

About SINA

Since its founding in 1977 SINA has worked with community organizations on issues such as affordable rental housing, education, public safety, homeownership and commercial development. With dozens of apartment units rehabilitated, homeownership programs, and the opening of The Learning Corridor, its visible impact in Frog Hollow, Barry Square and South Green neighborhoods has been significant and its community involvement has been a constant presence. SINA continues operations today in offices at 207 Washington Street. For more information call (860) 493-1618 or visit sinainc.org.



NEWS BRIEF: SINA Welcomes New Board Member

SINA Extends a hearty welcome to David Fichandler, its newest board member. David is the *Director of Patient Experience* at Hartford Hospital.



NEWS BRIEF: *Community Meeting*

SINA held a community meeting on Thursday, March 26 to discuss concerns about traffic and parking on Vernon, Broad, Brownell, Colonial, and School Streets. Neighborhood residents who attended voiced grievances over inconsiderate drivers who tie up traffic or park in driveways while dropping off or picking up their children at the Learning Corridor campus. Residents suggested a number of possible solutions to the problems, from making Vernon Street one-way, to changing the direction of several streets, to issuing resident parking stickers. One suggestion was to impose a time limit on parking on the west side of Broad Street to encourage school teachers who park there to use the assigned parking lot on the Learning Corridor campus. These and other proposals will be presented to the Frog Hollow NRZ at its next meeting.



SOUTHSIDE INSTITUTIONS
NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE

207 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106

HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

"TAKE THE TIME" - DIGITAL MOBILE MAMMOGRAPHY

"Take the Time," Hartford Hospital's Mobile Mammography Program, has been a vital community resource since 2005. More than 11,000 women have benefited from this life-saving screening in the comfort of their local community center, place of worship, place of employment or at public access locations. These women were encouraged to take the time to be screened, and many have been referred on for more health services as a result.



Our digital unit is housed in a 40-foot state-of-the-art coach that patients board for the service. The coach contains a registration area, a patient waiting area and two changing rooms. Patient privacy is maintained at all times. The digital mammography coach is staffed with the same friendly, experienced, professional staff that has become Hartford Hospital's signature since the inception of the program. With our digital capability, we are able to travel greater distances and serve populations in rural and more underserved area, as well as continue our service in our urban communities that are the core of our service area.

Health insurance(s) are accepted. If a woman has no insurance, donated funds are available to pay for her mammogram. If there are abnormal findings, the Hartford Hospital Department of Radiology follows up with the patient and the Hartford Hospital Breast Program is available to help with next steps.

Who is eligible for a screening mammogram with Mobile Mammography?

- Women over the age of 40.
- Women whose last mammogram was more than 12 months ago.
- Women who have **no** breast problems such as suspicious lumps, abnormal swelling, bleeding from nipples, or unusual tenderness.
- Women who are **not** pregnant.
- Women who have **not** had any type of breast biopsy or breast surgery since their last mammogram.
- Women who have **not** had a history of breast cancer in the past three years.

For additional information or to inquire about a visit from Mobile Mammography, please contact the Mobile Mammography Office at 860-972-1141.

SINA Launches Community Engagement Initiative



SINA Reports

Spring 2015

www.sinainc.org

SINA is a partnership between Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Hartford Hospital and Trinity College.

SINA's mission is to restore economic vitality and improve the quality of life for the people who live, work, play, and study in the neighborhoods of South Hartford.



Paying it Forward

Neighborhood Roots, Chance to Give Back Drive SINA's Adrian Texidor

Melvyn Colón



SINA Staff - From left to right: Linda Valentin, Dean Iaiennaro, Adrian Texidor, Melvyn Colón, and Keith Hedman.

You might say Adrian Texidor began his new position as SINA's Community Engagement Specialist not in December, but 27 years ago when he was born right here in Hartford, with the guidance of his loving (and very civic-minded) family.

Adrian's family knows all about "community engagement." His grandfather, William Roman,

a laborer, migrated from Aguada, Puerto Rico to Hartford where he met his wife. In Hartford, Roman became a community activist. A great-uncle, Juan Roman who came to America along with Adrian's grandparents, was Hartford's first Puerto Rican police officer.

"My family was always very engaged, and they instilled in me the importance of giving back to the community," said Adrian. "Helping give people here in Hartford the chance to pursue their own growth, to be the best they can be, that's what drives me every day."

Adrian grew up in the South End, attending St. Augustine's School and Hartford's Sport and Medical Sciences Academy. While in high school he worked for Mayor Eddie Perez in Constituent Services. Skidmore College in upstate New York recognized his potential and offered him a generous scholarship. While there he earned a degree in Government and was awarded a prestigious undergraduate fellowship to write a paper on the educational system in Hartford.

His experience in Constituent Services helped inspire his choice of career. One incident stands out in his memory:

"A woman came in; she had just been evicted from her home. She was homeless, she had three young children, she was crying, totally distraught," he recalls. "I didn't know how to handle it, and referred her to someone with more experience at dealing with this type of situation."

