



**For Immediate Release**

**Media Contact:**

Brad Biles, Associate Director for Communication  
(816) 584-6888, [brad.biles@park.edu](mailto:brad.biles@park.edu)

## **Park University's 2010-11 Ethnic Voices Poetry Series Opens with Latino Writers Collective**

**Parkville, Mo.—Sept. 8, 2010** — The [Latino Writers Collective](#), a group of Latino writers living and working in the Kansas City area, will kick off Park University's [2010-11 Ethnic Voices Poetry Series](#) on Wednesday, Sept. 22. Members of the group will hold a reading of their work starting at 7 p.m. in the Herr House Lounge on the Parkville Campus. A reception and book signing will be held following the reading.

Members of the Collective who are scheduled to read are: Maria Vazquez Boyd, Xanath Caraza, Ignacio Carvajal, Jose Faus, Tina Landis, Miguel M. Morales, Linda Rodriguez and Jason Sierra.

The LWC, which also has long-distance members throughout the U.S., helps hone and polish the work of its members for publication. In addition to creative support, the Collective organizes and coordinates projects for the larger community, such as the Primera Página, Segunda Página, Tercera Página and Cuarta Página Reading Series to showcase national and local Latino writers, and to provide role models and instruction to Latino youth. Its mission is to foster an environment where the voices of Latino students, blue collar workers, professionals and homemakers can be heard, contributing their experience and vision to the larger community.

According to EVPS Director **Virginia Brackett, Ph.D.**, associate professor, and chair of the Department of English and Modern Languages, the LWC has become a favorite in the Series. "They return each fall, and students and the public always look forward to seeing them again. Their dramatic style and delivery are so entertaining."

The Collective's anthology of poetry, *Primera Página: Poetry From the Latino Heartland*, was published in 2008. It received national attention with reviews in *Bloomsbury Review*, *La Bloga* and *Critical Mass* (the blog of the National Book Critics Circle). *Primera Página* won second place in poetry for both the International Latino Book Awards and the Eric Hoffer Book Awards. It was also a finalist in poetry for the USA BookNews Award and in anthology for the *ForeWord Magazine* Book Award. The group was named "Best of Kansas City 2008" by *The Pitch* for their festive, entertaining readings and events.

The purpose of Park University's Ethnic Voices Poetry Series, which started in 2007, is to expose individuals to artistic thought and expression that challenges preconceptions about those whose experiences and points of view differ from their own. Because all literature focuses on the human condition, a sharing of that literature promotes a sharing of ideas regarding the challenges, disappointments and celebrations of all people, and the written and verbal expression of emotions that those activities promote. The Ethnic Voices Poetry Series is funded in part by a [Missouri Arts Council](#) grant, a state agency and division of the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

Upcoming poets to be featured in the EVPS include Kazim Ali on Wednesday, Oct. 20, and Khaled Mattawa on Thursday, Nov. 18. Both events will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the McCoy Meetin' House on the Parkville Campus.

For more information on Park's Ethnic Voices Poetry Series, contact Brackett at [virginia.brackett@park.edu](mailto:virginia.brackett@park.edu) or (816) 584-6818. To learn more about upcoming poets in the Series, visit [www.park.edu/ethnicpoetry/2010-2011.html](http://www.park.edu/ethnicpoetry/2010-2011.html). For more information about the Latino Writers Collective, visit [www.latinowriterscollective.org/](http://www.latinowriterscollective.org/).

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For more information, please contact Rita Weighill, vice president for communication, at (816) 584-6211 or [rita.weighill@park.edu](mailto:rita.weighill@park.edu).