

Role Model program launches its 6th year on September 12th at a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration hosted by Ogilvy & Mather

NEW YORK, Sept. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Scores of Hispanic professionals will enlist in a role model program on September 12 that will put them in middle school classrooms to inspire students to excel and go on to higher education. Ogilvy & Mather (O&M) in New York City will host the 6th annual "kick-off" and recruiting event.

Hispanics Inspiring Students' Performance and Achievement (HISPA) is launching its New York City program during Hispanic Heritage Month. The "kick-off" theme is "More Stories: A Greater Contribution to America's Future." HISPA will highlight achievements and recruit volunteers to serve as role models for students to pursue higher education. The program offers a valuable networking experience for professionals from academia, government, business and non-profit sectors.

"We are excited to extend our program to New York City," says Dr. Ivonne Diaz-Claisse, President of HISPA. "Our goal is to recruit 250 role models to hit the ground running and build the program over the coming years. This is an excellent opportunity for Latino professionals to come together and contribute to the academic success and careers of our youth."

HISPA has hosted a series of talks in New York City at various corporations including: AT&T, The College Board, ESPN, IPG, JPMorgan, O&M, Verizon, and VIACOM, sharing the urgent, critical need for more Latino professional role models for youth in NYC where 40% of public schools students are Latino.

Joseph Baide, Practice Lead, Ogilvy ROJO and Executive Group Director, O&M North America, will be the keynote speaker. A Honduran-American, he will share his life and professional story and instill in others the vital importance of role models for our youth. "HISPA's mission of mobilizing Latino role models is particularly close to my heart and I am honored to be involved," said Baide. "I am excited to participate at the HISPA initiative and share my personal experience as a first-generation Honduran-American."

In addition, Carlos Ojeda, Jr., CEO of CoolSpeak, will train volunteers and give an inspirational presentation titled "Know your Role, Model the Change." Ojeda, a nationally recognized motivational speaker, has addressed tens of thousands of students and young professionals across the country.

Baide and Ojeda were chosen to speak because their educational journey and professional careers are outstanding examples of overcoming challenges and achieving success. Their participation will help new role model recruits forge the future of new generations.

O&M's Hispanic Employee Resource Group, LatinRed, is co-hosting the event. Many of its members are already enlisted as HISPA Role Models in the tri-state area as the program gets underway. "We are honored to partner with Ogilvy LatinRed to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and to launch HISPA New York City," says Diaz-Claisse. "Together we are inviting private and public sector professionals to become HISPA Role Models to make sure our Latino youth can witness first hand and be motivated by success stories."

HISPA is a national non-profit organization dedicated to contributing to America's future by inspiring Latino students' academic performance and achievement. HISPA mobilizes Latino professionals to serve as active role models by placing them in classrooms close to where they live and work. The role models share their stories with emphasis in overcoming obstacles, setting goals and showcasing their educational and professional achievements. Most of the role models to date are in STEM fields: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. HISPA annual partners include ETS and Southwest Airlines. In addition, ESPN is a "Transform" Sponsor of the HISPA Role Model Program in New York City.

To date, more than 800 professional leaders have become volunteers through HISPA's year-round Role Model Program since its inception in 2008. HISPA Role Models have visited

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25 schools in New Jersey and Texas. In addition, HISPA has presented its operation model at conferences in Chicago, Washington, DC, Miami and other cities.

In 2012-2013, approximately 150 volunteers shared their stories with 1,000 students during recurring visits to 16 schools and during the HISPA 2013 Youth Conference at the University of Texas in San Antonio in March and Princeton University in June.

For further information visit www.hispa.org , or contact HISPA by email at info@hispa.org , or by calling 917.531.5392.

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