

The NOSOTROS Student Organization  
Annual Report 2007-08



Michigan Technological University

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## 1 About this report

This document represents the first comprehensive report of the NOSOTROS Student Organization. It summarizes the activities that NOSOTROS organized during the 2007-08 school year. Also in this report the reader will find information about responsibilities of members, changes to the organization, procedure on the management of the Organization, etc. It is expected that this report will be upgraded by the current Executive Board (EB) and submitted to the new EB before the fall semester starts.

## 2 Introduction

The NOSOTROS Student Organization at Michigan Technological University has the purpose of establishing a sense of community on campus and to share the Latin/Hispanic culture with other students, faculty, staff and the local community. The organization holds events to foster interaction within member and non-members.

During the 2007-2008 period, we made a variety of activities which are described below including fundraising, presentation of the Latin countries, literature contests, among other activities. But, there is one issue that is the most important.

For several years NOSOTROS was affiliated to the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) chapter at Michigan Tech. Since the full commitment between both organizations was never reached due to the restriction imposed to NOSOTROS as a result of the affiliation, starting in spring February 2008, the organization decided to no longer be affiliated to the SHPE Chapter. These restrictions included not having the freedom to change the advisor chapter and the continuous pressure to focus our activities on professional development instead of focusing in ethnic/cultural events. The majority of the members agree that should be an equilibrium with cultural side that we represent and are ambassadors of. Without the cultural identity that we represent we are nothing. It is true that in University there are offices that can provide cultural activities, but none of them represents the Latin culture. It is also true that in University there are well qualified offices that can provide professional development activities. After a series of meetings, the final decision was to not longer be affiliated with SHPE, not because we were against of the professional development of our member, but because we want to be an independent student organization, taking our own decisions and to provide students the real possibility to become leaders. That was the most significant heritage that we leave to our follower Executive Boards.

Since it was decided to separate from SHPE, a new organization had to be registered at the Office of Students Organization. To do so, a Constitution had to be submitted in addition to other requirements. An initiative was undertaken to develop a Constitution that represents the will of ALL the members. A document was developed taking into consideration the suggestions of the Executive Board. The Constitution is available on the website, <http://nosotros.students.mtu.edu/>. Regarding the image of the organization (based on the suggestions of several members) it was decided to create a new logo that represents our mission and values, as well as to be seen as an inclusive organization. Jorge Kurita (a graduate student in Mechanical Engineering, from Paraguay), took the initiative and created the logo included in this report.

### 3 Executive Board and advisor for the 2007-2008 academic year

The officers for this academic year are listed in the following table.

Table 1: Officer for Academic Year 2007-08

<b>President:</b>	Ezequiel Medici	<b>Vice-president:</b>	Andrea Muñoz
<b>Status:</b>	Graduate	<b>Status:</b>	Graduate
<b>Major:</b>	Mechanical Eng.	<b>Major:</b>	CEE
<b>Email:</b>	efmedici@mtu.edu	<b>Email:</b>	amunozhe@mtu.edu
<b>Secretary:</b>	Julio L. Rivera	<b>Treasurer:</b>	Efran Muñoz
<b>Status:</b>	Graduate	<b>Status:</b>	Undergraduate
<b>Major:</b>	Mechanical Eng.	<b>Major:</b>	Economy/business
<b>Email:</b>	jlrivera@mtu.edu	<b>Email:</b>	emunoz@mtu.edu
<b>Pub. relations:</b>	Jorge Kurita	<b>Webmaster:</b>	Julio L. Rivera
<b>Status:</b>	Graduate	<b>Status:</b>	Graduate
<b>Major:</b>	Mechanical Eng.	<b>Major:</b>	Mechanical Eng.
<b>Email:</b>	jhkurita@mtu.edu	<b>Email:</b>	jlrivera@mtu.edu
<b>Adviser:</b>	Dr. Jaime Camelio		
<b>Status:</b>	Faculty		
<b>Major:</b>	Mechanical Eng.		
<b>Email:</b>	n/a		

### 4 Members

With the new Constitution, the only requirement to become member is the intension of signing a consent. In February 2008 the organization consisted of 15-plus members. At the time of this report the number of members who signed the consent is 30-plus. One of the strengths of NOSOTROS is that the body of members includes student, faculty, and staff from many different countries who share the same passion the Latin/Hispanic culture.

