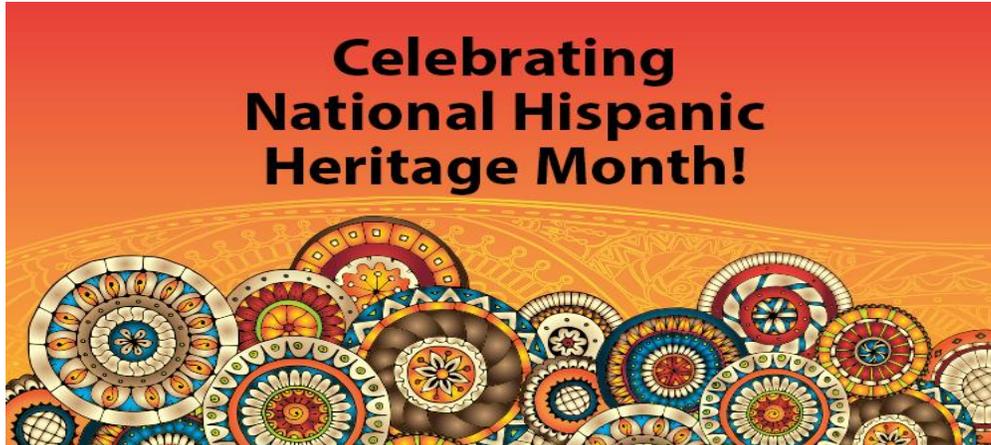
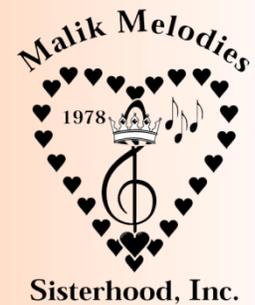


The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.



Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month!

Greetings Reinas y Reyes!

National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated in the United States from September 15 to October 15. This is the period when we pay tribute by learning about and celebrating the generations of Hispanic and Latino Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society.

Under President Lyndon Johnson the observation of National Hispanic Heritage Month started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week and was extended to a month-long celebration by President Ronald Reagan in 1988. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

September 15 is the anniversary of Independence Day of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile and Belize also celebrate their Independence Days on September 16, September 18 and September 21, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is October 12, falls within this 30-day period.

The term Hispanic or Latino refers to Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. On the 2010 Census form, people of Spanish, Hispanic and/or Latino origin could identify themselves as Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin."

Let's share in this annual tribute by learning and celebrating this rich and influential culture!

Que Comience la Celebración! (Let the Celebration Begin!)

Sharon Harleston
Executive Branch Vice President



September/October 2019

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The Graces Staff

Kim J. Bright
Sharon Harleston
Nathalie Lilavois, Ed.D.
Lisa Rodriguez
Anita Wallace
Jillian Gibson
Melissa Pacheco
Kendra Rivers
Bibi Chaterpateah

Executive Board

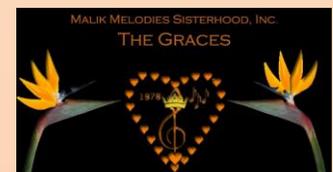
Kim J. Bright, Co-Founder
Nathalie Lilavois, President
Sharon Harleston, Vice President
Anita Wallace
Mary Richardson
Lisa Rodriguez

Malik Melodies Sisterhood Inc.

P.O. Box 260430,
Bellerose, NY 11426
P.O. Box 92944,
Washington, DC 20090

malikmelodies@gmail.com
www.malikmelodies.org

Please send comments or ideas for articles for future newsletters to TheGracesNewsletter@gmail.com





Second Annual WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference

In celebration of our 40th Anniversary and the United Nations the International Day of the Girl Child, our conference aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges girls face, while also promoting girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. This year's event will be held on **Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 9:00am – 4:00pm at the Nelson Mandela School for Social Justice in Brooklyn, NY.**

This **full-day conference** will be a day of networking and building flourishing bonds with other women, girls and organizations that share similar core values as our organization in Leadership, Empowerment, Collaboration, Faith, Cultural Enrichment and Education, Civic and Social Responsibility and Sisterhood. It will be an unforgettable celebration focused on inspiring all participants to work to create a better world for girls, women and everyone.

The day will culminate with the “Gem Among Us” awards presentation, honoring outstanding individuals and organization for their commitment to uplifting and empowering our girls.

This event is free for Students 18 and younger. \$5.00 for Adults. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.



CLICK HERE TO REGISTER: www.malikmelodies.org



Puerto Rico: My Home – So Close Yet So Far by Dylan Sprei



This Caribbean island. The little place I'm proud to call my home, at least one of them.

