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## Featured & Midwest

### Women's target

Wednesday, December 10 6:30 p.m.  
Mexican Fine Arts Center 1852 W. 19th Street  
Chicago, IL

What results when you combine the performances of a classical Indian dancer, modern jazz artists, various poets from diverse cultures and backgrounds, and an Argentinean guitarist? An evening celebrating countless voices honoring international women's rights. Women's Rights Across Boundaries and Borders: A Celebration of Our Voices brought together nearly 200 people throughout the Chicagoland community to the Mexican Fine Arts Center and Museum in Pilsen, one of Chicago's historic neighborhoods, for an evening of spoken word, dance, poetry, music, and food.

Amnesty International's Midwest Regional Office was joined by African American Women Evolving, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Arab American Action Network, Chicago Foundation for Women, Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers, Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, Chicago NOW, 8th Day Center for Justice, IL for CEDAW, Mujeres Latinas En Accion, and Rape Victim Advocates as event co-sponsors. This partnership of social justice/welfare and progressive women's organizations enriched the night's experience and quality of the overall event with their community voice and connections, local visibility, and organizational integrity. The relationship was mutually beneficial. According to Veronica I. Arreola, Vice President of Chicago NOW, "Chicago NOW is pleased to support the ongoing efforts of Amnesty International in spreading



Susan House with the Neighborhood Writing Alliance reciting a piece.



Poet, Author, and Activist C.C. Carter, performing a piece on the virtue of women's hips.

ongoing efforts of Amnesty International in spreading the word that women's rights are human rights."

The evening began with a welcome by Queta Bauer, former AIUSA Board Member, and the evening's MC. The opening performance featuring the Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago - Performing Arts Collective was one of several highlights for the night. These six young ladies dazzled the audience with the fluidity and versatility of their spoken word and poetry and provoked thought with the depth of their piece, entitled Come Take A Walk in My America. They were followed by The Funky Wordsmiths, one of Chicago's most notable and nationally recognized spoken word ensembles, created, in the words of institution co-founder Keith M. Kelley, for the "performance and preservation of 'hard hittin blak poetry n muzik'".

The audience was also treated to versatile performances by jazz musician Laurie Lee Moses with Bill MacKay, Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award winner Donna Rose, and the grace and beauty of Manjima Bose, who has been trained in the Bharata Natyam, a form of classic Indian Dance, since the age of nine. Midway through the night, three poets for the Neighborhood Writing Alliance, representing three distinct Chicago experiences took to the stage. While each story wove a peculiar thread into the tapestry of the Chicago women's experience, they all shared a common bond: the struggle to have their voices heard and acknowledged.

One of the night's most memorable moments was a performance by the 5th Annual Guild Complex Gwendolyn Brook's Open Mic Competition Winner, poet C.C. Carter celebrating WOMEN'S HIPS! The evening culminated with a beautiful Amnesty International inspired performance by the Argentinean born, international singer-songwriter-musician, Luis Jahn. Luis was followed by Beth Myers, Director of Outreach and Membership with the Women's Edge Coalition, an organization that advocates for international economic policies and human rights that support women worldwide. Beth kept with the theme inscribed on the poster draped in the background: Incite Hope. Nancy Bothne, MWRO Regional Director summed it up in the program introduction when she wrote, "We want to honor the voices of women, our



Argentinian singer-songwriter-musician Luis Jahn, performing a ballad.



Adriana Portillo-Bartow, Deputy Director and Nancy Bothne, Regional Director

poetry and spirit, our activism and endurance. We hope that as you enjoy "Women's Rights Across Boundaries & Borders: A Celebration of Our Voices " you are inspired to take action to support women's rights - here in the USA and around the world." Indeed this event not only honored the voices of women that reverberate deep in the city of Chicago, but also echoes across international boundaries and borders.

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