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ALAS Leaders in Education Award Recipients to be Celebrated on April 29

Senate and House leaders serve on Honorary Host Committee

WASHINGTON, D.C.—April 24, 2015—The Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) will host more than 200 education professionals, Congressional representatives, and business leaders at its inaugural ALAS Leaders in Education Awards Gala at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 29, 2015, at the historic Mayflower Renaissance Hotel, in Washington, D.C.

Several school district superintendents and administrators demonstrating best practices in public education, especially those serving large Hispanic populations, were nominated by ALAS state affiliate members in several categories.

The following superintendents and administrators have been selected as the recipients of the 2015 ALAS Leaders in Education Awards:

Latino Superintendent of the Year

Patrick Sanchez, Superintendent
Adams county School District 14
Commerce City, Colorado

Latino Administrator of the Year

Dr. Almudena “Almi” G. Abeyta, Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Sante Fe Public Schools
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Hispanic-Serving School District Superintendent of the Year

Robert W. Runcie, Superintendent
Broward County Public Schools
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Hispanic-Serving School District Administrator of the Year

Dr. Samuel D. Sarabia, Chief School Officer
Houston Independent School District
Houston, Texas

“These educators represent the finest example of successfully implementing programs that meet the academic and social needs of all students, especially Latino students, as well as engaging parents and their communities in the process,” said Veronica Rivera, ALAS executive director.

Jackie Puente, Executive Director of External Affairs, Comcast Corporation said, “Comcast NBCUniversal Telemundo is proud to support the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents inaugural gala in Washington, DC, and we salute the honorees for their outstanding vision, dedication, and commitment

to education. We are deeply committed to supporting these leaders, especially through our collaboration to close the digital divide and promote digital literacy with Comcast Internet Essentials program. When we connect low-income families with K-12 children to high-speed Internet at home, we promote opportunity for educational excellence and economic advancement for all Americans.”

Nominees for the Hispanic-Serving School District Superintendent of the Year also included:

Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, CEO, Prince George’s County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Nominees for the Hispanic-Serving School District Administrator of the Year also included:

Gonzalo S. La Cava, Area Superintendent, Fulton County Schools, Atlanta, Georgia

Todd J. LaPace, Principal, McArthur High School, Sunrise, Florida

Nominees for Latino Administrator of the Year also included:

Michael J. Ramirez, Director, Office of School Performance & Accountability, Broward County Public Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Dr. Eddie Ruiz, Principal, North Springs Charter High School, Fulton County Schools, Sandy Springs, Georgia

Victor Vergara, Principal, Woodburn School District, Woodburn, Oregon

Nominees for the Latino Superintendent of the Year also included:

Antonio A. Sanchez, Superintendent, Wilson School District #7, Phoenix, Arizona

Adan Delgado, Superintendent, Pojoaque Valley School District, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Juan Cabrera, Superintendent, El Paso ISD, El Paso, Texas

The selection committee included representatives from some of the most prestigious National organizations. They are Tom Saenz, president and general counsel of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund); Mary Ann Gomez, executive director of CHLI (Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute); Dennis “Denny” Dearden, associate executive director, AASA, The School Superintendents Association; and Jeanette Morales, director for Pre-K Initiatives, HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities).

Assisting ALAS with the event is the Honorary Host Committee, including U.S. Sen. Michael F. Bennett (Colorado) and Sen. Patty Murray (Washington), and Rep. Pete Aguilar (California, 31st District), Rep. Katherine Clark (Massachusetts, 5th District), Rep. Marcia L. Fudge (Ohio, 11th District), Rep. Raul Grijalva (Arizona, 3rd District), Rep. Joseph Heck (Nevada, 3rd District), Rep. Ruben Hinojosa (Texas, 15th District), Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (California, 40th District), Rep. Loretta Sanchez (California, 46th District), Rep. Albio Sires (New Jersey, 8th District), Rep. Mark Takano (California, 41st District), Rep. Juan Vargas (California, 51st District), Rep. Filemon Vela, Jr. (Texas, 34th District).

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About the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)

The ALAS mission is to provide leadership at the national level that assures every school in America effectively serves the educational needs of all students, with an emphasis on Latino youth, by building capacity, promoting best practices, and transforming educational institutions. ALAS was established in 2003 in response to a lack of national advocacy and representation of Latino students.