

100x35 PRCC Open House Celebrates Grand Opening of Digitizing the Barrio Archive Project

By: Angelica Hernández

This year marks the 50th anniversary of The Puerto Rican Cultural Center (PRCC), and to honor this milestone there was a celebration of both the organization and the 115th anniversary of the PRCC's namesake, Juan Antonio Corretjer. The PRCC held the annual open house of all its programs - highlighting the storied history of the Center, its ongoing work, and overall impact. This year's 100x35 event also celebrated the grand opening of the Digitizing the Barrio archive project, including a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the current 2448 W Division St archive location. This event was only the beginning of a year-long celebration of The PRCC's notable history and bright future.

For decades, The PRCC has wanted to preserve and archive its long history. With the support of a three-year, \$340,000 grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), made possible by funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, this dream is finally becoming a reality. The Digitizing the Barrio archive project was launched in 2022 and is led by Dr. Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz, Dr. Margaret Power, Dr. Ann Peterson-Kemp, and technology specialist Luis Alejandro Molina—all members of the organization's board, with Rodríguez-Muñiz and Power serving as principal investigators. The project also hired a professional archivist, Angélica Hernández, to begin the process of digitization. In collaboration with the community, the goal of The PRCC archive is to actively collect, store, and make this—our—history part of the public record of Humboldt Park/West Town, Chicago, Puerto Rico, and beyond.

This unique community archive project provides insight into the development of anti-colonial community efforts and nationalist Puerto Rican politics here in Chicago. And in honor of the lives and work of two influential leaders in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence, the collection on Juan Antonio and Consuelo Lee Corretjer will be the first to be digitized. Featuring speeches, poetry books, and essays, these materials shed light on the close relationship between the Corretjers, The PRCC, and Chicago's Puerto Rican community. Ultimately, Digitizing the Barrio aims to not only preserve important aspects of the history of Puerto Rican Chicago for future generations but also to be an archive for the present. In the face of gentrification and centuries of colonialism, the project will use The PRCC collection and its digitization to build community, deepen roots in our Humboldt Park barrio, and fuel the creation of decolonial alternatives.



RAYOS Y CENTELLAS
Tributo musical en conmemoración natalicio Juan Antonio Corretjer
3 de marzo de 1908 19 de enero de 1985

2 de marzo de 1986
Humboldt Park Civic Association
(esq. LeMoyné Y California)

3:00 pm

