

# CIELO GALA CELEBRATES 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF LATINO COMMISSION ON AIDS

*Star-Studded Evening Honored Leaders and Activists in the Fight Against HIV and AIDS*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Latino Commission on AIDS](#) celebrated its 35th anniversary with the highly anticipated [Cielo Gala](#) on Friday, June 6, 2025, at the elegant Cipriani Wall Street in New York City. Held under the theme Designing a World without AIDS, the Gala honored trailblazers in the fight against HIV and AIDS while raising vital funds to support the Commission's advocacy and community-based programs.

Acclaimed actors and comedians Dominic Colón and Jenni Ruiza brought a blend of warmth and humor as hosts of the milestone event. Guests enjoyed a dynamic program featuring live entertainment by the Grammy Award-winning Spanish Harlem Orchestra and a fashion presentation spotlighting designers Cindy Castro and Adrian Alicea.

"As we continue to celebrate 35 years of unwavering commitment, I am deeply humbled by the strength and resilience of our community," said Guillermo Chacón, president of the Latino Commission on AIDS. "This milestone is not just a reflection of the Latino Commission on AIDS – it is a tribute to every partner, advocate, and voice that has walked this journey with us. Together, we continue the work with hope, dignity, and unity."

This year's Cielo Awards honored outstanding leaders and organizations making a difference:

- Ilka Award — Actor Daphne Rubin-Vega was presented with the ilka Award, named in memory of Dominican actress and activist who courageously battled AIDS and passed away in 1996, for her unwavering commitment to raising awareness and breaking stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.
- Esperanza Award – Dr. Laura Cheever, former Associate Administrator, HIV/AIDS Bureau,



(L-R) 2025 Cielo Gala honorees Francisco Ruiz, actor Daphne Rubin-Vega, and Dr. Laura Cheever.

HRSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, for her groundbreaking work in HIV treatment and care.

□ Compañero Award – Hispanic Federation, for its enduring partnership and leadership in improving the quality of life for Latino communities affected by HIV/AIDS.

□ Business Leadership Award – Michael Dowling, CEO of Northwell Health, for his corporate leadership and advocacy in health equity.

□ Dennis de León Voz de Compromiso Award – Dr. Francisco Ruiz, former Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP), for his unwavering commitment to HIV education, leadership development, and public service.



(L-R) Latino Commission on AIDS President Guillermo Chacón, Board Chair Jesus Aguais, with Frankie Miranda, president and CEO of Hispanic Federation, which was recognized with the Compañero Award at 2025 Cielo Gala.

In addition to dynamic entertainment, the evening included cocktails, dinner, and a silent auction, with proceeds benefiting the Commission’s work in prevention, education, healthcare access, and health policy advocacy. The Commission will continue its fundraising efforts through June 30, 2025, with its [35 for 35](https://fundraise.givesmart.com/e/DVSTew?vid=1jz3yt) years campaign. Visit <https://fundraise.givesmart.com/e/DVSTew?vid=1jz3yt> to donate.

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*Guillermo Chacón, President,  
Latino Commission on AIDS*

The Cielo Gala also reaffirmed the Commission’s partnership with the Hispanic Health Network, reinforcing joint efforts to expand access to care and address health disparities within Latino communities nationwide.

#### About the Latino Commission on AIDS

The Latino Commission on AIDS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to combating the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Hispanic/Latino communities through education, prevention, and advocacy. Established in 1990, the organization has worked tirelessly to address the health inequities that disproportionately affect Hispanic/Latinos and to elevate the voices of those affected by HIV and AIDS. The Commission provides health education, advocacy, HIV prevention, capacity building, and health behavioral research that lead to community-based initiatives aimed at reducing the

spread of HIV and improving the quality of life for those living with the virus. For more information, visit [www.latinoaids.org](http://www.latinoaids.org).

Roy Cosme

Arcos Communications

+1 212-807-1337

[email us here](#)

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(L-R) Actors Dominic Colon, Zabryna Guevara, Daphne Rubin-Vega with Latino Commission on AIDS President Guillermo Chacon, and actor Jenni Ruiza at 2025 Cielo Gala.

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