

# Campus Happenings

## LAO: More than A Heritage

By Erin Meehan '12  
A&E Editor

For over thirty years the Latin American Organization (LAO) has been a fervent force in spreading Latin culture to the HWS campus; the 2009-2010 academic year is not any different. The group is one of the largest on campus with a board of eight students and a junior board of six students. Beyond the board members, twenty students are part of the club.

After meeting with Lily Bryan, an executive board member, one can see the strength of this club lies in the students who dedicate their time and energy every week at meetings and events.

Their biggest event so far this year occurred over Parent's Weekend. On Saturday, Oct. 24 a dinner was hosted by the LAO with over one hundred guests in attendance. The evening began with a performance by Hip-NotiQs, HWS's very own step team, and included speakers and other performances. The meal was served family style and Spanish food was prepared in Saga especially for the occasion. The dinner was a big hit and is, so far, their second most attended event until Extravaganza in the spring.

The main objective of the club is to spread Latin American culture throughout the Colleges. However, this does not mean you have to be of Latin American descent or speak Spanish to be a member or on the board. Bryan states that she herself is not and the goal of the club is to incorporate all different ethnic backgrounds and spread knowledge specifically about Latin America.

They do this by holding weekly meetings Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. in the Intercultural Affairs Center. The

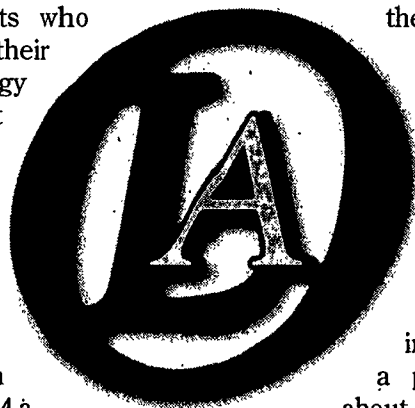
gatherings are open to anyone and everyone. Their most recent meeting included a co-operation between the Caribbean Student Association (CSA) and the new Native American Student Association (NASA).

Another important facet of the organization is their devotion to community service in the town of Geneva. They are hoping to strengthen their commitment to service in the upcoming year. Members are already working with the Salvation Army downtown. Further,

they dedicate some of their time to spending time with local high school students. Their interactions with the students include having a panel discussion about college and the application process. This is a great way for HWS students to not only relate to the younger residences of Geneva, but they can further act as role models.

The board of the club is planning to expand the community service aspect of their club by inviting some of the high school students come and shadow members for a day on campus. This will be a great way for them to have a first hand experience of college life and excite the young adults about taking the next step in their educational career.

The contributions LAO has made to the education of the Colleges as well as the town of Geneva are great and will only increase with time, especially with passionate board members such as Bryan leading the way. The meetings are open, welcome to all and usually include food. Thus, on Wednesday night when your stomach is grumbling head over to the Intercultural Affairs Center for great food and an enriching experience!



Members of the Colleges' Latin American Organization (LAO) pose together after the dinner they hosted on Oct. 24 as part of Family Weekend.

### Herald Meetings

Tuesdays @ 7 p.m. in the Creedon Room

**It Is Easy to Sit In Your Dorm and Criticize Us**

**It Is Harder to Actually Do Something!**



Julie Campus/Photographer

Placing emphasis on locally grown produce, Red Jacket Orchards expands facilities and expects a record-breaking apple crop for 2009, says JJ, Joseph Nicholson III, an heir to the orchards.

## Red Jacket Expands Facilities

By Julia Campus '11  
Herald Contributor

"Watch out," JJ says as he's nearly jolted by a worker carting apple crates. Joseph Nicholson the Third, "JJ," found comfort in his family niche during the damaged economic times when his architecture career failed to make ends meet.

"The juice outlet was built in 1980 with an emphasis on showcasing the fruit but also keeping it in an environment with a cold atmosphere." The fruit chamber is formatted like an igloo with tight sliding glass doors and regulated temperatures to maintain the nectar in the various fruits and juices; and the cellar is built with native hemlock wood fit for cider operations.

"We've always been about retail" JJ said discussing the importance of providing samples to customers.

As Spanish melodies and apple aromas melt away any sort of work tension in the facility, JJ explained, "[We're] maxed out right now because most of the capacity is being used for shipping our stuff while [we're simultaneously] producing it in the space—always bringing things in and out of this location."

For this reason, the company has introduced a newly developed 21,000 square foot facility unit behind the fruit outlet. Eventually, it will make the working environment less crowded for the "close to 99%" of Mexican workers, Maria the floor production supervisor, thankfully reminds.

"I learn so much about fruit, it's great here." Maria and JJ said that since the early 1990s Mexican families have been working for the Orchards: "All the brothers, cousins, nephews of Roberto Aguilera, one of the men who strengthened his family name at Red Jacket." Most of the Mexican men work in the fruit orchards while the Mexican women work in the production process.

Red Jacket Orchards primarily grows apples, cherries, plums, and apricots—while peaches, plums, and blueberries are reserved for the summer. In particular, the Orchards are recognized as the biggest commercial apricot grower east of the Rocky Mountains, gathering approximately 350,000 lbs per year.

As explained, the native apple rootstock that the Orchards grow is fused with apricot graft that makes for a stronger tree and

product. JJ interjected to say that the microclimate generated by the deepness and coolness of Seneca Lake is also a part of what makes the area ideal for growing fruits.

The acres they own are almost evenly divided on either side of the Red Jacket fruit outlet—250 acres behind Wal-mart and 200 acres behind the store.

As production manager of the sight Roger Morse stated, "We [Red Jacket] have seven orchards, 600 acres—about 350 for apples, the other 250 to 300 are summer fruits. They get picked, placed in the bins, then brought here and transported to the production facilities."

The apple storage rooms are jam packed with corrugated boxes where an even stronger scent emerges from the room that is cooled at 36-40 degrees acting as an apple-ripening tactic. Each box contains about five layers of apples stacked in white trays—boxes holding a variety of counts,



Photo courtesy of <http://www.beththefarm.com>

including 64, 72, and 80 apples per box.

The Orchards ship produce all across New York State, to places like Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, along with other states including Maryland and New Jersey. Its biggest clients have been Whole Foods, who they have collaborated with for about 8 or 9 years. JJ also included clients such as Fowler foods, Wegmans, online grocer freshdirect.com, Fairway market, and the NYC Green Market.

Still, "There are no other grocery stores in the area selling this much local food," JJ stated showing the locally produced applesauce and apple pie fillings sold to the orchards by "Martin's," a neighboring Mennonites family.

While June and July were cool, rain-filled months, a climate tending to produce premature fruits with less natural sugar, August and September made up for it expecting a record-breaking apple crop for the year. JJ closed to say, "It's to the worry point—wondering if we'll be able to get all the apples picked before the frost comes."