My mother (Maritza Arroyo) is a proud, strong Puerto Rican who throughout her life has remained true to her culture and ethnicity. She always has done her very best to instill and keep my interest in the culture, but as sad as I am to admit, at a younger age I wasn't quite as proud.

This is so tough for me to admit because now, whenever someone asks me my ethnicity, I state, with heart, "I'm Hispanic, Puerto Rican". When I was about 10 or 11 years old, I attended a primarily white middle school. Me, not being not so knowledgeable (woke, that is), I thought I needed to overlook the fact that 50% of me is Puerto Rican. My father, you see, is white. So, I thought that to fit in with the crowd and to be, in my mind, "acceptable", I would have to say I was a white male.

Sad, isn't it? I think so.

The last time I visited Puerto Rico in August 2017, I felt like, for lack of a better term, like a "gringo". I couldn't really speak nor write Spanish – I could only manage a few phrases and count to 10. And when I spoke, people looked at me like I was a tourist who was trying his best to make the locals feel comfortable. My experience on the island changed my whole perspective on what it meant to be Puerto Rican. It made me proud. The food I ate made me proud. The interactions I had made me proud. It made me want more of the culture.



Then Hurricane Maria struck. My mother anxiously watched on the TV and glued to social media. At the time I was 14, more aware, and after our trip, I felt more connected and prouder of our culture. I watched with her and stayed with her to comfort her, telling her that our family and friends would be safe.

The damage was deep and wide. Today people are still without electricity. Are still without roofs over their heads. Are still without necessities like food and water.



Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States. Like a little brother. The United States' brother has been hurt and it just sits there and does not help as much as it should.

I strongly believe the US government isn't doing enough. We, the people need to continue to support Puerto Rico.

Go take a vacation.

Donate to local charities.

Write to your local elected officials.





DID YOU KNOW?

- Vocalist Joan Baez participated in Civil Rights March on Washington DC 8/28/1963.
- Oscar Hijuelos is the first Hispanic to win the Pulitzer Prize for The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love (1989), the story of Cuban musicians in New York in the early 1950s, when Latin music first swept the United States.
- Ellen Ochoa is the first Hispanic woman to become an astronaut for NASA in 1990.
- The first Hispanic to serve in the U.S. Congress is Joseph Marion Hernandez a delegate from the Spanish territory of Florida. He served in Congress just over five months, from September 1822 to March 1823.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Breast cancer is a disease where cells in breast tissue of the lobes, ducts or connective tissue begin to grow abnormally. Taking an active role in your health care by being aware of how your breasts normally look can help one identify early signs or changes in the breast. Listed below are a few Breast Cancer facts you should be aware of.

DID YOU KNOW...

- After skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in women worldwide.
- As of January 2016, there were more than 3.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States
- The median age of breast cancer diagnosis is younger in women of color (59 years of age) than white women (63 years of age)
- Regular breast self- exam can help someone become familiar with how their breasts normally look and feel which may make it easier to identify a change early. Any change or sign such as a painless lump in the breast or underarm, swelling, redness or nipple discharge should be discussed with a health care provider.
- In a recent study, researchers explain that having a dietary vitamin D deficiency may accelerate the growth of breast cancer cells, suggesting that maintaining adequate vitamin D levels may be an important factor in supporting breast health.
- Biological markers are measured to identify the absence or presence of hormone receptors (HR) and excess levels of human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2). Based on the results of the tests, the breast cancer is categorized as either:
 - Hormone receptor HR positive/HER2 positive
 - Hormone receptor (HR) positive/ HER2 negative
 - HR negative/HER2 negative also known as Triple negative

By: Shirley Lilavois MSN, ARNP-C, CCRC

Oncology Research Nurse, Center for Novel Cancer Therapeutics, Northwell Cancer Institute

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Vitamin D Deficiency May Promote Spread of Some Breast Cancers was originally published by the National Cancer Institute."

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Epub 2016 Mar 2.

Tumor Autonomous Effects of Vitamin D Deficiency Promote Breast Cancer Metastasis.

Williams JD¹, Aqgarwal A¹, Swami S¹, Krishnan AV¹, Ji L¹, Albertelli MA¹, Feldman BJ¹.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Inaugural Conference

Last year, on October 13, 2018, MMSI hosted our Inaugural *WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference* at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center in Jamaica, NY. Everyone experienced an exciting and powerful filled day with fantastic guest speakers, awesome entertainment, and outstanding organizations who work tirelessly to empower our girls and our communities. Our full-day conference culminated in *The Gems Among Us Awards* ceremony.



2018 THE GEMS AMONG US AWARD RECIPIENTS

A Place of Abundance



Complete Girlz, Inc.



Reach Far Foundation



VIDEO: “Check out our compilation video from the *WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference*”
<https://www.malikmelodies.org/2018-conference-video>