



500 Lucas Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213.250.4800 phone
213.250.4900 fax

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CONTACT: ELENA STERN
(213) 481-3517
Cell (310) 738-1376

PARA LOS NIÑOS EXECUTIVE APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR TO CALIFORNIA STATE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

Hector Ramirez, longtime children and family services expert,
to fill slot vacated by actor Rob Reiner; will serve as Chair

Para Los Niños announced today that Hector Ramirez, one of its senior executives, has been named by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as Chair of the California Children and Families First Commission.

Mr. Ramirez, 38, is currently serving as Vice President of Programs and Chief Operating Officer at Para Los Niños. He has been with the agency since 1998.

Now in its 25th year of operation, Para Los Niños assists 2,500 low-income children each day and 4,000 families every year from 20 sites in some of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties' most impoverished neighborhoods. The agency's core services for infants to teens include early child development and education, a Charter School, after-school enrichment, youth diversion and delinquency prevention, youth workforce, and mental health services.

"I am truly humbled and greatly honored by Governor Schwarzenegger's confidence in me to carry out the responsibilities of a California Children and Families First Commissioner," said Ramirez. "There is significant work ahead of us to ensure that the highest quality early childhood programs exist in this state to serve those children and families who most need them, from education, to health care, child care, social services and family resources. These are the goals we seek to fulfill at Para Los Niños regionally, and I look forward to pursuing them now on a statewide level. This is indeed a tremendous opportunity."

"This is an extraordinary honor not only for Hector, but for Para Los Niños as a family services agency," said Roger L. Carrick, Chairman of the Board of Directors. "We are proud that the Governor has recognized Hector's expertise in his field and that he is entrusting Hector to participate directly in critical public policy decisions that will positively impact children and families throughout California. I know that Hector will contribute a balanced, reasoned and experienced voice in the ongoing dialogue aimed at improving the lives of all Californians. "

The so-called "First 5 California" Commission was created to promote, support and improve the early development of children from the prenatal stage through five years of age, focusing on community awareness, education, nurturing, child care, social services, health care and research.

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HECTOR LUIS RAMIREZ, MSW

Mr. Hector Ramirez is currently co-interim CEO, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer at Para Los Niños, a nationally accredited community-based family services agency headquartered in the Los Angeles, California. He is responsible for providing administrative and fiscal oversight of the agency's child development, school age, adolescent, family resource and mental health programs, which employ 320 employees and serve over 2,500 children a day and 4,000 families a year at 20 locations throughout Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. His professional experience includes working for the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and other community based agencies.

Mr. Ramirez serves on several local, national and international committees including the National Council La Raza (NCLR)--California Region Education Committee (Co-Chair), the CWLA International Advisory Committee (Co-Chair), and the International Child Welfare Forum (Agency Delegate), the CWLA National Childcare and Development Advisory Committee (Member). Mr. Ramirez is also a board member with SPIN-USA, a national organization based in Massachusetts, and he served on the Executive Committee for the Los Angeles County Universal Preschool (LAUPK) Initiative.

Mr. Ramirez holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from California State University, at Long Beach and he is a graduate of the Harvard University, Performance Measurement for Effective Non-Profit Organizations Program (PMNO). In addition, Mr. Ramirez is a certified Team Leader for the Commission on Accreditation for Children and Family Services, the nation's largest child and family services accrediting body.

Mr. Ramirez lives in La Mirada in Los Angeles County, and is the proud father of a twelve-year old daughter, Evanichole.

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