

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 15, 2021

Contact:

Carlos Vargas, cvargas@hunter.cuny.edu

Centro awarded prestigious NEH award

The Center for Puerto Rican Studies Receives Nearly \$350,000 to Digitize and Make Accessible Archival Collections About the Puerto Rican Diaspora

-Centro is among 225 recipients nationwide for a humanities project-

New York, NY – The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced yesterday that The Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro) is one of [225 recipients](#) of \$24 million in grant funding for humanities projects across the United States and beyond. As stated by NEH acting chairman, Adam Wolfson, “NEH is proud to support these 225 new projects, which embody excellence, intellectual rigor, and a dedication to the pursuit of knowledge, even as our nation and the humanities continue to face the challenges of the pandemic.”

Centro’s proposal competed with more than 230 other submissions and was one of only 34 recipients who share \$8.8 million in grant funding available under the Humanities Collections and Reference Resources category. The NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources program seeks to allow institutions to preserve and provide access to collections essential to scholarship, education, and public programming in the humanities.

Centro submitted an application to fund its project—“*One-Hundred Years of Puerto Rican History and Culture*”— for the digitization of 24 cubic feet of archival materials documenting the arts, culture, social movements and overall history of the Puerto Rican diaspora. The award of \$349,387 will allow Centro to digitize approximately 23,500 pages from 17 archival collections to create 6,600 new digital objects over a three-year period, and make them available to the public.

“Centro is gratified for the recognition and validation of its work and its mission by such an esteemed institution as the National Endowment for the Humanities,” said Dr. Edwin Meléndez, Director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies and Principal Investigator for this project. “This award, the second NEH award in a row to support our digital humanities initiative, is also a shot in the arm for the important work Centro does at a time of inordinate challenges. With this initiative, Centro seeks to ensure preservation, foster new scholarship, and support the design and implementation of outreach programs that rely on the use of new technologies to increase access to Centro’s vast research resources and archival collections.”

“The funding provided by the NEH will bolster an already significant digital footprint and provide global accessibility to primary source material documenting, arts, culture, politics, law, and major social reform of Puerto Rican communities throughout the 20th century,” said Aníbal Arocho, Centro’s library manager. To make the content of the processed digital collections widely accessible, Centro is launching a new online project—the *Centro eJournal*—to provide a new resource for digital humanities, and another Web-based humanities resource—the *Puerto Rican Heritage Cultural Ambassadors* program—a free, self-paced, multimedia online courses in Puerto Rican history, culture, and traditions.

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 15, 2021

Contact:

Carlos Vargas, cvargasr@hunter.cuny.edu

To learn more about Centro, visit: <https://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu/>

About the Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro): The Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY (Centro) is the nation's leading university-based institution devoted to the interdisciplinary study of the Puerto Rican experience in the United States. Centro is dedicated to understanding, preserving, and sharing the Puerto Rican experience in the United States. Centro seeks to link scholarship to social action and policy debates, and to contribute to the betterment of our community and the enrichment of Puerto Rican studies.

About Centro's Library and Archives: The Library and Archives contain the main collection of primary and secondary sources for the study of the stateside Puerto Rican community. As a specialized collection, its holdings are not circulating. The Library holds and provides access to more than 25,100 titles of books; 2,520 plus dissertations and master's theses; more than 200 titles of historical newspapers and periodicals on 3,790 reels of microfilm; more than 2,050 miscellaneous material organized by over 195 topics; approximately 2,000 audio recordings; and over 510 videos and DVDs containing information by and about Puerto Ricans. The Archives collects, preserves, and makes available for research unique primary materials that document the history and culture of the Puerto Rican diaspora. The holdings include over 6,700 cubic feet of archival material: including personal papers collections and collections of records of organizations and institutions.

About Hunter College: Hunter College is the largest college in the City University of New York (CUNY) system. Most Hunter students are the first in their families to attend college and many go on to top professional and graduate programs, winning Fulbright scholarships, Mellon fellowships, National Institutes of Health grants, and other competitive honors. More than 23,000 students currently attend Hunter, pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in more than 170 areas of study.