We all need role models who can inspire us to reach our full potential, but not everyone has access to them.

HISPA is committed to providing that access for our Latino youth.
HISPA (Hispanics Inspiring Students’ Performance and Achievement) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to developing the Latino educational pipeline.

Our mission is to mobilize Hispanic professionals to serve as active role models in educational programs within their communities, thus contributing to America’s future by inspiring Latino students’ academic performance and achievement.

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HISPA ROLE MODEL PROGRAM
Aixa Acevedo, MPA – Program Director
Herlinda Sifuentes – Operations Manager, San Antonio

Funding for the HISPA Role Model Program in the schools during the 2013-14 academic year was provided by:
- New Jersey Department of State – The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development (CHPRD)
- ETS
- PNC Bank
- Princeton Public Schools
ABOUT THE HISPA ROLE MODEL PROGRAM

The HISPA Role Model Program is our signature educational initiative. Since its launch at four NJ schools in 2008, our Role Model Program has grown to impact over 6,000 students at 25 schools in New Jersey, San Antonio, TX and New York City.

A critical component in establishing a college-going culture

HISPA targets Middle School students due to research indicating that early intervention is necessary to increase graduation rates among this target group. HISPA students receive up to 20 hours of College Readiness/Career Awareness information over the course of a school year, with twelve in-school visits from Role Models and a STEM career exploration field trip.

A message of educational empowerment

A diverse roster of Hispanic professionals, many with advanced degrees, shares their cultural backgrounds and the educational/career experiences that allowed them to achieve personal and professional goals:

- a valuable opportunity for students to personally identify with Latino professionals;
- emphasis on practical information (pathways to advanced classes and out-of-school learning opportunities) as well as non-academic life skills (developing grit and learning to overcome obstacles);
- promotes bilingualism and biculturalism as career assets in the 21st century global economy.

Positive impact. Dedicated volunteers.

Our research (student surveys designed with and analyzed by our partner ETS) shows that the HISPA Role Model Program has a positive impact on student attitude and awareness about college and career.

Our HISPA Role Models come from corporations, government, academia, small business and non-profit administration. We recruit role models from Employee Resource Groups, Hispanic professional associations and university alumni groups.

Schools 2013-14

1. Abraham Lincoln School #14
2. Benjamin Franklin School #13
3. Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School #28
4. McGinnis Middle School
5. New Brunswick High School
6. Park Elementary School
7. Red Bank Middle School
8. Samuel E. Shull School
9. Summit High School
10. Toussaint L’ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette #6
11. Christopher Columbus #15
12. Manhattan Bridges
13. Inwood Academy of Leadership
14. Lyons Community School
15. Cable Elementary
16. Anson Jones Middle School
17. Witherspoon Middle School
I am sold for life. I really enjoyed doing this. You can tell from walking into the Benjamin Franklin School that education was taking place. The students were very engaged and asked some great questions. Many of them wanted to continue talking afterwards. I thought it was a remarkable experience and one I hope to continue many times. I wish I would have started this years ago. Thanks for the opportunity.

It was truly exciting speaking to the kids. The Salsa dancing worked. It got their attention. They were well behaved and I was able to get my story across. I look forward to more opportunities to speak.

I want to first say “Thank You!” for this great opportunity. Speaking today was very successful and I really hope I inspired all 65 students. They were very excited about my story.

Thanks again, it was really an amazing experience that I look to continue doing. This was an amazing experience that I will highly recommend. I’m in the process of recruiting other professionals to join such amazing organization impacting many students at a time. The students were above and beyond and more than expected. Quite engaging all around.

