

Spanish version below - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 20, 2009

(Profiles at the bottom) *Picture can be requested with Carlos Morillo, Julio Torres-Recinos, Hilario Duran, Luis Carrillos, Hon. Peter Kent, Sonia Rodriguez (represented by her sister Vanessa), Ivar Mendez, Eduardo Canel and Alberto Elmir. Absent are Enrique Fernandez and Marlinda Freire*

“10 most influential Hispanic Canadians” – 2009

Hispanics: driving force behind Canada’s Creative Class

Toronto, ON (November 20, 2009) --- The Hispanic Business Association (HBA) today announced 2009’s 10 Most Influential Hispanic Canadians. The awards, sponsored by Scotiabank, were presented at an event held Friday night that was attended by the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada’s Minister for the Americas. The 10 Most Influential Hispanic Canadians 2009 (listed in alphabetical order by first name) are:

- Alberto Elmir (Ecuador): Media pioneer, founder of Ondas Hispanas
- Carlos Morillo (Colombia): Cardiology researcher and professor, McMaster University
- Eduardo Canel (Uruguay): Political science researcher and professor, York University
- Enrique Fernandez (Spain): Author and professor, University of Manitoba
- Hilario Duran (Cuba): Jazz prodigy, multiple-award-winning pianist and composer
- Ivar Mendez (Bolivia), Neurosurgery researcher, Dalhousie University
- Julio Torres-Recinos (El Salvador): Poet and professor, University of Saskatchewan
- Luis Carrillos (El Salvador): Community worker, Hispanic Development Council
- Marlinda Freire (Chile): Psychiatrist and professor, University of Toronto
- Sonia Rodriguez (Spain): Principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada

“The Latin American community is one of the fastest growing cultural groups in Canada,” said Fabiola Sicard, Senior Manager, Hispanic Market, Multicultural Banking, Scotiabank. “At Scotiabank, we recognize the importance of supporting the communities where our customers live and work and we congratulate all of the winners and nominees for serving as exemplary role models for Hispanic Canadians today and for future generations.”

In recognition, the **Prime Minister Stephen Harper** announced a meeting with awards winners next spring in Ottawa. Carlo Dade, Executive Director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and one of the program judges, would run a complementary program with the winners the same day.

“Congratulation to all nominees and winners. They help us prove that Hispanics are a driving force behind Canada’s Creative Class and continue to make tremendous contributions to our new country. It is fitting to launch the HBA at this important event. The 10,000 HBA directories containing the latest statistics about Hispanics in Canada will be available in both the GTA and Ottawa”, said Mauricio Ospina, awards organizer. Next year, the HBA plans to create a Manual for Hispanic Immigrants/Who’s Who in Hispanic Business”. Between 50,000 to 100,000 copies of the manual will be printed and distributed, supported by its soon-to-be one hundred members. Membership applications are now open.

This year’s winners were chosen from 34 nominations coming from seven different provinces representing ten countries of origin. The winners were selected by a panel of judges comprised of past winners and executives, The Canadian Foundation for the Americas, Canadian Hispanic Congress and the Hispanic Press Association of Canada, and journalists from the Globe & Mail, Toronto Star, Canadian Business, and CBC. Media sponsors included Correo Canadiense, El Popular, La Guia de Toronto, Mercado News, Abanico, Latin Life, Latidos, TorontoHispano.com, Una-C Canada, RevistaDebate.ca, Nuevo Mundo TV and TLN Television. The results were audited by an independent lawyer.

This year’s awards ceremony was launched at the Distillery District in Toronto. Up to \$13,000 in discounts are available until December 31, 2009 to urbanites and investors interested in two of the last three towers in this historic district. The offer is available through Mauricio Ospina.

The 2010 “10 Most Influential Hispanic Canadians” awards are scheduled for November 23 of next year.

