



62nd

CIRCLE OF ACHIEVERS EVENT 2023

AN INVESTMENT IN LATINO YOUTH

MON. | MAY | 2023
08

6:00pm - 10:00pm

583 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065

ASPIRA
OF
NEW YORK

BUILDING ON 62 YEARS OF INVESTING IN YOUTH



MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CHAIR

Dear ASPIRA Supporters:

On Monday, May 8th, ASPIRA of New York will celebrate its 2023 annual Circle of Achievers event. Last year, thanks to the generosity of corporations and individuals, \$1.1 Million dollars was raised to support ASPIRA's programs. Thanks to returning supporters and new ones, we are on track to raise \$1 Million again this year to invest in ASPIRANTES.

Since 1961, founded by Dr. Antonia Pantoja, ASPIRA has been at the forefront of providing educational and leadership development opportunities to Latino youth. In 2022, we served 5,978 New York City youth. Nearly all of the students come from low-income households. More often than not, they attend poor performing schools in under-resourced school districts and are first-generation college entrants. 100% of students engaged in our Leadership and College Access Program earned a high school diploma; of those, 99%, entered college. In our elementary and middle school-based programs, 100% of students had passing grades to enable them to progress with their age group towards graduation.

I want to take a moment to applaud Matt Ellis for his years of commitment to ASPIRA as chair of the Circle of Achievers gala. Millions of dollars have been raised through this event during his tenure as corporate gala chair.

Sincere thanks to each of you who partner to make tonight a success. I look forward to sharing an inspiring evening with you, focused on recognizing corporate achievers who make a difference in our companies and within the Latino community, as well as, awarding college scholarships to deserving ASPIRANTES.

Muchísimas gracias,



2023 Circle of Achievers Co-Chair
Treasurer and Senior Vice President, Verizon



Chief Executive Officer
ASPIRA of New York, Inc.

MESSAGE FROM ASPIRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear ASPIRA Supporters:

On behalf of the ASPIRA of New York's Board of Directors, staff and students thank you for joining us this evening to celebrate our Latino corporate achievers, who make a difference in their communities everyday, as well as, awarding deserving ASPIRANTES with college scholarships. Tonight we also recognize you for your commitment and support throughout the years. This year we are particularly proud and honored to recognize our Vice Chairperson and Advancement Committee Chair of ASPIRA of New York for her unwavering support, commitment to ASPIRA and the Latino community.

Founded by Dr. Antonia Pantoja in New York, ASPIRA (Spanish for "aspire") has been at the forefront of providing educational and leadership development opportunities to Latino youth. Over the years, ASPIRA has grown from a local organization to a national association of ASPIRA affiliates. Nationally, more than a half million Latinos have benefited from ASPIRA's youth development, college access and mentoring programs. In New York, nearly all the students we serve come from low-income households. More often than not, they attend poor performing schools in under-resourced school districts and are first-generation college entrants. In every program we run, active students showed a marked improvement in all school subjects.

The majority of students reported increased confidence levels and greater college "awareness." Moreover, our service model encouraged community empowerment through active engagement, as well as, the engendering of contributions to the wider society. Aspirantes become leaders.

On behalf of the ASPIRA of New York Board of Directors, staff, and students, we extend our deep appreciation to our Corporate Chair Scott Krohn, all our honorees, sponsors and supporters. We hope you enjoy the evening but, most importantly, we hope you leave this event inspired to make a difference, eager to help more and ready to make the future better together.



Board Chair



Vice Chairperson and
Advancement Committee Chair



ASPIRA HISTORY

In 1997, Dr. Antonia Pantoja, founder of ASPIRA and legendary for her role in the education and leadership development of Puerto Rican youth in the United States and Puerto Rico, received the highest honor the nation bestows on a civilian, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Dr. Pantoja was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1922 and studied at the University of Puerto Rico. Upon graduating from the University of Puerto Rico in 1942, she worked as a schoolteacher for two years in Puerto Rico where she cultivated a profound interest in education and addressing the needs of disadvantaged children. She arrived in New York City in November 1944 where she got a job as a welder in a factory making lamps for children.

Dr. Pantoja received a scholarship from Hunter College, City University of New York, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1952. She went on to acquire a Master of Social Work in 1954 from Columbia University and was bestowed a Ph.D. from the Union Graduate School in Yellow Springs, Ohio in 1973.

Her most profound contribution to the Puerto Rican community in the United States began in 1958 when she joined a group of young professionals in creating the Puerto Rican Forum, Inc. which paved the way for the establishment of ASPIRA in 1961. She was also instrumental in establishing the Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs (PRACA) among other important Puerto Rican institutions. However, ASPIRA is her legacy. Originally conceived to address the high dropout rate of Puerto Rican youth in New York City during the '50s and '60s, the organization has flourished into a major national organization dedicated to empowering Latino communities through education.

MEET OUR HOST

Rosevelie Márquez Morales is the Diversity & Inclusion Director for the Americas at Hogan Lovells where she oversees the firm’s strategic plan related to recruitment, retention, development and advancement of diverse lawyers and client engagement on diversity and inclusion initiatives within the U.S., Mexico and Brazil. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Fordham School of Law where she teaches Diversity & Inclusion in Law Practice and Fundamental Lawyering. Prior to becoming a full-time diversity and inclusion professional Rosevelie was a litigation partner at a firm in NYC. Ms. Márquez Morales serves as chair of ASPIRA of NY, a non-profit youth leadership organization, on the HNBA Executive Committee as VP of Programs – Su Futuro, and Fordham Law Alumni Association Board of Directors.

She has previously served as Chair of the NYSBA’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Chair of DRI’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee, President of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, President of the Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program, board member of the New York Women’s Foundation and as a member of the ABA Coalition of Racial and Ethnic Justice and ABA Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity.



Rosevelie Márquez Morales
Board Chair

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OF WORLD CULTURES**

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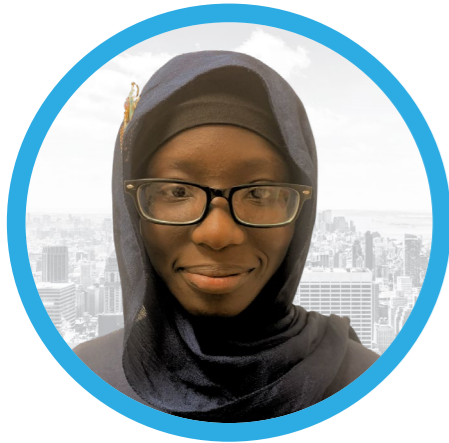
Oluwadamilola Elizabeth Akinola

WEST END

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Rayseel Espacia

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Aissata Diarra

University Prep Charter High School

Being a part of ASPIRA has unlocked a lot of doors for students like me. After the Covid-19 pandemic, it was hard for me to socialize and open up to the world again after we were shut out. Because of ASPIRA, I was able to find myself and make connections with mentors and other students who helped me identify who I am. Being surrounded by a motivational community that supports you through all your academic, personal, and extracurricular struggles has supported me in developing into the person I am becoming today and the role model I want to become.



