

# LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER HOSTS “MI VIDA, MI VOZ” ART EXHIBIT BY HISPANIC YOUTH ARTISTS**

*Washington D.C. (March 19, 2017)* – The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) launched a new program “MI VIDA, MI VOZ” earlier this year in January. The program led students to embrace their multicultural identities through creating mix-media art projects. Last night, over 50 people gathered inside LAYC’s Teen Center for the final art exhibition that showcased the projects of the ten participants. Participants are Hispanic students from Lincoln Multicultural Middle School and Bell Multicultural High School in Washington D.C.

The majority of youth that the LAYC serves come from Hispanic or Latino backgrounds. The goal of the program is to encourage students to combat anti-immigrant stigmas and perceptions through art. Patricia Bravo, the Chief Operations Officer, explains that the program MI VIDA MI VOZ “translates to ‘My life, my story,’ because each person has a story to tell based on their lived experiences.” Teens were able to work together to create their narratives in groups of two, and used a wide variety of mediums such as photography, painting and film. Through the program, students learned about the production process to develop their stories and art. Participants were also mentored by college students from the University of Maryland. Mentors were chosen based on their expertise in art, design, and film in order to guide students.

During the art exhibition, participants stood proudly next to their creations. Anthony L. Mendez, age 16, painted images of “a Hispanic family, who are facing up towards the sun while hearing their neighbors yell derogatory terms.” Anthony collaborate with Juan Perez show their perspective of how combating negative stigmas can strengthen the will of Hispanic communities.

The program MI VIDA, MI VOZ will use donations collected from last night’s exhibition to help fund the next sessions of the program in the start of the Fall Semester.

*The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) provides services that are geared towards fulfilling their mission of empowering a diverse population of youth. They aim to ensure a successful transition to adulthood, through multi-cultural, comprehensive, and innovative programs, such as “MI VIDA, MI VOZ.” For more information, and to donate, visit <http://www.layc-dc.org/> or call (202) 319-2225.*