

## Noche de Estrellas honoring Diane Guerrero, Marvin Weissberg & Sonia Gutiérrez

Culture 2019-04-03 11:54:30

**Washington D.C.** – GALA Hispanic Theatre will host its annual **Noche de Estrellas** benefit event honoring three extraordinary leaders at the National Museum of Women in the Arts on Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 6:30 pm. The 2019 honorees are: **Diane Guerrero**, known for her role in the Netflix series *Orange Is The New Black* and her advocacy for immigrant rights; **Marvin Weissberg**, a leader in real estate development and civic and cultural affairs; and **Sonia Gutiérrez**, founder and President Emeritus of the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School.

Proceeds from the event support GALA's youth education programs, which include the Student Matinee program, serving 9,000 students and teachers in the metropolitan area, and the Paso Nuevo program, an arts and cultural enrichment program for Latino and multicultural teens in the District of Columbia. Paso Nuevo was recognized with a 2012 National Arts and Humanities Youth Arts Program Award by former First Lady Michelle Obama.

In addition to the Honoree Awards, **Noche de Estrellas** will feature performances by cast members of GALA's production of FAME the Musical *En Español*; Venezuelan singer Jonathan Acosta; and Paso Nuevo students. Master of Ceremonies is Karla Flores, Telemundo 44 & NBC4 Reporter, and the guest auctioneer is Denise Bowyer of American Income Life.

Silent and live auctions will include exotic get-aways, theater tickets, sumptuous dinners, and unique experiences. The event is black tie optional and will be attended by several Latin American Ambassadors and international diplomats, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, leaders of DC's arts and business communities, corporate representatives, and the press.

The **Noche de Estrellas** event will be held at the National Museum of Women in the Arts at 1250 New York Avenue, NW. Street parking is available after 6:00 pm.

### THE HONOREES

#### Diane Guerrero / Artistic Excellence and Activism

**Diane Guerrero** is an actress, author and activist known for starring as "Maritza Ramos" on Netflix's *Orange Is The New Black*, which led to three consecutive wins for the [Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series](#). She currently stars as "Crazy Jane" in DC Comic's *Doom Patrol*, and as "Lina" in CW's break-out hit, *Jane the Virgin*.

Ms. Guerrero grew up in Boston and remained there when the rest of her family was deported to Colombia, after unsuccessfully pursuing legal citizenship. In 2015, she was named a White House Ambassador for Citizenship and Naturalization. She is an outspoken advocate for common sense, comprehensive immigration reform and has worked with Immigrant Legal Resource Center and Mi Familia Vota, a nonpartisan Latino civic engagement organization to promote citizenship and voter registration. She was also named one of Variety's "10 Latinos to Watch" in 2015, was recognized at the 2018 Phillip Burton Immigration & Civil Rights Awards for the work she continues to do.

Her memoir, entitled *In the Country We Love: My Family Divided*, was released by Henry Holt publishing in 2016. The memoir recounts the story of her parents being detained and deported when she was fourteen years old. She released her second book, *My Family Divided*, in 2018. Although similar to the first book, Ms. Guerrero tailored this one for a younger audience because she felt as if children who are now facing family separations have little knowledge of how to deal with it.

### Marvin Weissberg/ **Philanthropy in the Arts and Social Justice**

Throughout his life—now into his tenth decade—**Marvin Weissberg** has been a keen, sympathetic observer of the human condition, a friend to those in need, and deeply engaged in his community and the world. Mr. Weissberg's worldview was shaped by his early years in Depression Era New York and war-time Washington, D.C. As a teenager in 1940's Washington, he encountered both the influx

of energy and idealism of a world capital on war footing, and a provincial, racially stratified city. After graduating high school at 16, he enrolled in the University of Maryland for free (a privilege extended only to the District's white residents). At 18 he entered the Army, where he built bridges—and traveled the country—as the war had ended.

In 1953, Mr. Weissberg returned to DC and launched a career in real estate, where he was among the first to realize that Northern Virginia would play a central part in Washington's economic future. He also immersed himself in Washington's cultural, civic, and political life. He was a member of Theatre Lobby, Washington DC's first racially integrated theater, alongside students from Howard University. As an intrepid traveler and life-long learner, Mr. Weissberg's interests and commitments ranged beyond borders. A founding board member of The National Democratic Institute, he traveled the world as an election observer, building personal bonds with activists and political leaders. These experiences led to the development of the Weissberg Program in Human Rights at Beloit College by the Weissberg Foundation, which was established in 1998.