Alejandra Trochez

The American Dream High School

My name is Alejandra Trochez and I am currently a Senior at The American Dream High School situated in my birthplace, the Bronx, which has been my home for the past 18 years of my life. My family of both Honduran parents makes me a first generation college student, here in the United States. I intend to go to The University of Richmond, Virginia with an intended major in accounting and minor in business administration.



Alondra Acevedo

The American Dream High School

My name is Alondra Acevedo and I am Mexican American. I was born and raised in New York but my parents are from Mexico. The college I intend to attend next school year is The City College of New York. The major I want to go for is Spanish and a minor in ESL ASPIRA gives people the opportunity to advocate for themselves and their school's communities. ASPIRA has taught me to be open minded towards others opinions and made me more social in a way where I could stand up for myself and my ideas.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Andre Thomas

University Prep Charter High School

My name is Andre Thomas, I am an African American who was born in Manhattan but raised in the Bronx. I am a senior at the University Prep High School. My intent is to go to the City College of Technology, where I will be majoring in Liberal Arts & Science. ASPIRA has impacted my life by providing us with the opportunity to attend wonderful trips, meeting new people, and learning about people in the past who have started Aspira and how their impact has changed people for the better.



Assha Fofana

The American Dream High School

My name is Assha Fofana and I am a Gambian American born in Minnesota and raised in New York. My parents hailed from a small country in Africa called Gambia. I want to major in Business and/or mechanical engineering. I joined Aspira with the hopes of getting the scholarship money they awarded, but along the way, it became something more to me and impacted me in a very positive way. Through ASPIRA I learned to socialize and work effectively with my peers to get tasks done.



Aura Peduto

University Prep Charter High School

My name is Aura Peduto and I'll be attending Lehman College, double majoring in Biology and Education. ASPIRA has made a great impact on my life. From the way I communicate to just showing me a new perspective on how to handle different situations in life. ASPIRA has shown me that it is important to be a part of a community that represents your culture because it can help you learn more about yourself and others. ASPIRA has also shown me that it is important to accept and acknowledge people and their cultures because community and unity is key.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Cristian Olivares

University Prep Charter High School

My name is Cristian Alejandro Olivares, I am Colombian and Dominican. I am a leader and senior currently attending Valley Stream Central High School. At the age of 5 I was diagnosed with type one diabetes which has inspired me to attend Hofstra University and become a biomedical engineer and study diabetic insulin solutions to help combat the disease of diabetes. ASPIRA impacts my life by constantly reminding me that there's good in my community and encourages me to do good. While first joining the club because my sister was in it, I found myself resonating with my club advisor and their message of leadership.



Cristina Cabrera

High School of World Cultures

My name is Cristina Cabrera, I am from El Salvador and I go to High school of World Cultures and I want to attend Lehman College. I want to get my degree in Nursing.



David Lluilema

High School of World Cultures

My name is David Lluilema I am from Ecuador and I currently attend High School Of World Cultures. I am looking forward to attending Lehman College in the fall to study business.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Diana Jeffre

The American Dream High School

My name is Diana Jeffre and I attend The American Dream School . My passion for learning and exploring new things led me to pursue a Nursing degree. ASPIRA taught me to take responsibility for myself and develop a sense of autonomy and self-esteem. They showed me how one person's accomplishment could lead to a chain reaction transforming our neighborhood.



Domenica Herrera

Pan American International High School

My name is Domenica Herrera. I'm from Ecuador and currently a senior in Pan American International High School. I arrived in the USA five years ago and have learned a new language, became an activist in organizations like NYSYLC and ASPIRA. ASPIRA has improved my life through education and provided me opportunities to develop a strong character. ASPIRA erased the fear of not belonging and gave me a place where I can be proud of where I come from and the potential I have within myself to accomplish my goals. Now I am an open minded person who gets out of her comfort zone to explore new opportunities, new skills, new experiences, y vivir para dejar mi huella Latina en mi comunidad y en el mundo.



Emmanuel De La Cruz

High School of World Cultures

Mi nombre es Emmanuel De La Cruz, soy de la República Dominicana, y estudió en High School of World Cultures, y mi sueño es estudiar enfermería en Lehman College. ASPIRA no es solo una organización, no es solo un grupo de personas, ASPIRA es un lugar seguro para mi como para otros, ya que nos encontramos con personas que pueden entender y escuchar nuestros problemas como jóvenes adolescentes, con gente que con el tiempo pasan de ser extraños a ser familia. ASPIRA hace que mi vida tenga otro toque de alegría e iluminación, ya que es un lugar donde que alza mi cabeza para sentir esperanzas de que si se puede lograr hacer algo mejor en nuestras vidas.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Fatoumata Barry

University Prep Charter High School

Hi, my name is Fatoumata Barry from the Bronx. I'm West African from Guinean. I've been enrolled at University Prep Charter High school for 4 years and will graduate in June 2023. I plan to attend Binghamton University and pursue a major in Biology with a concentration in Athletic Training.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Gia Rebele

Long Beach High School

Gia Rebele is a senior at Long Beach High School. She has been a member of the ASPIRA club since freshman year and she is half Ecuadorian. She intends to attend Embry Riddle Aeronautical University majoring in Aeronautical Science with the goal and dream of becoming a pilot. ASPIRA has provided a sense of security with my heritage which in turn made me feel more secure as an individual.



Génesis Vaca

High School of World Cultures

My name is Génesis Vaca and I am sixteen years old. I was born and raised in Ecuador until I was thirteen. ASPIRA to me is a family rather than an organization. In ASPIRA I have learned how to be a leader of my own community and to not be afraid to speak up for myself and others. I think that a great part of being an ASPIRante is that you receive help and you give help because you get to support others in a unique way that only ASPIRA knows. Besides that, you meet amazing people, it is like a boomerang, and sometimes the relationships that you make in ASPIRA stay present in your life forever, like friendships.



