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Agenda

Welcome
Hispanic in Technology - Government Advisor of the Year
Promising Engineer Award
Manager of the Year
Innovator Award
Community Service Award
Diversity Award
Educator of the Year - Higher Education
Young Investigator Award
Hispanic ERG of the Year

Thank you to all of the volunteers who devoted their time and energy to review the award submissions!
Congratulations Esther!
SHPE’s 2021 Diversity Award Recipient

Esther Ledesma Pumarol, MBA, MS
Global Portfolio Manager and
Chair of Hispanic Latino Network
Twin Cities at Medtronic
Winners

HISPANIC IN TECHNOLOGY - GOVERNMENT
Capt. Cristian Hernández Rivera
Air Force Research Laboratory

A program manager, guardsman and language enabled active duty U.S. Space Force officer, Captain Cristian Hernández Rivera has served in a variety of positions in the innovation, research, and development fields of acquisitions. He is also a former member of the Air Force’s #1 tasked Base Honor Guard. His assignments have placed him at the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Mobility & Training Aircraft Directorate, and various offices within the Air Force Research Laboratory, including as an Executive Officer for the Air Force’s innovation arm, AFWERX. He currently serves as a sponsored Student at the Air Force Institute of Technology.

ADVISOR OF THE YEAR
Dr. Lizzie Santiago
West Virginia University

Dr. Lizzie Santiago is a Teaching Professor for the Fundamentals of Engineering Program in the Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources at West Virginia University (WVU). She holds a PhD in chemical engineering and has postdoctoral training in neural tissue engineering and molecular neurosciences. Since 2013, Dr. Santiago has served as an Advisor to the WVU SHPE chapter and has guided their campus activities and participation in organizational events. She teaches first-year engineering courses and serves as an academic advisor to at least 125 students each semester. Her research interests include neural tissue engineering and STEM education.
PROMISING ENGINEER AWARD
Leilani C. Rebolledo
Chevron Corporation

Leilani C. Reboldeo is an Operational Excellence Performance Engineer at Chevron. In 2012, she began her engineering studies at the University of Southern California. She went on to intern with Chevron all three summers of her university career. In 2016, she graduated with a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering with a Petroleum Emphasis and started a full-time position with Chevron. She has quickly moved up the ranks of the company, from commuting to work on a helicopter as Chevron’s youngest Lead Field Engineer on an ultra-deepwater drillship to her current role as OE Performance Engineer supporting multi-million dollar operations.

MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Leopoldo Hernandez Jr.
Bechtel Corporation

Leopoldo Hernandez Jr. joined Bechtel as a Mechanical Engineer after graduating from Texas A&M University (TAMU). He also earned an MBA from the University of Houston. He is a registered Professional Engineer in Texas and Queensland, Australia. He just completed 25 years of service with the company this year. He currently serves as the Manager of Engineering for the Mining & Metals (M&M) Global Business Unit based in Santiago, Chile. He has been a champion of change, attracting and promoting talent from underrepresented groups (URGs) in M&M engineering and increased URGs in engineering leadership roles.
INNOVATOR AWARD
Dr. Kenneth Miguel Armijo
Sandia National Laboratories

Dr. Kenneth Miguel Armijo graduated from UNM in 2005 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. Dr. Armijo then got a Master’s in Science in Mechanical Engineering, and a PhD in Mechanical Engineering (with minors in Energy and Resources) from the University of California, Berkeley. He also earned a business degree in Management of Technology from Berkeley’s Haas School of Business. His PhD and current work focuses on energy. He is the first member of his family to get a Master’s and a PhD. Dr. Armijo has 5 patents, 6 provisional technical advances, 1 copyright and over 80 technical publications.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Frances J. Gonzalez
Lockheed Martin Corporation

Frances J. Gonzalez has been a role model for Hispanics in STEM throughout his 7+ year career in the aerospace industry. He started his career at Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation as an intern in 2011, before joining full-time as an Associate Rotor Structures Engineer in 2013. Frances currently serves as a Staff Project Engineer on the CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement Helicopter Program. Frances is passionate about giving back. He is the co-site lead for the Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Awareness. He organizes career development and outreach events for the Hispanic community, and mentors future leaders of color.
DIVERSITY AWARD

Esther Ledesma Pumarol
Medtronic

Esther Ledesma Pumarol is originally from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She’s a Global Portfolio Manager at Medtronic. With 9+ years of experience, she’s held several engineering and marketing roles across the U.S. for Fortune 500 companies. She has a Master of Science in New Product Development from Rochester Institute of Technology, and a MBA from the University of Wisconsin. Esther is an active advocate for education, diversity, and equity in her community. Esther served as President and Vice-President for the SHPE Twin Cities chapter previously and currently Chairs the Hispanic Latino Network Twin Cities at Medtronic.

Leaders in Innovation.

We are honored to acknowledge Frances as a winner of this year’s SHPE National STAR Community Service Award. The men and women of Lockheed Martin commend you for your achievements and thank you for your dedication to excellence and innovation.

Learn more at lockheedmartin.com/diversity
EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR - HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr. Christopher J. Hernandez, PhD
Cornell University

Dr. Christopher J. Hernandez is a second generation Mexican-American born and raised in Fresno, CA. He earned his B.S. in Engineering Sciences at Harvard University, and his PhD in Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University. He is currently a Professor of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering at Cornell University. He leads the Hernandez Research Group which investigates the role of mechanical forces in the development and treatment of orthopaedic disorders, and the role of physical forces on bacterial resistance to antibiotics. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering.

YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD

Julibeth Martinez De la Hoz
Dow, Inc.

Julibeth Martinez De la Hoz is a Research Scientist at Dow Chemical. She graduated as a Chemical Engineer, and received a six-month exchange program opportunity to work on her undergraduate thesis at Texas A&M University. Through that experience, Julibeth decided to further her education by pursuing a PhD in Materials Science and Engineering at Texas A&M. After graduating in 2014, Julibeth joined Dow Chemical. She is currently a steering team member of Dow’s global D&I team, and created a dedicated local D&I team with the aim of increasing awareness and improving the culture within her own organization.
HISPANIC ERG OF THE YEAR
Dow Hispanic and Latin Network

Dow’s Hispanic & Latin Network (HLN) works passionately in service of our vision that the talents, skills, and cultural attributes of Hispanic and Latin employees are valued and recognized in Dow and surrounding communities. Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, HLN has nearly 3000 members globally and continues to innovate programming focused on employee development and STEM outreach. HLN supports multiple SHPE programs like SHPE Junior and by sponsoring students to attend SHPE Convention through scholarships. They also partner with SHPE chapters at local universities to host career workshops and mock interviews.


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