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For more information, visit www.HispanicBusiness.ca or contact Mauricio Ospina, Director, E: mauricio.ospina@HispanicBusiness.ca

(Perfiles al final– Foto disponible)

“10 Hispanos de Mayor Influencia en Canadá” – 2009

Hispanos: La fuerza que empuja la Clase Creativa de Canadá

Toronto, ON (20 de noviembre del 2009) --- La Asociación de Empresarios Hispanos (HBA) anunció hoy los ganadores de su programa “10 Hispanos de Mayor Influencia en Canadá” versión 2009. Los premios, patrocinados por Scotiabank, fueron presentados durante un evento hoy en la noche atendido por el Honorable Peter Kent, Ministro de Canadá para las Américas. Los 10 hispanos de mayor influencia en Canadá, 2009 (en orden alfabético por nombre) son:

- Alberto Elmir (Ecuador): Pionero de los medios hispanos, fundador de Ondas Hispanas
- Carlos Morillo (Colombia): Investigador de Cardiología y profesor, Universidad de McMaster
- Eduardo Canel (Uruguay): Investigador de ciencias políticas y profesor, Universidad de York
- Enrique Fernandez (España): Autor y profesor, Universidad de Manitoba
- Hilario Duran (Cuba): Prodigio del Jazz, ganador de múltiples premios musicales
- Ivar Mendez (Bolivia), Investigador e innovador en neuro-cirugía, Universidad de Dalhousie
- Julio Torres-Recinos (El Salvador): Poeta y profesor, Universidad de Saskatchewan
- Luis Carrillos (El Salvador): Trabajador comunitario, Consejo de Desarrollo Hispano
- Marlinda Freire (Chile): Psiquiatra y profesora, Universidad de Toronto
- Sonia Rodriguez (España): Bailarina Principal con el Ballet Nacional de Canadá

“La comunidad latinoamericana es uno de los grupos culturales de mayor crecimiento en Canadá,” dijo Fabiola Sicard, Gerente para el mercado hispano, sección multicultural de Scotiabank. “En Scotiabank reconocemos lo importante que es apoyar a las comunidades en donde nuestros clientes viven y trabajan. Felicitaciones a todos los ganadores y nominados por servir como ejemplo para la comunidad Hispano-Canadiense, hoy y en generaciones futuras”.

Como reconocimiento, el **Primer Ministro de Canadá** invito a los ganadores a asistir a una reunión en la primavera del 2010 en Ottawa. Carlo Dade, Director Ejecutivo de la Fundación Canadienses para las Américas (FOCAL) y uno de los jurados del programa, organizará un programa con los ganadores el mismo día.

“Felicitaciones a todos los nominados y galardonados. Gracias a ellos probamos que los hispanos somos la fuerza que empuja la Clase Creativa de Canadá y que continuamos haciendo importantes contribuciones a nuestro nuevo país. Hoy también hicimos el lanzamiento del HBA y de sus directorios. Los otros 10.000 directorios que contienen las ultimas estadísticas de los hispanos en Canadá estarán disponibles en Ottawa y Toronto en estos días”, dijo Mauricio Ospina, organizador del programa. El próximo año, el HBA planea crear un “Manual para Inmigrantes Hispanos/Quien es Quien en el Mundo Comercial Hispano”. Se distribuirán entre 50.000y 100.000 copias con el apoyo de 100 miembros. Solicitudes de membresía están abiertas desde ya.

Los diez ganadores fueron seleccionados por ganadores de las dos ediciones anteriores, así como periodistas y ejecutivos del *Globe & Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *Canadian Business*, *CBC*, *FOCAL*, *Canadian Hispanic Congress*, *Hispanic Press Association of Canada*. Los resultados fueron auditados por un abogado independiente. Patrocinadores de medios incluyen a *Correo Canadiense*, *El Popular*, *La Guía de Toronto*, *Mercado News*, *Abanico*, *Latin Life*, *Abanico*, *Nuevo Mundo TV*, *Latidos*, *TorontoHispano.com*, *Una-C Canadá*, *RevistaDebate.ca* y *TLN Television*.

