they come from is important endeavor in human rights. Denying people the opportunity to learn about their roots, or promoting the history of one culture over another is problematic and should be fought against. It's something we opposed back then and continue to do so. Even though the world is more connected than ever and more cultural information is readily available, there is still that fight to be made and having Latin American Studies and a Latino/a Cultural & Resource Center is an integral part of that fight. The university is paramount in providing a space to highlight the connections between our different cultures and a responsible university will have this space. NEIU is a university with a historically high Latino attendance.. I am proud that I carried that torch for a little while and that the center finally happened.

### **QOS: Are there any ideas or experiences you would like to share with the present membership of these organizations and the broader Puerto Rican and Latina/o community?**

Vilar: I think QOS and UPRS is uniquely prepared to lead in... the Puerto Rican community, given that more than half of us are now living off of the island. What implications does that have for our community and what are our roles as individuals and as a community in this country and the greater Latino community? One of the big migrations of Puerto Ricans today is to the Orlando, Florida area. The uniqueness of this migration is that it is composed of English-speaking Puerto Ricans coming from Northern U.S. cities and Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans coming from the island. What we are seeing is that these two groups of Puerto Ricans are not connecting well, nor are they organizing in ways that Puerto Ricans in Chicago and New York have. How do organizations like QOS, UPRS, and the PRCC connect with others [in the] Puerto Rican Diaspora? [How could they] lend their historical student, community, and activist expertise that they have acquired from over 40 years to improve their Puerto Rican communities and the college experience of Latinos in their areas?

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

**Yvonne Nieves**

Former editor, Class of 2006



## Time Well Spent

I had the pleasure of serving as the Editor of *Que Ondee Sola* (QOS) from 2003-2006. During that time, I simultaneously served as the President of the Union for Puerto Rican Students (UPRS), while working toward my BA in Anthropology at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). This experience helped to further shape my personal politics and influenced my future. To this day, my experience with QOS remains a pivotal moment in my life.

Since the age of nine, I grew up dancing, singing and drumming with Grupo Yubá, Chicago's first bomba group formed out of the Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center. There I learned about slavery in Puerto Rico, about the abolitionist movement on the island, and the music and culture of my people. I also traveled to Palestine in 1999 as a part of a youth delegation with the United Methodist Church in order to exchange and learn about the struggles of people at the hands of Israeli occupiers. This trip politicized me, and allowed me to seek parallels between the Palestinian experience and the experience of my own people. Then, during my freshman year at NEIU, I met the fiery QOS staff at a Puerto Rico Day activity. It was that

event that defined the rest of my college career, academically, socially, and politically. QOS has such a solid history on campus and in the community. I remember taking the time to read through the magazine's archives, learning about the roles that NEIU's Puerto Rican students played. Household names like Luis Gutiérrez (now an Illinois Congressman), Billy Ocasio (Senior Advisor to Illinois Governor Pat Quinn), and Miguel Del Valle (former City Clerk and Candidate for Mayor of Chicago) had all been part of the QOS staff before me. Poets that my aunt, Sandra and mother, Yolanda spoke about, like Pedro Pietri and Julia de Burgos, had been honored in QOS. Puerto Rican history and the struggle of my people were addressed openly in this magazine. The QOS staff, comprised of NEIU students from my geographic and ethnic community, were unapologetic about their views and expressed them in the most articulate of ways. I dedicated myself to upholding the magazine's mission of informing the campus on issues relevant to Puerto Rican and Latina/o issues for as long as I could, because I wanted to be part of this greatness.

I honored this commitment by spending long hours researching and writing articles that documented issues relevant to us students. The staff of QOS worked diligently analyzing campus issues, like those of Latina/o student retention,



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unfair tuition policies for undocumented students, and the absence of a Latino Cultural Center in what is Illinois' only four-year Hispanic-Serving Institution.

My favorite editions that I put together were the annual International Women's Month

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## “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

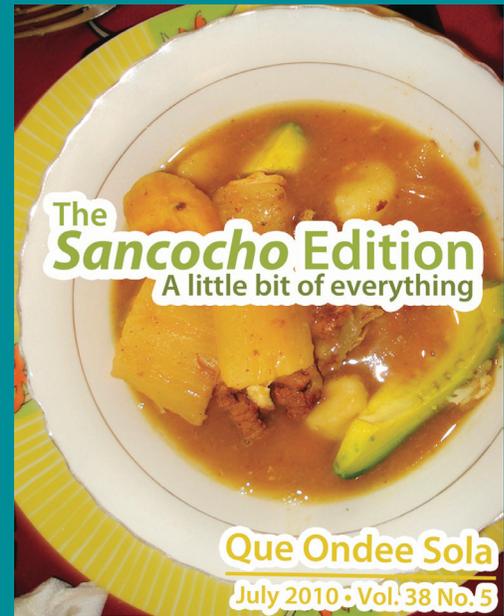
### A Time Well continued...

issues that were published every March. This gave the staff a chance to dedicate a full magazine to the voices of Puerto Rican women, past and present. Of course, putting the magazine together had its ups and downs. There were strong personalities to work with, and varying political views. There were always topics of controversy that the staff members were willing to engage in. We found ways to collaborate with Latina/o students from other Chicago colleges and universities, and helped them put together their own printed publications. We had to deal with the realities of the magazine's production budget and occasional opposition from staff and students. We spent sleepless nights finding the right words and images that would accurately paint the pictures of

our stories. I remember traveling long distances and hauling heavy boxes filled with freshly printed issues. But I lived for the moments that I could rip open one of those boxes, see the glossy cover of our latest editions, and hand out the copies to students, faculty, and community members at QOS sponsored events in the community.

