

ESPN, Bristol-Myers Squibb Organization for Latino Achievement and UPS Employee Receive Awards

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Princeton, NJ – Hispanics Inspiring Students' Performance and Achievement (HISPA) will recognize volunteers and present awards at its 7th annual Three Kings (the three Wise Men) banquet on January 15 at the Hotel Woodbridge in Metropark, N.J. starting at 6 p.m. The event gathers some 300 corporate, nonprofit, government, education and other leaders. The banquet celebrates the contributions of the 1,500 supporters and volunteers who share their stories with middle school students inspiring them to stay in school, graduate and use education as a way to fulfill their dreams.

HISPA will present its "Transform" award to ESPN as the Sponsor of the Year, its "Inspire" award to Bristol-Myers Squibb's Organization for Latino Achievement as the Champion of the Year and its "Share" award to Manfred Morales of United Parcel Service, as the Role Model of the Year.

"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 Monica Diaz, VP of Diversity, Inclusion and Wellness at ESPN. "Our Latino / Hispanic Employee Resource Group, GOAL!, has embraced the relationship with HISPA, to inspire young students to pursue higher education," said Monica.

"Through the HISPA Role Model Program," said Manfred Morales, "I was able to go back home and speak with some of the students in my old neighborhood, just a few blocks from where I lived when I was in middle school. I had the opportunity to let these young boys and girls know that 'yes they can' achieve great things through education."

Now in its seventh year, HISPA conducts its programs throughout New Jersey, New York City and San Antonio, Texas. The Three Kings banquet coincides with the traditional gift-giving period of the Nativity in Latin America. HISPA selected this theme to thank those whose gifts of support and volunteerism assure the success of its programs.

Our 2015 Annual Partners are Comcast, ESPN, ETS, Verizon and Southwest Airlines. This year's Banquet Sponsors are the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Investors Bank, PNC Bank, PSEG, Merck, UPS, Verizon and Wells Fargo.

"Our award recipients exemplify the gifts that HISPA brings to students," says Dr. Ivonne Díaz-Claissé, founder and president of HISPA. "They tell inspirational stories that showcase the power of education, and inspire students to realize their dreams."

This year HISPA has created a new honor for the "Leadership in Mentoring" Award. The recipient will be Debra Joy Pérez, Vice President Research, Evaluation and Learning, The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Growing up in Trenton, N.J., Pérez was one of nine children in a low-income Puerto Rican family. She did not plan to attend college, but recalls how the caring act of a guidance counselor, who paid her \$25 college application fee, set in motion an educational journey that culminated in two master's degrees and a Harvard Ph.D. Pérez's proudest endeavor is the "\$25 Fund," which she launched at the Princeton Area Community Foundation to provide "whatever it takes" to help talented youth of color get to college and succeed.

"Research shows that our programs work," said Yvonne Shepard, Chair of the HISPA Board. "After hearing these inspirational stories many students who never thought about going to college say, I can do it too." "We are so proud to support HISPA's research," said Yvette Donado, chief administrative officer, ETS. "HISPA's goals are aligned with the ETS mission to provide quality and equity in education for all."

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WHERE :

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