



Media Contacts:

Rosalina Stober, HBIF
407.428.5872
RStober@hbifflorida.org

Diana Bolivar, HCCMO
407.428.5870
DBolivar@hispanicchamber.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HISPANIC PROFESSIONALS, BUSINESS OWNERS AND SUPPORTERS RECOGNIZED AT
THE 15TH ANNUAL DON QUIJOTE AWARDS**

Awards Honor Seven Winners for Excellence in the Hispanic Business Community

ORLANDO, FL (December 5, 2012) — The Hispanic Business Initiative Fund of Florida, Inc. (HBIF) and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando (HCCMO) announced the winners of the 15th Annual Don Quijote Awards at a gala held on Saturday night. The gala took place at the Epcot World Showplace Pavilion.

Each year, the Don Quijote Awards recognize business excellence and outstanding professionalism in Central Florida's Hispanic community.

"The Don Quijote Award winners truly deserve the recognition for demonstrating throughout their careers and community involvement outstanding leadership, entrepreneurship and perseverance to realize their goals," said HBIF President & CEO Augusto Sanabria. "Our Hispanic community, their industries and our Central Florida community at large are fortunate to benefit from their work and the legacies they are leaving."

HCCMO President Ramon Ojeda added, "We are humbled by the community's support of this event. Our generous sponsors, guests and supporters made the 15th annual Don Quijote Awards a huge success, which is vital for the sustainable operation of both the Hispanic Chamber and HBIF. It was an excellent opportunity for our community to gather and recognize talented professionals and entrepreneurs among us."

Lizette Valarino was named the Lifetime Achievement Award winner for her impact on the Hispanic community in Central Florida. Among her many accomplishments, Valarino managed community outreach as a liaison to the Hispanic Community for Orange County's Administration for 12 years during the terms of Mayors Mel Martinez and Richard Crotty. She also organized the County's first Translation Team, ensuring better communication to all citizens. In 2000, Valarino started the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund of Metro Orlando. Since its inception, the scholarship has been awarded to 195 Hispanic students. Today, Valarino continues her service as the Fund's volunteer Executive Director.

A special, first-time award was announced and presented during the 2012 gala: the Luminary Award, created to celebrate the courage, success and determination of a Hispanic individual at a global level, from outside Central Florida, whose significant contributions in various fields make the world a better place to live. The inaugural Don Quijote Luminary Award was presented to Juan Luis Guerra—a renowned merengue and bachata singer and winner of fifteen Latin Grammy Awards, two Grammy Awards, and two Billboard Music Awards—in recognition of the awareness his music raises about social issues and Christian values, as well as his charitable outreach to the disadvantaged families in his native Dominican Republic who desperately need medical assistance.

Winners were also named in five traditional categories. This year, the Don Quijote Awards selection committee received more than 150 nominations. Only 15 finalists were selected for the final round and among those, five winners were selected. The 15th Annual Don Quijote Awards winners are:

- **Hispanic Business of the Year – 5 Years or Less:** CCH Marketing and Events, Inc.
Owner: Cristina Calvet-Harrold
- **Hispanic Business of the Year – More Than 5 Years:** Conpilog
Owners: Luis Pinzon, John Garcia and Luis Londoño
- **Professional of the Year:** Lourdes Quintana, Director, Central Florida Early Steps and Manager for the Developmental Center for Infants and Children, Orlando Health
- **Hispanic Community Champion:** Tony Jenkins, Market President - Central and Northwest Florida for Florida Blue
- **Excellence Award:** Melissa Martinez Hernandez, Director of Constituent Services for the Office of U.S. Senator Marco Rubio

The Don Quijote Awards serve three strategic objectives: to recognize top Hispanic entrepreneurs, professionals and leaders of our community; to be the premier business recognition event for the Hispanic community of Central Florida; and to serve as an important fundraiser for HBIF and HCCMO.

The Don Quijote Awards are made possible thanks to the support of the Central Florida business community. The event sponsors include **Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, Bright House Networks Business Solutions, Darden, Florida Blue, Florida Hospital, Orlando Magic, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, CenturyLink, Florida Technical College, National University College, Orlando Health, Chase, AT&T, JetBlue, Lockheed Martin, Tupperware Brands, Universal Orlando, UCF and State Farm**, among others.

For more information on the Don Quijote Awards, please visit www.donquijoteawards.com.

About the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide leadership and support the economic development of the Hispanic business community of Metro Orlando. For more information about the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, please visit www.HispanicChamber.net or call 407-428-5870.

About the Hispanic Business Initiative Fund of Florida, Inc.

The Hispanic Business Initiative Fund of Florida (HBIF) is the leading Hispanic economic development nonprofit organization specializing in providing bilingual assistance to Hispanic entrepreneurs trying to establish or expand their business in the State of Florida. For more than 21 years, HBIF has promoted the Hispanic entrepreneur, provided programs and created community partnerships to enhance the economic development of the Hispanic business community. For more information, visit <http://www.hbiflorida.org> or call 407-428-5872.

###