Giselle Estrada

The American Dream High School

My name is Giselle Estrada and my nationality is Mexican American. I am an ASPIRante and I love to help my community. ASPIRA has impacted my life in opening ways for many different opportunities to impact my community and being able to use my voice in helping the Women, Latino, African American, and our local communities. Learning about ASPIRA's history in what started with one woman that led to multiple communities being able to have the opportunity to help others has been an inspiration.



Gerlis León

John Adams High School

Mi nombre es Gerlis León con nacionalidad Ecuatoriana, asisto a John Adams y asistiré a la escuela de York College para estudiar enfermería. ASPIRA ha sido un club que me ha brindado todas las oportunidades que ellos tienen a su alcance, ASPIRA es un lugar donde te puedes sentir seguro y también es un club donde permite despejarte y divertirse. El legado de la Dra. Pantoja es que todos tengamos un lugar en el país sin importar el estatus, color de piel, nacionalidad etc, ya que todos debemos tener derecho no solo a vivir como deseamos si no poder estudiar de una manera sencilla y cómoda.



Isaac Asare

John Adams High School

The time that I have spent in this community in this program, I have realized that I have been surrounded with people that have a lot of talent and I have also realized I've been given so many opportunities and things to learn from this community. I'm grateful for even being here in the first place. I'm grateful for Vanessa, Deon, David, Perla and Diego. They have taught me so many things about finding out who I was and what I can be. It opened my eyes because they formed this community for young leaders to grow up and change themselves and the people around them for the better. I had so much fun and I love these two years that I spent with them and the rest of the group.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Isaí Emanuel Ajcapaja

Franklin D. Roosevelt High School

My name is Isai Emanuel Ajpacaja, my family and I are from El Salvador. I am a senior at Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School. I am Salvadoran/Guatemalan. As an active member at ASPIRA club I can say that ASPIRA has changed my life for the better. ASPIRA took a seed and watered it and cared for it. As someone who was always quiet, this organization helped me find my voice and advocate for those who struggle with the same thing. I can gladly say that ASPIRA helped me talk more and fight for change in our community.

Janina Chinchilima

Franklin D. Roosevelt High School

Mi nombre es Janina Chinchilima Reyes, soy Ecuatoriana, actualmente resido en Brooklyn, New York y me encuentro estudiando en la escuela secundaria Franklin D. Roosevelt, dentro de los próximos 5 meses pienso iniciar mis estudios en la Universidad Estatal de Nueva York en Delhi para estudiar la carrera de arquitectura. Para mí Aspira es un programa importante que ha impactado de manera positiva a muchos jóvenes latinos y a mi personalmente desde que pertenezco al club ASPIRA en la escuela donde asisto y estar en las reuniones del programa en general ha impactado en mi vida enseñándome el empoderamiento y fortalecimiento del liderazgo, trabajo en equipo y compromiso.

Jean Gonzalez

High School of World Cultures

Mi nombre es Jean Gonzalez soy de la República Dominicana, y tengo 18 años. Estudio en el High school de World Cultures. Quiero estudiar en Lehman College para tener una carrera en contabilidad.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Jessica Yungan

John Adams High School

Mi nombre es Jessica Yungan, soy Ecuatoriana, tengo 18 años y acudo a John Adams High School . Asistire a Queensborough Community College a especializarse en la carrera de Ciencia Forense. ASPIRA impacto mi vida de forma positiva ya que cuando apenas llegue aqui no tenia la nocion de si me podria adaptar a un nuevo sitio, pero cuando me hablaron de un grupo que era solamente para latinos decidí ir y experimentar por mi misma conocí a muchas personas de diferentes países y algunos del mio mismo por lo que me senti comoda, las personas que iban ahí me enseñaron varias cosas que no sabia y ademas me ayudaron mucho para informarme sobre varias actividades que realizaban en fechas especiales como al igual que académicamente.

Joseph Allen

Brooklyn Technical High School

My name is Joseph Allen. I have committed to Boston University, where I will be studying Computing and Data Science. Since I started in freshman year, I have felt the warmth that ASPIRA brings to its members. Immediately I experienced the sense of community, family, and upbringing that the program offers. It was comforting knowing that I had a group of people that supported my success and every step I took to achieve it. It has shaped me for the better in becoming more aware and active in our community.

Juan Duque

Pan American International High School

Juan Duque is my name, I am Colombian and attend Pan American International High School. In the past two years, ASPIRA has become a significant part of my life, and even though I am an immigrant student, I feel more confident and proud of who I am as a result of ASPIRA. By getting involved in various activities both inside and outside of school, and by becoming a part of this community, I was able to step outside of my comfort zone and express my opinions without fear of being judged by others. In addition, I made new connections, met new people, and began to feel more secure when I had to start speaking English as a Second Language with all the participants and ASPIRA leaders.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Julio Sacalxot

Franklin D. Roosevelt High School

I'm Julio Sacalxot, currently enrolled at FDR High School as a senior. I'm 18 years old and I'm pursuing an accounting degree to go to Law School to become a corporate Lawyer. Before I even joined ASPIRA I didn't know what it was, all I knew was the fact that ASPIRA was just a club. Thanks to my Spanish teacher I learned more about it after joining. It was a new environment because I wasn't used to a club where we had to take the initiative and decide what to do that day. This allowed me to develop leadership skills. ASPIRA also allowed a bunch of different opportunities to open, most specifically PR/HYLI which was a great experience, and I could've never been a part of it without ASPIRA.



Lindsay Bueno

Franklin D. Roosevelt High School

My name is Lindsay Bueno and I am Ecuadorian. I intend to also get my masters done and major in criminology so I can become a criminal psychologist. Everything I've learned from having strong values to being a good leader I have ASPIRA to thank for because I use these skills, in my everyday life, learning more about myself along the way. Taking the opportunity to contribute in this strong community ASPIRA builds with my full support, respect and open-mindedness is what makes me an ASPIRante. Especially being able to step outside my comfort zone to learn from others and become a better leader while representing ASPIRA in opportunities such as PR/HYLI is what makes it an honor to call myself an ASPIRANTE.



Justin Flores

High School of World Cultures

My name is Justin Flores, I'm Ecuadorian and I attend the High school of World Cultures. I want to attend Hunter College in the fall and will follow a pre med track for my degree.



Lucia Paredes

Francis Lewis High School

My name is Lucia Paredes and I am currently attending Francis Lewis High School as a Senior. I intend to minor in Political Science in order to pursue a career in politics and one day become a Congresswoman for my state with a law degree in immigration. I will be the first woman in my family to attend college and pursue a career in law. I have a passion for equity, and social justice allowing me to foresee and pursue a better world for not only myself but for generations to come.



