



The Heart in Hand

el corazon en la mano

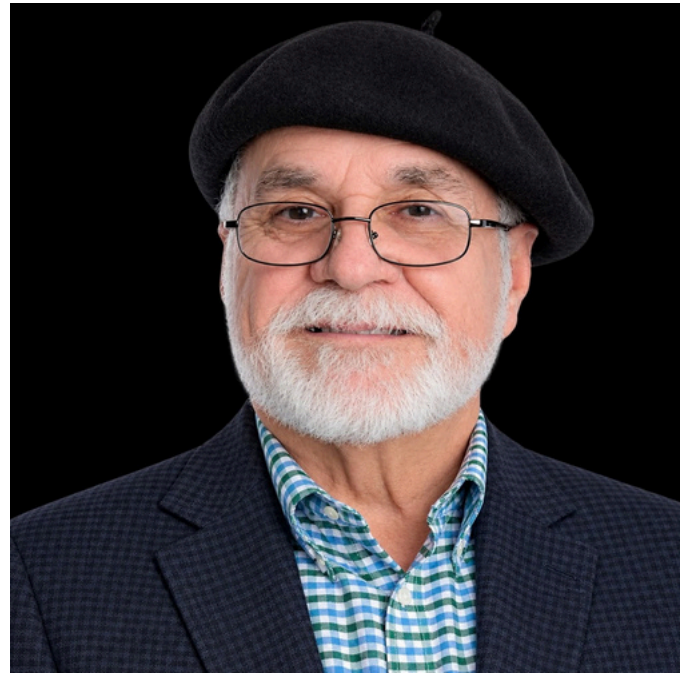
Memorial Gift to Corporación Milagros del Amor for Rvdo. Dr. César R. Maurás Torres

While Jean and I traveled on our August vacation, we heard the sad news of the passing of Rvdo. Dr. César R. Maurás Torres. We watched the evening memorial service over the internet before returning home.

César's vision created the space for Hermandad's birth. We made our Caguas connection because of his role in starting Corporación Milagros del Amor (CorMA) almost thirty years ago. After Hurricane Maria, we searched for a place we could help. CorMA was suggested and the connection was made, thanks to César's insight many years before. Over Hermandad's first seven years of existence, César had become a great friend.

He provided us with the use of his home in Ceiba, Puerto Rico the first year of our extended stays on the island. We always looked forward to seeing César's warm smile and "God bless you" greetings during each visit.

In recognition of César's loving spirit, Hermandad gave a gift of \$500 to Corporación Milagros del Amor in his memory. Jean and I always feel moved after each visit. Volunteering and helping at CorMA, we have seen the love and dedication that César embodied and modeled. We will miss him and know that his spirit will still live there.



Rvdo. Dr. César R. Maurás Torres

Habitat for Humanity of Puerto Rico Gift

In July, Hermandad awarded a gift of \$1,000 to the Habitat for Humanity of Puerto Rico Affiliate. During their trips, Jean and John Knight have enjoyed the privilege of seeing Habitat's work on the island and a recent Caguas project in the before and after stages. Puerto Rican residents experience greater challenges for housing as many from other areas of the world seek property in a tropical setting.

We celebrate the work of Habitat for Humanity of Puerto Rico engaging in innovative techniques and processes to bring affordable housing to residents on the island.

Fundación Luis Salazar Géigel Gifts

In July Hermandad donated \$1,000 to Fundación Luis Salazar Géigel to assist with rehabilitation and family support costs for head trauma victims. Insurance coverage is a mere two weeks. Our plan is to stay engaged with the foundation Luis has created.

We set our objectives and goals for the remainder of the year. Hermandad is pleased to announce an anonymous donor who learned we earmarked \$5,000 for the Fundación Luis Salazar Géigel, provided the funds! We appreciate the generosity of all our donors who help us serve our calling. Thank you to all who support us.



Luis Salazar Géigel, President Fundación Luis Salazar Géigel. Luis speaks to a group and during a family support meeting.

Teacher Continuing Education Gift

Hermandad set a goal to support teacher continuing education at Colegio Bautista de Caguas. Thanks to a \$3,000 anonymous gift designated specifically for this cause our goal was met. We are very pleased we could include this need as part of our work for the people of Puerto Rico. Each donation large or small helps us carry forth our mission and vision that drives us forward.

School Supplies Gift

In July, Hermandad donated \$500 to Primera Iglesia de Bautista de Caguas to support their effort to provide backpacks and school supplies to school children throughout Caguas. Hermandad continues to look for new opportunities to improve the lives of all people. We thank the church for letting us join with them in their efforts to serve.

