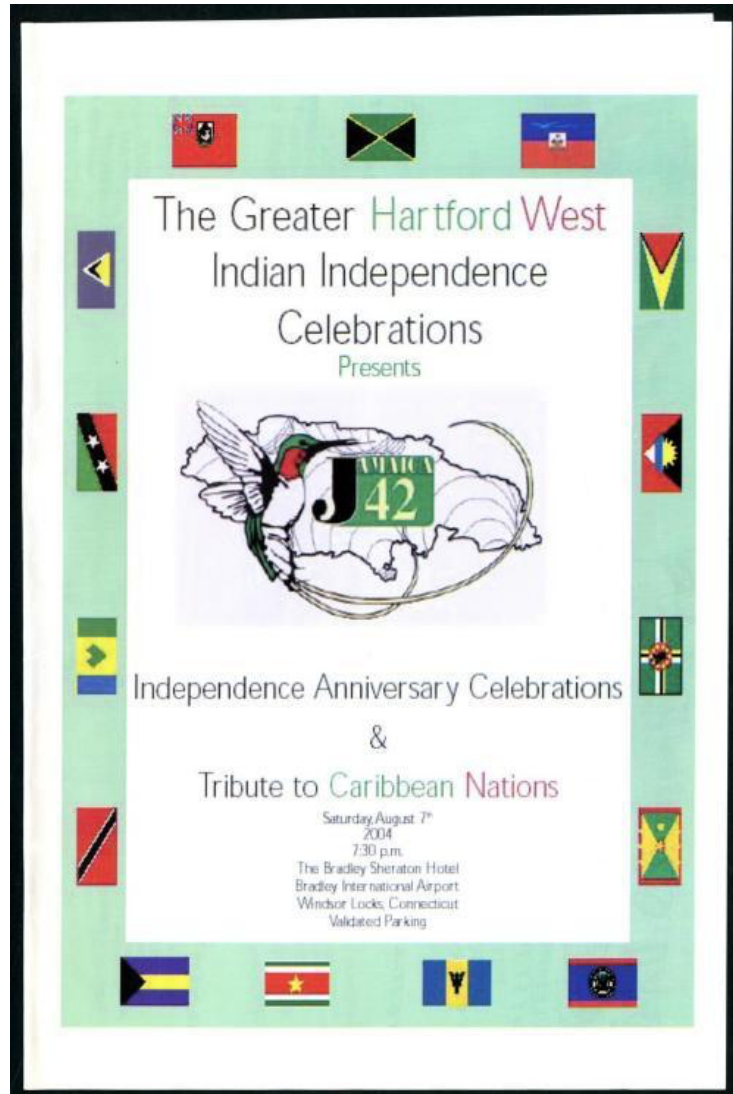


Source Pack 3

Source 1



Flyer, The Greater Hartford West Indian Independence Celebrations presents Independence Anniversary Celebrations & Tribute to Caribbean Nations, 2004.

Flyers, West Indian Independence Celebration Week, 1993-2013. Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program collections, CHS Collection 2015.196.70.5

Background: Connecticut's West Indian community includes immigrants from all the islands in the Caribbean. They have established significant sports, cultural, and social clubs, dance and music groups, and produce an annual week-long festival that attracts audiences from all over the Northeast. With Greater Hartford now being home to the third largest West Indian community in the nation, beloved traditions like Carnival have been transplanted and sustained here. In 1962, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago claimed their Independence from Great Britain. Since that year, the West Indian Parade and Independence Celebration has been a highlight of Hartford's summer activities. The week of activities includes many events taking place at the different island clubs around Hartford and features headlining musicians who perform at the West Indian Social Club. The celebration concludes with a parade and festival in Hartford featuring floats, steel band performances, and masqueraders displaying brilliant costumes.

Source 2

Nuestras Historias Oral History Interview Florencio Morales

This interview is from *Nuestras Historias - Our Histories* project. It was conducted in May of 2000. The Connecticut Historical Society collected several oral histories and photographs from a few of those who helped establish the Puerto Rican community in Hartford. These interviews were part of an online exhibition presenting the story through the words and images of the pioneers themselves. *Nuestras Historias* was funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Connecticut Historical Society.