Laudy Cardona

High School of World Cultures

Mi nombre es Laudy Cardoza y soy de Honduras. ASPIRA ha impactado mi vida de una manera positiva ya que me ha ayudado en mi proceso de asimilación cultural. Anteriormente yo me sentía completamente ajena a esta nueva cultura, el idioma y el sistema educativo. Pero al conocer a muchos ASPIRantes y asimismo unirme a ASPIRA sentí el apoyo y asesoramiento que antes no sentía. Conecte con ellos y me sentí en familia, por lo que puedo decir que ASPIRA es una familia que me ha ayudado en mi proceso.



Maryfer Henriquez

John Adams High School

Me llamo Maria Fernanda Henriquez soy de Honduras y tengo 18 años. Asisto a la escuela John Adams High School he hecho mis estudios allí desde que estaba en 9 grado y escuela secundaria. La universidad a la cual quiero asistir es Hunter College, para estudiar negocios internacionales.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Nicholas Camacho

University Prep High School

ASPIRA impacts my life by helping teach me life lessons on how to be a leader in my own Puerto Rican community. It helps by showcasing my strengths and weaknesses that I could work on to help others. It also teaches me how to be a well rounded person and learn responsibility. Dr. Pantoja's legacy is what brings inspiration and leadership into many people's lives. I consider myself an ASPIRante due to the many things I have experienced in my lifetime that impacted people's lives.

Samantha Fiallos

Long Beach High School

My name is Samantha Fiallos and I am Honduran. I have always been proud to be a part of the Latino community and frequently engaged in it. I currently attend Long Beach High School and intend to further my education at New York University with a major in Computer Science. I've always been a diligent and driven individual when it comes to my education and I worked hard in order to get into a great college. I believe my education is a privilege and I strive to make the most out of the opportunities given to me. I have participated in ASPIRA for four years and am currently the president at my school's club. I intend to continue to achieve my goals and do anything I set my mind to.

Nicole Roa

Pan American High School

I was born in Venezuela and grew up there until I was twelve years old. I dared to reach my goals and propose more, leaving behind the girl who had no opportunities and who was starving, but still without forgetting the place that I came from. It hurts me to graduate this year only for the fact that I will no longer be at ASPIRA, it is a place where my mind and my culture grow, thanks to them I do not feel ashamed to say that I speak Spanish and that I am of Afro-Latino descent. ASPIRA made me understand how important it is to be yourself, keep going and never give up.

Skerleny Castillo

High School of World Cultures

Mi nombre es Skerleny Castillo Macea, para mí ASPIRA ha sido de gran ayuda, ya que he podido trabajar en equipo y conocer a diferentes personas de varios países y con un idioma nuevo, ha sido increíble trabajar en equipo, tener información acerca de las becas para las universidades y las actividades que realizamos en ASPIRA son muy buenas. Quisiera hablar un poco sobre Antonia Pantoja, ya que ella fue la fundadora de ASPIRA y luchó para que nosotros los latinos tengamos derecho, fue defensora de los derechos civiles y eso ayudó a que podamos tener voz.

Patricia Martinez

The American Dream High School

My name is Patricia Martinez, and I attend the American Dream High School and my family is from Honduras. ASPIRA was one of the first extracurriculars to introduce me to a loving community. Through my trips to different colleges and zoom meetings I've been able to meet so many people, and improve both my networking and leadership skills. I've noticed my growth so much from the beginning to now. All of the support and insight I have received has brought me to where I am today. A high school senior who's attending Tufts University through Questbridge. Thanks to Dr. Antonia Pantoja.

Victor Paniagua

High School of World Cultures

My name is Victor Paniagua, I am from the Dominican Republic and currently attend High School of World Cultures. I will be attending Temple University in the fall of 2023 to study international business. ASPIRA ha tenido un gran impacto en mi vida, he podido conocer varias personas a lo largo del trayecto, de ASPIRA he aprendido muchas cosas como por ejemplo salir de mi zona de confort, aprender a conocer a muchas personas y sobre todo conocerme mas a mi de mis capacidades y mis fortalezas, considero que ASPIRA es una gran oportunidad ya que creces como persona.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Vida Rodriguez

New Design High School

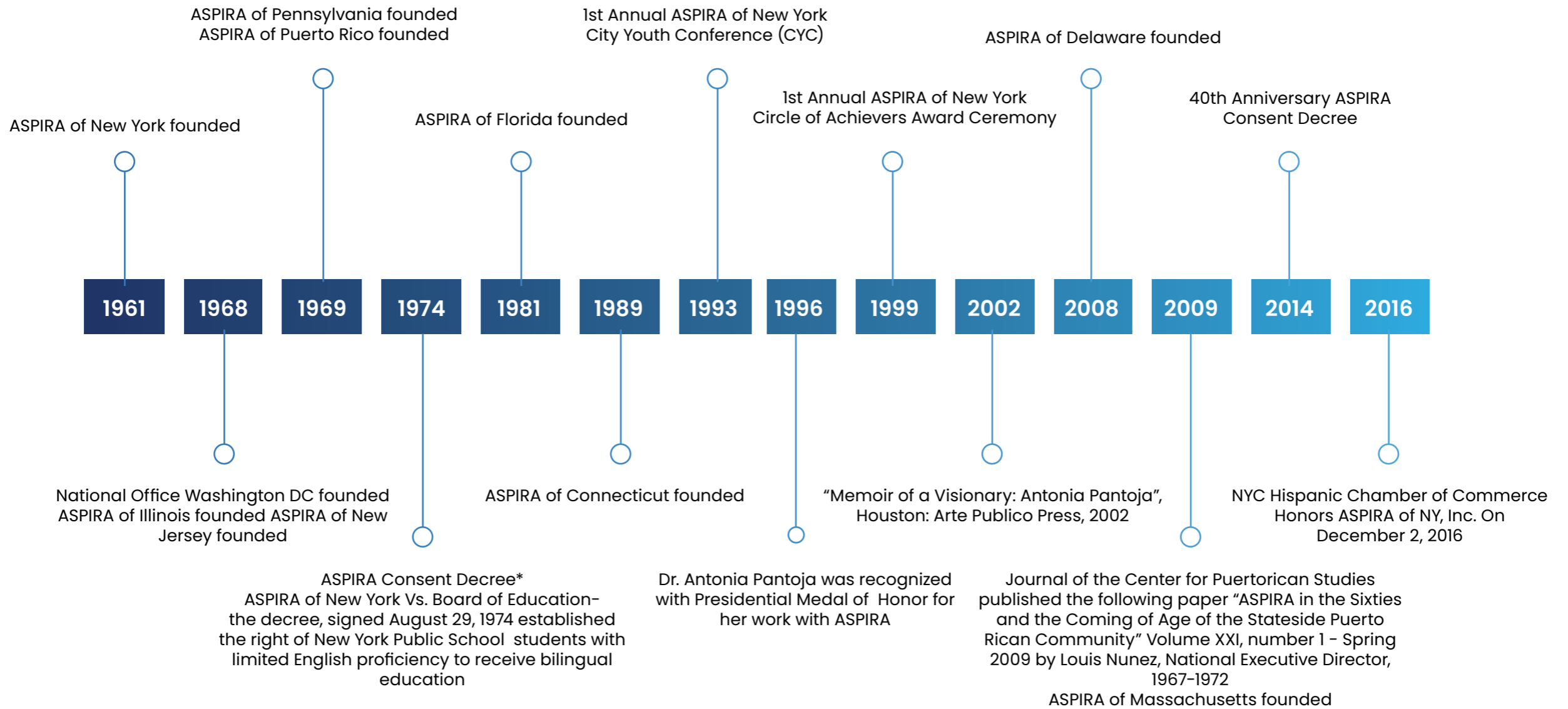
Hi my name is Vida Rodriguez, I am Puerto Rican and have been an ASPIRante since freshman year. ASPIRA has afforded me so many great opportunities and experiences like the annual Leadership Retreat, college trips, career days, and cultural excursions. There really is no other place like ASPIRA. To meet strangers in one meeting who become family for the rest of your life, to know that you have a safe space to go to to speak about your wants and needs and that of your community, to know that you have adults that care and root for you, probably more than you're rooting for yourself is hard to put into words. ASPIRA because 62 years later, it continues to create a lasting impact on not just me, but my generation and I'm sure for those who come after.

