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DISTRICT WINS TOP NJSPRA AWARD FOR MEDIA RELATIONS

Award recognizes Communications Department's efforts to promote stories about district students who were accepted into elite colleges in 2022

PATERSON – District officials today announced Paterson Public Schools has won first place in the N.J. School Public Relations Association (NJSPRA)'s annual School Communications Awards in the Media Relations – Human Interest category.

The award was given in recognition of the Communications Department's efforts, led by Communications Director Paul Brubaker, to earn numerous stories in the media about three members of International High School's Class of 2022 who were accepted into elite colleges.

Stefany Morales was co-captain of the Kennedy High School wrestling team when she was notified that she was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania. She was raised by her single mother from Mexico.

Juan Marrero was accepted by Johns Hopkins University with his sights set on becoming a surgeon. It was only a few years earlier when he first arrived in the United States from the Dominican Republic not able to speak English, which is why he went to the New Roberto Clemente Middle School to encourage English language learning students who were following in his footsteps.

Isabella Gonzalez was raised by her mother who immigrated from Venezuela. Gonzalez's acceptance to Harvard University fulfilled her lifelong dream of going to the prestigious university and made her the 10th district graduate to be accepted to an Ivy League school in 10 years.

Stories ran locally and nationally that profiled the students' backgrounds as immigrants or children of immigrants, the obstacles they and their families overcame, and their efforts to give back to the district by encouraging younger students to follow in their footsteps.

The media coverage not only highlighted three outstanding Paterson Public Schools students but was also a major step forward in redefining the narrative of Paterson Public Schools.

"We greatly appreciate the recognition the NJSPRA has kindly granted the district with this award," said Superintendent of School Eileen F. Shafer. "The media coverage our students, teachers, and staff have received for their accomplishments happens through regular, consistent contact with members of the media. That has always been a top communications priority, and I congratulate our communications director, Paul Brubaker, and his team on this honor."

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