



The Heart in Hand

el corazon en la mano

mayo de 2024

Hermandad's Annual Herencia Musical Held on Sunday, December 3, 2023

Hermandad again celebrated the Christmas season with "Herencia Musical a Puerto Rican Christmas music celebration." Our performers included Catherine Fries-Sierra (Vocals and Narration), Orlando Cotto (Percussion and Vocals), Luis Rivera (Vocals), Ernesto Rivera (Percussion), and Santiago (Tito) Padilla (Keyboard and Vocals).

The audience remained spirited with many playing their own maracas and other instruments along with the group.



L-R: Luis Rivera, Catherine Fries-Sierra, Ernesto Rivera, Orlando Cotto, and Santiago (Tito) Padilla.

Hermandad Partners with Corporación Milagros del Amor (CorMA) to Host Three Kings Day Lunch.

January 2024



Working with Corporación Milagros del Amor (CorMA), Hermandad underwrote the cost of a lunch for the homeless and CorMA clients. The lunch was held at Primera Iglesia Bautista de Caguas. Hermandad president, John Knight, served as one of the Three Kings presenting presents to children attending the lunch.

From left to right: the singers: Cynthia López; Rvd. Adlin Quiles; Carlos Acevedo on the guitar; and José Luis Torres on the congas.

From left to right: Gladys Rodríguez, John Knight, Orlando Pontón and Rubén Ramírez



Corporación Milagros del Amor (CorMA) Hosted Hermandad's Scholarship Awards Ceremony on January 19, 2024



L-R Patricia Cordero Flecha, Emibet Rios Roldán, and Arianna M. Naverrete Rivera.

On Friday, January 19, 2024, Hermandad's Jack and Eunice Knight Memorial Fund Scholarship Award Presentation was again held at Corporación Milagros del Amor (CorMA).

Hermandad presented awards to three students who demonstrated exemplary efforts in leadership and service. Through a series of weighted criteria, applicants were evaluated by our scholarship committee on their experience, extent of service and evidence of leadership, their thoroughness in presenting their materials and submitting all the materials by the designated date and time.

Our three 2024 recipients were Emibet Rios Roldán (First Place - \$1,500), Patricia Cordero Flecha (Second Place - \$1,000), and Arianna M. Naverrete Rivera (Third Place - \$700). All three awardees are members of the National Honor Society.

Emibet discussed a family tradition called "La Promise de Reyes" where they went into the community on Three Kings Day distributing "necessities." From her perspective *La Promise*

de Reyes was "not just a tradition" but "a living testament to the potential we have to create a community founded on love, understanding, and selflessness." Emibet's additional leadership endeavors included leading youth during Summer Bible School where she recognized the importance of "patience and tolerance." She also served as Chem Club president and led activities in and outside of school and was recognized as Student of the Year by the Congress of the Private Education Association of Puerto Rico. She engaged in technology events outside her school.

Patricia has also engaged in a lifetime of service. Her ongoing volunteer community work continued into a second year at a residence for children ages 6 to 12 who have been removed from their homes due to child abuse. Patricia wrote in her essay about gratitude for a new understanding related to poverty and how to serve as a more effective volunteer. Her modeling has led her family to volunteer as a tutor family. Patricia has enrolled in course work at the university level.

Arianna has been a scout for 13 years. She is a talented musician singing and playing a variety of musical instruments. She reported on three impactful girl scout related projects of collecting dog food for the animal shelter, renovation and conditioning of her school band room, and acquiring donations of new instruments for the music program in her school with the assistance of a music store and the Fundación Banco Popular. Additionally, Arianna conducted three worship music workshops for children (1) at the biennial meeting of the American Baptist Churches/USA in San Juan in 2023, (2) a five day Bible summer camp in her church and (3) in a low income community. She was able to teach children about missionary work during Vacation Bible School in her church and was recommended for a leadership role this year.

Hernandad, INC Awards \$2,000 Grant to the National Federation of the Blind of Puerto Rico

During their January trip to Puerto Rico, Hernandad President, John Knight and Secretary, Jean Knight continued to engage with organizations helping Puerto Rican citizens. On Tuesday, January 23, 2024, Hernandad met in-person and virtually with members of the National Federation of the Blind of Puerto Rico (NFBPR) in Caguas, Puerto Rico. We awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,000 presenting a check to Ms. Aleyda Santos, President-NFBPR. A donation of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) was allocated to purchase canes, slates, and styluses, essential for the education of blind children in Puerto Rico. A second award of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) was given to establish scholarships that will allow two members of the NFPR to attend the national convention in Orlando, Florida July 3-8, 2024.