Zulmy Gonzalez

John Adams High School

Mi nombre es Zulmy Gonzalez, soy de Guatemala actualmente asisto a la secundaria John Adams y me gustaria entrar a la Universidad de Queensborough Community College con la especialidad de médico forense dual program with John Jay College o a la universidad de LaGuardia Community College con la especialidad de administración de empresas. En lo personal ASPIRA me ha ayudado a mejorar mucho en el ámbito de crecimiento personal y a la contribución de la realización de mis sueños y aspiraciones pero también me ha ayudado a mejorar mi capacidad de afrontar desafíos.

ASPIRA MILESTONE 1961-2022



ASPIRA CEO HIGHLIGHTS



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2023 Circle of Achievers Dinner! The Circle of Achievers is an exciting night that honors the excellence within our Latino community while celebrating the strides we have made to create a more equitable society. This evening we recognize the executives and leaders who pay it forward every day. We also spotlight the bright, young ASPIRANTES who represent this and the next generation of Latino talent. It is a celebration of mission-driven work, shared values and determination that support the social advancement of youth through educational access and leadership development.

2023 marks the Centennial Celebration to commemorate the life of Dr. Antonia Pantoja across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, we plan on honoring the extraordinary legacy, influence and enduring impact her life-long activism imparted on our community. Believing that education and cultural pride were crucial to healing and lifting the community out of poverty, she

committed her life to activating public consciousness to the unique educational needs of Puerto Rican youth. Her persistent and passionate advocacy contributed to the establishment of bi-lingual and culturally relevant education in New York.

While some ASPIRANTES may just be beginning their elementary, middle and/ or high school journey it is never too early to engage them in the ASPIRA Triple A process of Awareness, Analysis and Action. Below are our community program sites that foster ASPIRA's equitable access vision: Academy of Public Relations; BEAM 1 PS/IS 224; Bronx HS for Medical Science; I.S. 131; P.S. 62; P.S. 107; P.S. 161; P.S. 25; P.S. 31; P.S. 5; Pugsley Preparatory Academy; Pelham Gardens Middle School; St. Helena School; and Soundview Academy. Our dedicated staff members are committed to positively impacting ASPIRANTES with exposure to new opportunities and connections to resources within and beyond their communities.



TONIGHT, WE CELEBRATE THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AND THE IMPACT WE CAN MAKE WHEN WE ARE UNITED.

Carmen Diaz-Malvido

Chief Executive Officer

MEET OUR HONOREE

DR. ANTONIA PANTOJA LEADERSHIP LEGACY AWARD

Magda Yrizarry has been a force for change for over three decades at Verizon and in the communities served by the global technology powerhouse. Across her career, Magda has held roles that care for the needs of multiple stakeholders – employees, customers, investors and society. She has designed and executed initiatives that connect corporate capabilities with community needs, drove public policies that enabled both business success and social responsibility, and led talent organizations to attract, develop and inspire employees and diverse suppliers. Driven by the scripture, to whom much is given, much is expected, Magda will continue to use her experience to build a more inclusive and equitable society as she enters her retirement, “reirement”, season.

Magda served as Verizon’s Chief Talent and Diversity Officer where responsibilities included the hiring, development, advancement, and retention of talent, from campus to executive, and Verizon’s Supplier Diversity program. Knowing representation is not enough, Magda led many global initiatives to foster an inclusive culture and build inclusive leaders. In response to the recent calls for racial justice, Magda developed a cross-functional response allowing Verizon to live up to the highest ideals of equality. Under Magda’s leadership Verizon received industry praise with top accolades from Forbes, Fortune, Working Mother, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR), Black Enterprise, Human Rights Campaign (HRC), Disability:IN and Military Friendly®. Magda began her Verizon career in external affairs where she held numerous roles at the local and national level, including executive director for public policy and strategic alliances, managing national outreach efforts across diverse constituencies.

Magda serves as vice-chairperson of ASPIRA of New York and chair of its advancement committee. She is an alumna Hall of Famer for the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF). Magda has been twice recognized as one of the 50 Most Powerful Latinas in America by the Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA), named to People en Español’s 25 Most Powerful Women, a Top Executive in Corporate Diversity by Black Enterprise, and a President’s Award recipient from the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USHCC). Magda is also an alumna of the National Hispana Leadership Institute (NHLI) and a founding member of 100 Hispanic Women. In 2023,

Magda was appointed to the White House’s Presidential Advisory Commission on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics.

