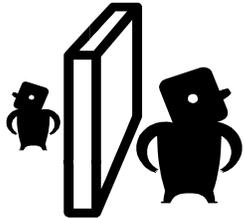
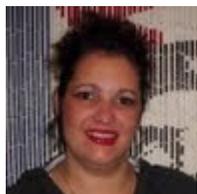


# UNITED, WE SERVE OTHERS



# DIVIDED, WE SERVE OURSELVES

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER CELEBRATING **CULTURAL DIVERSITY** AT CAI - VOL 1 WINTER / 2012



## SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF

For 27 years Rosa Batista lived, went to school and worked in Holguin, Cuba – the eastern part of the country where farm land and sugar cane factories dominated the area. Her father grew the food they ate, education and healthcare were free, and life was simple...too simple, in fact. They lived in a cinder block house with tile floors. They had no running water, no electricity, and the closest neighbor was 10 miles away. They ate the bananas and potatoes they grew. If anyone owned a cow, the government controlled what could be done with the cow. They were allowed to milk the cows and make cheese. They were not allowed to kill or eat the cows, even if the cow died from a disease. The authorities were called and they would come take the cow away. At times, they were able to access meat on the black market and smuggle it, which they did at the risk of being caught. The sentence was 20 years in prison; a penalty far more stiff than the 5 years probation one might receive for murdering someone. The average wage was about \$7 a month. Most purchases required ration books regulated by the government, unless someone had US dollars which expanded the purchase options.

Rosa has a Master's Degree in English. She explained that the government designated an education in economics because that's what was needed at that time. Education was free, but the government determined what the education would be, based on the needs of the country. Rosa recalls, "I hated math! I didn't want to take economics." At the risk of losing her education benefits entirely, she convinced a different school to take her in and allow her to become an English teacher. She received her Master's Degree, and after teaching 3 years, she applied for a VISA to come to America. She was the only one out of 120 who was granted a VISA. A church in Newport News sponsored her, paid for her plane ticket, took her in and helped her settle. She stayed in Newport News for one month before moving to Virginia Beach. Her first job was as a waitress. She couldn't get a job teaching because Cuba refused to release transcripts of her education. Free education meant that they owned her credentials. She later worked in the housing industry, which eventually lead to her position with Community Alternatives, Inc.

Rosa recalls the culture shock when she landed at JFK in New York. "When I first came here, I would sit by the sink and turn the water on. I was fascinated by the running water!" She went on to explain how it felt to be free. "I could say what I wanted and think what I wanted...and there were no rations!"

Rosa told the story of a cousin here who escaped from Cuba three times on a raft. Twice he was caught, returned to Cuba, put in prison and tortured, but the third time he made it to America. She is very thankful to the church that sponsored her to come here, but says she is not very religious. "Religion was illegal in Cuba. Castro thought he was higher than God, and didn't want anything to be more important than he was." Rosa's family is still in Cuba and that makes her sad. Rosa sends money to help her mother, which is especially important since the Cuban government retracted her mother's monthly pension of \$4.00, saying that her daughter in America could take care of her. On occasion Rosa returns to Cuba to visit her family, bringing her own daughter to visit her roots. "I cry when I go back, but I'm surprised that my daughter is able to adjust."

Rosa was recently promoted from Leasing Agent to Outreach Coordinator in CAMG. What does the future hold for Rosa? "I'd like to go back to college someday and get a degree in Criminal Justice. I want to work in a forensics lab, but that'll take a lot of money."

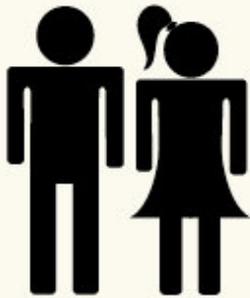
## DID YOU KNOW?

**JANUARY is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) History Month** in the UK and was initiated by schools in Britain in February, 2005 as an opportunity for all to learn about the lives and achievements of **LGBT** people in Britain and Northern Ireland.

**FEBRUARY is BLACK History Month** - Since 1976 to recognize the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. The event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans.

**MARCH is WOMEN'S History Month** and was initiated by the National Women's History Project (NWHHP), a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1980 to "promote gender equity through education about women's diverse lives and accomplishments."

