

The **Esperanza**¹ Education Fund

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Dear Friends,

All of us at The Esperanza Education Fund send our warmest wishes for the holidays and our deep appreciation for your support over the past year. As 2010 draws to a close, we'd like to take a moment to update you on our achievements this year, our goals for the year ahead, and how—with your continued help—we can make those goals a reality.

As you know, Esperanza is one of the only college scholarships in the capital region that serves immigrant students regardless of national origin, ethnicity, or immigration status. And unlike most other scholarships, Esperanza is run entirely by volunteers. **In the two years since our founding, we've awarded \$125,000 in scholarships to seventeen local immigrant students—without paying a cent in rent or salaries.**

Building on last year's success, we focused on three goals this year:

- Awarding more scholarships—and reaching the neediest students;
- Improving academic and professional support for our scholars; and
- Developing our fundraising, outreach, and operational capacity.

Thanks to your help, we've succeeded on all three fronts—and we've won recognition for it. In November, the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia awarded Esperanza the Hugh A. Johnson, Jr. Memorial Prize—an honor for leading nonprofit organizations that we're thrilled to have received in just our second year of operation.



Hispanic Bar Association's Equal Justice Awards Reception

This year we awarded 50% more in scholarships—and reached the neediest students.

In 2009, our first year, we awarded \$50,000 in college scholarships to six promising high school seniors. This year, with your support—along with a generous grant from the D.C. Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs—we **expanded our program to include GED holders, and we awarded a total of \$75,000 to eleven outstanding immigrant students.**

Choosing these eleven students from the hundreds of deserving applicants was not easy. Staffed by more than fifty volunteers, our Scholarship Committee reviewed more than 250 applications and interviewed thirty impressive finalists. From this rigorous selection process emerged eleven extraordinary scholars who embody the resilience, vitality, and diversity of our immigrant community. Hailing from eleven countries spanning three continents, our 2010 Esperanza Scholars aspire to become civil rights lawyers, cardiologists, rocket scientists, and everything in between. They include:



- A recent immigrant from **Vietnam** who maintained a 4.0 GPA while serving as the sole breadwinner in her family after her father was disabled by a stroke. Already a certified pharmacy technician, she hopes to become a UNICEF doctor.
- A **Honduran** immigrant who supported himself by working as a custodian while taking AP classes, leading his high school soccer team, and serving in the ROTC. This **Arce-Aviles Family Scholar** plans to become a mechanical engineer.
- An immigrant from **Panama** who served as president of the Young Democrats Club and interned for a Montgomery County Councilmember while excelling in an advanced curriculum at his high school. He aspires to become Maryland's first Latino governor.
- A young woman from **Guinea** who earned straight A's in AP classes while volunteering hundreds of hours at a homeless shelter. After attending Montgomery College, this **Garland-Rojas Family Scholar** plans to become a cardiologist.
- A recent **Chinese** immigrant who worked fifty hours a week managing her family's restaurant while maintaining a 3.6 GPA. An aspiring entrepreneur, she is studying accounting at the University of Virginia at Wise.
- A young man who grew up in a rural **Bolivian** village where education ended at middle school and there was no electricity. After graduating high school with A's in IB Math, IB Chemistry, and IB Physics, this **Natalia Aragon Scholar** is studying engineering at Virginia Tech.
- An **Indian** immigrant who managed a Rockville City Council campaign, won the state Economic Challenge competition, worked twenty hours a week at a check cashing depot,

and founded his high school's Young Independents Club. After attending Montgomery College, this **Fred Wang Memorial Scholar** hopes to start a microfinance business.

- A **Mexican** immigrant who maintained a 4.5 GPA in an AP curriculum while working twenty hours a week at a restaurant to help support her family. This **Arce-Aviles Family Scholar** plans to become a lawyer who will represent victims of domestic violence.
- A young man who left primary school in **El Salvador** to support his family by working as a street vendor and then resumed his education by enrolling in a local GED program, where he earned a 3.75 GPA and was selected to attend a national leadership conference.
- An immigrant from **Eritrea** who obtained a GED while working forty hours a week as a parking attendant and volunteering at George Washington University Hospital. He is now studying to become a physician's assistant at Montgomery College.
- The son of corn and bean farmers from **Guatemala** who earned his GED and won first prize in a local poetry contest while working as a busboy to support himself. He aspires to become an astronomer.

In 2011, we aim to reach an even larger and more diverse pool of students by expanding our partnerships with immigrant youth organizations, developing our contacts with education administrators, and conducting outreach at local high schools and GED programs. **To join our Scholarship Committee, contact Marie Scott at marie.scott@esperanzafund.org.**

This year we invested more human capital in our scholars—and saw great returns.

Unlike many other scholarships, we do more than just cut tuition checks. **We also provide the academic and professional support that immigrant students often lack by pairing our scholars with mentors in their fields of interest.** This year, for example, we matched our aspiring astronomer with a NASA scientist, and our future cardiologist with a physician at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. And with the help of their mentors, our 2009 Esperanza Scholars passed their freshman year with flying colors.

Aided by a generous grant from the Inter-American Development Bank Solidarity Program, we also held several events for our scholars and their mentors. In March, we hosted a Career Day featuring Clifton Coates, Director of the University of the District of Columbia's Career Center, who gave valuable advice on career paths, summer internships, and interview skills.



