

ISABEL VILLAR

Class of 1968

Inducted 1996

Isabel Villar, the founder and director of Centro Hispano in White Plains, has been one of the leaders in providing both needed services and a voice to the City's growing Hispanic population.

Ms. Villar was born in Cuba, arrived in the United States 30 years ago in November 1966 and entered White Plains High School two weeks later. She was a member of the Class of 1968 and received a full scholarship to Manhattanville College. Ms. Villar went on to earn a Masters in Secondary Education from NYU and degrees in administration from Iona College and school guidance counseling at Long Island University.

Ms. Villar founded the Centro Hispano in January 1974 under the City's Community Action Program. It has been located, since inception, at the Chapel Hall in St. Bernard's Church.

Centro Hispano offers a variety of educational, outreach, counseling and advocacy programs and services, from adult English classes to a bilingual girl scout troop, from housing and job information to translation and legal support. Ms. Villar is also host of the Centro Hispano cable TV program, "El Centro Hispano Informa."

For 18 years, Ms. Villar was a bilingual teacher and guidance counselor at Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk, CT.

Ms. Villar is the recipient of a variety of awards and honors for both her service to Centro Hispano and the City of White Plains, and her achievements as an educator, including recognition from the City, the County and the state legislature.