Mr. Weissberg established the Foundation to deepen his philanthropic efforts and enlarge their impact. As the Foundation enters its fourth decade, it strives to stay true to the deeply humane, humble, and fundamentally optimistic ethos that Mr. Weissberg continues to model.

### Sonia Gutiérrez / **Community and Education Leadership**

**Sonia Gutiérrez** is President Emeritus and Founder of the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School. For more than 43 years, she has been a principal, counselor, advocate, and organizer for more than 70,000 adult immigrant students. She began her career in 1972 in the DC Public Schools as a counselor in

the Program for English Instruction to Latin Americans, where she became its Director, transforming the English as a Second Language program into a comprehensive adult education program. She merged the program with the Americanization School in 1974, relocated to the Gordon Junior High School in Georgetown in 1978, where it was renamed the Carlos Rosario Adult Education Center and operated until DC Public Schools eliminated all adult education programs in 1996. Ms. Gutiérrez reopened the school in 1997 as the Carlos Rosario International Career Center, which became the first Adult Public Charter School in the nation, expanding to six sites in the city by 2003. After completing an \$18 million capital campaign, the sites were consolidated into its current facility on Harvard Street NW. Today with the additional Sonia Gutiérrez Campus in Northeast Washington, the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School serves more than 2,500 students with English as a Second Language classes, a GED program in Spanish and English, and courses in information technology, citizenship, culinary arts, nurse aide, family literacy, and Spanish.

Among her many awards are the American Dream Medallion in Education from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute; the Graciela Olivarez La Raza Award from Unidos US; and having the 500<sup>th</sup> block of V Street NE designated the Sonia Gutiérrez Campus Way by Mayor Muriel Bowser and the City Council.

**The Honorary Host Committee** for Noche de Estrellas (to date) is comprised of His Excellency Fernando Oris de Roa; Ambassador of Argentina to the U.S.; His Excellency Alfonso Silva Navarro, Ambassador of Chile to the U.S.; Her Excellency Claudia Conjura de Centeno, Ambassador of El Salvador to the U.S.; Her Excellency Martha Barcena, Ambassador of Mexico to the U.S.; His Excellency Francisco Campbell, Ambassador of Nicaragua to the U.S.; His Excellency Santiago Cabanas Ansorena, Ambassador of Spain to the U.S.; Mari Carmen Aponte, Former Ambassador of the U.S. to El Salvador; Luigi Einaudi, Former Ambassador of the U.S. to the Organization of American States; Alberto Fierro, Director, Mexican Cultural Institute; Honorable Muriel E. Bowser, Mayor of the District of Columbia; Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman of the City Council of the District of Columbia; Honorable David Grosso, Councilmember at Large, City Council of the District of Columbia; Honorable Anita Bonds, Councilmember at Large, City Council of the District of Columbia; Honorable Brianne Nadeau, Ward 1 Councilmember, City Council of the District of Columbia; Honorable Jack Evans, Ward 2 Councilmember, City Council of the District of Columbia; James Boland, President, International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers; Angie Fox; Peter Hakim, President Emeritus, Inter-American Dialogue; Allison Kokkoros, Chief Executive Officer, Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School; Dorothy P. McSweeney, Chair Emeritus, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities; Jackie Reyes, Director, DC Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs; Allison Kokkoros.

**Sponsors** of GALA's 2019 Noche de Estrellas event (to date) include: Star Level: Verizon, Weissberg Foundation. Ovation Level: International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Community Capital Corp. Luminary Level: City National Bank, Wells Fargo, Goya. In-Kind: Line DC, Watermark Design Office, 3 Stars Brewery; Prestige Ledroit Distributors; Limo Pro by Joe Gottesman; DanMartin Productions.

## **Tickets**

Tickets for the Noche de Estrellas are \$225 per person, and \$400 per couple. For more information about the event or sponsorship opportunities, please call **202-234-7174**, e-mail [silvia@galatheatre.org](mailto:silvia@galatheatre.org), or visit [www.galatheatre.org](http://www.galatheatre.org).

**WHAT** : Noche de Estrellas honoring Diane Guerrero, Marvin Weissberg & Sonia Gutiérrez  
**WHEN** : 2019-04-03 11:54:30

**WHERE :**

**CONTACT:**

Dubraska Vale / 202-234-7174 / [dubraska@galatheatre.org](mailto:dubraska@galatheatre.org)