Past attendees of the national conference have reported this as “life changing.” National Federation of the Blind of Puerto representatives noted during the Tuesday, January 23 meeting, “This activity provides our members with the tools to develop and achieve the independence that every blind person and community needs and desires to achieve. By participating in the Annual Convention you will learn to visualize that blindness is only a characteristic (not a limitation), internalizing that when you lose your sense of sight you do not lose your vision in life itself.” “This gift serves as a seed to a relationship we hope to grow both in support and understanding of NFPR’s ongoing needs,” President Knight said.



Left-Right: Jean Knight, Secretary-Hernandad; John Knight, President-Hernandad; and Ms. Aleyda Santos, President-National Federation of the Blind of Puerto Rico. Photo by Gladys Rodriguez

Thursday, May 16, 2024, a Committee from the National Federation of the Blind of PR and a representative from Hermandad met to evaluate the essays submitted by four members from NFB of Puerto Rico to participate in the National Convention. Hermandad, INC is happy to award Barbara Linares Díaz and Christie Michelle Vega \$500 each to attend the National Convention.



Left: Christie loves technology and all the possibilities it offers for blind people. During the convention she wants to learn more about this and also help other colleagues who need help with English interpretation.

Below: Barbara is a young mother who works as a freelance consultant for a well-known beauty brand. She is excited as this trip will be her first travel experience outside of Puerto Rico. During the convention she wants to share with other blind parents with a goal of organizing a blind parents group in Puerto Rico.



Visit to Habitat for Humanity's San Juan Office

On Thursday, February 1, 2024, Hermandad president, John Knight and Hermandad secretary, Jean Knight visited the offices of Habitat for Humanity in San Juan. Hermandad gave a \$1,000 check designated for Habitat for Humanity's work in Puerto Rico. Over the last five years, Habitat for Humanity International, along with a corporate partnership, has provided funds for legal work to help Puerto Rican homeowners obtain the needed paperwork proving home ownership allowing them to obtain FEMA grants. Since starting the program, Habitat for Humanity has helped over 618 households.



L-R: Amanda Silva, Jean Knight, John Knight, and Gionira Blanco

During their Thursday meeting, Jean and John met with Gionira Blanco, Resource Development Manager and Amanda Silva, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Puerto Rico to learn more about the work they're doing on the island.

Hermandad's Film Fundraiser

On Sunday, April 14, Hermandad hosted a film event at Greenbelt Cinema.

Hermandad's Film Shorts fundraiser was held on Sunday, April 14, 2024. Like the event presentation held in Caguas, Puerto Rico, our event was titled Cine con Corazón (Cinema with Heart) at Greenbelt Cinema in Greenbelt, Maryland. Seven film shorts from Puerto Rico, Spain and Iran were presented. Cathy Fries-Sierra served as the master of ceremonies for the event. Films included: 'Hasta Que La Cela Nos Separe,' 'La Boda,' 'The Fish and I,' 'La Capa Azul,' 'Medio Minuto,' 'La Foto de Papa,' and 'Nos Vamos Pa' Paris.' These films were designated by a panel in Puerto Rico who chose from the over 5,043 titles from the non profit Puerto Rico Film Foundation, Cinefiesta. They were founded in 2002. We extend a special thanks to Luis Cruz from the foundation for granting Hermandad the rights to show these films. Hermandad wishes to thank Cathy and Marta Padilla for volunteering at this event.



Above: Marta Padilla volunteered at Hermandad's Greenbelt Cinema event.

Left: John and Jean

A Celebration of Spring Piano and Voice Recital Held on Sunday, May 5, 2024



L-R Kathleen Hackett, David Garcia, Mary Stanton, John Knight, and Jean Knight

On Sunday, May 5, 2024, Hermandad presented *A celebration of Spring Piano and Voice Recital* fundraiser at the Divinity Lutheran Church in Towson, Maryland.

Our event featured David Garcia, piano, Kathleen Hackett, Vocalist, and Mary Stanton, accompanist for Kathleen Hackett. Hermandad stands grateful to each of these musicians who shared their extensive talents for this fundraiser.