"That moment lives with me today. I learned that there are very vulnerable people in society, and things can happen that fundamentally change your life. It convinced me that in my life, in my career, I needed to be someone who can contribute to the betterment of other people's lives."

As for why Adrian has now returned to Hartford, the impetus goes beyond the notion of giving back to the community in which he was raised.

"Hartford is my home, it's where I grew up," he says. "Who wouldn't want to give back to their hometown?"

"And besides," Adrian smiles. "Hartford has it!"

[See article on SINA's new Community Engagement Initiative in this issue.]

SINA Launches Community Engagement Initiative

For decades, Hartford has built a reputation as a city of strong, identifiable neighborhoods, with equally strong citizens, activists and community organizations providing a platform and resource for residents to organize and have a say in shaping the quality of life in their own neighborhoods.

The organizations that powered this activism have disappeared over time as funding for community organizing dwindles. HART, an organization that has been an active presence in Frog Hollow and other neighborhoods in Hartford, is not likely to survive its current troubles. In many neighborhoods the civic infrastructure is weak. A few neighborhoods have strong NRZ's but many lack neighborhood associations, crime watches or other ways for residents to get involved. In response, SINA has created a Resident Engagement Initiative in order to provide a platform for residents of South Central Hartford to advocate for the local issues they care about.

Welcome to SINA's new Community Engagement Initiative.

"We want to be a well-organized community with a stronger capacity to tackle a variety of issues affecting the quality of life in our neighborhood," said SINA Executive Director Melvyn Colon. "Crime and drugs, traffic, recreational opportunities for children, linking residents effectively with resources they need right here in our neighborhood, these are some of the issues we anticipate tackling."

According to Colon, it never has been SINA's mission to be a community organizer, but rather a partner in helping such groups be successful. SINA's role, said Colon, is to be a collaborator and catalyst for measurable change and improvement in such areas as economic development, housing and public safety. "We did not want to duplicate the work of others. We wanted to support them as a resource, to help them succeed," he said. "However, the reduction in recent years in the community's capacity to organize calls for more direct involvement. Also, we can't accomplish the goals in our strategic plan without resident engagement."

SINA created the new position of Community Engagement Specialist and brought in Adrian Texidor in December to join the team. [See the accompanying story to learn more about Adrian.] Adrian relishes the opportunity to bring residents of the SINA communities together to work on common issues.

"Hartford is a place where there is opportunity," said Adrian of his hometown. "We have outstanding medical facilities. World-class higher education. There are so many positive things going on. And we have good people, passionate people."

"I'm privileged to have this opportunity to help SINA implement its strategic plan and to make a real difference for the people here where I grew up."

As SINA's first-ever Community Engagement Specialist, Adrian is working alongside Colón and the SINA team on the challenging task of taking the relationships SINA has built over the years – and the new ones Adrian will cultivate – to a new level. The Community Engagement Initiative is designed to help SINA and its member institutions (Trinity College, Hartford Hospital and the Connecticut Children's Medical Center) realize the overarching vision of its Strategic Plan, which focuses on neighborhood renewal; building partnerships to improve public safety, education and health outcomes; advocating for new investment, economic development and job creation; raising awareness of SINA and its mission; and building capacity to better assist neighborhood organizations.



SINA Launches Community Engagement Initiative (from previous page)

For the rest of 2015, the Community Engagement component will focus on:

- Opening a dialogue with local grassroots organizations.
- Maintaining regular contact with tenants and homeowners.
- Engaging the community in promoting street cleanliness.
- Convening regular meetings with community stakeholders to address public safety concerns.
- Working with and supporting community service officers.

Job one for Adrian is to get out in the neighborhood, knock on doors and canvass residents, to learn about their needs, their priorities and what neighborhood issues are most important to them. This grass roots effort will provide residents the opportunity to get to know SINA better, and for SINA to reassert its role as a community resource – a helping hand.

Critical to SINA's success will be the ability to build relationships – and trust. Adrian has the advantage of being from the neighborhood, giving neighborhood residents the comfort of knowing they are working with someone who, growing up, walked the very same streets and frequented the very same markets they do every day.

"I will often meet people in the community for the first time, and they are comforted when they see that I speak like they do, that I know their neighborhood," he said. "The value of that in gaining the community's trust and respect is enormous."

Adrian Texidor can be reached at atexidor@sinainc.org or by calling the main number at SINA, (860) 493-1618.

41-45 & 47-49 Wolcott Street Cityscape Homes for Sale



Funding for this home was made possible through the NSP program in cooperation with the City of Hartford.