Vocabulary to know:

Interviewee: The person that is being interviewed is answering the questions - **Florencio Morales**

The interviewers: (people conducting the interview and asking the questions)

Ruth Glasser: and **Amanda Rivera-Lopez** . Ruth Ruth Glasser was a Professor in the Urban and Community Studies Department at the University of Connecticut. Her publications include: "My Music is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917-1940" (University of California Press, 1995), "Aquí Me Quedo: Puerto Ricans in Connecticut" (Connecticut Humanities Council, 1997), "Aquí Me Quedo K-12 Curriculum Guide" (Mattatuck Museum, 1999), [as co-editor] "Caribbean Connections: Dominican Republic" (Teaching for Change, 2004). She work on many community-based projects including books, curriculum projects, oral history projects, and exhibitions.

Transcription: This interview was recorded using an audio cassette recorder. A transcription is a written representation of audio recording. Background information about the interviewee is included in the transcription – these are the words not in quotations. The words of the interviewee are in quotations.

Community Renewal Team (CRT): According to the CRT website, "As the designated community action agency for both Hartford and Middlesex Counties, the Community Renewal Team (CRT) is dedicated to helping people take steps toward healthy and economically stable futures. Since 1963, our 501(c)3 nonprofit organization has partnered with local elected officials, providers, funders, businesses and the community to address challenges like hunger, homelessness, unemployment and poverty. Together, we increase access to education, affordable housing, mental health services and much more for thousands of individuals and families throughout Central Connecticut each and every year." To learn more about the CRT today, click this link [Community Renewal Team](#)

Puerto Rican Day Parade: The first Puerto Rican Day Parade in Connecticut was October 4, 1964. One goal of the parade was to encourage Puerto Ricans to register to vote and participate in elections. The other goal of the parade is to celebrate the state's Puerto Rican community. From [the Connecticut Institute for Community Development-Puerto Rican Parade Committee](#) (CICD) website: "The Connecticut Institute for Community Development-Puerto Rican Parade

Committee founded in 1958 dedicated to social engagement, community building, cultural enrichment, and most renowned for its annual Puerto Rican Day Parade. Cultivated decades ago through modest means, it has emerged as a parade of prominence in the state of Connecticut highlighting the sensational influences that Puerto Rican heritage has on society as a whole."

Affirmative Action: First issued as Executive Order 11246 — Equal Employment Opportunity by President Johnson in 1965 to address discrimination in employment at government jobs. From the U. S. Department of Labor: “For federal contractors and subcontractors, affirmative action must be taken by covered employers to recruit and advance qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans. Affirmative actions include training programs, outreach efforts, and other positive steps. These procedures should be incorporated into the company's written personnel policies. Employers with written affirmative action programs must implement them, keep them on file and update them annually.” To learn more about Affirmative Action click this link [Affirmative Action](#)

Florencio Morales

Background: Florencio Morales migrated from Puerto Rico in 1948 to South Bronx, New York and lived there from 1948-1953. He moved to Guilford, Connecticut in 1952/3 with his brother. He served with the U.S. Navy during World War II. Florencio had several different jobs over the years. He did work for the federal government with the Department of Defense Affirmative Action Program. Below are selections from his interview. This is not the entire interview. The interview was conducted in English on May 11, 2000 by Ruth Glasser and Amanda Rivera-Lopez. Ruth Glasser transcribed this interview.

055: "A poor guy always dreams of becoming rich. When I graduated from high school in 1936 in Coamo, which is a little town on the southern part of the island, there was nothing to do. You just came out of school, you're worthless, really, because there are no jobs, nothing. If you get a little job it pays peanuts, so I drifted. I came to San Juan, and I had some relatives in SJ, and then I started moving around, I became involved with the labor movement, I became a steward for the organization of the hotels and restaurants union of PR. We started...organizing workers in Mayaguez, in Ponce, San Juan, so I became active in that and eventually the war started in the 40s and I went to work for the Navy...I learned a little bit of English there, at least how to call a boat 'boat,' and screw 'screw.' "

073: "Once the war was over...I applied for a job in a club that was very very exclusive, in Santurce, it was the Jacks Panamerican Club...That was on Stop 10 in Santurce...They hired me and for some reason I had perhaps the desire to move up or they saw that I was worth it because...from busboy they made me a waiter, from a waiter they made me an assistant to the manager, and so on...I was dealing with the best of PR, the rich people,

the Lozanas of SJ, the Padins...Once in a while they would come to the club and make a big bill and they didn't pay it, they just went home and later on I went to collect...I got my good tipping by doing that...So finally I created a mental awareness that if I were somewhere else I will do better...and encouraged by the people themselves. They tell me, Florencio, if you go to NY, you will do wonderful. Because NY is the place to be, a guy like you should be in NY...So that got into my blood and in 1946 I got married. In 1947 I was really dreaming to come to NY. And in 1948 I came to NY. I came to NY looking for that big dream."

