

2011 Hispanic Teacher of the Year

The Hispanic Teacher of the Year Award was established by the Hispanic Human Resources Council (HHRC) to honor the many contributions of classroom teachers of Hispanic descent to the students they serve and to education in general. Since 2003, Hispanic Human Resources has awarded over \$12,000 to well deserve teachers that have won these awards. The winner received a \$1,000 cash award, and \$500 was given to the school. The two second place winners received a \$500 cash award each, and \$200 was given to each school.

Laura Corzo – Hispanic Teacher of the Year



Laura is a teacher at Elbridge Gale Elementary School who teaches K-5 ESOL and 4th grade regular and gifted Dual Language. She is a member of the Palm Beach County TESOL, the Get Caught in Reading National Association, the Foreign Language Association, the International Reading Association and numerous other regional and national organizations. Laura has developed and received grants from the Education Foundation, Target, PEN of Florida for a reading at home program titled “Mrs. Corzo’s Suitcase” which gives students additional literacy support by engaging them in at home reading strategies. In addition to this program, Laura has developed and received grants from Citibank Success Fund Grant and the Education Foundation for other literacy programs as well. She is a volunteer for the Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition, a coordinator for Cell Phones for Soldiers, and has received recognitions and honors from The Palm Beach Post, Indian Pines Elementary, The Sunshine State TESOL to name a few.



Alexandra Blanco – 2nd place winner



Alexandra is from Loxahatchee Groves Elementary School where she is a Pre K ESE Behavior Focus teacher and part of the ASD Unit. She is currently an active member of the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Classroom Teacher Association and the Employee Building Council at Loxahatchee Groves. She calls her classroom setting highly structured, with planned disruptions, adding that this method is not over stimulating to the students, while still showcasing their individual work. She serves as a lay counselor, assisting parents of children suffering from behavioral difficulties, such as ADHD, learning disabilities, or those experiencing life altering problems in school or at home. She helps the parents establish routines that will assist the children in coping and managing their behavior. She is a former Dwyer Award Nominee, holds a Master of Science in Psychology and has been her school's Hispanic Teacher of the Year for the past two years.

Natasha Araos – 2nd place winner



Natasha Araos is from Chile and teaches at West Gate Elementary School. In conjunction with the Norton Museum of Art, Natasha has developed an Arts integration program which exposes her students to arts and culture at an early age and integrates them into the Next Generation Standards. Additionally, she created a component for her school's Reading Counts Program that monitors student's reading strategies and improves their reading ability. On a regular basis she organizes a Literacy Enrichment Night where students and their families obtain literacy tools and strategies to develop both English and their native language. She also holds her National Board Certification and a Master's of Science Degree. Mrs. Araos is a member of the National Education Association and the International Reading Association. During her free time she provides free tutoring to children in need and organizes school based events, fundraisers and community charities.

Nominees

Alejandro Aponte – Highland Elementary
Alonso Torres – Eagles Landings Middle
Allyson Luna – New Horizons Elementary
Angela Gonzalez – South Grade Elementary
Christina Cox – Coral Reef Elementary
Daisy Lord – Crosspointe Elementary
Diana Sardina – Forest Hill High
Edimer Ortiz – Jupiter Elementary
Fe Zamora – West Boca High
Gladys Bacuylima – Indian Pines Elementary
Gladys Moseley – Royal Palm Beach Elementary
Isabel Parrado – Okeeheelee Middle
James Rodriguez – Atlantic High
Jeannette Alfaro – Woodlands Middle
Kim Mercurio – Binks Forest Elementary
Lissette Dagnan – Freedom Shores Elementary
Lizamary Molina – Allamanda Elementary
Miriela Ojito – Greenacres Elementary
Norma Leal – A.W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts
Nesty Nuñez – Cholee Lake Elementary
Regina Levy – Boca Raton Community High
Rosa Leal – Palm Beach Lakes High
Sandra Giraldo – Sandpiper Shores Elementary