# NEW AMERICANS IN VIRGINIA

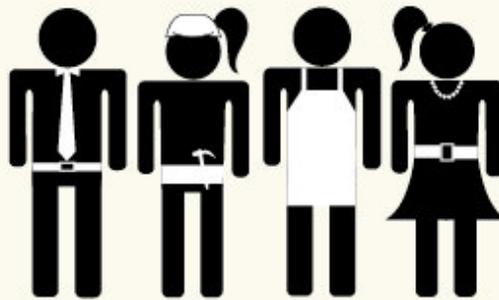


**11.4%** of Virginians are foreign born.

**13.4%** of Virginians are Latino or Asian.

**45.5%** of immigrants in the state are eligible to vote.

**9.3%** of registered voters are New Americans.

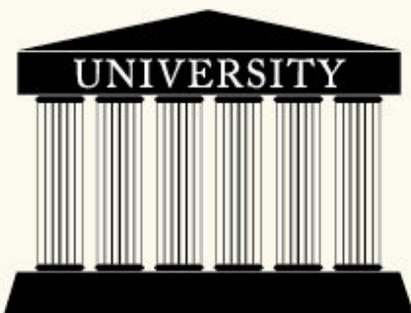


Immigrants are **15%** of the state's workforce. **3.9%** of the workforce is unauthorized.

Asian-owned businesses in Virginia have sales and receipts of **\$13.2 billion.**

Latino-owned businesses in Virginia have sales and receipts of **\$5.9 billion.**

The purchasing power of Virginia's Latino and Asian populations is **\$33.6 billion.**



Virginia has 14,844 foreign students who contribute **\$357.2 million** to the state economy.

**44.2%** of foreign-born adults have a bachelor's degree or higher.



**88.4%** of Virginia's children with immigrant parents are U.S. citizens.

**86.6%** of children with immigrant parents are English proficient.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Virginia would lose **\$11.2 billion** in economic activity if all unauthorized immigrants were removed.

[www.immigrationpolicy.org](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org)

## JANUARY 2012 EVENTS

- 1 - Japanese New Year (Japan)
- 1 - [New Year's Day](#) (United States)
- 16 - Religious Freedom Day
- 16 - [World Religion Day](#) (Baha'i)
- 16 - [Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday Observed](#) (United States)
- 23 - [Chinese Lunar New Year](#) (China, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam)
- 23 - [Tet Nguyen Dan](#) (Vietnam) "Year of the Dragon"
- 26 - India Republic Day

## FEBRUARY 2012 EVENTS

American Heart Month

[National Black History Month](#) (United States)

- 2 - [Groundhog Day](#) (United States)
  - 4 - Rosa Parks Birth Anniversary
  - 5 - Mexico - Constitution Day
  - 5 - Super Bowl XLVI, Arlington, TX
  - 8 - Tu B'Shevat- "Birthday of the Trees" (Jewish)
  - 12 - [Abraham Lincoln's Birthday](#) (United States)
  - 12 - NAACP Founded
  - 14 - Race Relations Day
  - 14 - [Valentine's Day](#) (United States)
  - 17 - League of United Latin Citizens (LULAC) Founded
- American

## FEBRUARY 2012 EVENTS (cont.)

- 20 - [President's Day](#) (United States)
- 21 - [Mardi Gras](#) (United States)
- 22 - [Ash Wednesday](#) (Protestant, Roman Catholic)
- 22 - [George Washington's Birthday](#) (United States)
- 22 - [Lent begins](#) (Orthodox Christians)

## MARCH 2012 EVENTS

Deaf History Month

Greek-American Heritage Month

Irish-American Heritage Month

Intellectual Disabilities Awareness Month

National Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month

National Multiple Sclerosis Education & Awareness Month

[National Women's History Month](#) (United States)

Spiritual Wellness Month

- 2 - Mothering Sunday (England)
- 4 - World Day of Prayer
- 8 - International Women's Day (United Nations)
- 8 - [Purim](#) "Festival of Queen Esther (Jewish)"
- 11 - [Daylight saving time begins](#)
- 17 - [St. Patrick's Day](#) (Ireland, United States)
- 20 - Spring Begins