136: "But I didn't like NY. I felt that NY was not the place for me. So one July my brother Gabriel, one of my younger brothers, that was in 1951, he had been working for a farm in NJ. And the apple orchards in CT...in Guilford, CT, the Bishops. They were looking for help. So they recruited from this farmer in NJ and PA, and they sent a group of men to work in Guilford, among them my brother Gabriel. In July of that year, 1951, he come in NY, and I came to Guilford, the first time in my life. In fact, there was not even an expressway in those days. Only the Merritt Parkway and Route 1. So I liked the little town...I was born and grew up in the country, in a little town so [I] came to Guilford...I went back to NY. In 1952 I came, got my brother, brought to NY for the winter. And in spring of 1952, I brought him back to Guilford. He didn't want to stay in NY. And then he kept on saying to me, why don't you move to Guilford. My brother Augie who lives in Guilford still, came and started to live in Guilford. My brother Wilson came in [southern?] Guilford. Then in 1953 I came to Guilford. And how I came to Guilford? I didn't come to stay, I came on vacation, again in July. And I was right on Route 1, and there was this plant there, it said Victor's Foundry. I didn't know what a foundry was. And I saw this tall gentleman cleaning. I thought he was the janitor, so I stop and ask him a couple of questions, and he says, are you looking for a job. I said well, I don't know yet...He says to me, you look a guy I would like to hire. I said well, why don't you tell me what it is that you do here? He said, well come in. I was skeptical because I thought he was putting me on. This guy in broken dungarees...couldn't be the owner of this place, I thought. So he...sat down, he said to me, I will give you a job, easy job, and you will do this and this and this, and this is the pay, and you will work overtime, you will make good money here and if you get me men to work here I give you an extra for that...So I said, well, let me think about it."

181: "I went to NY, told my wife, and she raised hell. She said that I couldn't stand in one place long enough...I said well, but I'd like to go to Guilford. So she didn't want to come, I came alone. And this gentleman found me an apt. In Guilford there was no places...because everybody owns homes. There was no rentals in Guilford. And there was a Jewish man that had a store, and he had some rooms, so he rented me a room there, and so what?...I stay in NY 2 more weeks, presented my resignation and came to Guilford. And I started working for them, I start recruiting people. And I tell you, they did very well, they were very good employees, very liberal people. I think it was the first time some of the people that came to work for them that had any relationship with the bank or anything like that. We had young men that came from Puerto Rico...and those guys had never even seen a 10 dollar bill. They came there and those guys started earning as much as a hundred dollars a week in 1953, working overtime and piecework. Those guys worked 6 days a week, like beavers. And they wasted their money, they were really blowing the money, buying automobiles and this and that, without a license, that was really something."

207: "The town started getting mad about us, and then started putting ordinances that we couldn't stand on the street, that we couldn't do this, we couldn't do that. I created a group then, and we start dealing with the town. And the town responded tremendously. We started learning English from the...English-speaking people of the town, and we were teaching them Spanish. It's over here, pictures of that...So the relationship was eased. Then we created the Spanish-American Association, we met...we had picnics, we had lechon asados, Puerto Rican style, all over the place, and in fact, Daniel Rineharson [?] was the first selectman of Guilford, used to call me the mayor and I became very active in the town and the state, obviously. In the 60s Governor Grasso appointed me as a justice of the peace. There was good feelings because actually I was in a process of growing my own family, my son was in high school, he graduated from Guilford. Today he's an engineer...My daughter didn't come to school in Guilford but she did very well in NY...Angie and I, my wife, we were in the process of organizing to have a home and stay in Guilford. We thought that we had come to the place where we were not going to leave...In 1954 I convinced her and she came...My wife was born and grew up in...Bayamon. She had never seen a fly in her life. She's afraid of everything that moves. We have in PR lagartijos, she's afraid of lagartijos...She didn't want to come to the country...But nevertheless she got adjusted."

322: "But I was running all over the state. I was having meetings in NY with people from Puerto Rico, I went to Puerto Rico, we met with Gov Muñoz Marin...they were sending us films to show to the people here on the farms...and try to show to the Puerto Rican community the need for involvement...and to become part of the system...I was working at Cheseborough-Ponds when I received a letter from New Haven, offering me a job in the city of NH. I went to meet with...Mayor Lee in NH and they offered me a job...Then I received a telegram from Htfd to come for an interview...A gentleman named John McLean had started in 1962 organizing the Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford. And then, I came for the interview, April 9, 1964...They had an office at the YW on Ann St, which is now the Civic Center...They had moved from W Htfd, Main St, where they formed the group...I was hired...There were...five of us begun with the Community Renewal Team in 1964. They had already been doing some work since 1962. Mr Lloyd Cotwell [?] and others...I became a Community Renewal Team fieldworker. What we did was go out and do the same thing, interview people...tried to document the needs of the community."

