



ARTE CALIDAD CULTURAL INSTITUTE

A 501 (c) 3 Organization Tax ID No. 20-2952490
1362 N. Eastern Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90063
323-264-9573 6, Fax 323-264-9543

www.artecalidad.org and www.festivaldelagente.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 19, 2009

CONTACT: Frank Ordonez
f.ordonez@festivaldelagente.org
Office: 323-264-9573

PRESS RELEASE

City of Los Angeles “Day of the Dead” Cultural Festival Canceled

Councilman Jose Huizar’s Office Unable to Waive Safety and Park Fees For What Would Have Been the 10TH Annual Festival De La Gente

LOS ANGELES, CA – The producer of the Festival de La Gente announced today his organization has been forced to cancel the festival that was to be held this weekend, on October 24 and 25, 2009. The producer was able to secure corporate sponsorships from GOYA FOODS, WELLS FARGO, HOY/Los Angeles Times, the WALT DISNEY Company and local art and food vendors for the budgeted costs. However, last-minute add-on fees from the City of Los Angeles for public safety and use of Hollenbeck Park were not covered by the City of Los Angeles as they have been in the past.

Tony Dominguez, the producer of the event and Executive Director of Arte Calidad Cultural Institute, the non-profit organization that produces the festival, has said, “In good faith, I began this process of partnership with Los Angeles City Council District 14 back in March of 2009. Per their request, I pursued a new location for the festival at Hollenbeck Park in Boyle Heights. Last week I was informed of the additional fees associated with the new location and the Department of Recreation and Parks. Those costs were more than 30% of the event’s current budget and we could not raise replacement funds with such short notice.

The Councilman Huizar’s office representative, Ana Cubas, stated, “Our office, like the entire city budget has faced major cutbacks,” in explaining why it could not support the festival this year although Mr. Huizar name is used in all promotional material including the web site:

www.festivaldelagente.com

Marketed as the nation’s largest “Día de los Muertos” commemoration, the free festival typically includes a display of giant paper maché skeleton characters joining in the fun. Día de los Muertos is a Latin American cultural tradition that honors life and the spirit of family and friends who have passed on. The iconic playful skeletons were made famous by Mexican artist Jose Posada and are recreated by famed L.A. based paper maché artist, Tony Dominguez.

In an effort to build community pride and acknowledge biculturalism, the 2-day cultural festival would have featured children’s themed arts and crafts, an altar contest, and traditional foods. The festival has also been a venue for local bands. In 2008, festival attendance exceeded the expected 60,000 per day.

###

***About Arte Calidad Cultural Institute:** The art school targets Latino youth who need positive role models and a place where they can mold their art aptitude into marketable job skills that will keep them away from graffiti “tagging crews”, gangs and jail.*