A Puerto Rican, born and raised in Brooklyn, New York by an amazing mother, Magda is a first generation college graduate who earned a Bachelor of Science and Master’s Degree from Cornell University. She serves on the Cornell University Alumni Council and Cornell Mosaic dedicated to campus diversity and inclusion, as well as the Advisory Board for Cornell’s College of Architecture, Art and Planning. Committed to continuous learning, Magda completed an executive training program at Harvard University and is also a certified executive coach. She serves on the Governing Board of Stonecrest Community Church and Chair of its Racial Justice Task Force. Magda is also a Trustee of Columbia Theological Seminary. Magda shares three adult children with her husband, Ray, and lives in New Jersey. As a beneficiary of Head Start, and as an Aspirante, Girl Scout, Fresh Air Fund kid, and HSF and LULAC scholar, Magda understands the power of resources that open doors of access and opportunity.



Magda N. Yrizarry
Vice Chairperson and
Advancement Committee Chair

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



AMAYA ESPARZA
SANTANDER CORPORATE & INVESTMENT BANKER

Amaya is an Executive Director in the Santander Corporate & Investment Banking division. Originally from Spain, she moved to the United States with her family in 2010 and lives in West Harlem. Amaya is also the Regional Leader of the Santander Women’s Network for New York and New Jersey, dedicated to the development, empowerment, and growth of women. She has a BA in Economics from Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, and an MBA in Business Administration and Management plus a Master of Arts in Finance and Economics from Leeds University, UK.

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ARLENE IMENDIA
VICE PRESIDENT

Arlene is a leader on GSAM’s Alternative Investment Solutions Group. In her role, she is responsible for Alternatives relationships with key platforms, custodians and technology providers. Arlene spent almost 10 years on the GSAM LATAM Institutional Sales Team where she delivered the breadth of investment capabilities to clients. Arlene is highly driven with a focus on excellent client service. She is seen as a subject matter expert, mentor, and friend by her colleagues. In her free time, Arlene enjoys traveling, trying new restaurants, hanging out with her husband Ricky, and reading about current events and pop culture news.

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CARLOS CABANA
MANAGING DIRECTOR, HEAD OF EQUITY SALES & TRADING

As a member of senior management, Mr. Cabana has built the CastleOak Equities team into a desk providing 24/6 coverage for domestic and international markets and doubled the department's revenues during his tenure. Prior to CastleOak, Mr. Cabana was at Topeka Capital Markets, Cantor Fitzgerald, Knight Capital Group, Bloomberg LP, Morgan Stanley and Bear Stearns. He holds a BA in Economics and Spanish from Bucknell University, and an MBA in Finance and a Masters in BCIS from Hofstra University. At the community level, Mr. Cabana operated a lacrosse program providing underserved participants access to top coaching and playing opportunities.

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EMILY ESTEVEZ
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Emily has more than 20 years of investment and commercial banking experience with a Bachelor of Science degree in finance and international business from New York University's Stern School of Business. Emily began her career at JPMorgan Chase & Co. within its Power and Utility Investment Banking Division. She is a founding member of UNIDOS (SMBC's first Hispanic/Latin American employee-led resource group) and Chair of the Corporate and Investment Banking Inclusion and Diversity Council. She serves as a member of the SMBC Executive Inclusion & Diversity Council and the Campus Recruitment Advisory Group for the Americas. In addition, she is a member of the Women's Inclusion Network (WIN) leadership team at SMBC, where she serves as a Co-Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

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FRANK LUNA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Mr. Frank Luna graduated in 2001 with a degree in Computer Science from APEC University in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. In 2006, he joined KPMG and is now an Executive Director for the Global Tax Transformation and Technology practice. In 2015, Frank received his Master in Business Administration from NYU Stern. In 2018 he was awarded the KPMG Montvale Chairman Award, a prestigious recognition to honor employees for their extraordinary performance, impact on an inclusive culture, and commitment to KPMG values. He is an active member of the Hispanic Information Technology Executive Council (HITEC) where he mentors other Hispanic IT professionals.

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



CLEARY GOTTLIB

IGNACIO LAGOS
ASSOCIATE

Ignacio is an associate at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton’s Latin America practice. Since joining the firm in 2014 in Cleary’s former Buenos Aires offices, Ignacio has specialized in providing legal advice to sovereign entities in Latin America, assisting them in capital raising transactions or renegotiating existing debt. Ignacio regularly participates in transactions by the governments of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay. In particular, Ignacio played a key role in the restructuring of Argentina’s debt in 2020. Ignacio dedicates time providing pro bono legal advice to immigrants from different countries of Latin America, most of which have undergone traumatic experiences prior to, or shortly after, their arrival to the United States. Ignacio holds a law degree (Abogado) and economics degree (Licenciatura en Economía) from the University of Buenos Aires and an LLM from Stanford University. He grew up in a ski resort in northern Patagonia, Argentina, and takes every opportunity to get back on the ski slopes.

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



LORRAINE A. NIETO
DIRECTOR, VPS- CLIENT SERVICES

Lorraine leads the Service Delivery and Service Assurance Teams within the Verizon Partner Solutions Client Services Organization. Prior to VPS, Lorraine was part of our Global Network & Technology Team for approximately 23 years and held various roles of increasing responsibility at both the Supervisor and Senior Manager levels. Highlights of Lorraine’s accomplishments as part of the GN&T team include leading the Test Center Teams responsible for the 4G LTE FTTC rollout in NY and NJ, FOA for DSI GPON in NYC, and the 5G rollout for VZW Dark Fiber. Lorraine is very passionate about Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging and enjoys being an active participant within the Verizon Employee Resource Group (ERG) community. The SOMOS ERG is the voice of the global Latino community at Verizon. Lorraine enjoys spending time giving back to the community, especially in ways that foster the growth, development and empowerment of children. Her most recent contributions include serving as a HISPA (Hispanics Inspiring Students’ Performance and Achievement) Role Model and Imagine Day Participant.

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



LUCY PÉREZ
SENIOR PARTNER

Lucy Pérez is a Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company and co-leads McKinsey’s Diversity & Inclusion efforts across North America. She sponsors McKinsey’s Hispanic Leadership Academy (16,000+ Hispanic executives to date). Lucy authored multiple reports on Latino economic mobility and is deeply committed to helping organizations enable sustainable and inclusive growth. She is a Board member of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable and sits on the advisory boards of the Aspen Institute’s Latinos in Society program and the Women’s Health Innovation Summit.

