

Vida Award acceptance remarks
Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PAHO
Kennedy Center, Jan. 28, 2013

Thanks Ms. Fernandez for your kind words and to all of you for making this a truly special evening. This is an honor that I will treasure forever. In the web of life many streams converge today.

First, this prestigious National Alliance for Hispanic Health celebrates 40 years of tireless and fertile advocacy and action for improving the health and well-being of millions of Hispanics as PAHO commemorates 110 years of efforts and achievements in public health in the Americas.

Second, both organizations share the dream and activism for Health for All and universal health care with quality for all. This makes us natural partners and allies in the battles for equity in public health.

Third, I am completing almost three decades of international public health career, and in 3 days I will be passing the leadership of PAHO to Dr. Carissa Etienne. The VIDA award and this ceremony mean a lot as I close this cycle. Nevertheless, I will continue defending our people's right to health and will always be ready to support those who represent their interest and aspirations for a just, inclusive and peaceful world without stigma or discrimination.

All of us deeply care about our fellow human beings, especially those most in need. We have taken our individual commitment to bear fruit by serving in high quality organizations. The National Alliance for Hispanic Health is a unique U.S.A.-focused NGO in official relations with PAHO. This is much owed to the outstanding leadership of Jane Delgado and the Board of Directors, and grounded on our common vision and values and on the contributions of our talented and committed teams. Thank you all!