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 mobilizing Latino professionals to inspire our youth.
HISPA (Hispanics Inspiring Students’ Performance and Achievement) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to developing the Hispanic and Latino educational pipeline and creating a workforce of highly-skilled leaders to contribute to America’s economic future.

HISPA mobilizes Hispanic professionals to serve as role models in schools and educational programs in their communities to inspire students' academic performance and achievement by demonstrating that they, too, can attain success through education.

We aim to achieve these goals through the HISPA Role Model Program, Youth Conferences, Corporate Visits and the HISPA Leadership Workshop Series.

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www.hispa.org
info@hispa.org
609.436.0417
Yvonne Vargas Knykendall spoke at HISPA’s 2019 San Antonio Youth Conference at St. Mary’s University in Texas. She grew up in San Antonio, just a few miles from St. Mary’s, and is a proud graduate of Business Careers High School. After earning her B.A. at Ohio Wesleyan University, she quickly returned to her hometown to serve her community. Yvonne is the director of proposal development for Educational Testing Service (ETS). Connecting her career in business development with youth development, she is honored to serve on the Board of Directors and volunteer with Communities in Schools of San Antonio. She also serves on the Board of Directors and volunteers with Girls on the Run of Bexar County.

Phoebe A. Haddon spoke at HISPA’s 2019 Camden Youth Conference at Rutgers University–Camden in New Jersey. A nationally noted leader in issues related to access and equity, Phoebe became chancellor of Rutgers University–Camden on July 1, 2014. She has direct responsibility for the daily administration of a campus that has more than 13,000 employees and enroll more than 7,600 students in 39 undergraduate programs and 28 graduate programs at the master’s and doctoral levels. Under her leadership, Rutgers University–Camden has greatly widened affordable access through its innovative Bridging the Gap program, which provides full or significant tuition coverage for New Jersey’s working families. She also has expanded Rutgers–Camden’s role as an anchor institution in Camden and the Delaware Valley by expanding the institution’s nationally recognized civic engagement program. In fall 2018, Rutgers–Camden achieved the highest enrollment in the history of the institution.

Jorge L. Cardenas spoke at HISPA’s 2019 Princeton Youth Conference at Princeton University in New Jersey. He was named vice president—asset management and centralized services at PSEG in July 2012. In this role, he has many responsibilities including electric and gas asset strategy, reliability, delivery planning, operations and technical services, business performance and improvement, finance support, and supply services.

Juan Perez spoke to the New Jersey Governor’s Hispanic Fellows on June 19, 2019, and to students at HISPA Imagine Day - Corporate Visit to UPS on May 10, 2019. Mr. Perez is the Chief Information and Engineering Officer for UPS and a member of the UPS Management Committee which is responsible for the company’s long-range vision and strategy. Prior to this role, Perez served as Vice President of Technology. His career has also covered assignments in Operations, Industrial Engineering, Process Management, and Technology in corporate, US, and international business units.

Representing the possibilities of the public and private sectors, these experts and professionals inspired our students this year.

Joaquín Zihuataneco spoke at HISPA’s 2019 New York City and San Antonio Youth Conferences at Columbia University and St. Mary’s University, respectively. Joaquín is a poet, spoken word artist, and award-winning teacher. Born and raised in the barrio of East Dallas, Joaquín strives to capture the duality of the Chicano culture in his work. Sometimes brutal but always honest, his work depicts the essence of barrio life, writing about a youth that existed somewhere between the streets of the barrio and the dream wanderings of a boy who found refuge in a world of stories and poems.

Francisco “Frank” Moran spoke at HISPA’s 2019 Camden Youth Conference at Rutgers University–Camden in New Jersey. Mayor Moran is the embodiment of a hard-working family man who continuously works to improve the quality of life for others. He is a strong advocate for the rights of the blue-collar worker and the well-being of the young, and is a grassroots leader who has helped to empower the residents of Camden. He was elected Mayor in November 2017 and officially took the oath of office as the 48th Mayor of the City of Camden on January 1, 2018.