Highlight of my week. Glad some seemed to have gotten inspired from it. Overall experience was really amazing. I thought the fact that kids came up afterwards showed it wasn’t a waste of their time or going over their heads. They really took the time to listen and make sense of it all.
ROLE MODELS 2013-14

Aixa Acevedo  HISPA
Alyx Gonzales  Trinity University, Theatre Arts
Abraham Lopez  CHPRD
Anthony Rodriguez  ARMG
Ardi Dvornik  ESPN
Berenice Lewis  AT&T Human Resource Manager
Brunilda Sanchez  Census
Carlos Arias  Ameriprise
Carlos Gomez  RPMG
Carmen Luna  ETS
Cindy Medina, Esq  Partner Medina Law Group, P.C.
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Damaris Garcia  ETS
Darlene Lapola  AVIS Group Attorney
David Brezler  Mental Health Association of Westchester
Diana Calle  NJ Governor’s Hispanic Fellow Alumna
Dr. Laura Morana  Red Bank Superintendent
Dr. Nathan Parker  Summit Superintendent
Emy Quispe  NJ Governor’s Hispanic Fellow Alumna
Ernest Battle  ETS, Assessment Specialist, Mathematics
Ethan Maayan  Principal Wayne
Eva Manchexo  NutriLab
Evelyn Vega  Life Force Psychotherapy
Fernando Olivera  JP Morgan
Gabriela Nunez  ETS
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Gloria Cevallos  Bergen Community College
Griselle Gonzalez  NYC Dept. of Education
Ibelka Fernandez  ESPN
Janie Kaltenbacher  ETS, Mathematics Assessment Specialist
Jay Atkins  ETS, Proposal Coordinator
Jennifer Isabel  D Exposito & Partners
Johanne Rodriguez  Verizon
Jonathan Cabrera  NJ Governor’s Hispanic Fellow Alumna
Jorge Fis  Colgate Palmolive
Jorge Villegas  Verizon
Jose Reyes  Becton Dickinson
Joseph Tulipani  Merck
Juan Diego Santamaria  MassMutual
Juan Lopez  BMCC & Attorney
Juan Perez  UPS

Karolina Brito  NGL Media
Keith Martinez  Verizon
Laura Tavera  Rutgers Student
Lisa Marie Gomez  UTSA Center for Professional Development
Mabel Bejarano  Round Star Foundation
Manfred Morales  UPS
Manuel Mermea  Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Margo Uriegas  Action United for Entertainers and Diverse Artists
Marina Batista  UPS
Mayra Caceres  AT&T
Mildred Medina  Merck
Miriam Litum  Rutgers Student
Nate Santana  ETS
Nelson Tucios  Pediatric Pulmonology
Obed Figueroa  Stoney Brook
Omari Jinaki  Ogilvy & Mather
Paco Rivera  USAA, Director of Business Case Analytics
Pam Sheffield  Mobil Consultant, AT&T retired
Patricia Batista  Zone 126
Pedro Portillo  Microsoft
Ramiro Sanchez  Austins, Vice President/GM
Rebeca Cuadros  Merck
Rene Herrera  Verizon
Renee Osorio  UPS
Rudy Kiste  Edelta Consulting
Sarah Salinas  Escuelitas Mentoring Leadership Program
Steve Cox  UPS
Sylvia Ledesma  ETS
Tatiana Canjura  Ogilvy & Mather
Tiffany Yun  Viacom
Tomas Porturas  Wells Fargo
Tony Rodriguez  Bristol Myers Squibb
Victor Bolanos  Mercy First
Wanda Saez  Wells Fargo
Yocasta Castillo  Wakefern Food Corp
Christopher Columbus Middle School
You showed me that you can still succeed even if you didn't grow up with a lot. You also taught me to not give up on education. Thank you for coming to my school and teaching me and my peers to never give up.

Summit Middle School
I was happy that you came from Ecuador and didn't know anything and you surrounded yourself around good friends and achieved a good goal influencing Hispanic women.

Park Elementary
When you moved here you didn't know English that well. Also when you played soccer then worked for the company of Verizon.

Shull Middle School
I learned that you can be or do anything you want to be and you inspired me! Thank you for "Being You" and telling your beautiful story.
Toussaint L’Ouverture - Marquis de Lafayette

I cannot thank you enough for choosing our school to attend High Technology Day. The students really did have an amazing day and will not soon forget their time at AT&T. The positive role models that took their time to be with us on Thursday seemed to have a great impact on our students. One of our teachers overheard a student describe the trip as “epic”! The promotion of STEM education throughout the day will hopefully lure many of these children more towards math, science, and technology. Thank you again for such a special and memorable day!

