



For Immediate Release
Contact: Amy Hinojosa
ahinojosa@hermana.org

MANA National HERMANITAS® Program Receives White House Recognition

September 15, 2015 -- Today, Alejandra Ceja, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, announced the Bright Spots in Hispanic Education at a press conference in Washington, DC. As a Bright Spot, the MANA National HERMANITAS® Program, will be part of a national online catalog that includes over 230 programs that invest in key education priorities for Hispanics. The Initiative seeks to leverage these Bright Spots to encourage collaboration between stakeholders focused on similar issues in sharing data-driven approaches, promising practices, peer advice and effective partnerships, ultimately resulting in increased support for the educational attainment of the Hispanic community from cradle to career.

The MANA HERMANITAS® Program is a national mentoring program that provides young Latinas ages 11-18 with educational and skill-building opportunities, leadership development, mentoring and peer support. The program is designed with cultural competence and addresses the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of Latina youth. HERMANITAS® (Little Sisters) are matched with trained mentors from their home communities, referred to as Madrinan®, who commit to 110 hours of mentoring and activities over the course of one year. MANA Chapters and Affiliates nationwide administer the Hermanitas programming in their local communities.

"There has been notable progress in Hispanic educational achievement, and it is due to the efforts of these Bright Spots in Hispanic Education, programs and organizations working throughout the country to help Hispanic students reach their full potential," said Ceja.

MANA National President and CEO, Amy Hinojosa said, "The National HERMANITAS® Initiative has been mentoring young Latinas across the country for over 25 years. The dedication that our Madrinan® display nationwide is a testament to their belief in the potential of our students. This recognition is for all of their efforts, as they contribute to a national movement to strengthen the capabilities of youth. We are honored to be counted among the Bright Spots in Hispanic Education and are grateful to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics for recognizing our national efforts."

The Initiative was established in 1990 to address the educational disparities faced by the Hispanic community. To learn more about the Initiative and to view the Bright Spots in Hispanic Education national online catalog, visit: www.ed.gov/HispanicInitiative. The press conference announcing the Bright Spots was the launch of Hispanic Heritage Month and in honor of the Initiative's 25th Anniversary in Washington, D.C.

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MANA, A National Latina Organization was founded in 1974 and is a national grassroots membership organization with chapters, affiliates and individual members across the country. The MANA mission is to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy. This is accomplished through the AvanZamos® adult Latina leadership training and the HERMANITAS® youth mentoring program for Latinas ages 11-18.