

Latino U College Access to Hold 12th Annual Visiones Gala to Celebrate First Generation Latino Students

This year's gala will honor Cynthia Rivera Weissblum, Peter and Karen Herrero, and Valley National Bank

WHITE PLAINS, NY, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Latino U College Access (LUCA) proudly presents its 12th Annual Visiones Gala: Inspired by Purpose, a premier event celebrating leadership, advocacy, and impact. This year's gala will take place on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 6:00 pm at the elegant Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle, NY.

The evening will recognize three remarkable honorees who have demonstrated unwavering commitment to LUCA's mission: Cynthia Rivera Weissblum, who will receive the Founder's Award for her visionary leadership; Peter and Karen Herrero, who will be honored with the Community Advocate Award for their outstanding nonprofit advocacy and dedication to empowering the Latino community and beyond; and Valley National Bank, who will be recognized with the Corporate Partner Award for their impactful partnership and commitment to serve, support, and strengthen our communities.

"We are looking forward to our 12th Annual Visiones Gala as we celebrate and recognize this year's honorees who have significantly impacted our mission while uplifting the Latino community," said Shirley Acevedo Buontempo, LUCA Founder and Executive Director. "This year's benefit theme, Inspired by Purpose, holds much significance for our first-generation Latino students as they dream big and achieve their college and career dreams through the power of education. I am inspired by our scholars and supporters who help make our mission at LUCA possible. We envision a world where everyone has access to opportunity and the ability for our



Cynthia Rivera Weissblum

youth to reach their fullest potential.”

Cynthia Rivera Weissblum, CEO of the Edwin Gould Foundation, has dedicated her career to addressing educational inequities in America through initiatives that include incubation services, grantmaking, and advocacy. As the creator of the EGF Accelerator, New York’s leading incubator for nonprofits, she has empowered countless organizations to drive meaningful change.

A proud first-generation college graduate and one of the few Latina CEOs in philanthropy, Weissblum’s journey aligns deeply with the mission of Latino U College Access to uplift first-generation Latino students and help them access higher education. Grateful for the mentors who guided her, Weissblum has spent her career championing opportunities for first-gen students and their families, advocating tirelessly to remove barriers and expand access to higher education. Her dedication to equity makes her a powerful role model for LUCA’s Scholars and the broader community.



Peter and Karen Herrero



Valley National Bank

Peter and Karen Herrero are the dynamic duo behind the NY Hospitality Group, a company dedicated to providing guests with the highest quality cuisine, exceptional service, and genuine hospitality. Their success story, managing a range of venues, including the iconic Sam's of Gedney Way, is a testament to their hard work and dedication.

Beyond their business endeavors, the Herreros actively participate in charitable initiatives, including supporting Latino U College Access. Their philanthropic endeavors are an extension of their business philosophy, reflecting their dedication to making a positive impact through their culinary offerings and their community engagement.

With over 95 years of service, Valley National Bank is a cornerstone financial institution deeply

committed to empowering and uplifting the communities it serves. Their dedicated team goes beyond traditional banking, driving growth, prosperity, and meaningful economic inclusion through innovative solutions and strong partnerships. As integral members of these communities, Valley National Bank champions initiatives that foster long-term success for individuals, businesses, and neighborhoods.

Their dedication extends to workforce and community development, investment in local nonprofits, environmental stewardship, and a conscious commitment to creating lasting, positive change with their regional partners. Valley National Bank's unwavering focus on strengthening communities ensures their impact is felt at every level, building a more inclusive and prosperous future for all.

Guests will be treated to a vibrant evening featuring a Latin-inspired menu, signature drinks, lively dancing, and an inspiring awards program. The highlight of the night will be the heartfelt testimonials from LUCA Scholars, offering powerful stories of resilience and achievement that underscore the life-changing impact of LUCA's mission.

This year's gala sponsors are Champion Sponsors – Bloomberg, EGF Accelerator, Christine & Patrice Louvet, Shawn Edwards & Paulina Ribadeneyra; Success Sponsors – Danone North America, Mark Ellman; Opportunity Sponsors – NY Hospitality Group, Valley National Bank; Access Sponsors – Morgan Stanley, PepsiCo, Scott Silverstein; Coach Sponsors – Shirley & Anthony Buontempo, Keating Electric, Clara & Antonio Roman, Jonathan & Lisa Schwartz, Dalia Valdes; Supporter Sponsors – AMC Networks, Lisa & Barry Bell, Aldo Polak & Ana Bluth, Matthew Pollack, Carol Pouchie & Michael Graham. For more information about this year's event or to purchase tickets or a sponsorship, please visit latinou.org/visiones or contact Chereese Jervis-Hill at (914) 218-3968 or via email at event@latinou.org.

About Latino U College Access: Latino U College Access (LUCA) is a dynamic 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that transforms the lives of high-achieving, low-income Latino students by making college dreams a reality. Since 2012, LUCA has empowered first-generation Latino students and their families through every step of the college journey—from navigating the application process to securing financial aid and thriving on campus. By providing personalized guidance, mentorship, and college readiness programs, LUCA ensures that students not only access higher education but also succeed and graduate, unlocking their full potential.

With a deep commitment to advancing equity, LUCA works at the heart of the community, addressing systemic barriers and driving educational opportunities for the next generation of Latino leaders. Our comprehensive support services, tailored to the unique challenges faced by first-gen students, have impacted hundreds of families, creating lasting change and building a brighter future for both individuals and the communities they will serve. To learn more about LUCA or to make a donation in support of our mission, please visit www.latinou.org.

Chereese Jervis-Hill

Events To Remember + PR To Remember

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