

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING DOMINICAN WOMEN
MAKING AN IMPACT IN NYC POL-
ITICS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues, I rise to share an important article which originally appeared in the Dominican-American publication, *Quisqueya Life*, on April 1, 2003.

Translated into English by the Independent Press Association of New York, this article details achievements of four women of Dominican heritage that have risen to become instrumental players in the usually male-dominated world of New York City politics. They are role models for boys and girls of all racial and ethnic groups, young leaders that are dedicated to making the government live up to its highest ideals.

They are just some of the many Dominicans who are making a positive difference in the lives of Americans in New York and across the nation.

[From *Quisqueya Life Magazine*, Apr. 1, 2003]
WOMEN WITH POLITICAL POWER IN NEW YORK

(By Nathalie Jerez)

"Educate a man and you educate one person. Educate a woman and you educate a whole family," said Ruby Manikan.

New York State was one of the epicenters of the Women's Suffrage movement in North America. It took more than a century of struggle for the women of this nation to gain access to the voting booths and participate equally in the election of public representatives.

This struggle for equal rights is the foundation of a generation of women who now exercise rights prohibited to their ancestors.

The same state that until 1915 did not permit women to vote, today counts among some of its most important political figures four women of Dominican origin who have overcome discrimination not only against their gender but against their race as well.

LOURDES VENTURA, ASSISTANT DISTRICT
ATTORNEY IN CORONA, QUEENS

Lourdes Ventura's story is an example of what courage, commitment, and determination can do for a person. As a grade-school student, Ventura was told that she would never go very far in life because she was the daughter of Dominican immigrants, her family was dependent on public assistance, and because she was a woman.

Today, those who tried to discourage Lourdes should know that this Latina is the Assistant District Attorney in Queens. Among her many accomplishments in this office she investigated cases of discrimination in areas like housing, credit, labor, education, and public services.

Lourdes has also served as the president of the Association for Latin-American Law Students and recently traveled to South Africa with the Center for Legal Resources to do community-based work.

In 1998 she returned to Queens from the University of Buffalo to start her career as a

lawyer. She proved herself by gaining the position of Assistant District Attorney, the first Dominican woman to ever hold the job. Since her return to Queens, she remained active in community work, something she promised herself as a student that she would always do. Lourdes uses a quote from writer Maya Angelou as her personal motto: "Even though you try to drag me down, like the wind, I will rise." The secret to her success, she says, has been to maintain focus, work hard and, above all, to be proud of her origins.

"I never forgot my roots. The history of my people is what makes me special. I think the power to dream, to grow, and to make progress is what takes us where we want to go," Lourdes said.

LARK-MARIE ANTÓN, MAYOR'S PRESS
SECRETARY

This is a woman who has made good use of her education and grabs the bull by the horns. Lark-Marie is responsible for supervising all press and publicity functions for various New York City agencies and offices, among them the New York City Housing Authority, the NYC Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, the Department of Records and Information, the Commission on Women's Issues, the Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the Art Commission, and the Office of Veterans' Affairs, to name a few. She is also the voice of the Mayor.

Of Dominican and Lebanese heritage, Lark-Marie is just 25 years old. She was born and raised in New York, and graduated from Marist College with degrees in Communications and Public Relations and Psychology. She later earned a Master's Degree in Communication Studies from the University of West Virginia.

After returning to New York with her degrees, Antón worked as a producer on projects such as the 2001 MTV Movie Awards and TV Funhouse on Comedy Central. These experiences gained her an internship as a reporter for WNBC and a job as Polling Supervisor for the Marist Poll Institute.

Lark-Marie is a firm believer in the power of education and has taught as an adjunct faculty member at Marist College and as assistant professor at the University of West Virginia.

ALEXANDRA VENTURA

Born and raised in Queens and of Dominican heritage, Alexandra Ventura is the director of the New York State Citizenship Unit [which helps people through the naturalization process]. Through dedicated service, Alexandra built a bridge between the Dominican community and the Governor by bringing the needs of Dominican and other immigrants to the state's attention.

Before the creation of the Citizenship Unit, Alexandra had worked side by side with Governor Pataki as Assistant Advisor on Special Projects and Protocol since 1997. Alexandra achieved a great deal for the Latino community by fighting for better conditions and developing programs to benefit Latinos in New York. Through her position, Alexandra launched interesting campaigns and oversaw the integration of the state government and the needs of Dominican immigrants. In 1998, she helped Mayor Giuliani organize aid for the Dominican Republic after Hurricane George.