When I reflect on my journey of becoming who I am today, I can look back to my days with QOS with satisfaction. I learned a lot more about the history of oppressed people all over the world, group dynamics, community service and engagement, how to think critically and act strategically in order to produce works of substance. QOS strengthened

my personal beliefs and I saw first-hand how the simple act of documenting history through



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articles can empower entire communities.

### **Miguel Cambray** Director, Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center



**“Now students can have a place and major that support their identity and, most importantly, their culture.”**

Compiled by Christian Cambray

*Miguel Cambray, 30 is Director of the Latina/o Cultural and Resource Center in the Angelina Pedrosa Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs. It is located in room 159 in the B building and is a space where people of any background can come in and engage with individuals of different and similar cultures. This space is crucial because it has been fought for, for so many years. With great power comes great*

*responsibility. It's a cliché but also very true. As the first director, Mr. Cambray has to set the bar high, and overcome all obstacles. After conducting this interview, it became very clear to me why he is the Director of the Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center.*

“Northeastern has become a home for first generation Latino students. A place where first generation students will encounter such a diversity of cultures and

experiences. During my time in Northeastern, I've seen Latino students work to organize and strengthen their programs and groups. That in itself is a struggle. In addition to formal programs and departments that serve Latinos. El Centro, LLAS [Latino and Latin American Studies program], Latino Heritage Committee, and the cultural center, face the same challenges. Two of my most memorable moments were the first

*continued next page...*

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

**Juan “Nito” Morales**

Editor, Class of 2013



## Looking forward to the next 40 years...

by Current Editor, Juan “Nito” Morales

As a student and current editor of *Que Ondee Sola*, I have been captivated by theorist Frantz Fanon’s statement: “each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it.” This speaks to the ongoing struggle, displayed by past and current members, to build responsibility for each other and the community. We have continued a legacy in which new possibilities are imagined and made a reality through collective struggle. I remember first reading *QOS* when I was a student at Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School. The articles were inspiring and uplifting for me. I explored through its pages, which spoke to who I was as a young Puerto Rican man from Humboldt Park. As a high school student, I was eager to learn more about my own history

and was also interested in socio-political movements that empowered countries toward their independence or that uplifted communities. Thus, *QOS* has provided me a foundation to be actively engaged in issues relating to and impacting Latinas/os. This includes advocating for the release of the Puerto Rican political prisoners, working with high school students, and building an organic pipeline from the community to the university. In essence, *QOS* was the start of a collective consciousness that continues to inspire generations of students to participate in a process towards a more free and just world.

### *Cambray continued...*

Latino graduation reception and the grand opening of the Latino Resource Center. Those were days that exemplify victories for Latino students and our communities.

*QOS* [*Que Ondee Sola*] and UPRS [Union for Puerto Rican Students] were also trying to reestablish themselves. I saw them regroup and transition in leadership. Some of the crucial relationships that they strengthen[ed] over the year has been with LLAS, student groups, and the Latino Resource Center. This process has strengthened the sense of community for Latino

students, staff, and faculty. One of the things that I’m proud of is their [*QOS*] pride and dedication to their 40th year celebration. They also continue to engage various stakeholders in their magazine. They have allowed a continuum of public recognition to other Latino student groups.

The opening and establishment of LLAS and the Latino Resource Center validate the Latino community institutions. Now students can have a place and major that support their identity and, most importantly, their culture. It

contextualizes how culture and academic development can be one. These last two years have been the result of all those students, staff, faculty and community members that have fought for the last forty years. It’s an affirmation of our future at Northeastern.

My experience at NEIU and in the community continues to show me how we as Latinos are a beautiful people. We continue to establish ourselves in a positive manner in a society that excludes us. We have many victories to celebrate, but also many struggles to overcome.

*Latina/o Retention* Transforming the Culture of the University Proyecto Pa Lante Latina/o Recruitment UIC Paseo Boricua 40 Years of *Que Ondee Sola* NEIU D.A.L.E Depaul Oye P.R Colombia College Chicana/o Community to University Pipeline Oscar López Rivera Latina/o Cultural & Resource Center Pilsen Union for Puerto Rican Students *Latino & Latin America Studies* Little Village ENLACE NEIU Gentrification Latino Alliance *Latina/o Faculty* Ethnic Affirmation



## Latina/o Coalition

A coalition of university student organizations in Chicago

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I am looking forward to the next 40 years.