La apertura de premios de este año se hizo en el Distillery District de Toronto. Hasta \$13.000 en descuentos están disponibles hasta el 31 de diciembre del presente para inversionistas y ciudadanos interesados en dos de las tres únicas torres en tal histórico distrito. La oferta es disponible a través de Mauricio Ospina.

La 4ta edición del programa “10 Most Influential Hispanic Canadians” se hará el 23 de noviembre del 2010.

ALBERTO ELMIR**Origin:** Ecuador**Residence:** Ontario

Alberto Elmir came to Canada with a Business degree from Ecuador. A real pioneer, he shaped Canada's Hispanic media.

In 1969, Elmir opened "El Rincon Suramericano", a store in Toronto. His career with the Hispanic media began in the mid-seventies as editor of El Popular newspaper (www.diarioelpopular.com) and as broadcaster at CHIN Radio (www.chinradio.com), Canada's pioneer in multicultural radio broadcasting. He also hosted Hispanovision, a TV program on Channel 11 in Hamilton, Ontario.

In 1984, Elmir influenced the birth of Telelatino TV (www.tlntv.com) and secured several hours of programming in Spanish. In 1986, he was instrumental in the creation of CIRV FM-Radio (www.cirvfm.com) and became vice president. This class "A" radio station now transmits in 12 languages reaching over 2 million people in Southern Ontario. Elmir created and anchored the Festival of the CIRV FM Songs (1988-2007) promoting numerous local and international Hispanic artists. In 2000, he founded Ondas Hispanas (www.ondashispanas.com), a 24-hours Spanish-speaking radio and Internet station. In 2004, with the desire to unite the Hispanic media, he launched the Alliance of Canadian Hispanic Media.

Elmir gave more than forty years to Canada and the Hispanic media, and supported plenty of local and international humanitarian campaigns. For these contributions, he has received numerous awards and recognitions including the Honour Award from the now defunct "Latin American Achievement Awards" 2003, and Certificates of Recognition from the Canadian Hispanic Congress, the Hon. Judy Sgro, MP, and Toronto Councillor Cesar Palacio, on behalf of the City of Toronto.

CARLOS MORILLO**Origin:** Colombia**Residency:** Ontario

Dr. Carlos Morillo, a Professor of Medicine and Director Arrhythmia Service at McMaster University and Hamilton Health Sciences, received his MD degree from the Universidad Javeriana in Colombia. He is also a researcher at the Population Health Research Institute. He completed his Cardiology and Electrophysiology training at University of Western Ontario supported by a Heart & Stroke Foundation Research Fellowship Award.

Morillo returned to Canada in 2002 to conduct the largest study ever performed in Chagas, first described 100 years ago. Chagas is an infectious tropical disease transmitted by a parasite that affects cardiac tissue. Approximately 30% of infected individuals develop heart enlargement leading to heart failure and sudden death. The disease is relentless and usually fatal. No specific treatment has been developed and the WHO considers Chagas a neglected disease. Primarily seen in Latin America (approximately 10 million people are infected), current immigration patterns indicate that 80,000 to 250,000 subjects may be infected in North America.

The BENEFIT study led by Morillo and funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Tropical Disease Research branch of WHO and McMaster University, has enrolled 1,800 patients in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and El Salvador, who have been referred by 150 health professionals in 45 centres - the largest network of investigators in Chagas to date. BENEFIT will establish if eliminating the parasite halts the progression of heart damage. Morillo is an Honorary Member of most cardiovascular societies in Latin America and continues to develop treatments of neglected diseases such as Chagas and Rheumatic fever.

EDUARDO CANEL**Origin:** Uruguay**Residency:** Ontario

Eduardo Canel is Associate Professor of Latin American and Caribbean Studies and International Development Studies in the Department of Social Science at York University. He received the prestigious York University Teaching-Award in 1998 and mention in the "Most Popular Professors List" in The Maclean's Guide to Canadian Universities in 2000 and 2001.

