

LATINO LEADERS NETWORK HONORS U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET

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Washington, D.C. - The Honorable Maria Contreras-Sweet, head of the U.S. Small Business Administration, will keynote the Latino Leaders Luncheon Series™ hosted by the Latino Leaders Network (LLN) on Wednesday, October 22, 2014 in Washington, DC. She will also receive the Eagle Leadership Award, which is presented as a symbol of vision, achievement and commitment to the Latino community.

“Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet serves as a powerful example of the success that can be achieved through hard work and determination. She is a role model for Latinos and all Americans,” states Mickey Ibarra, founder and chairman of LLN.

On April 7, 2014, she was confirmed by the Senate to serve on the President’s Cabinet as the nation’s 24th Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Contreras-Sweet is a successful entrepreneur, business executive, and state cabinet official. Throughout her career in the public and private sector, she has been a champion of diversity, access to capital and equal opportunity for all Americans.

Prior to her arrival in Washington, Contreras-Sweet founded the first Latino-formed commercial bank in California in more than 35 years. As the bank’s executive chairwoman, she focused on providing access to capital and counseling to small- and mid-size businesses in Los Angeles. She also was the first Latina to hold a state cabinet post in California serving as Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing.

The program will feature an honoree introduction by Cecilia Muñoz, who serves as Assistant to the President and Director of the Domestic Policy Council at The White House. In her role, she coordinates the domestic policy-making process in The White House. Prior to this, she served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs where she oversaw the Obama Administration’s relationships with state and local governments.

Ignacio Salazar, President & CEO of the SER National, will be the featured community partner during the luncheon program. SER (*Service, Employment, and Redevelopment*) is a national network of Community Based Organizations (CBO’s) that formulates and advocates initiatives resulting in the increased development and utilization of America’s human resources, with special emphasis on the needs of Hispanics, in the areas of education, training, employment, business and economic opportunity. SER National aims to develop the capacity of the SER network through the provision of technical assistance, research and planning, program and policy development, and fundraising.

The Latino Leaders Luncheon Series™ consists of quarterly events convened in Washington, DC and other cities to provide a platform for prominent Latino leaders to share their personal story of obstacles overcome to achieve success and to provide a network opportunity for elected officials, policy makers, corporate executives, opinion leaders, community activists, industry experts, and political insiders. Sponsors include Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc., Univision Communications Inc., Kraft Foods Group and Southwest Airlines.

About The Latino Leaders Network™

The Latino Leaders Network™ is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to “*Bringing Leaders Together*” to establish relationships, build unity, and foster dialogue on issues important to the community. Mickey Ibarra, founder

and chairman, served as Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House for President Clinton.

Other board members include: Ruben Alvarez, The Molera Alvarez Group, Phoenix, AZ; Soyla Fernández, Fernández Government Solutions, Sacramento, CA; David Ibarra, Ibarra Foundation, Salt Lake City, UT; Maria Teresa Kumar, Voto Latino, Washington, DC; Michelle Minguez, Voto Latino, New York, NY; Miguel Santana, Chief Administrative Officer of Los Angeles, CA; and Ken Trujillo, Partner at Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP, Philadelphia, PA.

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