

Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Celebrates 15 Years At Annual Hispanic Gala, Announces Award Recipients At Beautiful Country Estate

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Richmond, VA - This year's Hispanic Gala on October 16th celebrates 15 years of building bridges since the Chamber was formed in 2000. Themed "Quinceanera," The Gala highlights the outstanding achievements of Hispanics and is the concluding celebration for Hispanic Heritage Month in Virginia. Featuring tapas, cigar lounge, silent/live auction, dance performance by the Latin Ballet of Virginia with the Quinceanera contest winner, and wine tasting, the event also honors recipients of the prestigious Hispanic Bridge Builder Award, with live entertainment provided by Ban Caribe. Over \$50,000 in scholarships will be awarded to Latino students entering college. Several hundred attendees include business leaders from around the Mid-Atlantic region and public officials from around Virginia. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are still available at vahcc.com with all proceeds going to benefit the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and its foundation, especially its acclaimed Passport to Education program that keeps Latino students on the path to higher education.

The Impacto Latino Bridge Builder of the Year Award goes to **Dany Garcia**, Entertainment and media empress, the founder and force behind The Garcia Companies, a multi-faceted talent and media management company which oversees Seven Bucks Productions, a full service production company with management client Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. Her numerous successes in television and film have garnered her the reputation of an acclaimed producer. A lifelong philanthropist and social advocate, Garcia founded The Beacon Experience, a foundation that identifies promising but at-risk second graders in inner city schools and empowers them throughout their lifelong education with weekly tutoring and scholarships for college. Garcia also competes as a professional IFBB Pro Women's Physique Bodybuilder.

Other recipients include: **Joel Martinez, Hispanic Bridge Builder Education Award**, recently joined digital marketing company Red Venture as EVP of Human Capital. Prior to this he was Managing Vice President HR Enterprise Services/Staff at Capital One, and served on the VAHCC Board. Over the years, Martinez was instrumental in securing thousands of dollars of scholarship money to help Latino students; **Ana King, Hispanic Bridge Builder in the Arts Award**, Founder, and Artistic Director of the Latin Ballet of Virginia, with over twenty years of experience teaching, directing and performing in South America and the United States.

2015 Latino Entrepreneur awards go to **Francisco Gonzalez, Panchito** (Richmond), **Brandon Montijo, Tijo Media** (Richmond), **Hugo E. Vargas, El Rincón Hispano** (Culpepper), and **Benito Loyola, Loyola Enterprises, Inc.** (Virginia Beach). As leaders in their communities, these Latino entrepreneurs have built successful businesses and proudly stand as a model for all aspiring Latino entrepreneurs.

The Hispanic Gala supports programs of the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Foundation, which include the Passport to Education Programs, marketing higher education to Hispanic students and families, bilingual leadership and mentorship programs in schools, Educational Bilingual Web Portal, bilingual business workshops and training seminars, business center and business-assistance programs. These services encourage business development and promote success to individuals desiring to achieve the American dream.

Join us at this year's Hispanic Gala to celebrate 15 Years for the VAHCC!

What: The Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 12th Annual Hispanic Gala

When: Friday, October 16th, 2015, 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Where: Dover Hall Estate, 1500 Manakin Road, Manakin-Sabot, VA 23103

Tickets: \$125 members \$145 non-members

More information and to register: <http://www.vahcc.com>

About The Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (VAHCC):

The VAHCC is a membership-based non profit organization dedicated to building bridges for its members and partners by promoting, enhancing, and developing business opportunities between the Hispanic business community and the business community-at-large. The VAHCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit with the mission of providing education, information and resources to Virginia's Hispanic community. www.vahcc.com

About the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation (VAHCCF):

The VAHCCF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit with the mission of providing information, education and resources to Virginia's Hispanic community.

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