- Completely renovated and restored Two Family Home for only **\$154,900**
- 2700 square feet
- Owners Unit is 3 bedrooms with 2.5 baths
- Rental Unit is 1 bedrooms with 1 bath
- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places!!
- Construction is Energy Star 3.0 Rated
- Up to 20% Downpayment from the House Hartford Program

If you are interested please contact RE/Max Renaissance Realtor
Lesbia Hernández • 860-209-4895 • lhernandez0929@comcast.net

View all our Cityscape Homes for Sale at www.sinainc.org/homes

Neighborhood Restaurant Favorites

La Plaza Del Mercado (Food Court) - 704 Park Street

THE CHEAP EATS FLAVOR FESTIVAL YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF; RIGHT HERE ON PARK STREET

Established in 1991 in the style of a Latin American open air market, La Plaza del Mercado ("The Market") is located in the heart of Hartford's signature Latino business district at 704 Park Street (at the intersection of Babcock Street). Like those markets in Latin America it brings together prepared foods, fresh produce and other consumer goods to one convenient location.

El Mercado houses a supermarket and various shops featuring a wide variety of items from handbags to music to lottery tickets. But if you are hungry and searching for Latino cuisine, the food court is the place to treat your taste buds. Various dishes are offered from the Caribbean, South America, Mexico and more, seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. most days. **Let's tour the food court...**

Viva Mexico

"El Tepeyac" Mexican Restaurant offers the best from south of the border. Named after a famous mountain in Mexico, El Tepeyac has been serving all the favorite Mexican dishes for more than 10 years. Some of the most popular offerings are the taquitos that are served with sausage or pork, and the tortas or sandwiches, a staple for lunch, which are served in various combinations. The most popular torta is the Milanese de Pollo or Chicken Parm Mexican style. All sandwiches come with mayonnaise, lettuce, tomatoes and avocado.



El Tepeyac also offers a wide range of dinner meals to satisfy the appetite of the hungriest diners. Dishes include carne asada (grilled steak); arroz con frijoles (rice and beans); soft tortillas; and salads. And for the early bird (also served any time of day) there is the popular Huevos Rancheros or Huevos Estrellos - eggs prepared with that special touch of Mexico.

Caribbean Flavors

"El Gran Dominicano Restaurant" has been serving the best of the Caribbean here in Hartford for more than six years. Although the owners are Dominican, many of the flavors and offerings are prepared with Puerto Rican flair. "With the makeup of our clientele, we cannot be without the popular arroz con gandules and pork shoulder," stated one of the associates of the restaurant. Diners can window shop and select from an enormous display of ready-made dishes from the islands.

If it is a quick fix you need, choose from the large variety of frituras or fried delicacies. These include pinchos (kabobs) of pork and chicken with fried plantains, and the old favorite, the Alcapurria (fried plantain dough or Yuca - cassava dough- filled with meat) or the pastelillos (fried dough filled with meat and cheese). No fork or spoons are necessary with these items and they are available at all times.



There is also a wide selection of fish salads from king crab to cod fish, plain or in sauce, just to name a few.

From the main courses there are selections fit for a week's worth of indulgence showcasing the best of the Caribbean, including rice and beans with chicken, beef fricassee and the ever-popular pasteles.

Each day takes diners back to the islands with the exclusive Caribbean flavor, and all meals are moderately priced. For major meals, small orders come in at \$6 while a large order goes for \$8.



Tastes of Peru



Next door diners are taken to South America to "Autentico Sabor Peruano," which serves the finest in Peruvian cuisine.

Topping the offerings here is Ceviche. This traditional seafood dish is popular in the coastal regions of the Americas especially Central and South America. The

dish is typically made from fresh raw fish cured in citrus juices, such as lemon or lime, and spiced with ají or chili peppers.

For all fish lovers there are many other offerings. Included in the selection at Sabor Peruano are shrimp salads, breaded shrimp and the restaurant's sumptuous fish stew.

Chaufa, a rice dish famously made in Peru which includes vegetables, eggs and chicken, is available all day and for big appetites there is Biftec Al Pobre featuring steak, eggs, plantains and rice.

Autentico Sabor Peruano offers a daily special seven days a week at only \$9. And although it is considered the lunch special, it is available all day. This dish includes soup of the day, rice, meat of your selection, salad, sweet plantains and a drink.



A Visit to Colombia



"Antojitos Colombianos" completes the listing of restaurants from the food court. Many days diners will find owner Patricia serving her famous empanadas, a fried cornmeal dough with chicken or beef inside. On weekends, Patricia says, well over 500 of these empanadas are sold.

A typical dish that harkens back to the Colombian countryside is the Bandeja Paisa. This tremendous plate features frijoles (beans) and rice, deep fried pork (chicharrones), chorizo (Spanish sausage), plantains, beef and avocado.

After this meal, it would be best to take a stroll up Park Street!

Specials are offered on weekends such as the famous chicken stew that includes various root vegetables and fixings, and Mondongo, a stew with tripe bursting with Latino flavors, best served with a plate of white rice.

The spacious eating court offers comfortable seating, and there is the option of taking home one of the vast variety of available meals.

Don't miss a chance to visit El Mercado food court, where the best of Latin American dining is available every day. Your most difficult decision will be deciding which outstanding treat to try first. **Buen Provecho/to your health.**

[When you visit the eatery at La Plaza del Mercado you would be well advised to bring cash although, El Tepeyac and El Gran Dominicano Restaurant accept cards. There is an ATM on the premises.]