Below are images of some of the school supplies purchased.



More CorMA Gifts

Throughout the years, Hermandad has included Corporación Milagros del Amor as one of our targeted agencies for support. Again we set a goal for their support. In August we received a request from an anonymous donor, aware of our continued support for the ministry of CorMA, who gave a designated \$3,000 gift to support their good work that the staff and leadership do daily.

The Reverend John and Mrs. Jean Knight Endowment Fund for Puerto Rico has announced it will give an additional \$1,000 to Corporación Milagros del Amor before the end of the year. Hermandad's most recent funds are helping support CorMA's literacy program.

Corporación Milagros del Amor serves a vital role meeting the needs of many through support for those struggling with addictions, and providing assistance with housing and food insecurity, social workers, a literacy program, and a cancer support group. All stand as ministries that have changed lives for decades. The spirit and vision of Rvdo. Dr. César R. Maurás Torres and others lives and moves forward into the future through CorMA.



The CorMA literacy program serves as just one asset as they minister to their community.



Concrete Canoe Donation to University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

Hernandad again gave a donation for the Department of Civil Engineering & Surveying student concrete canoe project. Thanks to our generous donors we raised our donation to \$300 this year from the memorial fund for youth.

Established in 1852, the American Society of Civil Engineers is recognized as “the oldest and largest civil engineering association in the United States.” The University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez retains the largest chapter in Puerto Rico with a membership of over 200.

This annual event engages students in the process of designing and constructing every element of a concrete canoe. In this competition, engineering students draw from their classroom learning and their strengths in leadership and teamwork to mold and build professional development and a concrete canoe. The Mayagüez team has engaged in this activity for over 20 years maintaining a recognized level of excellence at a regional level placing well in competitions annually.

We celebrate the students innovation, creativity and work ethic. Hernandad again looks forward to seeing the development and result of the students’ efforts.



More for the Department of Civil Engineering & Surveying students Good Works

The Reverend John and Mrs. Jean Knight Endowment Fund for Puerto Rico has just announced that they will be donating \$500 to Hermandad with the designation that it go to The University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, the American Society of Civil Engineering chapter. The funds are designated for their fundraiser “Built for Better 5k” race. They are raising the funds designated for their project rehabbing a Habitat for Humanity of Puerto Rico home in Caguas, Puerto Rico. Hermandad is matching their gift with an additional \$500 and has sent a \$1,000 check.

The Reverend John and Mrs. Jean Knight Endowment Fund for Puerto Rico Fundraiser

On Saturday, October 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. The Reverend John and Mrs. Jean Knight Endowment Fund for Puerto Rico will have its first fundraiser. Join Joseph Bowens, pianist; Dannel Daley, bassist; and Jeremy Caesar, drummer for a jazz performance at Divinity Lutheran Church, 1220 Providence Rd., Towson, Maryland 21286. Their performance will be in The Great Room starting at 6:00 p.m. Beverages and lights snacks will be available.

Tickets are: \$25 each
Sponsorship: \$125
Corporate Sponsor: \$300

Get your tickets now by using the QR code or at the door.

Thanks to John Knight, Accordionist for processing the tickets for us at no cost to the endowment.

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Pianist Joseph Bowens trained at the Peabody Preparatory for classical/ jazz piano. As a composer and producer, he enjoys exploring and blending a wide range of genres, including gospel, jazz, classical, lo-fi, hip-hop, soul, and progressive rock. “My work reflects a passion for musical versatility, expressive storytelling, and pushing creative boundaries across styles.”



Dannel Daley is a seasoned bassist with more than 20 years of experience, bringing a deep sense of groove, musicality, and versatility to every performance. With a foundation in classical piano and music theory, Dannel combines technical musicianship with a strong ear. His playing has been shaped by years of performing across gospel, jazz, R&B, and contemporary music, with an approach centered on serving the song.



Drummer Jeremy Caesar started his musical journey in the "panyard." As a first generation Trinidadian American, he grew up with the steelpan as his primary instrument. Jeremy has traveled to the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa. He teaches private and public lessons and performs with ***Eclipse International Band*** and PanMasters ***Steel Orchestra***. We stand grateful Jeremy was available following news of drummer Sam Marshall's personal emergency.

Orlando Cotto Quartet



Jim Hannah



Jack Gussio



John Dahlman

December Fundraiser for Hermandad's Memorial Fund

Our December concert will feature Orlando Cotto's Quartet. Members include: Orlando Cotto, percussion; Jim Hannah, Drums; Jack Gussio, piano; and John Dahlman, bass. The program will include a variety of musical styles such as Cuban Danzón, Son, Cha-cha-chaá, original compositions and Christmas selections.

