



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Friday, August 11, 2023
Contact: Mario M. Carrera
Email: mario.carrera@cllaro.org
Cell Phone: (303) 918-1996

**Mayor Michael Johnston to Keynote
the CLLARO 28th Annual Bernie Valdez Awards
at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts' Seawall Ballroom**

Mayor Michael Johnston to keynote the Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy & Research Organization (CLLARO) 28th annual Bernie Valdez Awards at the Seawall Ballroom inside the Denver Center for the Performing Arts on September 21st, 2023. Doors open at 7am and the breakfast program will begin at 8am.

"We are delighted to have Mayor Johnston join CLLARO during our Bernie Valdez Awards and be a part of celebrating the contributions of so many in the Latino community for the betterment of Colorado," said Mario M. Carrera, CLLARO's President and CEO.

The Bernie Valdez Awards, which serve as CLLARO's hallmark annual fundraiser, honor Latino community leaders and organizations who exemplify CLLARO's mission of empowering Colorado Latinos through leadership development, advocacy, public policy, and research. We are pleased to announce the six individuals and one organization which will be recognized for their outstanding commitment to Colorado's Latino community through 2023.

The Federico Peña Lifetime Achievement Award:

Debbie Ortega, recent Mayoral Candidate and former Denver City Councilwoman .

The Alianza Award: Adams County's **Cultivando** for exceptional work in the Latino community.

The Roger Cisneros Public Policy Award: **State Senator Julie Gonzalez**.

The Polly Baca Social Justice Award:

Denise Maes, Regional Director of the US General Administrative Services office.

The Lena Archuleta Education Award:

Dr. Luis Torres, retired key MSU Denver Administrator that led the Hispanic Serving Institution initiative.

The Sheldon and Jan Steinhauser Community Service Award:

Juanita Martinez-Rocha, Weld County longtime community advocate .

The Distinguished Capitol Fellow Award: **Andrea Colmenero**, Emerson Collective in Washington DC.

For ticket or table purchases, please visit <https://bebidz.me/tickets/cllaro/tix/>. Tickets start at \$100. If you would like to donate in lieu of attending the event, please visit <https://www.coloradogives.org/story/Cllaro2020>. CLLARO thanks you for your support of its mission and of Colorado's Latino community.

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The Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy & Research Organization (CLLARO), formerly known as LARASA, is a non-profit organization established in 1964. CLLARO's mission is to empower Latinos through leadership development, advocacy, and policy research to strengthen Colorado. CLLARO's vision for the future is a State of Colorado where Latinos achieve their fullest potential.

<http://www.cllaro.org>