Our program began with David Garcia who started playing the piano at age 11. From the beginning of his studies, David received outstanding grades in piano exams and continued

his studies at the Peabody Preparatory. His piano teacher, Amy Killian, was present for the concert. He has received Adult Achievement Awards from the Peabody Preparatory multiple times. David performs in the Adult Continuing Education Recitals at Peabody. In 2019, David was a second-place winner in the American Protégé Competition of Romantic Music and performed at Carnegie Hall. David's program included works by Mozart, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, Alberto Ginastera, Johann Sebastian Bach and Claude Debussy.

Kathleen Hackett is a first year student at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, in the studio of Ah Young Hong. She has performed in live theater since the age of 6, and has a passion for uplifting people through the arts. She presented songs in Italian, French and German.

Mary Stanton is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Miss Stanton has concertized on five continents as piano soloist, accompanist and chamber musician, appearing frequently with orchestra and on radio and television. Miss Stanton has served on the piano faculties of the Hartt College of Music in Connecticut, Miami University of Ohio, and Northwestern University in Chicago. She has conducted extended Piano Master Classes in Israel, Indonesia and Brazil. After teaching Religion at Mount de Sales Academy in Catonsville, Maryland, for twenty-two years, Miss Stanton currently serves as Organist and Music Director at St. Clare Catholic Church, in Essex, and as part of the Accompanying staff at Peabody Preparatory School.

Special Thank You's are extended to - Tito and Marta Padilla for their help with taking our spring recital beyond an idea; Javi Padilla for all his web expertise and assistance and sponsorship of all our events; Warren and Rose Knight for their faithful sponsorships of all our events; Divinity Lutheran Church for providing the space for our recital; and Jean Knight for all her hard work (much of it behind the scenes). Jean embodies the soul of Hermandad.

A recording of the concert is available to all who contributed and/or attended our concert through the end of May. If you missed the concert, you may donate any amount and watch a recording. Go to our website www.jkhermandadpr.org and click Donate. -Thank you.

Hermandad Draws from Memorial Fund and Obtains a Grant for Support to Colegio Bautista de Caguas Library

Hermandad continued their ongoing support of the library at Colegio Bautista de Caguas. We were touched by the needs when first visiting the library in August 2022. As a result of Hurricane Maria and mold damage during the pandemic, the library had lost around 40% of their materials. We stand pleased to be one of those partnering with them in support of their work.



Cynthia Román Rivera

At the close of 2023, Hermandad sent an order of books and other materials to the library from the Jack and Eunice Knight Memorial Fund dedicated to the youth of Puerto Rico.

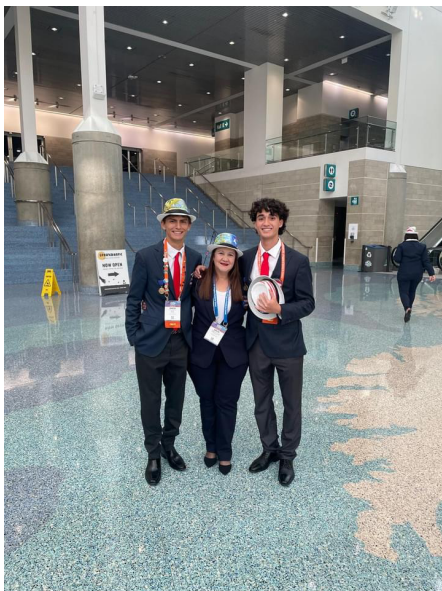
In February 2024, Hermandad received a \$1,500 grant from the Baltimore Rotary Club allowing us to purchase a Logitech - ERGO K860 Ergonomic Full-size Wireless Keyboard, a Lenovo - IdeaCentre Mini Desktop - Intel Core i7-13700H - 16GB Memory, a LG - 24" IPS LED FHD 75Hz FreeSync Monitor (HDMI, VGA), and an additional shipment of books and other materials.

Hermandad Supports Two Students Representing Puerto Rico at the International Science Fair in Los Angeles

Hermandad sent a check in the amount of \$1,000 in support of their efforts.

In the words of school chaplain Lilybeth Bosch, "We make history with the achievement of our students Martín Stella and Patrick Peña by winning 1st place in the finals of the National Science Fair. With their work, Ecofriendly Fabric: Use of Algae and Seagrass in Paper Production (Environmental Engineering), they will represent Puerto Rico 🇵🇷 at the International Science Fair held in Los Angeles, California from May 11 to 17."

In California, they received the Sigma XI Scientific Research Honor Society Award.



Picture on the right:

L-R: Patrick Peña and Martin Stella

Picture on the left is in California:

L-R: Martin, Ms. Rivera (Teacher), and Patrick