# “Affirming Identity as a Praxis of Solidarity”

**Lourdes Lugo**  
Former editor, *Class of 1988*



## Memories That Shaped Who I Am



Lourdes Lugo with her uncle,  
Oscar López Rivera

By the time I started at NEIU, my political and community work had begun, so naturally I gravitated to *Que Ondee Sola* as the space that

**“It was my work with the UPRS and QOS that solidified my growth and commitment to my community and country...”**

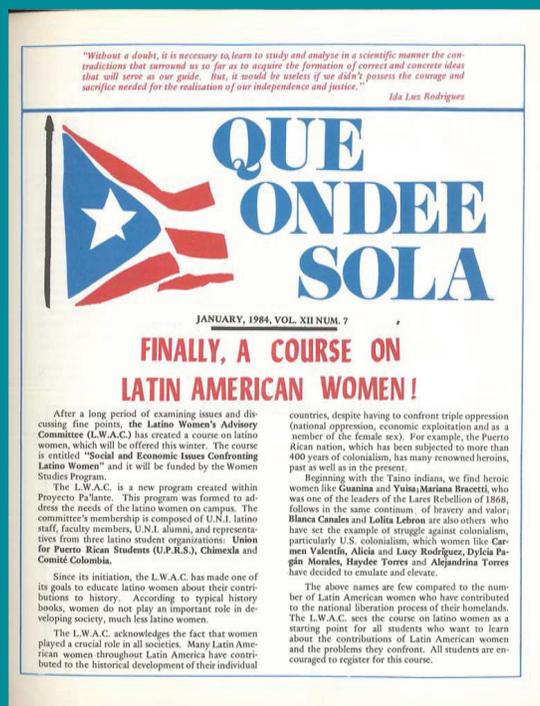
allowed me to form the intellectual aspect of that work. While working in *Que Ondee Sola* I had to learn to write and express my ideas in a cohesive and significant way. During our meetings I was able to exchange ideas, and form better perspectives on the realities we

faced, both as a community within the university, and the community we lived in.

The office of QOS was our real home. Many times we stayed in discussions and exchanges until the university security asked us to leave the premises. We ate, shared, and lived in that space as young women and men building the hope for a better and stronger future. Sometimes we planned our next moves for a better space, or the Mexican/Caribbean Studies Program, as well as what actions were needed to bring attention to the rampant racism at Northeastern. It was within those walls that we honored our past heroes and those that were incarcerated, as we enjoyed the everyday existence of each other.

As young Puerto Rican women we found a space to be safe, heard and respected, and above all, by ourselves. We discovered our strengths and weaknesses, and worked to figure them out. We shared our talents, and sometimes not so much talent. We grew to be in the front of the line when facing injustice, and talk openly of our doubts. I learned the strength of working as a group, and the damage that selfishness can cause others.

*Que Ondee Sola* allowed me to meet students of different cultures and communities across the city of Chicago, hence expanding my perspective of diversity and solidarity with other groups. It



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was my work with the UPRS and QOS that solidified my growth and commitment to my community and country, as well as my responsibility to other groups facing the same challenges we face as Puerto Ricans. I always feel proud of the exposure I had while member of both organizations, and many of my accomplishments are the direct result of the experiences with *Que Ondee Sola* and UPRS.

# Que Ondee Sola 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

## Our Official Website

The internet and online social media have engendered enormous possibilities for politically progressive organizations to connect, inform and document. For Puerto Rican organizations in the diaspora, this is evermore important and urgent. While the mainstream media ignores our diverse stories and our publications are subsumed under a “multicultural” umbrella, *Que Ondee Sola* continues to unravel the complex tapestry of the Puerto Rican experience with a praxis of solidarity. We are proud to say that for over forty years we have, unapologetically, offered a critical lens on the issues relevant to our community, university, and homeland. In celebration of this momentous occasion, we present our official website, the most important feature of which is a pdf archive of our editions since 1972. Now *Que Ondee Sola* can truly live forever. **Visit us at [queondeesola.org](http://queondeesola.org)**

Special thanks to Alejandro Luis Molina for his guidance, commitment, and talent.

Abraham Esparza  
Xavier “Xavi” Luis Burgos  
Web Designers



**QUE ONDEE  
SOLA**  
1972-2012

**Patricia Pérez**  
QOS Panels Artist, Class of 2012



Nothing great has ever been accomplished without a vision, struggle, and support of the people. I am honored to convey these past 40 years of our Puerto Rican history in a series of panels that represent significant leaders and events. The panels take us on a powerful journey that remind us of the victories and many accomplishments we have achieved throughout the years. These memories that stem from the island to the hearts of many, have inspired new generations of leaders to continue the vision of those before us. As I prepare for graduation this

May, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to create this art piece. I hope that it will

**“A special ‘thank you’ to the Que Ondee Sola and the Union for Puerto Rican Students for your commitment to NEIU students.”**

influence future students to look deep into their roots and discover who they are beyond the present moment.

A special “thank you” to the *Que Ondee Sola* and the Union for Puerto Rican Students for your commitment to Northeastern Illinois University students. I personally value the many articles you have written and magazines you have published because they have not only informed me, but inspired some of the artwork I produce.