Magda Yrizarry spoke at HISPA’s 2019 New York City Youth Conference at Columbia University in New York. Ms. Yrizarry is Verizon’s senior vice president and chief talent and diversity officer for Verizon Communications, a leading provider of wireless, fiber-optic and global Internet networks and services. She is responsible for the development and implementation of Verizon’s global diversity and inclusion, strategic talent acquisition, development and succession planning strategies. In addition, she leads all corporate Human Resources Business Partner and change management initiatives.
THE

HISPA Role Model Program

The HISPA Role Model Program enables professionals to step into Hispanic majority classrooms of predominantly low-income, public middle school students to serve as examples for our youth. Since its 2008 launch in New Jersey, the HISPA Role Model Program has expanded to New York, Texas and Florida. In that time, HISPA has mobilized 1,017 Role Models to make 1,259 visits, reaching 13,110 students. In 2018-19, HISPA completed 273 Role Model Program visits, reaching 2,275 students in 32 schools: 24 in New Jersey, four in San Antonio, Texas, one in New York City, and three in southern Florida.

Creating a College-Bound Culture

HISPA’s programming is strategic and research-driven. Our programs target middle school students, given that studies reveal that early intervention and having a role model strongly correlate to the pursuit of higher education. Throughout the academic year, the HISPA Role Model Program arranges six school visits, each with one to three HISPA Role Models who emphasize the importance of education to future success and who introduce students to careers in the public and private sectors. The Role Model Program also engages students in a STEM career exploration field trip: a HISPA Youth Conference and/or Corporate Visit.

Educational Empowerment

A diverse roster of Hispanic professionals—approximately 50% with a master’s degree or higher—shares their cultural backgrounds and educational and professional journeys, relating the key experiences that allowed them to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. These visits provide:

+ A valuable opportunity for students to identify with Latino professionals

+ Practical information (e.g., pathways to AP classes and out-of-school learning opportunities) and non-academic life skills (e.g., developing grit and learning about career opportunities)

+ Promotion of bilingualism and biculturalism as assets in the 21st century global economy

A Record of Impact

Our research—tools and metrics designed and analyzed with our partner ETS—shows that the HISPA Role Model Program has a positive impact on student attitudes toward and awareness of college and career. Indeed, after experiencing HISPA programming in 2018-19:

94% of students learned more about possible careers

93.2% of students found the role models’ presentations interesting

93.1% of students were inspired to do better in school

90% of students were inspired to set going to college as a goal
Dania Arias was enrolled in the HISPA Role Model Program in Perth Amboy in 2009-10. Ten years later, she graduated from college and became a HISPA Role Model.

Dania Arias
Kean University Graduate

Dania M. Arias Bueno was born in Santiago de Los Caballeros, Dominican Republic on September 29, 1997. She is the second child of three in a beautiful family of five and was always taught to live a bold life, positively impact those around her, and serve her community.

At age 11, Dania moved to the New Jersey coast—leaving not only all she had ever known but also her mother—to seek what her parents called “a better opportunity to grow.” She sought to be fully engaged at school through programs and community service. Dania graduated high school at 16, where she developed a passion for business and taught herself how to think like an entrepreneur.

In 2018, at only 20 years old, she graduated from Kean University with a B.A. in global business, working the entire four years at Kean’s Small Business Development Center. Dania has also been involved in several non-profit and service-focused organizations such as the International WeLoveU Foundation, which promotes unity and friendship among all people of the global village—beyond nationality, race, religion, and socioeconomic status—through impactful environmental and social welfare initiatives.

Dania also worked as an intern at the Newark Community Economic Development Corporation (Newark Community EDC) where she coordinated Newark’s public school students’ trip to represent their city in China. Dania also assisted in international projects and marketing departments in the Newark Community EDC.

Whether she is working as a translator for immigrants who want to start a new business or doing community service, Dania approaches all experiences enthusiastically and strives to be a young role model to others. All of her experiences have shaped who she is today, and she is more excited than ever to keep growing and helping those around her to fulfill the same hopes as her parents: to find a better opportunity.
HISPA AT A GLANCE

HISPA Role Model Program 2018-19: Who We Are & What We Have Achieved

OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS

NEW JERSEY
- Abraham Lincoln School No. 14
- Benjamin Franklin School No. 13
- Christopher Columbus School No. 15
- Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19
- Dr. Antonia Pantoja No. 27
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6
- Elmore School No. 12
- Grace A. Dunn Middle School
- Hamilton High School West
- Jerome Dunn Academy No. 9
- Juan Pablo Duarte - José Julián Martí School No. 28
- Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School
- Mario J. Drago School No. 3
- Mastery Schools of Camden - East Camden Middle School
- Nicholas S. LaCorte - Peterstown School No. 3
- Nottingham High School
- Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy School No. 20
- Passaic Preparatory Academy
- Samuel E. Shull Middle School
- School No. 25
- Steinert High School
- William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11
- William C. McGinnis Middle School
- Woodrow Wilson School No. 19

NEW YORK
- Manhattan Bridges High School

TEXAS
- Anson Jones Middle School
- Cable Elementary School
- Gus Garcia Middle School
- Memorial High School

FLORIDA
- Kinloch Park Middle School
- L. C. Swain Middle School
- Miami Senior High School

The HISPA Role Model Program has mobilized over 1,000 unique volunteers to date.

