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# EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS

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Wayne County Treasurer  
Hosts 8th Annual Veterans Fair

## “Que comience nuestra historia”: Proyecto de historia oral de VOCES en el suroeste de Detroit

Escrito por Ozzie Rivera

En la noche del 6 de diciembre, el equipo del Proyecto de historia oral del suroeste de Detroit de VOCES presentó su proyecto a la comunidad en general del suroeste de Detroit. Con el título “Que comience nuestra historia”, compartiendo la documentación de la historia de la comunidad en Detroit. Asistieron aproximadamente 80 personas, entre ellas ancianos, jóvenes activistas, líderes educativos, culturales y comunitarios, entre otros.

Tan pronto como ingresamos al sitio de la Corporación de Desarrollo Comunitario de Mexicantown para la actividad, fuimos recibidos en un ambiente colorido,

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## “Let Our Story Begin”- VOCES Southwest Detroit Oral History Project



VOCES Team members, from left to right: Len Radjewski, Maurizio Dominguez, Aaron Bardollar, Maria Elena Rodriguez, Irma Andrade-Guzman, Martina Guzman, Tanya Saldivar Ali, Ozzie Rivera and Luis Ali

This past Friday night, December 6, the VOCES: Southwest Detroit Oral History Project team introduced



By: Ozzie Rivera

their project to the general community of Southwest Detroit. Entitled “Let Our Story Begin” they shared their work in documenting our community’s history in Detroit. Approximately 80 people attended. In attendance were elders, young activists, educational, cultural and community leaders, among others.

As soon as you entered the Mexicantown Community Development Corporation’s site for the activity, we were welcomed into a brightly colored environment which was orchestrated by event planners Angela Gallegos and Angela Perez-Harris.

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## Miss Mexico Pageant Shines for 3rd Year, Celebrating Heritage and Community

By Juan Ochoa

The audience, full of family, friends, and community supporters, watched as three young contestants emerged, their floor-length gowns shimmering like cascades of jewels. Every detail sparkled under the glow of a crystal chandelier in the main ballroom, embellishments on the dresses, flawless makeup, and perfectly styled hair. But beyond the glitz and glamour, their faces told a deeper story: one of hope, determination, and the culmination of months of preparation. This was more than a competition; it was their chance to represent the pride and tradition of a nation.

On Friday night, December 6, the Mexican Patriotic Committee of Metro Detroit (Comité Patriótico Mexicano) brought that tradition back to life with the revival of the Miss Mexico pageant. Held at the elegantly decorated Prestige Banquet Hall in Allen Park, the event was a dazzling celebration of heritage, culture, and community, marking the continuation of an annual gala deeply cherished by many.

For the past three years, the Miss Mexico pageant has been

a pillar of the area’s cultural calendar, offering young women a platform for personal and professional growth. For many participants, the competition is far more than a beauty pageant; it is a steppingstone for leadership opportunities, academic advancement, and civic engagement.

Elizabeth “Lisa” Gonzalez does community work with the Congress of Communities by day. Then she starts her next job, which, according to Gonzalez, isn’t a job but a calling she enjoys as she coaches young ladies and prepares them for their first or next pageant.

“The girls are very timid because they haven’t had experience with public speaking yet,” Gonzalez said.

“I walk them through everything. I’m like their big sister. When we meet and get together, I always tell them we are a sisterhood. This is not about competition, the prettiest or the best. It’s for, actually, for school. It’s about scholarships.”

Throughout the evening, performances by traditional Mexican dance groups, Mariachi music, and speeches from local community leaders were featured, all over food and



(L-R) Elizabeth “Lisa” Gonzalez (MPC Chair Director, Miss Mexico Pageant), Perla Garcia (Miss Mexico 2025), Yeiralexy Garcia (1st Runner Up), Dulce Xitlaly Ramos (2nd Runner Up), Daniela Diaz (Miss Mexico 2024), MPC President Alma Cruz, and Karina Lambaren (Mistress of Ceremonies)

drinks being served.

As each contestant took the stage, they brought a unique story and a shared passion for preserving and promoting their heritage. The young women competed in multiple categories, including traditional wear, evening gowns, and a talent segment, all highlighting the diversity and strength of the Mexican community in Metro Detroit.

The night’s highlight came when this year’s Miss Mexico

was crowned alongside her court. The 2025 winner, Perla Garcia, was greeted with cheers and applause, expressed gratitude for the opportunity, and expressed excitement about her upcoming role.

“I honestly didn’t expect to win. I entered the contest for fun, and I wanted to do this because it was a new experience for me to step out of my box,” Garcia said.

“I’m very shy and have always been shy, I don’t do things like

this. The moment of winning, I felt like I was in a dream.”

The Miss Mexico pageant isn’t just about celebration; it’s about creating opportunities for young women in the community. In addition to representing the Mexican-American community at cultural events throughout the year, Miss Mexico 2025 will receive various prizes, including a college scholarship, which has long been a hallmark of the program.

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