

## **Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute (CHLI) partners with Young Playwrights' Theater**

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Washington, DC (CapitalWirePR) October 29, 2008 -- The Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute (CHLI) partnered with Young Playwrights' Theater (YPT) on Monday, October 27, 2008 to present *Celebrating Community: A New Writers Now! Event* in honor of Hispanic Heritage month.

The staged reading, which was free of charge and open to the public, was held at GALA Hispanic Theatre in Washington, DC. Immediately prior to the event, CHLI hosted a catered reception, sponsored by Commerce Bank Dupont Circle, in order to provide a space for students, family and community members to interact before the performance.

"The Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute was delighted to host this meaningful event for Hispanic youth in the District of Columbia," said Octavio A. Hinojosa Mier, Executive Director, Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute. "As an organization that promotes diversity of thought in the Hispanic community, we are proud to support our local youth in the performing arts which inspires our community to reach its full potential in all aspects of society. It is wonderful to see such young talent, and these particular high school students – Vanessa, Rose and Jorge – are part of a Hispanic legacy rich with literature, culture and story-telling."

Each play was written by students in Young Playwrights' Theater In-School Playwriting Program, and examined the role of family and community. Featured plays included: *Goodbye Past, Hello Future* by Vanessa Vatan; *Do Dreams Exist?* by Rose Stefany Quispe; and *The Last Goodbye* by Jorge Hernandez.

Jorge Hernandez, discovered his talent for writing and story-telling through the Young Playwrights' Theater. He moved from Guatemala in 2004 and is now a Senior at Bell Multi-cultural High School. He is applying to colleges to study political science and writing/theater.

"Through this program, I have developed a passion for writing; I see a connection between myself and literature," said Hernandez. "Writing a play is different from writing a story because in a play, you have to use emotion and language to show your character, whereas in a story, you can use specific adjectives to describe the character. I use a lot of poetry in my writing."

All three plays, each lasting approximately 20-25 minutes, focused on family and hardship – the importance of the immediate family, extended family and the community as a whole in order to live in peace and joy and to thrive.

"Each play was captivating and intense. We are fortunate that there is an outlet like YPT for these young people to share their stories and develop their talent," said David Chalker, Manager, Commerce Bank Dupont Circle. "Commerce Bank Dupont Circle is committed to local youth programs and is pleased to have partnered with the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute and the Young Playwrights' Theater for this very meaningful event."

Young Playwrights' Theater teaches students to express themselves clearly and creatively through the art of playwriting. For a schedule of upcoming youth performances or for more information on the organization, visit [www.yptdc.org](http://www.yptdc.org).

**The Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute** advances the Hispanic Community's diversity of thought through non-partisan analysis, study and research. Through educational partnerships, scholarships,

leadership programs, academic seminars and other events, CHLI provides opportunities for discussion and exploration of strategic solutions for community challenges that in turn, benefit the nation as a whole. For more information, visit [www.chli.org](http://www.chli.org).

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