

## NEWS

## MVA Diversity Committee Hosts ¡NUEVOlution!

Media  
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The MVA Diversity Committee recently hosted a luncheon featuring The Levine Museum of the New South's latest exhibit **¡NUEVOlution! Latinos and the New South**. The exhibit boasts a 3,500 square foot bilingual, interactive exhibit with robust programming, civic dialogue, collaborative art, and online media that explore the surprising ways Latinos are shaping the South and the South is shaping Latinos. MVA Members Ana Flynn, Luis Lluberas, and Paul Peralta provided introductory remarks during the presentation where they discussed their respective personal and professional commitments within the Hispanic Latino community.

Led by Latino New South Coordinator Oliver Merino, the luncheon explored the seismic demographic change that the South has experienced and continues to experience. Over the past 25 years, the South has abruptly emerged as the nation's most vibrant area of Latino growth. Charlotte and Atlanta top the Nielsen list of fastest growing major Latino metro areas nationwide, up over 400% since 2000. In North Carolina alone, more than two dozen small and mid-sized municipalities are now over 20% Latino. This puts the South at the cutting edge of a nationwide trend that is seeing new Latino populations where none previously existed in nearly every U.S. state.

Many historians consider the dramatic shift and its impact to be the biggest story in southern history since the Civil Rights Movement. ¡NUEVOlution! explores this topic by sharing powerful, personal stories behind the statistics.

*"One of the stories I hear from people who have been in Charlotte for a long time, from Latinos and non-Latinos, is that 15 years ago it was hard to find a decent Mexican place in Charlotte. I'm not talking about Taco Bell or Chipotle, but a Mexican, or Columbian, or Dominican restaurant," said Merino. "Now you can go into neighborhoods across Charlotte and see all of these influences in businesses. This is such a great way for the community to invest in these different cultures."*

Created by Levine Museum, in collaboration with Atlanta History Center and Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, the exhibit aims to engage Latinos of many backgrounds together with non-Latinos—serving as a catalyst for personal reflection, cross-cultural interaction and community engagement. It will create civic spaces physically and virtually to deepen understanding of Latinos' histories, cultures and experiences, foster connection across difference and promote exploration of contentious issues in a safe environment.