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



ROSELY FERNANDEZ

VICE PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY BRANCH MANAGER

Roselyn Fernandez is a Vice President and Deputy Branch Manager for BNP Paribas Fortis New York Branch. Roselyn possesses a wealth of knowledge and expertise acquired over 18 years in the financial services sector. Roselyn immigrated to the United States with her family from the Dominican Republic over 25 years ago. Her personal journey has fueled her commitment to pay it forward and work with young immigrant students who may be experiencing some of the same challenges. Roselyn is a mentor to interns and graduates who participate in programs offered by BNP Paribas such as Year Up, CUNY-BNPP Global Finance Fellowship and other outreach programs servicing underserved and underrepresented communities. In this role she continues to focus on partnering with the bank on the attraction, retention and development of Latinx talent.

ASPIRA CIRCLE OF LATINO ACHIEVERS



YADIEL AYALA

LEAD SQL DATABASE AND TABLEAU DEVELOPER, DISTRIBUTION ENGINEERING

Yadiel Ayala has worked at Con Edison for 15 years. He currently serves as a lead SQL database and Tableau visualizations developer on the Distribution Engineering team. Previously, Yadiel worked as an educator teaching various courses in mathematics, including advanced placement calculus and physics. In his spare time, he teaches Salsa and plays instruments like the bongos and trombone.

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CyberQRT is proud to support ASPIRA of New York. Congratulations to all of this year's scholarship recipients.

Thank you to all the sponsors and the ASPIRA staff for your hard work and dedication to our students.

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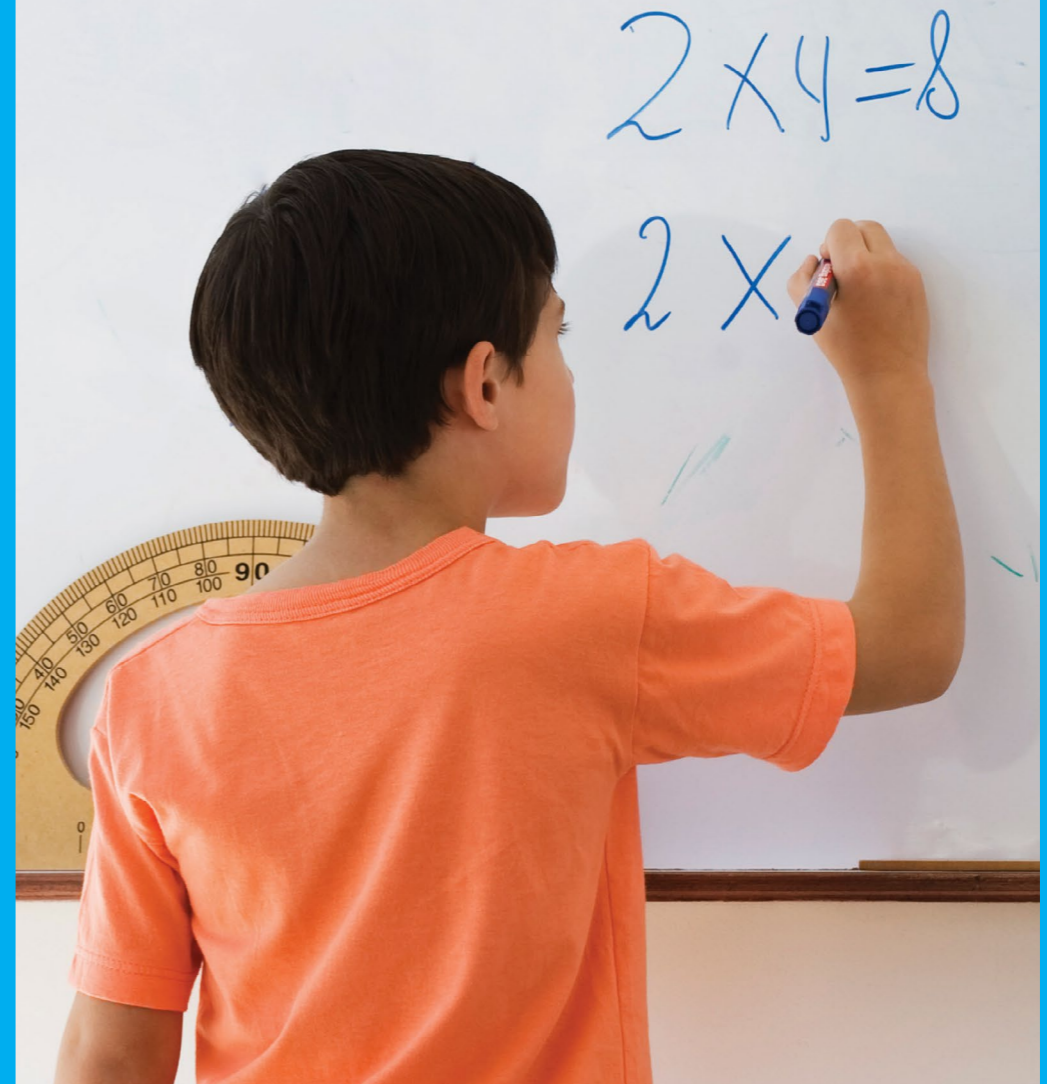
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Barclays proudly supports ASPIRA of New York's Circle of Achievers event, celebrating educational excellence through leadership development activities and programs benefitting the Latino community.



