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HITN Honors Puerto Rican Heritage at El Centro

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Brooklyn, November 17, 2025 - HITN, the leading Spanish-language public media network in the United States, continued its acclaimed *Puerto Rican Heritage Series* with a celebration at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro) at Hunter College.

On Friday, November 14, community leaders, elected officials, and members of the Puerto Rican and broader Hispanic communities gathered to honor five extraordinary figures whose leadership, creativity, and service have transformed lives and uplifted generations: Sonia Manzano, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, Marta Moreno Vega, Hipólito ‘Paul’ Roldán, and, posthumously, Roberto Clemente.

“Puerto Ricans continue to play a vital role in shaping this nation, contributing in every manner possible,” said **Michael D. Nieves, President and CEO of HITN**. “This year, we celebrate those pioneers, visionaries who opened doors and made a difference in education, business, the arts, science, sports, and the fight for justice. Their stories of *pura cepa* and diaspora speak to future generations about our Puerto Rican resilience and strength.”

The honorees represent a wide spectrum of Puerto Rican excellence:

- **Sonia Manzano** – Iconic actress and writer best known as ‘Maria’ on *Sesame Street*, and creator of *Alma’s Way*, whose storytelling has inspired children and advanced Latino representation in media.
- **Félix V. Matos Rodríguez** – A groundbreaking academic leader, he became the first Puerto Rican and person of color to serve as Chancellor of CUNY, championing access, equity, and student success.
- **Marta Moreno Vega** – The second Director of El Museo del Barrio, and Founder of the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute; she has spent decades preserving and celebrating Afro-Latino heritage worldwide.
- **Hipólito ‘Paul’ Roldán** – A decorated Vietnam Veteran, MacArthur Fellow and visionary community developer whose work reshaped Chicago’s housing landscape with thousands of affordable homes.
- **Roberto Clemente Walker** – The first Hispanic inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, achieving 3000 hits and unrepentant spokesperson for Latino players and hero to youth, his humanitarian selflessness continues to inspire new generations.



The program premiered five short documentaries chronicling each honoree's remarkable journey, followed by the presentation of commemorative plaques, including one bestowed on the late Roberto Clemente.

Now in its fourth year, the Emmy Award–winning ***Puerto Rican Heritage Series*** has become a cornerstone of **HITN**'s November programming, spotlighting the rich legacy of Puerto Ricans in American history. Through coverage with powerful storytelling, **HITN** ensures these legacies of courage, vision, and tradition endure for generations to come.

The complete series and short films are streaming now on HITN's digital platforms and the [Puerto Rican Heritage](#) website.

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About HITN

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