

## **CHAMBER MOVING TO NEW LOCATION LATIN ASSOCIATION HEADS TO PLANTATION FROM HOLLYWOOD**

By Kenneth D. MacHarg

A growing membership and shifting demographic patterns have led the Latin Chamber of Commerce of Broward County to move their offices from Hollywood to Plantation.

“Our lease was up and we wanted to look for a better location that fit our budget and needs,” explained Tony Chao, the Chamber’s Chair-elect. “Our new location will be closer to I-595.”

“We wanted to be closer to our membership which is now scattered all over the county,” said José “Pepé” Lopez, President of the Chamber. “Plantation is more of a central point and we want to be in the middle of the county.”

“When we moved to Hollywood, we picked up a lot of members in the southeastern part of the county,” Lopez remembered. “Then, most of our potential membership lived there. Now, they have moved north and west and we want to be more centrally located.”

The Chamber currently counts nearly 600 members, some of which are what Chao describes as “major corporations,” including BFI and Auto Nation.

Lopez said that his organization has experienced major growth in the past few years and the current Hollywood office facilities are too small to serve the Chamber’s growing staff.

“We will have 1,500 square feet in Plantation, almost double our current space,” he said. “Currently we have four people working in the office, but we will be expanding and will need to provide space for new people.”

Chao said that the need for expansion and shifting population patterns all contributed to the decision to relocate. “Hollywood was great,” he said, “But we pay attention to census news.”

The Chamber’s new offices, which are currently being renovated, are scheduled to open around June 1. The new address is 8320 West Sunrise Blvd., Suite 206, in Plantation. The organization’s phone and fax numbers will remain the same.

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HEADS TO PLANTATION FROM HOLLYWOOD, *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, May 24, 2002**