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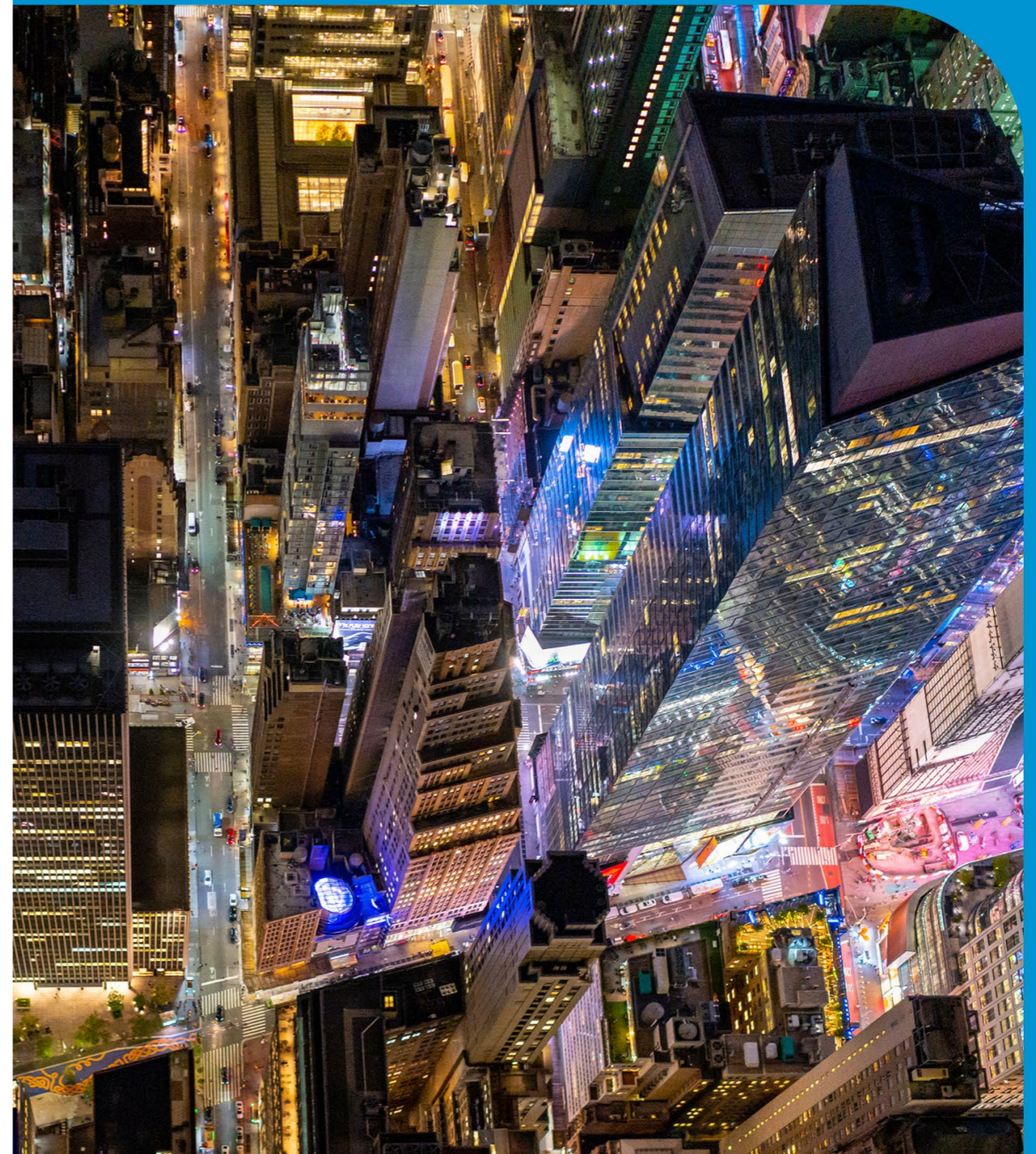
Create change. Create hope.

Citi recognizes the work of ASPIRA of New York, Inc. and those who work together to build a better tomorrow.



conEdison

We proudly support ASPIRA of New York and congratulate the 2023 Circle of Achievers honorees, with special acknowledgement of Con Edison's own Yadiel Ayala.



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Through its commitment to education,
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ASPIRA continues to make a tremendous
difference in the lives of Latino youth.

Congratulations to the Corporate Achievers
and to all the deserving ASPIRANTES on their
scholarship awards.

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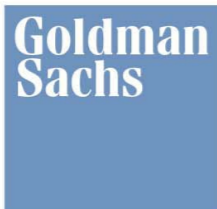
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Thank you for taking the time to make a lasting difference.

Today, we celebrate your dedication, your hard work, your victories and your achievements. We are proud to support ASPIRA of New York as you celebrate your 62nd Circle of Achievers Dinner 2023. Congratulations to the corporate achievers and the ASPIRANTES who have reached their ASPIRATIONS.

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Publicis Groupe proudly supports
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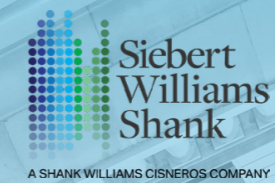




Samuel A. Ramirez & Co., Inc. is proud to support Aspira of New York for another outstanding year providing exceptional programs and services to the entire community.

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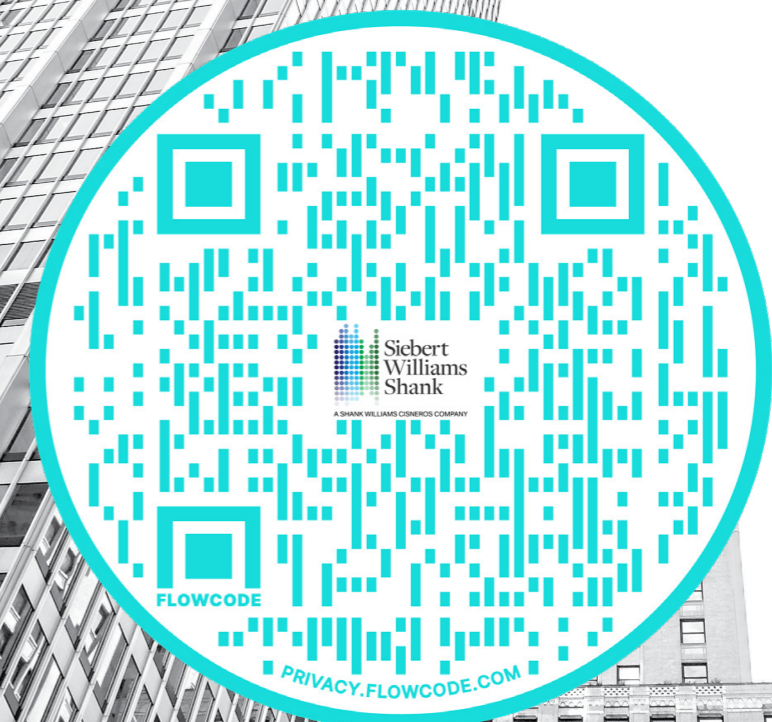


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As a leading global provider of financial services, SMBC is a proud sponsor of ASPIRA of New York and applauds its dedication to providing educational and leadership development opportunities to Latino youth.

Congratulations to all Aspirantes



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Wells Fargo is a proud sponsor of the Circle of Achievers Gala, and salutes **ASPIRA of New York** for its efforts to foster the social advancement of the Puerto Rican/Latino community by supporting its youth.

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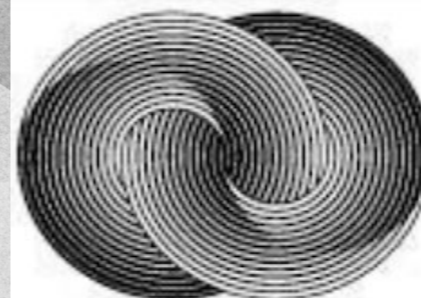
Alliant is proud to sponsor the
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We congratulate all **Aspirantes** on
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A&S is honored to support the ASPIRA of
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