### 5 Meetings

During the 2007-2008 period the organization hold six general meetings with a coffee break format. The purpose of this format is to motivate students participation in an open and friendly environment. At the meeting free pizza was also provided. To guarantee an inclusive environment, the language for the meetings was English. Even though we share our culture, the organization understands that using a common language

results in a unified body of members. In addition to the group meetings, the Executive Board had regular weekly meeting in the library.

### 5.1 Mandatory meetings

Members of the Executive Board should attend mandatory meetings at the beginning of the fall semester. Failing to attend this meeting will lead to the dismissal of the organization. It is important that the contact information at the Student Organization Office is updated as soon as the results of the elections are known to make sure that the new President receives the emails regarding these meetings.

## 6 Storage room, email account, server, and bulletin board

From August 2008 the organization has a storage room located in the building just north of the Ice Arena. This storage room is a space which serves as documents depository as well as other materials of the organization like banners, T-shirts, poncho, hats, and magazines. This storage room is one of the larges in the building (5' x 9'6") identified as the #11. There is a locker combination to have access to the building and a key to have access to the room. Both things are responsibilities President.

Also, the organization has two emails list. One is designated communicating announcements, appreciations, among other relevant information to our members. This list is `nosotros-l@mtu.edu`, and must be update every time that a student agrees to became a member. The other one, `nosotros_exe-l@mtu.edu` is designated to communicate between the Executive Board. The President is responsible for managing these lists.

Since we are a registered organization, we are given a space for a website which is found at `http://nosotros.students.mtu.edu/`. The website is managed by the Webmaster. The purpose is to communicate with member about events, news, etc. and also to keep records of the activities so that future members have a place to learn about the history of the organization. The current Webmaster should meet with the elected officer to provide him/her with the details on how to access the server. In cases in which the webmaster is not able to access the webpage (the account could be blocked for example after several failures to login), the office could contact the administrator for the Student Organizations Server by sending an email to `studentorg@mtu.edu`.

In addition to the server space, the organization was given a space in the MUB which is use to advertise our events. This space is located on the West exit of the MUB (walking from the cafeteria). The Public Relations officer is responsible for keeping the space updated.

## 7 Budget and finance (Treasurer)

### 7.1 Responsibilities

1. Be responsible for general supervision of finances for the Organization.
2. Collect dues and give receipts.
3. Maintain the checking account and balance the statements monthly.
4. Be responsible for the prompt payment of all bills of the Organization.
5. Maintain up-to-date financial records and provide a report at the end of each serving term.
6. Prepare a financial report of the estimates for the Heritage Week to be presented to the USG board, as well as any other unexpected reasons to ask the USG for funds.

## 7.2 Finance

During the 2007-2008 most of our expenses were allocated in our effort to establish the new organization. This money was spent in the food provided during our coffee breaks. The balance of the account at the end of the spring 2008 was \$2008.57 (\$1327.95 in savings and \$684.79 in checking).

## 7.3 Transition

The organization has a bank account at the Michigan Tech. Credit Union COOP located in Shelden Ave. The President and Treasurer have access to the account. A transition could be made for the new Executive Board during the summer or at the beginning of the fall semester. For the transition, the new account managers and at least one of the oldest account managers have to go to the bank with their personal identification (usually driver license) to proceed with transition.

## 7.4 Next Term Budget

At the time of the report \$700 were obtained from the Undergraduate Student Government as support for the Hispanic Heritage Week 2008. In order to obtain that support, a short proposal describing the event was written and a tentative budget were submitted online.