370: "So in '65 I left for Norwalk, I went to S Norwalk to work in urban renewal. And I stayed in S Norwalk for a year...It was better pay and a better job, I felt, anyhow...In 1966 I came to lunch in Htfd with John McLean and he said, Flor, I need you. I want to pay you better, I want to give you a better job, I want you back in Htfd. So I came back to Htfd. And became the supervisor of the neighborhood centers...Carrie Saxon Perry...was in charge of my division, she was my boss. So I worked for Carrie for many years, and in the '70s I was already too senior in CRT...I became the director of this, director of that, and I felt that the first orientation on the Community Renewal Team to us was that the program was not to be forever. The program was just until the community became aware of the needs and the self-help type of program...that we were to drift out. In other words, the Community Renewal Team was like a school, teach you and then you fly out and you go and get yourself a job. So I did that in 1970 and applied for the govt job, with the federal govt."

435: Regional office was in Boston, local office in Htfd. FM had gone to Oswego, U of NY to conference, had met John Melendez who lives in Tolland, been selected to direct office in Htfd. "I was explaining to the conference the Community Renewal Team involvement and programs, and they felt that there was a lot to be learned from those things...This man heard me talking, he offered me a job in Htfd. He was my first boss here at the Dept of Defense...The Community Renewal Team, we were instrumental in creating a program, it was called BOLT...Basic Occupational Language Training. The idea...came from NY. We went to NY many times to meet with the PR Forum, which now is here in Htfd, and Aspira...and from there we got the idea of creating under the CRT umbrella a pgm to teach...mostly Puerto Ricans that came here that had some skills. Like if you graduated in PR from...a technical school and you knew the job, but what you needed was some English to communicate, to learn the toolings of the job, so that's [what] Basic Occupational Language Training wants to do...I was the director of that program with...Hector Rivera, who is from Meriden, CT."

478: Pgm did very well, eventually closed because of lack of funding. Then created Farmworkers' Council under CRT umbrella. FM was part of that, used to meet with Maria Reyes from Boston, had office in Chicopee. He had gone to conference in Boston, met people active with migrant workers. State of MA had got already involved because a lot of complaints, reported abuses. CRT donated FM's time to organize it. Met with officials at UMass/Amherst, mtgs in Htfd, Springfield, had conference. He was one of

people who proposed name New England Farmworkers Council, became member of board. Alejandro La Luz and many others part of it.

520: "We created the New England Farmworkers Council because the workers were coming here from Puerto Rico, mainly men. And they were sold out to other farmers. And for instance, Puerto Ricans that never ate sandwiches for lunch. In Puerto Rico people in my days... we ate food with lunch. And these people were being fed poorly. Besides there was no health care at all. There was no participation in religious groups. See these people were just like in a camp with a guy with a gun. They were actually in a concentration camp here in Windsor Locks. So we start raising hell with that and fighting with the farmers in the tobacco industry... That's why the New England Council became so interested to the community, because we were going to be the spokespeople for the farmworkers, and we did... We... served... as advisors to local communities. I remember the many meetings we had with local officials, advising them of the future, which is today, that they didn't listen. Like for instance, Puerto Ricans were coming to camps here, right? Many of them would go back, many of them will drift out to other places. But many of them will stay around, which was told to the administrators... that eventually the school system... had to absorb some of these people. They were told about housing needs. Much of the things went unheard and as a result Barnard Brown became the school for the Puerto Rican community."

567: "The Puerto Ricans were not graduating from high school. Puerto Ricans were being lost in the transition. And then Dr. Rogler from Yale came at a time and start thinking about the idea of bilingual education. Now when I met with Dr. Rogler and many others in trying to organize the system that will take in the non-English-speaking children and try to bring them to a level where they could become part of the school system... The idea was just to create a program whereby children could become part of the whole spectrum of schooling, rather than to aid a system of one language... It was integration, really, because I have never believed in any other thing but integrating. Since I came to this country I found that when you... are part of it. If you separate yourself as a Puerto Rican or as this or that then you are going to be looked at as such. So because of that I had been able to communicate with the entire society... And so Dr. Rogler felt that way too... Today we have many Puerto Ricans that have benefited from bilingual education as well as the time, because they had grown up and children are born here and so on."

