

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 10, 2012

**ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS
HONOR OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY
IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

**Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla Sponsors Presentations
Honoring Isabel Calero, Diego Munoz, Manuel Ordonez, Jr., Tave Padilla and Georgina DeJesus
at October 4th Event**

(Newark, NJ) – The Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders recognized National Hispanic Heritage Month during its Thursday, October 4, 2012, meeting at the Hall of Records when it honored five outstanding members of the Essex County Hispanic community. District 1 Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla of Newark sponsored and presented the Board’s commendations to: Isabel J. Calero, Diego F. Munoz, Manuel Ordonez, Jr., Tave Padilla and Georgina DeJesus, all residents of Newark.



The Freeholder Board’s Hispanic Heritage Month honorees are (from left to right): Tave Padilla, Isabel J. Calero, Diego F. Munoz, Georgina DeJesus and Manuel Ordonez, Jr. (Photo by Glen Frieson)

Freeholder Bobadilla, who immigrated with his family to the United States from Honduras at the age of 8, opened the program by saying, “Today is a very special day, because the Board has never before celebrated National Hispanic Heritage Month... this is the first time!” He also explained that September 15th, the starting date for National Hispanic History Month (September 15 through October 15) holds special significance in that it is the day so many countries in Central America gained their independence (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua), and that the celebration “gives an opportunity to learn about each other, share histories that are unique and diverse, and to share each other’s cultures”.

Isabel J. Calero was born in Lima, Peru, and earned her B. S. degree in Accounting from the University of Inca Garcilaso De La Vega in 1989 before beginning her career in the field of accounting, highlighted by her employment as Accounting Auditor in the Technical Office of Internal Audit for the House of Representatives in the Peruvian Congress from 1987 until September of 1992, when she emigrated to the United States and settled in Newark. In Newark, she was employed as a bookkeeper by Innovations Ferry, LLC, of Newark for 10 years, earned her N.J. Realtor’s License and worked as a Realtor Associate with Exit Lucky Associates from 2003 until 2008, when she returned to her accounting career with the City of Newark; first as a Senior Accountant and then as a Principal Auditor in the Finance Department’s Division of Special Taxes, where she continues to work today.

Ms. Calero is a leader in the Peruvian-American community where she has served as General Secretary of the Cultural Group Traditions of Newark since 2009, and is currently serving a 2-year term as General Secretary of the Peruvian Parade, Inc. She is also involved in the civic affairs of her community by serving as a District Leader for District 19 in Newark’s East Ward. She and her husband, Pedro, are the proud parents of three children, Isabel, Stephany and Peter.

Ms. Calero thanked Freeholder Bobadilla for honoring her and said that she is working to “...keep my commitment to work not only for the Peruvian community, but for everyone, by giving voice to the people in reaching their political leaders and improving their lives”. She encouraged everyone to do what she does, “because if we all help each other, everyone’s life will be better.”



Isabel J. Calero receives her Commendation from Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla.

Diego F. Munoz was born in Loja, Ecuador, where he attended the National University of Loja and was employed first as the General Manager of the mining company, Empresa Minera 22 de Enero, then as General Secretary/Financial Administrator for the Tribunal Electoral (Board of Elections) for the Province of Zamora

Chinchipe, and then as Secretary for the Juzgado Militar (Military Court) in Loja before emigrating to the United States in July of 1994 and settling in Newark. In Newark, he opened his own business, Five Star Limo

Services, and then, in 2003, began his career in the newspaper business; first as a sales representative for the *El Especial* and *El Especialito* newspapers before serving as a media marketing specialist in the Hispanic market for *The Star-Ledger* and *The Jersey Journal*, as well as the Evening Journal Association and its *El Nuevo Hudson*, *El Nuevo Essex*, *El Nuevo Passaic*, *El Nuevo Union* and *El Nuevo Jersey City* newspapers from 2004 to 2009. Since 2009, he has served as a General Director of *Latino Street* newspaper, “El Vocero de la Comunidad Latina”, which covers Essex, Passaic, Hudson, Union and Bergen counties in New Jersey, and Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island in New York.

Mr. Munoz is a leader in the Ecuadorian-American and Hispanic communities through his involvement in numerous civic and ethnic organizations. He is the Founder and current President of the Ecuadorian American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, has been the Coordinator of the Desfile y Festival Ecuatoriano de New Jersey since 2008, and previously served as President of the Ecuadorian Lions Club of Union City, General Coordinator of the Hispanic State Parade of New Jersey and Vice President and General Coordinator of the Comité Civico Ecuatoriano de New Jersey. He is the proud father of two children, Fernanda and Juan, the loving grandfather of Alyha and Sofia, and is married to his dear wife, Miriam Bustamante.

Introducing Mr. Munoz, Freeholder Bobadilla commended him as “an excellent media specialist, dedicated family man and a civic-minded Hispanic”. Mr. Munoz thanked the Freeholder and expressed how proud he was to be honored with the other honorees and to join with them in representing their various nationalities and countries.



Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla (right) presents the Board’s Commendation to Diego F. Munoz.

Manuel Ordonez, Jr., was born and raised in Newark, the son of hardworking Ecuadorian immigrants who inspired him to make the right decisions in life and to pursue his dreams. He graduated from Essex County Vocational High School – Bloomfield Tech in 2004 and attended Katherine Gibbs School in pursuit of a career as a graphic designer. He further enhanced his knowledge by working at a local print shop, TechGraphics, where he learned many skills in graphic design and digital printing.

Mr. Ordonez achieved his goal of operating his own graphic design business when he opened Ensign Grfx Printing in 2011, and he continues to pursue his dreams by striving to make his “brand” known everywhere.

“Manuel has passion and incredible talent,” said Freeholder Bobadilla, “and he brings ideas to life with a computer and a mouse.” He went on to add that as a business owner at such a young age, “Manuel is not only pursuing his dream, but also adding to the economic vitality of the community.” Mr. Ordonez thanked the Freeholder for honoring him, and his parents and wife for supporting him, adding “my journey is just starting.”



Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla (right) presents the Board’s Commendation to Manuel Ordonez, Jr.

Tave Padilla is a lifelong resident of the City of Newark and a graduate of Essex Catholic High School. He is an active member of the community who currently helps to run a recreation and youth leadership program for more than 3,200 Newark children. He has also been involved with youth through the Roberto Clemente Little League, the Newark Small Fry Basketball program and North Ward baseball leagues.

Mr. Padilla previously was the owner of Galaxy Footwear and Prestige Fine Footwear in Newark and is an experienced manager, recruiter and marketing executive. He has also assisted the residents of Essex County in the realm of politics and government, having previously served as a Legislative Aide to Assemblywoman Nellie Pou and as Chief of Staff to former Assemblyman Wilfredo Caraballo. Mr. Padilla is the proud father of two children who currently attend Rutgers University.

Freeholder Bobadilla introduced Mr. Padilla as someone who is engaged in the community “24-7”, and especially with the youth in his role “as part of a youth development recreation team that works with kids to be sure they have the physical strength and mental capacity to succeed” through football, basketball, baseball and after-school academic programs.” In his remarks, Mr. Padilla expressed how honored he was to be a part of the Board’s first-ever celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month and said, “our community is not just made up of Puerto Ricans, or Dominicans, or Peruvians or Ecuadorians... we are *all* Latinos, and as a group we all have to stand for each other, help one another, and if someone needs help, we must lend a hand to them.”



Tave Padilla (left) receives his Commendation from Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla.

Georgina DeJesus was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, where she earned her LPN from Centro Nacional de Enfermeria (CNEA) nursing school in 1979, after which she began her career in nursing and also advanced to serve as President of her nursing union, Union Nacional de Enfermeria, from 1990 until 1992, when she emigrated to the United States. She first lived briefly in the Bronx, New York, before settling in Newark, where she has continued to work in the health care field: she took nursing and social work courses at Essex County College, earned her certification (CAN) as a nursing assistant from Clara Maass Hospital, and studied to become a dialysis technician before working for DCI Dialysis Clinic in New Brunswick.

Ms. DeJesus is a leader in the Dominican-American and Hispanic communities through her involvement in numerous organizations. She is a founding member of the Dominican Union Club, the Socio Cultural Club and ADEPCOH (Hispanic Community Association for Development and Promotion). She also continues to assist Club Edom in Santo Domingo, an organization that helps senior citizens with issues concerning medication, transportation, wheelchairs and other such concerns. She is a founding member of the Dominican Parade and Cultural Festival of Essex County and currently serves as its President. Ms. De Jesus has been married to her husband, Cesar, for 22 years, and they are the proud parents of three children, Pablo, Kelvin and Amber, and the loving grandparents of seven.

“Georgina is an outstanding role model for our community”, said Bobadilla. “She happens to be a proud Dominican, she happens to be Hispanic, and she happens to be an American who contributes to this society

each and every day.” Ms. DeJesus thanked Freeholder Bobadilla “for thinking of us” and all the Freeholders “for opening their house for us.” She went on to say that she just tries to do her best, “as a wife, as a mother, and for my community”, adding “and if we want to move forward in this country, we must be together.”



Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla presents the Board's Commendation to Georgina DeJesus.

In his closing remarks, Bobadilla reminded the audience that, “as different Latinos, we have different histories and cultures that we need to share with each other in a celebration that lasts *not* only for this one month, but throughout the *whole* year so we can get to know one another and grow with each other.” He also expressed his appreciation to Freeholder President Blonnie Watson for agreeing to hold the Board's first-ever recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, and for her commitment to add the celebration to the list of the Board's annual events, beginning in September of 2013.

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