## 8 Summary of activities fall 2007

### 8.1 Keweenaw Day (K-Day)

During the K-Day the organization booked a table to promote the coming activities and to recruit students. During event 5+ student became member of the organization.

### 8.2 Hispanic Heritage week and Spanish essay contest

NOSOTROS Student Organization proudly organized the Hispanic Heritage Week. During that week, students made different presentations related to the Latin/Hispanic Culture. They were: Jorge KuritaParaguay; Jose Camilo Uzquiano and Giancarlo Calbimonte PerezBolivia; Ezequiel MediciArgentina; Juan Morinelli-Colombia and Rudiger EscobarGuatemala. Also, 15+ students from Michigan Tech as well as high school students participated in the First Spanish Essay Competition. The selected essays were:

<b>First place</b>	Valerie Fuchs (CEE)
<b>Second place</b>	Nicole Lopez (PSY)
<b>Third place</b>	Alison Springer-Wilson (CM)

All the participants were awarded with Certificates of Honor. Yesianne Ramirez (wife to Carmelo Dvila from Industrial Archeology) was the judge for the essay competition (she holds a degree in Literature).

## 9 Summary of activities spring 2008

### 9.1 Tropical Music Night

In March 28th, 2008 NOSOTROS organized a Tropical Music Night hosted at Uphill 41, Hancock, MI. The purpose of the event was to share the passion for Latin music and to raise fundings for a local non-profit

organization. During the event attendants enjoyed a mixed selection of Latin rhythms like salsa, meringue, bachata, rock, cumbia, and others. There were 120+ people including students, faculties and community members. Thanks to their support and to the opportunity given by the UpHill 41, \$200 were donated to the local organization Little Brother located in Hancock.

## **9.2 International Night participation**

For three consecutive years the organization has been represented at the International Night event organized by the International Club. This year four of our members participated including Jos Camilo, Lucas Lago, Giancarlo Calbimonte Perez and Rei Tangkothey played two songs, called “La masa and “Perdn The organization awarded them a \$10 gift certificate from the local commerce Worlds Food.

## **9.3 Chess social**

On April 10, 2008 the NOSOTROS organization had a chess social with the Michigan Chess Club. This was the first time both organizations work together. The objective is to persuade students to play and eventually organized a competition on fall 2008.

## **9.4 Jeronimo Osorio Chen, “Giving voice to indigenous Mayan people in Guatemala**

NOSOTROS and Global City student organizations sponsored the Copper County Guatemalan Accompaniment Project (CCGAP) presentation on Thursday, April 10, 2008 at DOW 641. The speaker presented the details of a controversial hydroelectric power plant project going on in Guatemala. The speaker, native from Guatemala, explained how the Guatemalan government is handling the project. The contact point for this event was Rdigert Escobar who also served as translator. 35+ people attended the presentation including members of the hosting organizations as well as Peace Corps, Engineers without Borders, etc. That was the first time that the three organizations worked together. After that productive experience, the three organizations are looking for new collaborative projects for next semester.

### **Abstract of the talk**

Jeronimo Osorio Chen represents the Ixcn Referendum Commission, a grassroots group that engages in education, organizing, and legal strategies to ensure that the people of the Ixcn determine their own resource use and development priorities. In a referendum held last year, almost 90% of Ixcns inhabitants voted against the construction of large hydroelectric dams, including Xalal. Disregarding this overwhelming opposition, the Guatemalan government is currently accepting bids from national and international investors interested in the Xalal dam.

## **9.5 Workshop on copyrights and plagiarism**

In collaboration with the Michigan Tech Van Pelt Opie library, a workshop titled The basic issues of copyright, plagiarism, and intellectual integrity was held on April 17th, 2008 in the library. The speakers for this event were: Nora Allred (Library’s Head of Access Services), Deb Charlesworth (Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School), and Pat Gotschalk (Director of Student Judicial Affairs). The event was organized with the help of David Lapse (Head of Reference, Instruction, & Government Documents).