GROWTH OF HISPA PROGRAMMING

In 2008-09, HISPA had 15 Role Model visits.

To date, that number has grown to 1,259.

HISPA served 305 students in 2008-09.
Today, we have served over 13,000.
WHO ARE HISPA'S ROLE MODELS?

- Business: 38% hold a degree in business or a business-related field, such as accounting.
- Other: 3% hold a degree in another field, such as medical writing or the arts.
- Education: 10% hold degrees in education.
- STEM: 33% hold a degree in the natural or applied sciences, including biology, math and engineering.
- Social Sciences & Humanities: 16% hold degrees in humanities or social sciences, including economics, psychology, languages and literature.

10% - Doctorate/Professional Degree
47% - Master's Degree
31% - Bachelor's Degree
12% - Associate's Degree/Some College

GENDER

- 53% Female
- 47% Male

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

- Academia (9%)
- Corporate/Private (70%)
- Government (6%)
- Nonprofit (15%)

BY THE NUMBERS

- 89% Hispanic and/or Latino
- 72% fluent in Spanish
- Average age: 45
- Average years as volunteer: 4
- Average total hours volunteered: 96

Program Participation

- Role Model Program
- Youth Conference
- Corporate Visit
- Leadership Workshop Series

OCCUPATION & INDUSTRY

- Accounting, banking, finance
- Business, consulting, management
- Charity, nonprofit, voluntary work
- Education
- Energy or utilities
- Engineering or manufacturing
- Government
- Information technology
- Legal
- Marketing, advertising, PR
- Media or internet
- Medicine or healthcare
- Public services or administration
- Recruitment or HR
- Science or pharmaceuticals
- Transport or logistics

Our HISPA Imagine Day Corporate Visits immerse students in the corporate environment. Touring labs and facilities and working with technology alongside highly-skilled professionals introduce students to potential career opportunities and encourage them to envision who they want to become and what they must do to get there. In 2018-19, HISPA held 12 such visits, mobilizing 153 volunteers to host 384 students.

WE ASKED OUR HOSTS: WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE “IMAGINE DAY” MEMORY?

“The insights from the youth were very moving, and the 1:1 time allowed for more personalized conversation.” - Visa

“Positive feedback from students...many mentioned they are thinking about a career in a company such as Visa.” - Visa

“Fantastic participation [by] this group of children.” - Visa

“The kids’ engagement with all that was being presented to them, regardless of any language barrier...their smiles and hopes and plans for the future.” - Office Depot

“Interacting with the kids, speaking to them. Watching them be engaged in certain activities, listening to their responses and questions.” - Prudential

“Watching the faces of the students when they entered the conference room. It was an amazing day for all involved.” - PSEG

“Interacting with students and learning about their backgrounds. Inspiring curiosity for STEM on these young minds and relating to their school experiences. Seeing how impressed students are when they learn the behind the scenes of Wireless Networks. It's gratifying to know that they will never see their cell phones and devices the same way!” - Verizon

“The best memory was the close interaction between the students and the CIEO of UPS Juan Perez from his office in Atlanta to the Parsippany facility via a video connection. The students were very engaged [and] asked our CIEO many questions [about] his growth and journey to success. Normally Juan is available for about five to ten minutes, but he fielded questions for over half an hour! In addition, the students enjoyed a lengthy tour of our new tech facility as well as three different workshops.” - UPS
OUR 2018-19 IMAGINE DAY CORPORATE VISITS:

CitiBank  
San Antonio, TX – October 4, 2018  
25 students from Gus Garcia Middle School

JPMorgan Chase  
San Antonio, TX – October 24, 2018  
25 students from Anson Jones Middle School

Office Depot  
Boca Raton, FL – March 14, 2019  
29 students from L. C. Swain Middle School

Verizon  
Bedminster, NJ – March 22, 2019  
44 students from School No. 25, Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, Mario J. Drago School No. 3, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6, William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11, Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19, and Passaic Preparatory Academy

PSEG  
Newark, NJ – May 3, 2019  
20 students from Nicholas S. La Corte-Peterstown School No. 3 and Christopher Columbus School No. 15

