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AUTHOR ROBERT RENTERIA TO DELIVER KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET, DEC. 4

Renteria will share his inspiring story, "From the Barrio to the Board Room," and challenge attendees to put this empowering book into the hands of those who need inspiration most

AURORA, Ill. (Nov. 11, 2008) – Growing up in the barrio of East L.A., where drugs and gang banging were commonplace, Robert Renteria knew there had to be a way out of a life of poverty and violence. Today, the successful author and business man is inspiring others with his memoir, "From the Barrio to the Board Room." He will share his story and message of empowerment as the keynote speaker at the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation's Annual Conference, *La Presencia Latina: Influencing Change*, on Dec. 4.

In a time where the word "change" means so many things to so many people, Renteria will discuss the current state of many youth in this country and how individuals, community and business leaders can make a difference in the lives of those who are victims of domestic violence, drugs, crime, and poverty. He will also share his grassroots effort, *The Barrio Making a Difference Challenge*, which is providing a way for his book to reach those who need it most.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to share my story with so many Latinos who want to learn from each other," said Renteria, whose book is being used by teachers, students, and organizations. "By working with local and state government officials as well as community and organization leaders, we can affect change and help kids and adults alike overcome these struggles in order to chase the American Dream. Some say drugs are a lifestyle for kids today. Well, I say it's a deathstyle, and I plan to do something about it. That is my mission."

The sixth annual conference will be held at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont. The event brings together members and friends of the Illinois Latino community in a day filled with sessions dedicated to educate, inform and motivate. Cook County State's Attorney-elect Anita Alvarez will address attendees at the event's luncheon. For more information about the event or to register, please visit www.illcf.org.

"From the Barrio to the Board Room," *The Barrio Making a Difference Challenge* and Renteria's personal story were featured on WGN (Adelante Chicago), Univision, *Hoy*, and Y-Talk Radio, and profiled in *La Raza* and *Hispanic Executive Quarterly*. U.S. Congressman Bill Foster, Aurora Mayor Thomas Weisner, Princeton University Professor Russ Nieli, and Chicago police officers are just a few of the many committed professionals who are supporting his dream to reach out and give back. To learn more about Renteria's story and *The Barrio Making a Difference Challenge*, please contact Renteria at 312.933.5619 or visit www.thebarriochallenge.com and www.fromthebarrio.com.

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