

## **ESPN, CUNY, LRN and PRISM Join With HISPA to Inspire Students**

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Princeton, NJ – Over one hundred middle school students will gather at John Jay College in New York on April 2 to learn about STEM careers and hear success stories. The Youth Conference is titled “Take Action! Achieve Your Dreams” and is hosted by Hispanics Inspiring Student Performance and Achievement (HISPA), the Latina Researchers Network (LRN) and the Program for Research Initiatives in Science and Math (PRISM) in partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY) and ESPN as lead sponsor.

Founded in 2006, HISPA places Latino professionals in middle schools to tell their stories and inspire students to excel and plan for higher education. Since its founding in New Jersey, HISPA has extended its Role Model Programs to San Antonio, Texas and to New York City, where it began in three schools in 2014. For many of the students who attend the HISPA Youth Conference it will be their first time on a college campus.

“I am excited about the public and private sectors joining HISPA to provide this inspiring conference with hands-on STEM workshops,” said Ivonne Diaz Claisse, CEO HISPA. “The speakers and volunteers will showcase the power of education by sharing their stories of achieving higher education and having successful careers.”

The speakers and workshop topics are: Ivonne Diaz-Claisse, Ph.D., “An Unpredictable Mathematical Journey;” Edward Montenegro, “What is Engineering?;” Edgardo Sanabria-Valentín, Ph.D., “So, You Want to Be a Scientist;” John Moreno Escobar, “Life After High School;” and Orlando Rivera, “Have an Idea for an App?”

The “Sharing Our Stories” luncheon will feature keynote speaker Silvia Mazzula, Ph.D., Latina Researchers Network Executive Director. Mazzula is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at John Jay College. She is a licensed professional counselor in New Jersey. Her clinical interests focus on working with underserved and underrepresented populations.

Members of corporate Latino Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), members of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and university students will serve as role models throughout the conference, helping students with the hands-on STEM activities and sharing their educational and professional journeys. Participating company ERGs include ESPN – *Goal!*, UPS – Crecer, Ogilvy – LatinRED, Verizon – HSO, JP Morgan – Adelante, TD Bank – Latinos in Leadership, and university students from Columbia University, John Jay, PRISM and CUNY.

The lead sponsor for the youth conference is ESPN and the lead partner is CUNY. HISPA’s annual partners are Educational Testing Service, ESPN, Verizon, Comcast, and Southwest Airlines.

“ESPN is proud to be the founding sponsor of HISPA in New York City. We value the strong relationship we have with sports fans in the Latino/Hispanic community and demonstrate it by supporting the development of our youth,” said Mónica Díaz, Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Wellness at ESPN.

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