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**DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ HOSTS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
CELEBRATION WITH SPECIAL ACCOLADES TO LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERS**

In-Person Program Included Live Performances, Honorees, Guest Speakers and More

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, in partnership with her Latino Advisory Council, hosted an annual celebration in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month last night during an in-person event at a local venue, La Boom, in Woodside. The program included special awards honoring notable community members of Hispanic and Latin descent and included songs and musical performances.

District Attorney Katz said, “This celebration reflects my vision for the Office of the Queens District Attorney - one that is focused on enriching our ties to the community. The many different cultural groups of Queens County are vital partners in our efforts to protect and safeguard this Borough. Our Hispanic community has grown in recent years and now makes up approximately one-third of those who call Queens home. It was my pleasure to pay tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans that continue to have a positive impact on our Borough.”

During the two hours of festivities that were both in person and live-streamed, DA Katz honored:

- **Pedro Zamora**, local business owner of several restaurants and nightclubs throughout the City, including La Boom, Cantina Rooftop, and Stage 48. Zamora is also the founder of the non-profit organization, MECENAS, which promotes, fosters and advances awareness of Mexican culture and languages.
- **Helen Arteaga Landaverde**, MPH, Chief Executive Officer at New York City Health+ Hospitals/Elmhurst. Landaverde previously served as the Assistant Vice President, Queens Network and Executive Initiatives at Urban Health Plan, a network of community health centers located in three boroughs in New York City.
- **Eduardo “Eddie” Valentin**, owner of Friends Tavern, Music Box, and Club Evolution. Valentin previously worked at the United Nations, where he helped manage their Pension Fund Division. He has used his entrepreneurial success to host fundraisers for non-profits, LGBTQ organizations and local elected officials. His local businesses have been some main sponsors of the Queens Lesbian & Gay Pride Parade & Festival, working alongside City Councilman Daniel Dromm to fight for equal rights for the LGBTQ community.

- **The Dominico-American Society of Queens (DASQ)** has worked to improve the quality of life in the New York City community since its inception in 1993. DASQ assists local residents with services such as adult literacy and job training, legal and immigration assistance, after school programs and youth development, health education, as well as access to community health services.
- **Sophia Villacreses**, Trial Prep Assistant, Major Economic Crimes Bureau at the Queens District Attorney's Office. Villacreses previously worked in the Narcotics Trial Bureau. She hopes to become a Detective or an Investigator and has helped Spanish speaking victims of crimes obtain assistance navigating the criminal justice system.
- **Shanise O'Neill**, Unit Chief of the Intake and Assessment Bureau at the Queens District Attorney's Office. Shanise has been a prosecutor in the Queens DA's Office for over 14 years and obtained her law degree from St. John's University. She previously served as a Supervisor in the Criminal Court Bureau and as a line assistant in the Narcotics Trials Bureau, where she tried felony cases ranging from DWI to burglary. She sits on the office's hiring committee where she conducts interviews for new assistants and helps train newly hired ADAs.

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