624: "We created pgms in the political arena. We created pgms in the labor movement. We created pgms in law enforcement. We created pgms with education, like Rita Cohen, she was the director of the Barnard Brown School. Rita didn't know what to do when she found that so many Puerto Ricans who'd come into Htfd couldn't speak English. Now what did you do when you haven't got the expertise or the funding to create pgms... So the church was great in that because they created then the so-called San Juan Center, and that was to serve as a field office for the Puerto Rican community... I think it was in '69... or later on, the San Juan Center was moved and then they brought in a very active young woman, Sister Margaret Johnson. And Margaret wasn't taking no from no one. Margaret and some of us created the San Juan Center of today. We brought in talent, and we became an independent group from the church... We kept the name San Juan Center and we started working on seeking funding for ourselves and we brought a young fellow from the University of CT, Josh Escalera came as the first director and under Margaret Johnson we grew. Those buildings now on Main St belong to the San Juan Center. That was in a deal with Aetna Insurance Company. We created the elderly center, which is still there today. The SJ Center built a home for the elderly... I was involved in that. Then I became involved with La Casa, which I had been, but not deep in. And once I went to work for the Dept of Labor I got involved with La Casa more actively and they made me president and I was president... for many years... The first job I did with La Casa was to put people there that had knowledge... that had responsibilities... that had contacts... So La Casa board became a group of working individuals in each segment of our society. For instance we had representation from law enforcement, from the lawyers and from the employers and so on. Obviously we had such a dedicated individual in Tony Soto. Tony and Julio Mendoza, those two were and are today leaders of the development of the Puerto Rican community... and the late Mildred Torres. Those are people that if somebody needs to be honored, those are people that should be recorded as the honorees... Like Tony Soto gave so much to... La Casa de Puerto Rico which is there today.

Bilingual Education Opposition Cited as Proof of 'Racism'

The Hartford Courant (1923-); Jun 9, 1972; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Hartford Courant pg. 35

Bilingual Education Opposition Cited as Proof of 'Racism'

Leaders of the Spanish-speaking community charged Thursday that a statement by officials of the Hartford Federation of Teachers criticizing a \$175,000 federally-funded bilingual program "is clear proof of the racism in our school system."

They said the reason so many of their children are hanging around the streets instead of being in school is because they are unable to learn basic school subjects in English.

"They (Hartford Federation of Teachers) don't care about the education of our children, but we do. And we're ready to fight all the way," said Juan Fuentes.

Resolution

Leaders of the Spanish Action

Coalition, the Bilingual Committee and the Spanish Education Planning Committee met Thursday afternoon and voted unanimously on the following resolution:

"We are going to keep on fighting for bilingual education to be expanded on a citywide basis to include all four children because a child learns better in his mother tongue."

Gordon Hill president of the teacher's union, said Wednesday that the bilingual program would "intensify the problems Puerto Ricans have now." He said the program to educate some 300 primary grade students in the Barnard Brown School district in both English and Spanish would create a "pocket of Spanish" in an English-speaking society.

"They have a right to come here. They figure it is an opportunity. It's their problem to learn English. It's not necessarily our problem to bend over backwards to provide all-Spanish schools," Hill said.

Jose Claudio, a Puerto Rican community leader, said if the bilingual school program is cut, his people will tack their children out of the schools "and teach them in the streets."

"What do they mean by bending over backwards? They have been hired to teach and they're getting paid for it," he said.

'Proven Successful'

Julia Ramos, of the Bilingual Committee, said the federal government has recognized the need for bilingual education "and it has been proven successful throughout the country." She said the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO) stated many years ago that children learn better in their mother tongue.

She said while Spanish-speaking children are learning English in the school system, they are falling behind in all the other subjects. It is for this reason, she said, that so many Puerto Rican children are dropping out of school.

Maria Sanchez said if the teacher's union is so interested in the problems of Puerto Ricans, "where were they when we started a year and a half ago" to develop learning programs for these children?

"I feel sorry to see more kids on the streets than in school," she said.

Mrs. Sanchez said there are more than 20,000 Spanish-speaking people in Hartford and the federal government "gave us the \$175,000 because we fought for it."

The Spanish-speaking group said they will invite Hill and John Palmerick, president-elect of the teacher's union, to a meeting in the near future to explain their position on the bilingual program.