

# Aging Latinos: Growing Population, Growing Importance

## Two main reasons why the Latino elderly population is increasing

1. Many working-age immigrants arrived in the 80's and 90's and are now reaching their 60's.
2. Immigrants who have attained US citizenship work toward family reunification and seek the support of adult family members for child care by bringing their parents or older siblings to live with them.

"En el Centro Intercultural puedo aprender algo nuevo cada día."

—A. Alvarez

## Growing Population

- Latinos are the fastest-growing segment of the older adult population in the United States. It is predicted that from 2008 to 2030 the Latino population age 65 and older will grow by 224%. The white population of the same age is expected to increase 65%.
- Nationally, from 1990 to 2007, the immigrant population age 65 and older nearly doubled, growing from 2.7 million to 4.5 million. A large proportion of those aging immigrants are Latinos, and from 1990 to 2009, the over-65 Latino population more than doubled and went from 1,161,283 million to 2,717,573 million.
- In the U.S., Latinos of retirement age are expected to increase from 6.4% in 2007 to 17.5% in 2050.
- In Nebraska, the Latino population 65 years and older increased by nearly 266% from 1990 to 2009.
- Of the Nebraska's population 65 years and older who are Latinos, 13.8% are native born, and 6% are foreign born.

## Growing Importance

- Nationally, the poverty rate among Latinos 65 years of age and older is nearly twice as high as the poverty rate for the total US population within the same age range.
- In Nebraska, while only 1.2% of the white, 65 years and older, population is below the poverty line, 15% of Latinos in the same age range are below the poverty line .
- Nationally, in 2007, one in three older Latinos lived in isolated households. More than half were limited in English proficiency and had difficulty accessing services from mainstream providers who lack Spanish-language materials.
- Interviews with Nebraska elderly suggest similar problems with isolation. The older immigrant population also has limited access to transportation, and is less likely than the native-born population to know about support services when they do exist.

“Although the number of seniors that we have in Nebraska right now doesn't seem as significant as other groups, in thirty or forty years, these numbers are going to increase dramatically; the large number of working migrants we have right now is going to age, and if centers like this don't grow or get support, then we are not going to be prepared to serve that aging community.”

—Carolina Padilla  
Director of the Omaha  
Intercultural Senior Center

The well-being of aging Latinos is heavily dependent upon the services available to them, the investments in and by the Latino community, and the extent to which public policies and current immigration debates lead toward inclusion rather than further marginalization of this population.

