

Appleseed This Week

eNewsletter - June 25, 2009



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Immigrant Banking in Louisiana

Building Wealth in Growing Latino Community

In collaboration with Appleseed's national financial access program for Latino immigrants, Louisiana Appleseed recently released a report documenting the need - and desire - for better financial services and education within the local immigrant community.

Immigrant Banking: Reaching the Latino Population in Louisiana can be [viewed here](#) on the Louisiana Appleseed website.

Rebuilding efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita prompted an influx of Latino immigrants into the region, with some estimates showing the regional Latino population to have nearly doubled since 2005. Consequently, Louisiana Appleseed recognized a need to connect this growing community to mainstream financial institutions and promote financial education.

According to the report, "a more financially literate Latino population will contribute to the prosperity of the area and its revitalization because families will be able to build credit, start savings, purchase homes, obtain loans and pursue education. Instead of spending money on high fees charged by alternative financial services, immigrants will be able to reinvest in the community by contributing the savings to the local economy."

Immigrant Banking also contends that local financial institutions would benefit from increased outreach to the growing Latino community. For example, banks and credit unions would attract more immigrant customers by offering remittance products, accepting foreign identification and training bank employees to be conscious of cultural differences.

The report also lays out a number of best practices for meeting the financial needs of Latino immigrants. By following these recommendations, banks and credit unions will not only build their customer bases but also build a more integrated

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Louisiana Appleseed Executive Director Christy Kane has been named by Chief Justice Catherine D. Kimball to the Louisiana Supreme Court Pro Se Litigant Task Force. The group is charged with "studying the issue of 'self represented' litigants to examine what steps can be taken to assist such litigants, and to make appropriate recommendations."

community that will contribute to the city's social and economic well-being.

In other Louisiana Appleseed news, Governor Bobby Jindal signed into law last week a bill that will provide greater protections for owners of "heir property."

Act No. 81 will lower the costs of title-clearing for many low-income homeowners and protect heir property owners from land loss, affording them better disaster recovery options and increasing their access to the wealth-generating tools commonly associated with home ownership.

The act was drafted and introduced by State Senator Edwin R. Murray with the help of Louisiana Appleseed. Read the press release [here](#), or click [here](#) to view a PDF version of Act No. 81.