

Nation's First Adult-Focused Charter School, Based in Washington, D.C., Earns National Award for Exceptional Immigrant Integration Initiatives

WASHINGTON – The Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy announced today that [Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School](#), based in the nation's capital, is one of four recipients of its 2013 *E Pluribus Unum* Prizes for exceptional immigrant integration initiatives. The national award honors the Carlos Rosario School for its extraordinary efforts in helping more than 60,000 adult students who are immigrants or refugees to learn English, obtain educational degrees and workforce certifications that allow them to start jobs and climb career ladders, and become U.S. citizens, voters and home owners.

Established in 1970 as a small grassroots organization and later evolving to a charter model, the Carlos Rosario School serves more than 3,000 adult students annually via daytime and evening classes. The school grew from its roots teaching English to offer adult basic education and workforce training programs in high-demand careers coupled with comprehensive supportive services that represent a nationally recognized model for improving educational and professional outcomes for adult learners, particularly those with an immigrant background.

The school, which recently opened a new workforce development campus in D.C with professional kitchens and technology labs, has job training programs in culinary arts, health care and IT support — fields it identified as high-demand and with the potential for providing family-sustaining wages and career mobility. English language and literacy instruction is embedded in the Carlos Rosario model, which focuses on a comprehensive approach to address the social, economic and linguistic integration of its immigrant students via a combination of education and life skills programs and connection to support services such as psychosocial and financial counseling, medical referrals, tax preparation help and immigration advice.

The [E Pluribus Unum Prizes](#) program, established in 2008 by MPI's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy with generous support from the [J.M. Kaplan Fund](#), seeks to encourage the adoption of effective integration practices and inspire others to take on the important work of integrating immigrants and their children so they can join the mainstream of U.S. society.

The 2013 *E Pluribus Unum* Prizes winners will be honored tonight at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., with a keynote address by U.S. Congressman Luis Guterrez, author of the recent *Still Dreaming: My Journey from the Barrio to Capitol Hill*. The national award is accompanied by a \$50,000 prize.

“The success of U.S. immigration policy ultimately turns on the effectiveness of immigrant integration, and there remains too little focus by policymakers, community leaders and the broader public on the tremendously important integration work that takes place across the nation, whether by non-profits, schools, government agencies, faith-based organizations, employers and others,” said Margie McHugh, co-director of the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. “As Congress

debates reform of the U.S. immigration system, scaling effective immigrant integration services such as those provided by Carlos Rosario is essential to assure the success of not only reform measures but our immigration system as a whole.”

Said MPI Senior Vice President Michael Fix, who also co-directs the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy: “Carlos Rosario’s cutting-edge programming has allowed tens of thousands of immigrants to pursue the American Dream and go on to success as bankers, pharmacists, chefs and business owners. Not content to rest on its early successes and strong performance on accountability measures, the school has continued to improve its instructional model and expand innovative training for new high-demand jobs in the regional economy.”

Sonia Gutierrez, who recently celebrated her 40th year leading the school she founded, welcomed receipt of the prize. “As we seek to improve and build upon our efforts locally, we also are focused on replicating our model not only in the U.S. but also internationally, and this award validates our vision and efforts to help immigrants fulfill their dreams,” Ms. Gutierrez said.

The other 2013 winners of the \$50,000 *E Pluribus Unum* Prize are the **Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition** (MIRA), whose Integration Institute has become a national model for bringing together stakeholders from government, immigrant and refugee communities and the private and non-profit sectors to improve integration research, policy analysis, advocacy and system capacity; and **Neighborhood Development Center**, a St. Paul, MN community development organization that connects African-American, Latino, African immigrant, and other leaders to revitalize inner-city neighborhoods. The Prizes program’s 2013 Corporate Leadership Award goes to **Kaiser Permanente** for its dedication to providing culturally competent health care and expanding such efforts in the health care industry more broadly.

Winner highlights can be found at www.integrationawards.org. For more information or to set up interviews, contact Michelle Mittelstadt at 202-266-1910, mmittelstadt@migrationpolicy.org.

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The **Migration Policy Institute** is an independent, non-partisan think tank in Washington, D.C. dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. MPI provides analysis, development and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national and international levels. For more, visit www.migrationpolicy.org.

MPI’s **National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy** is a crossroads for elected officials, researchers, state and local agency managers, grassroots leaders and activists, local service providers and others who seek to understand and respond to the challenges and opportunities today’s high rates of immigration create in local communities. For more on the center’s work, visit www.migrationpolicy.org/integration.