Toussaint L’Ouverture - Marquis de Lafayette

Very effective! The Role Model did a great job promoting the importance of education and determination. In sharing his story, the Role Model explained how education truly got him to where he is today.

- Promoted Perseverance.
- Interactive
- Nice PPT
- Genuine Speaker
- Stressed importance of asking questions
- Asking students about their goals and aspirations and connecting what they said to his presentation
- Made many real connections.

Teachers from Park Elementary

Very effective, the students really paid attention to her story and were able to relate to where they are now. The speaker was able to clearly explain her background. The students need to have more role models to come and speak to them.

He explained the importance of never giving up. I loved the use of his quotes - they were profound.

Very Effective. I believe the strength was the fact that he wants to become the 1st Latino CEO of Verizon. He was able to grasp and keep the students attention.

Teacher from Red Bank Middle School

He was an excellent role model for the program’s message. He was relatable for them and shared such inspiring experiences.
Dear Aixa,

It has been a pleasure to host the HISPA Role Model Program at Juan Pablo Duarte- Jose Julian Marti for three consecutive years. Our students have benefited tremendously from the presentations and testimonies of the role models.

It is our Mission to provide educational experiences that will “inspire students to continue their educational experiences beyond high school”. The HISPA Role Models have provided our students with exposure to their own life experiences in which they have aspired to and found success in the pursuit of Higher Education. The Role Model’s life experiences have been similar to many of our students, as they are of the same familial and cultural backgrounds making the connections all the more relevant.

Our students participate in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, in which significant emphasis is placed on the importance of Post Secondary Educational experiences. They have visited many colleges, such as Rutgers, Princeton, St. John’s, Kean, and Union County College in an effort to provide further exposure to collegiate life and experiences. The HISPA Role Model’s testimonies exemplify our Vision and Mission.

On behalf of Juan Pablo Duarte Marte -Jose Julian Marti’s staff and students, with sincere gratitude for all of your efforts, I thank you for including us in the HISPA program once again. We look forward to working with your organization in the future.

We truly appreciate all of your efforts and can not thank you enough for the invaluable impressions HISPA Role Models have left on our students.

Thank You Aixa.

Sincerely,

Sara LaFace, LCSW
School Based Social Worker
Juan Pablo Duarte Jose Julian Marti
School #28

Juan Pablo Duarte - José Julián Martí School No. 28

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W: elizabeth.k12.nj.us
June 16, 2014

Aixa I. Acevedo, MPA
HISPA Program Manager
3587 Highway 9N-145
Freehold, NJ 07728

Dear Aixa,

It is with strong support that I write to endorse the HISPA Role Model Program that has been a positive enhancement to the overall establishment of a college-going culture at our Red Bank Middle School that currently serves students in Grades 4-8.

The commitment of our Middle School is to provide all of our students a highly welcoming, supportive, and challenging learning environment where students’ potential is maximized. Our focus has, undoubtedly, been to support the implementation of a curriculum that emphasizes writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading. Furthermore, the emphasis on preparing students for a successful high school and post-high school experience is supported by HISPA’s Role Model Program. Through this program, students have been exposed to a multitude of careers and successful individuals whose backgrounds and experiences are both motivating and inspiring.

We have been very impressed with the role model’s commitment to giving back to the community as they share their cultural backgrounds, educational experiences and their professional careers in becoming a role model to whom the students can relate. The goal of HISPA’s Role Model Program is highly valued within our school community because of its impact on students’ aspirations shaping and as they imagine infinite possibilities of setting goals and achieving their dreams.

Our experience with HISPA has revealed that it has both the capacity and expertise to serve as an invaluable resource for our schools and other schools in the state.

Sincerely,

Maria H. Iozzi

Maria H. Iozzi
Red Bank Middle School Principal