



Olga Hugelmeyer
Superintendent of Schools

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Principal

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Dear Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 Community,

The Governor's Educator of the Year Program highlights educational innovation, student achievement, exemplary teaching, and important services outside the classroom environment that lead to student success. This celebratory program recognizes our state's best teachers and educational services professionals who will be recognized at the Union County Office of Education.

We are proud to announce that the 2018 Governor's Teacher of the Year for Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 was awarded to Ms. Julissa Urena. Ms. Julissa Urena was born and raised in Elizabeth, New Jersey and graduated Kean University with a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education in 2009. She joined Elizabeth Public Schools in 2012 as a first grade teacher and has demonstrated strong dedication and commitment throughout the years. Ms. Urena has played a significant role in keeping the school and community connected by organizing the school's PTO and many different events at which students and parents come together to engage in the school learning experience. In addition, Ms. Urena has been a part of many committees here at School 28 including the National School of Character Award and the Green Flag School recognition. In 2017, Ms. Urena decided to pursue a Master's degree in School Counseling to enhance her ability of helping students achieve self-efficacy to become leaders in the near future.

This year's Educational Service Provider of the year for Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 was awarded to Ms. Wilma Helm. Ms. Helm was born in Jersey City and raised in Belleville, New Jersey. Ms. Helm was the proud recipient of the Martin Luther King Scholarship Award at Seton Hall University, graduating magna cum laude in 1981. After graduation, Ms. Helm put her career dreams on hold to begin her family in Honolulu, Hawaii. Upon returning to N.J., she returned to school at Kean University to earn an MA in Bilingual Bicultural Educations. She currently holds education certificates in Elementary Education, Bilingual, Bicultural Education ESL, Nursery School, and Student Personnel Services. After almost 28 years of service, Ms. Helm prides herself in empowering the students and families of Elizabeth Public schools to overcome obstacles and take advantage of the educational opportunities the district provides for them. Ms. Helm takes great pride in her two daughters who have followed her example and have become school counselors in other school districts.

Please join us in celebrating these two amazing professionals for the work they have done, and continue to do, for our school community and district.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Rodriguez-Salcedo

Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28