



San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center *Volunteer Spotlight*

December 2009

José Lizárraga



José began his involvement with the Latin@ Forum in May 2008. As the Chair of the Latin@ Forum, he has been instrumental in planning and implementing the annual Cinco de Mayo and Día de los Muertos events at the Center. Through this work, Jose has been able to provide the queer Latin@ community with a variety of arts, educational and social activities.

José joined the San Francisco Friends School staff in 2005 after serving as the Area Coordinator for Housing at the California College of the Arts. The son of first generation Mexican immigrants, José grew up in Salinas, California where he attended public schools and developed an early talent as an artist. As a student, José studied French, Japanese, and American Sign Language to supplement his fluent English and Spanish and planned a career in translation or foreign relations. A beloved art history professor encouraged José to apply for a scholarship to study art and culture in Japan, and to pursue painting at California College of the Arts. He won both scholarships in a single week, and shifted directions towards the visual arts. José is an award-winning altar maker and exhibits his work around the Bay Area during the Day of the Dead season. José is also a stellar performer and loves to sing, currently with the world-renowned San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus!

He continues to bridge his commitment to the arts, education, children and families and community building through his volunteer work at the Center. We are extremely fortunate to work with Jose!