First Annual Career Day with Clifton Coates at the University of the District of Columbia

We also organized field trips to the National Cherry Blossom Festival and the USA Science and Engineering Festival for our scholars and their mentors. In August, we held our second annual Community Picnic at Fort Hunt Park in Virginia, where Esperanza scholars, families, mentors, and volunteers gathered for fellowship, food—and, of course, soccer.



Second Annual Community Picnic at Fort Hunt Park

Our goal for next year is to build a more formal structure for the mentorship program and to facilitate deeper relationships between scholars and mentors. **To become a mentor or to join our Mentorship Committee, contact Alice Yao at alice.yao@esperanzafund.org.**

This year we expanded our networks, doubled our fundraising—and had a lot of fun.

Unlike many other scholarships, Esperanza devotes all of its yearly proceeds to funding new scholarships instead of building an endowment. By the end of last year, we'd raised \$50,000 for the 2010 Esperanza Scholarship. This year, thanks to your generosity, **we've doubled that amount, raising \$100,000 for new scholarships in just six months.** And on top of that, we've received an extraordinary gift of \$100,000—our largest yet—from Suyen Ko and Amy Wang on behalf of the Fred Wang Memorial Scholarship. How did we do all this?

First, **we spread the word about Esperanza through diverse media outlets.** Highlights include a National Public Radio story featuring one of our 2010 Esperanza Scholars ("[D.C. Students Succeed Against Tough Odds](#)"), and a profile of Esperanza by New America Media, a national association of more than 2,000 ethnic news organizations ("[As DREAM Fades, a D.C. Nonprofit Gives Kids Hope—and Help](#)").

Second, **we marshaled the financial support of corporate and institutional donors, and partnered with local organizations that serve the immigrant community.** Last year, we won a \$20,000 grant from the D.C. Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) to launch our scholarship for GED holders. This year, OLA renewed our grant and doubled it, committing \$40,000 for the 2011 Esperanza Scholarship. In addition, we secured financial sponsorships

from leading law firms WilmerHale LLP and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP for our winter benefit concert, and we partnered with several local bar associations and education advocacy groups to host a series of happy hours this fall.

Finally, we continued to host events to raise awareness about the need for access to higher education in the immigrant community. Following the success of last year's launch party at Atlantic Video Studios and winter benefit concert featuring classical pianist Elizabeth Roe, this year we held even more fundraising and outreach events, including:



An elegant dinner for our Board of Advisors and top supporters at the Peruvian Embassy, graciously hosted by Ambassador Luis Valdivieso and his wife Cecilia. **To join our Board of Advisors, contact Tom Olson at tom.olson@esperanzafund.org.**



A series of 10K races featuring Team Esperanza and “The Phalanx.” **To join our running team, contact Alvaro Bedoya at alvaro@esperanzafund.org.**



A happy hour at Lupe Cantina co-hosted by the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of the Greater D.C. Area, the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia, and the South Asian Bar Association of Washington D.C.



And our capstone event: our second annual winter benefit concert, featuring the captivating music of Russian-born flamenco guitarist Grigory Goryachev, and the stunning oil paintings of young American artist Teresa Oaxaca. Held in the beautiful ballroom and rotunda of the Carnegie Institution, our benefit concert and champagne reception sold out all 200 seats and raised over \$15,000 for new scholarships.

We have many more exciting events in store for 2011, and we aim to deepen and expand the partnerships we've cultivated this year. **To join our Development Committee, contact Alex Lin at alex.lin@esperanzafund.org.**

How can you help?

Esperanza has made great strides in the past two years, but we still need your help to make 2011 our best year yet. Here are four ways you can help:

- **Make a year-end tax-deductible contribution.** The Esperanza Education Fund is a tax-exempt public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your generous tax-deductible gift will help send our 2011 Esperanza Scholars to college. To give, visit www.esperanzafund.org/support, or donate through the [Combined Federal Campaign](#) (CFC #19508). (The deadline for CFC contributions in the National Capital Area has been extended until January 17, 2011.)

- **Join one of our Committees.** Esperanza is powered by volunteers. To help us select our new class of scholars, serve as a mentor, or plan our next event, please sign up at www.esperanzafund.org/support/#Volunteer or contact one of the Committee Chairs:
Scholarship Committee: Marie Scott (marie.scott@esperanzafund.org)
Mentorship Committee: Alice Yao (alice.yao@esperanzafund.org)
Development Committee: Alex Lin (alex.lin@esperanzafund.org)
- **Join our Board of Advisors.** Members of our Board of Advisors serve as ambassadors-at-large for Esperanza, leading fundraising efforts and connecting us to professional and personal networks of potential supporters. For more information, contact Tom Olson at tom.olson@esperanzafund.org.
- **Connect us to your friends and colleagues.** We're always looking for new supporters. If you know a business or community leader who would be interested in joining our mission—or an artist or speaker who might headline our next event—please consider introducing him or her to Esperanza at our next event or through a private meeting.

In sum, 2010 was another great year for The Esperanza Education Fund. And with your continued support, 2011 promises to be even better.

We wish you a happy and safe new year. Thank you for everything you do for Esperanza.

Warmest regards,



Alice Wang
Chair, Board of Directors