## **9.6 Potluck for graduates**

On April 12, 2008 a potluck was held at the Daniel Heights Community Room to share with those graduating in the spring 2008. Students, professors, and staff members joined us.

## 9.7 Nomination and elections for 2008-2009 executive board

NOSOTROS hosted the elections for 2008-2009 executive board. Nominations were open from Monday, April 7th through Wednesday April 16th for the following positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations. Nominations were considered sending an email with the intention to the President of the organization. Nominations were opened for the Elections took place on Thursday 04/17 in parallel with the last general meeting and Coffee Break. The result of the elections was the following:

President: Victor Flores (11 out of 15, 1 opposed, 3 void) Vice-president: Julio L. Rivera (15 out of 15) Secretary: Lucas Lago (13 out of 15) and Giancarlo Calbimonte (2 out of 15) Treasurer: Efran Muoz (15 out of 15) Public relations: Ezequiel Medici (15 out of 15)

A week after the elections, the elected secretary Lucas Lago resigned the position. At the time of that report the position was still open.

## 9.8 Spring Fling

During Spring Fling, NOSOTROS had a table to promote the organization. Members volunteered to stay at the table for periods of 1/2 hr to 1 hr, starting from noon till 4pm. Typical Latin table games like domino and Spanish cards were played capturing the attention of those that participated on the events, including the Vice-president for Students Affairs.

## 9.9 14th Annual student award Banquet

This year, NOSOTROS was nominated in three categories for the 14th Annual Student Awards. The nominations were: The Most Improved Organization, Exceptional Program of the Year (Hispanic Heritage week), and Student Organization Advisor of the Year (Dr. Jaime Camelio). This was a valuable feedback that motivates us to keep working in order to promote the Latin culture at Michigan Tech.

## 9.10 Potluck at Andreas house

At the end of the spring semester, a potluck dinner was hosted by Andra Muoz (Environmental Engineering). Fifteen plus students attended his event.

## 9.11 Spanish essay contest

At the time of the report only three papers were received and they are in the evaluation process.

# 10 Activities fall 2008

## 10.1 Keweenaw Day (K-Day)

A table including power supply was already reserved. That event will take place on the first Friday of fall semester. The Executive Board must have a meeting before that day in order to decide what to include in the table.

## 10.2 Hispanic Heritage Week

The Hispanic Heritage Day is an international event that commemorates the legacy of the Spaniards celebrated on October 12th. Here at Michigan Tech the Hispanic Heritage has been celebrated since 2004 (based on current knowledge) in an effort to share the Hispanic/Latin culture with students (both undergraduate

and graduate), faculty, staff members, and the local community for example high school students. The events will be organized during the second week of October. The celebration will include:

1. Oral presentations given by members of the NOSOTROS organization as well as professional speakers. Topics are selected regarding social and political aspects, food, tourism, sport, etc.
2. Spanish essay contest is a writing competition for non-native Spanish speaking students within two categories, high school and Tech students,
3. A collage exposition opened throughout the week for attendants to enjoy from the personal experiences of the organization members.
4. To close the Hispanic Heritage Week a social dance with a professional DJ will be organized. In this event attendants have the opportunity to taste some of the traditional dishes from the countries of Latin America and Spain.

The Hispanic Heritage week has always been successful and well accepted by the community. Based on the feedback, it is evident that this event makes a strong contribution in promoting cultural diversity at Michigan Tech.

## **11 List of Activities for Spring 2009**

1. Performance for International Night
2. Spring Fling
3. Nomination and elections for 2009-2010 executive board

## **12 List of potential activities that could be planned**

1. Bowling
2. Potlucks
3. Brunch social
4. Chess social
5. Movie nights
6. Ice cream socials
7. Pool party

## **13 Closing remarks**

In order to ensure continuity within the organization, members are encouraged to keep records of their duties. With this, the making of the annual report will be much easier. Once the report is approved by the Executive Board, it should be made available on the website.