



National Latina/o Psychological Association

Asociación Nacional de Psicología Latina

Press Release: September 14, 2016

Orlando Mass Shooting Victims Remembered at the NLPA Biennial Conference

The National Latina/o Psychological Association Biennial Conference in Orlando taking place on September 29 through October 2, 2016 at the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort has a central focus on recognizing the victims of the 6/12/16 Orlando Massacre at the Pulse Orlando Night Club & Ultra Lounge. In the worst mass shooting by a single individual in U.S. history, nearly all 49 victims killed were Latinas/os. It was the deadliest occurrence of violence towards LGBT people in U.S. history. The President of NLPA, Melanie Domenech Rodríguez, Ph.D., states that during the Conference “there will be a folkloric tribute and ceremony to honor the deceased and a commemorative sign that we [NLPA] are creating for Pulse. We will also be selling t-shirts and the proceeds will be donated to the OneOrlando Fund. There is a ‘Corazón (heart) team’ that will be on hand to address any needs that any attendants have to process the loss at Pulse.” The commemorative ceremony will take place on Friday, September 30th, 2016 from 8:00am – 8:50am at the conference hotel. A panel discussion will follow at 11:00am to talk about issues facing Latinx LGBTQ+ communities. Additionally, gender neutral bathrooms will be available at the conference, as well as LGBTQ+ Safe Zone buttons.

The conference chair Cristalís Capielo, Ph.D. and conference organizers have placed great emphasis on creating an inclusive environment under the conference theme of “Latina/o Psychology: Advocating for social justice, liberation, & equality for our familias” by highlighting programming that is LGBTQ+ affirming. This includes one of the keynote speeches by Olivia Espín, PhD, an internationally renowned psychologist who has advanced our understanding about the intersectionality of culture, gender, and sexuality. Dr. Domenech Rodríguez will also present a Presidential Citation to Orgullo, NLPAs LGBTQ+ special interest group, for their outstanding efforts to advance inclusion in NLPA generally, and their specific efforts to give voice via two statements (accessed via: <http://www.nlpa.ws/news-events>) crafted following the Orlando Massacre. Dr. Domenech Rodríguez states that “it seems that every fiber of our Conferencia this year is threaded by a commitment to reflect our values as One Family.”

NLPA, through its members and presence in Orlando, stands in solidarity with the residents of Central Florida and the entire state in supporting and advocating on behalf of all Latinas/os in need of behavioral health services. We recognize that the outpouring of support by the Orlando community in response to this tragedy was swift and generous. We also understand that the mental health sequelae as a result of such a devastating event can be long-standing and requires sustained effort by well trained professionals who are linguistically and culturally competent. The NLPA stands ready to be part of that effort. The conference program has many participants who will be presenting on the latest advances in interventions for Latinas/os and in training the mental health workforce for building capacity in a culturally and linguistically competent manner. We are available to further discuss this issue with key stakeholders and to collaborate on efforts to protect the psychological well-being of the victims of these horrific acts.

For further information, please contact Dr. Melanie Domenech Rodríguez, Ph.D. at melanie.domenech@usu.edu. You may also visit our conference website, www.nlpaconference.org.