A professor for the past fifteen years, Canel promoted an appreciation of the cultures and societies of Latin America among students, policy makers and the Canadian public. He taught and mentored hundreds of students and delivered Intercultural Communication workshops for Canada's diplomats, policy makers and development aid workers through the Canadian International Development Agency and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (DFAIT). He facilitated numerous student exchange programs and internship opportunities in Latin America for Canadian students, and promoted partnerships between academic institutions and civil society organizations in Canada and in Latin America.

Canel is currently Director of York's Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC), Canada's premier research centre on the region. He is also a member of the national Board of the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies. He was Coordinator of York's Latin American and Caribbean Studies

program (1995-2001) and the International Development program (2006-2007). In the 1980s, he worked in journalism, assisting in the production of a dozen CBC television documentaries on Central America and Cuba. His book *Barrio Democracy in Latin America. Participatory Decentralization and Community Activism in Montevideo* (Penn State University Press) will come out in 2010.

ENRIQUE FERNANDEZ **Origin: Spain** **Residency: Manitoba**

Enrique Fernandez (Princeton PhD, 1998) is head of the Dept. of French, Spanish and Italian at the University of Manitoba. He came to Canada in 1991, worked as translator for oil companies while completing an MA, and in 1994 received a scholarship at Princeton University. He taught at Texas A&M International University in Laredo, Mexico.

Since his return to Canada in 1999, he has published scholarly books and articles on the Latin sources of the 16th century masterpiece *La Celestina*. He has written short stories published in Canadian and Mexican magazines as well as in the recently published *Portrait of a Cloud: First Anthology of Hispanic-Canadian Short-Stories* (2008) and the *Anthology of Literary Translation of the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta* (2006).

In 1994 he created *Proyecto Sherezade*, online site with contributors from the Spanish-speaking world. The best two short stories are published every month, amounting to 300 short stories published to date. It is the oldest, most prestigious publication of its kind. Besides the stories, *Proyecto Sherezade's* readers can download recordings and teaching materials.

In 2005, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of *Don Quixote*, with the help of his students he created the *Puppets of Don Quixote*, a company that put on stage the misadventures of Cervantes' hero in several Canadian cities. He contributes to the local media in matters related to the teaching of Spanish. In 2009 he received the *Internationalization Award* (University of Manitoba) for promoting the richness and opportunities of the Spanish speaking world.

HILARIO DURAN **Origin: Cuba** **Residency: Ontario**

Hilario Durán was born in Havana, Cuba in 1953. A multiple-award-winning pianist, composer, arranger, orchestra leader, educator and recording artist, Duran started playing the piano by ear when he was eight years old.

He studied at Cuba's Amadeo Roldan Conservatory of Music and has since played around the world with Jazz and Salsa legends such as Dizzy Gillespie, Chucho Valdes, Paquito D'Rivera, Oscar D'Leon, Demetrio Muñoz (former director of the Buena Vista Social Club), Arturo Sandoval and others. In 1987, Durán made his first trip to Canada to perform at the Montréal International Jazz Festival. In 1992, he joined Canadian flautist Jane Bunett's *Spirits of Havana* and won the 1992 Canadian Juno Award. He settled in Canada in 1998 with his wife Cristobalina and their daughter Yailen, also an artist.

His current projects as a leader include 'The Hilario Durán Trio', 'Hilario Durán & Orquesta Havana Remembered' and 'Hilario Durán & His Latin Jazz Big Band'. Some of his multiple awards include:

- o Chico O'Farrill Lifetime Achievement Award (Latin Jazz U.S. 2007)
- o Juno Award, 2006 ("From the Heart")
- o Juno Award nominee, 2006 ("Encuentro en la Habana")
- o Juno Award, 2005 ("New Danzon")
- o Juno Award, 1992 ("Spirits of Havana", with Jane Bunett)
- o Premio EGREM, Best Arranger of the Year (Cuban musical award, 1982)

Duran volunteered as a teacher at Toronto's Humber College where is now a faculty member, acting as both adjunct Piano Professor and Ensemble Director. He will play at the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad as part of the Vancouver Olympics.