AT&T  
Middletown, NJ – October 18, 2018  
30 students from William C. McGinnis Middle School

Visa  
Miami, FL – March 1, 2019  
40 students from Miami Senior High School

Visa  
Miami, FL – March 15, 2019  
9 students from Miami Senior High School

Visa  
Miami, FL – April 12, 2019  
45 students from Kirkoch Park Middle School

Bristol-Myers Squibb  
Lawrence, NJ – May 3, 2019  
39 students from Grace A. Dunn Middle School, Steinert – Hamilton High School East, Nottingham, Hamilton High School North, and Hamilton High School West

UPS  
Parsippany, NJ – May 10, 2019  
40 students from Jerome Dunn Academy No. 9, Benjamin Franklin School No. 13, Mario J. Drago School No. 3, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6, William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11, Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19, Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy School No. 20, and Passaic Preparatory Academy

PRUDENTIAL  
Newark, NJ – May 17, 2019  
38 students from Abraham Lincoln School No. 14, Woodrow Wilson School No. 19, Mario J. Drago School No. 3, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6, William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11, Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19, Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy School No. 20, and Passaic Preparatory Academy
HISPA Youth Conferences

Our Youth Conferences provide students a full day on a university campus to experience hands-on STEM workshops alongside positive HISPA Role Models. Being surrounded by inspirational career opportunities and motivational speakers has led students to declare it “the best field trip ever.”

OUR 2018-19 YOUTH CONFERENCES:

**New York, NY – March 15, 2019**
Columbia University

Hosted by the Columbia Chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, co-hosted by Verizon
79 role models and 167 students from Community School District Four, Jerome Dunn Academy No. 9, Manhattan Bridges High School, Mario J. Drago School School No. 3, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6, William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11, Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19, Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy School No. 20, and Passaic Preparatory Academy

**Camden, NJ – May 10, 2019**
Rutgers University–Camden

Hosted by Rutgers University–Camden and ETS, with Lead Sponsor Wells Fargo
74 role models and 128 students from Grace A. Dunn Middle School, Mastery Schools of Camden - East Camden Middle School, Pan American Academy Charter School, Julia De Burgos Elementary School, Roberto Clemente Promise Academy Middle School, LEAP Academy University Charter School, and Thomas H. Dudley Family School

**San Antonio, TX – May 23, 2018**
St. Mary’s University

Sponsored by Enrollment Management at St. Mary’s University, co-hosted by ETS
109 role models and 150 students from Anson Jones Middle School, Brentwood Middle School, Frederick Douglass Academy, Gus Garcia Middle School, and John Jay High School

**Princeton, NJ – June 7, 2019**
Princeton University

Co-sponsored by the Office of Human Resources at Princeton University, with Lead Sponsors Novartis, Merck MHO, and Wells Fargo
92 role models and 124 students from Elmora School No. 12, Juan Pablo Duarte - Jose Julian Marti School No. 28, Steinert - Hamilton High School East, Nottingham: Hamilton High School North, Hamilton High School West, Grace A. Dunn Middle School, Mario J. Drago School School No. 3, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 6, William B. Cruise Veterans Memorial School No. 11, Daniel F. Ryan Elementary School No. 19, Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy School No. 20, Passaic Preparatory Academy, William C. McGinnis Middle School, Samuel E. Shull Middle School, and Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School
Youth Conferences
STUDENTS SAY

“That was the best conference because it taught me that I shouldn’t doubt myself just because others are.”

“The role model made me want to push myself past my limits. He really showed that he cared and it motivated me to be better.”

“I’ve always liked reading and writing, but now I also like engineering and nursing. I will try to get as many scholarships as I can so my parents don’t have to worry about me.”

“It motivated me to keep on looking for something I’m passionate about.”

“Today’s conference impacted me... because it taught me that my future is important, as well as going to college.”

“The part that impacted me the most was when the college kids talked in the panel because they gave great advice for success.”

“I liked that we got to experience to be a scientist. The workshop was the best since I learned a lot and also had a lot of fun.”

“I learned that just because they say "no" it doesn’t mean to stop trying.”

“All of [the role models] impacted me. They inspired me to take action and to work harder. I want to go to college and make a difference in my community.”

 “[The inspirational speaker] was amazing. He made me think about the future. He encouraged me to do better and life and to never give up.”

“I liked when we did experiments because I may be interested in what we did in the future.”

“The role model impacted me the most because I wasn’t from around here but when I went to school they put me in ESL and didn’t give me a chance. They didn’t give him a chance like they didn’t me a chance.”