Raised in the traditions of Puerto Rican and Afro-Cuban music, Orlando Cotto began playing conga drums at five and has built a career as a marimbist and percussionist. He earned the Pro Arte Ferdman Grant for outstanding work during his percussion-performance bachelor's degree at Puerto Rico's Conservatory of Music.

Cotto later became the first marimbist to receive an Artist Diploma from the Peabody Conservatory of Music at Johns Hopkins University. That year, he also appeared with the Peabody Symphony Orchestra after winning the Yale Gordon Concerto Competition.

Praised by the San Juan Star as “an artist of musical sensitivity and accomplished technique,” Cotto combines classical training with a Latin American musical foundation. His recordings include *Caribeños*, *A Little Prayer*, *Wild Hands*, and *Landmark: Afro-Cuban Music for the Marimba*, featuring Michael Spiro and Juan Alamo. He has performed at PASIC (Percussive Arts Society International Convention), universities, and festivals throughout the United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Taiwan.

The Washington Post called him “an invaluable percussionist,” while Latin Beat magazine described his conga playing as “a percussive pillar.” Cotto performed in more than 100 productions of Lin-Manuel Miranda’s “*In the Heights*” and appeared on PBS’s Hispanic Heritage Special. He was the lead conguero of the Rumba Club, one of the East Coast’s popular Latin Jazz ensembles and has performed at major jazz venues in the U.S. Orlando has collaborated with Chita Rivera, Gary Nuñez, Angel “Cachete” Maldonado, Dave Samuels, Darin Atwater, Andy Gonzalez, Giovanni Hidalgo, Liam Teague, Robert Chappell, Edwin Colón Zayas, Victor Mendoza.

Endorsed by Yamaha, Latin Percussion, Sabian, Croaker Percussion, and D’Addario Percussion, Cotto has taught at universities and colleges. He is now an Elite Instructor at Music & Arts in Ellicott City, Maryland. Many of his students have gone on to build successful careers as professional performers and music educators.

Jim Hannah has been deeply involved with Latin and jazz music since the early 70’s. After studying marimba with Gordon Stout and classical percussion with the late Nora Davenport, he went to NYC to study congas with Joe ‘Papo’ Daddiego. Jim has worked and jammed or studied with many great musicians including Tito Puente, Giovanni Hidalgo, Andy Gonzalez, Los Munequitos de Matanzas, Nestor Torres, Jon Faddis, Doc Cheatum, Cat Anderson, Roberto Borrell, and Miles Davis’s sidemen Gary Bartz and Gary Thomas. He continues collaborations with many in the Baltimore, Washington DC and South Jersey regions.

Jack Gussio has been playing piano/keyboards professionally since 1975. His studies include performance program at Berklee College of Music, Third stream music (with New England Conservatory’s Ran Blake and Greg Silberman in Boston MA.), and private lessons with renowned teacher Dr. Asher Zlotnick, studying everything from classical to traditional and modern jazz. Jack has worked as musical director and performer in every situation from solo piano to big band, fusion, jazz, Latin Jazz and pop. His work also includes composition, arranging, studio work, teaching, timbales, traps, percussion, and vocals. Jack’s favorite saying is “I’ll be a student all my life.”

John Dahlman has been a bassist in the greater Baltimore/Washington area since the late 70s. He has lived, performed, and taught in a number of cities and countries including New York, Nashville, Jamaica, Scotland, and Washington, D.C. He now lives outside Baltimore, MD. John can be found performing all through the Mid-Atlantic region with a wide variety of groups or as a solo artist.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 6, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. at Divinity Lutheran Church, 1220 Providence Rd., Towson, Maryland 21286. All proceeds go to Hermandad's Jack and Eunice Knight Memorial fund for Puerto Rican youth.

Looking toward the Future

A Mission Trip to Puerto Rico in 2028 by The Reverend John and Mrs. Jean Knight Endowment Fund of Puerto Rico

Soon after Jean and I started the Endowment Fund for Puerto Rico, I had some conversations with staff both at the American Baptist Foundation and the American Baptist Home Mission Society concerning a summer mission trip to Puerto Rico in 2028.

Planning an endeavor of this type will require work and coordination. We have just under two years before such an event will take place. As we gain greater insight into immediate and lingering needs, we will alert everyone who follows the work of Hermandad. The endowment seeks to engage anyone who supports our mission, work and vision. I hope this can serve as an ecumenical endeavor allowing all willing to journey to the island to partner with us.

Thank you to all who help Hermandad do the vital work for the people of Puerto Rico. We still have more to do.

Come journey with us!