IVAR MENDEZ **Origin: Bolivia** **Residency: Nova Scotia**

The Bolivian Embassy in Canada nominates philanthropist and pioneer Dr. Ivar Mendez, Director of the Neural Transplantation Laboratory at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. As a clinician, Dr. Ivar Mendez is pioneering the use of robotics in neurosurgery. As a researcher, Dr. Mendez is breaking new ground in the field of neurotransplantation.

At Canada's only Cell Restoration Laboratory, Dr. Mendez' work moves us closer to the possibility of brain repair. He co- founded the Brain Repair Centre, where he has developed a world-class collaboration of researchers and physicians aiming to find innovative solutions to diseases and injuries of the brain and spinal cord. Dr. Mendez

played a critical role in expanding state-of-the-art research facilities and new neurobiology and stem cell laboratories in Canada.

He is also the Head of the Division of Neurosurgery at the QEII Health Sciences Centre in Halifax, and is Director of Research for the Department of Surgery at the QEII. In 1999, Dr. Mendez received the Royal College Medal Award for Surgery from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada for his outstanding contribution to research in neurosurgery. He believes that the research that is being conducted in neural transplantation today is moving us closer to the possibility of brain repair.

His last project with the Canadian government was to develop a distance surgery system to treat Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. Dr. Mendez makes financial and social contributions to programs that benefit poor children in Bolivia, and is also a renowned artist (photographer).

JULIO TORRES-RECINOS **Origin:** El Salvador **Residency:** Saskatchewan

Dr. Julio Torres-Recinos, born in El Salvador, received his PhD from the University of Toronto. He is an Associate Professor of Spanish and Literature at the University of Saskatchewan.

Accomplished poet and short-story writer, Torres-Recinos has published five poetry books. His poetry and short stories have appeared in journals and anthologies in Canada, Spain, Peru, Mexico and the U.S. He has given poetry readings in Canada, Germany, Italy, U.S. Costa Rica and El Salvador.

In 1992, he won first prize for Poetry in a competition organized by Toronto's Cultural Celebration of the Spanish Language. In 2003, the Accademia della Cultura di Roma named him Accademico D'Onore. He received a Teaching Excellence Award by the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union. In 2004, a translation of the books *Crisol del Tiempo* and *Nosotros* was published in France. He edited two books with Luis Molina Lora, *Ero's Falsenesses* and *Portrait of a Cloud*, each collection with over fifty short-stories by Hispanic-Canadian authors (the latter considered a landmark in Hispanic-Canadian literature). His last book, *Hojas de aire*, was selected as one of the best poetry books published in Spain (2008).

His volunteer work includes being President of the Hispanic Circle of Saskatoon, Treasurer of the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association and of the Canadian Association of Hispanists, and VP of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan.

He is President of Saskatoon's Folkfest, the largest multicultural festival in the province with over 269,000 visits in 2009. For this role, he received a Leadership Award by Tourism Saskatoon (2009).

LUIS CARRILLOS **Origin:** El Salvador **Residency:** Ontario

Luis Carrillos has worked across Canada as educator and volunteer. Since 1994, the thrust of his work has been with the Hispanic Development Council on youth gangs. Projects include: *Identity Politics Among Latino Youths in Toronto*; *Youth Gangs: To See Them Talk Is To Hear Them Walk*; *MEXUSCAN (Mexico, U.S, Canada): A tri-national research on youth and employment*; *How to... handbooks I and II: guides for parents with adolescent children*; and lectures at York, Guelph and Michigan universities, and George Brown College.