“I like when we built the marshmallow tower because you see how teamwork actually works.”

“I liked how I was able to interact with people outside my school so I could step out of my comfort zone.”
Hispanic college students often face unique professional challenges—including less access to leadership development, career networks and role models—that affect their future educational and employment opportunities. In 2011, HISPA began the Leadership Workshop Series to provide these opportunities to the students of the New Jersey Governor’s Hispanic Fellows Program, sponsored by the State of New Jersey and overseen by the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development. The HISPA Leadership Workshop Series brings Fellows to a variety of host institutions for a full day of leadership development led by diverse professionals. Each workshop has a unique focus and develops skills key to success in any field. In the words of one alumnus, “The program literally changed my life.”

Session #1  Hosted by ETS  5/31/19

Session #2  Latinos in College Conference at Princeton University in partnership with the Office of Human Resources and the Graduate School at Princeton University, the Latino Princetonians and CHPRD, co-hosted by AT&T  6/7/2019

Session #3  Hosted by AT&T  6/12/19

Session #4  Hosted by UPS  6/19/19

Session #5  Hosted by Wells Fargo  6/26/19

Session #6  Hosted by Thomas Edison State University  7/10/19

Session #7  Hosted by Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital - RWJ Barnabas Health  7/17/19

Session #8  Hosted by Bristol-Myers Squibb  7/24/19
"Great! I’m always moved and inspired by the students and their genuine ability to dream. I spoke to a room full of six graders who were primarily Spanish-speakers. The room had close to 50 students in attendance. The energy and participation made it fun!"

"I thought it went well given it was our first time presenting to a large group of middle school students. The principal and teachers were very supportive and reinforced our message at the end."

"It was a wonderful experience! The teachers and children were very welcoming. We had a very engaged group of 91 students."

"The experience was amazing. Both the students and facility were very welcoming. The setting was appropriate and the students were in tuned."

"I had an amazing experience talking with these middle school students and empowering them to start thinking about their future. Everyone was nice, and I’m glad I had this opportunity to speak at this school."

"It was very well orchestrated and the students were attentive. After the presentation they were asked what they learned and they were able to tell us what they learned."
“I liked when each representative talked about their own lives and the things they faced when they were young like us.”

“I liked how they tell us about their life and the things they went through to become who they are. I realize that anything is possible and that even though you have to go through things to get there the victory will always be the best.”

“Something I liked was [the HISPA Role Model] explained his jobs and how everyone can do what you put your mind too and that ‘failure is worth a try’.”

“I would like to thank you for taking a time out of your day and coming to speak to us. I really see my life in a different perspective. It made me realize that doing what others do just to fit in isn’t what is going to lead me to my career, only I am by making my own choices.”

“I learned that just because my family member went to jail that I shouldn’t do the same and follow those footsteps because there is more to life.”

“I liked that you spoke about that picture of you standing in the abandoned house...I think that we can all relate to living in the “hood” because that is the environment we now are living in...It really made me realize and see my life in a whole different way and I now feel positive in what I wanna do as I grow up and for that I thank you.”
“Each of the [HISPA Role Model Program] presentations...carried a clear message of effort, work,...and believing in oneself. It has been very encouraging to listen to each of the successful professionals share with our students their passion for progress...and for having a better educational future...Programs like HISPA motivate...students to persevere and overcome any obstacle without letting themselves be robbed of the opportunity to reach their goals.”

“During my two years of teaching, I’ve seen HISPA influence many young kids and have gotten them on the right path as to what they want to become when they grow up. I believe this program is just pure excellence because it gets students exposed to many different careers and fields that our students are not familiar with. They also get to visit some organizations as well, giving them exposure to diverse career opportunities and to increase their attitudes towards a career.”

“For the students of Jerome Dunn Academy, HISPA has been a program that has filled them with hopes for a better tomorrow. Seeing individuals that look like them and come from similar backgrounds has allowed them to start crafting their own futures...Some students have expressed interest in engineering and...the use of drones. These conversations have only been made possible through HISPA and are conversations that will not only impact the students of today, but generations to come.”

“Never give up on your dreams and work hard so that you may achieve and be whomever you’d like”; that is the message that was constantly relayed to our scholars. It is such an empowering message that all students should hear on a day to day basis. Many students do not get the encouragement needed nor do they receive the support. Each speaker reminded our scholars that it is ok to struggle, it’s a part of life. But the biggest life lesson is to never give up. This program has provided our scholars with the hope they need to flourish in their future endeavors.”
2018-19 Co-Founding Partner

verizon

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