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CAMBIO DE COLORES (CHANGE OF COLORS) 2005—LATINOS IN MISSOURI FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE: “CONNECTING RESEARCH TO POLICY AND PRACTICE: HOY Y MAÑANA”

“Cambio de Colores (Change of Colors) - Latinos in Missouri” is an annual three-day conference that focuses on issues related to the current Latino immigration to the state in particular and the Midwest in general. The goal of this conference is to contribute to the smooth integration of the new population for the benefit of all the people in the state of Missouri.

Similar to other states of the heartland, the Latino population in Missouri has more than doubled in the past fifteen years. Today, it comprises nearly 2.5 percent of Missourians. And even though the largest concentrations are in the metropolitan areas of the state, almost every county has had significant increases. A state government study based on the 2000 census found that “Fifty-six of Missouri's 114 counties reported percentage increases from 1990 of over 100%.”

The fourth conference theme is **“Cambio de Colores (Change of Colors)—Latinos in Missouri: Connecting Research to Policy and Practice - Hoy y Mañana.”** It will take place from March 30 to April 1, 2005, at the Reynolds Alumni Center on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus. The conference, which draws more than 300 participants, will be organized in five general areas: change and wellbeing; civil rights; education; health; and youth, families, and communities. Academic research and extension specialists, public and private service providers, grassroots organizations, state and local government institutions, politicians, and newcomers themselves are encouraged to attend.

With the overall emphasis of translating knowledge into policy, the main objectives of the conference are to assess the changes brought about by the presence of new Latino settlers in every region of the state; to discuss the multiple contributions—economic, social, and cultural—that this settlement of new Missourians is bringing to many communities and to the state as a whole; to share relevant scholarship and best practices, and identify growth opportunities and challenges that this demographic change brings to the state, its people, communities, businesses, and educational institutions; and to provide a forum to discuss these important and complex issues.

Conference co-chairs are University of Missouri’s Stephen Jeanetta, community development state extension specialist, and Linda Espinosa, professor at the college of education. The Executive Coordinator is Domingo Martínez Castilla, coordinator of the

Cambio Center. The conference planning committee includes more than thirty volunteers from state public and private institutions.

Plenary speakers will include national and state experts on education, demographics, community development, policy-making, health care, as well as service providers themselves. There also will be a presentation by the Missouri Governor's Commission of Hispanic Affairs.

Special guests include Columbia Mayor Darwin Hindman, UM System President Elson S. Floyd, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton and interim Provost Lori Franz, and other University of Missouri leaders.

Main sponsors are the University of Missouri System; the MU Office of the Chancellor, Office of the Provost, Vice Provost for International Programs & Faculty Development, Cambio Center, Hispanic and Latin American Faculty & Staff Association (HLAFSA); University of Missouri Extension Alianzas; in cooperation with the MU Conference Office.

Early additional sponsorship has been received from State Farm Insurance, Saint Louis University, US Bank, Missouri Foundation for Health, Premium Standard Farms, and Mercy Health Plans of Missouri.

For more information regarding the conference, please access the conference website: <http://www.cambiodecolores.org>