Born in El Salvador, Carrillos holds a Masters in Education from York University, and Youth Worker and Advanced Counseling Skill diplomas from George Brown College. He is president of the Association of Spanish Speaking Seniors-GTA and member of the following organizations: Immigrant & Refugee Housing Committee of Toronto, Toronto Police Services Board Advisory Panel on Community Safety, Center for Addiction and Mental Health, Alternative Housing & Services Committee of Toronto. He is former chair of the Bloor Information and Life Skills Centre, and former president of the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples.

His volunteer work spans over thirty years. Awards include a Certificate from MP Osvaldo Nunez for the advancement of young people at risk and salutations from the Hons. Anne McLellan, Canada's Attorney General, and Lawrence MacAulay, Canada's Solicitor General, "for his commitment to creating safer communities".

Carrillos has been interviewed by most Hispanic Canadian media, CBC Radio, Radio Canada International, Toronto Sun, Immigrant Voices, and Prensa Grafica and El Diario de Hoy (El Salvador).

MARLINDA FREIRE **Origin:** Chile **Residency:** Ontario

Dr. Marlinda Freire arrived in Canada as a Chilean refugee in 1974 with a background in pediatrics and little English. She became a psychiatrist from the University of Toronto in 1980.

Freire has worked with numerous organizations providing services for victims of human rights violations. Her main areas of expertise are mental health and poverty, torture, violence, women's issues, exile, second language acquisition and retention by displaced and traumatized populations. She has contributed to legislative changes through work with the Immigration and Refugee Board and legal community addressing the complexities of culture, communication and trauma in refugees - particularly child claimants. Dr. Freire was a speaker at the 1989 International Symposium on the Refugee Crisis, Oxford University. She did field work in Croatia during the war (1993) and was a consultant for the documentary "War is Not a Game."

As Chief Psychiatrist at the Toronto District School Board (1987-2003), Freire advocated for the rights and needs of newcomers and traumatized and poor students. She is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto and has taught and mentored students at York and Ryerson universities. She also consults at the Hospital for Sick Children, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, City Health Associates, and sits on the Mental Health Advisory Committee for the UN High Commission for Refugees. Dr. Freire's three children are health professionals and, when asked recently to write an essay about the person they most admired, her two oldest grandchildren wrote about their "Abuela" (grandmother).

SONIA RODRIGUEZ **Origin: Spain** **Residency: Ontario**

Sonia Rodriguez studied dance in Madrid with Pedro de la Cruz (Princess Grace Academy, Monaco) and graduated with Honors from Madrid's Royal Conservatory. Winner of Italy's Grand Prix International Dance Competition, she joined The National Ballet of Canada in 1990 and was promoted to Principal Dancer in 2000. There are only five female principal dancers in Canada's national ballet.

Rodriguez's repertoire with Canada's ballet includes all major classics like Swan Lake, Don Quijote, Romeo and Juliet, La Fille mal gardée, The Sleeping Beauty, Giselle, Coppelia and Madame Butterfly. She has danced principal roles in numerous George Balanchine ballets, including leads in Mozartiana, Stravinsky Violin Concerto, Theme and Variations and Serenade.

A versatile dancer, she is favorite among choreographers and has created many roles such as the title role in James Kudelka's Cinderella and Princess Vasilisa in The Firebird, as well as roles in Matjash Mrozewski's A Delicate Battle, Jean-Pierre Perreault's The Comforts of Solitude and Kudelka's The Four Seasons. In 2005, she danced the role of Dulcinea in the world premiere of Suzanne Farrell's re-staging of Balanchine's Don Quixote at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

A great ambassador for the company and the Hispanic community, Rodriguez has performed in numerous galas all over the world, most recently in Miami's International Dance Festival performing The Pas de deux from Val Canipero's Lady of the Camellias and Balanchine's Agon.

Rodriguez has appeared in numerous company premieres, including Marie Chouinard's 24 Preludes by Chopin, Christopher Bruce's Rooster and John Newmeirs' The Seagull.