Alexandra graduated from Syracuse University with two Master's Degrees, one in Political Science and another in Public Administration. In 2002, the Dominican-American National Round Table, for which she served as Assistant Secretary, elected her to its Board of Directors. Alexandra is also a member of various organizations such as 100 Hispanic Women and the American Society for Public Administration.

DIANA REYNA, DISTRICT 34 CITY
COUNCILMEMBER

Diana Reyna represents Williamsburg, Bushwick, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn in the City Council. She has led a distinguished career in public service fighting for community issues.

Since 1997 until her swearing-in as Councilmember in 2001, Diana worked as the head of personnel for Assemblyman Vito J. Lopez. Before this she was a legislative aide.

As a Councilmember, Diana has been active and constant in the community that she represents. For example, in answer to the need for bank services in the Bushwick area, she helped found a federal credit union and serves on its board of directors. The credit union provides the community with services that before were absent.

Councilmember Reyna has also organized community activities. Now she is the coordinator of United Brooklyn and the "South Side Task Force," Latino groups who offer a community forum for residents to express their opinions. She is also the facilitator of the North Brooklyn Public Housing Coalition and the Fathers of Bushwick, two other organizations that help residents get involved in the decision making process.

Diana is a graduate of Pace University in Pleasantville, New York. She was born in Brooklyn and is the daughter of two Dominican immigrants who came to New York in the early 1960s.

LAS MUJERES CON PODER POLÍTICO EN NUEVA
YORK

"Si educas a un hombre estás educando a una persona, pero si educas a una mujer, estás educando a una familia." Ruby Manikan

El Estado de Nueva York fue un lugar clave durante el surgimiento de los movimientos que exigían el derecho a votar de las mujeres en Norteamérica. Más de un siglo les tomó a las mujeres de esta nación llegar hasta las urnas y participar, al igual que los hombres, en la elección de sus representantes.

Esa lucha por alcanzar la igualdad de derechos es la base de una generación de mujeres que ejerce labores antes prohibidas para ellas.

El mismo estado de Nueva York que hasta el año 1915 no permitía al sexo femenino tomar decisiones políticas, hoy tiene entre sus ciudadanas más influyentes en la política a cuatro mujeres de origen dominicano, que han roto la doble barrera de la discriminación, por su raza y por su sexo.

LOURDES VENTURA, UNA FISCAL EN CORONA,
QUEENS

La historia de Lourdes Ventura es un ejemplo de lo que el coraje, el compromiso y la determinación pueden hacer de una persona. Cuando era estudiante de las escuelas primaria y secundaria, Ventura encontró gente que le advirtió que nunca llegaría a ninguna parte porque era hija de inmigrantes

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

dominicanos, porque era una mujer y porque su familia dependía de la ayuda pública.

Hoy aquellos que insistían en poner trabas a las pretensiones de Lourdes deben estar enterados que esa latina es Asistente del Fiscal General. Entre sus actividades como fiscal ha hecho, precisamente, la labor de investigar casos de discriminación en viviendas, crédito, empleos, educación y lugares de acceso público.

Lourdes ha sido Presidente de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Estudiantes de Leyes y estuvo en África de Sur, trabajando con temas de la comunidad a través del Centro de Recursos Legales.

En 1998 volvió de la Universidad de Buffalo a Queens para iniciar su carrera de abogada desempeñándose como Asistente del Fiscal de Distrito, en ese momento era la única descendiente de dominicanos ocupando esa posición. Desde que regresó a Queens se ha mantenido activa en los trabajos comunitarios, algo que se prometió a sí misma hacer, cuando aún era estudiante. Lourdes ha hecho suya la frase de la escritora Maya Angelou, "Aunque trates de arrastrarme en la tierra, como el viento, yo subiré". El secreto de sus logros, señala, ha sido el mantenerse enfocada, trabajar duro, pero sobre todo, no sentirse avergonzada de sus orígenes.

"No olvido mis raíces. La historia de mi gente es lo que me hace especial. Creo que el poder de soñar, de desarrollarse, de progresar es lo que nos hace llegar a donde queremos."

LARK-MARIE ANTÓN, SECRETARIA DE PRENSA
DEL ALCALDE MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

Ella es una mujer que ha impuesto su conocimiento y se mantiene con "la sartén por el mango". Lark-Marie es responsable de supervisar las actividades de prensa y publicidad de varias agencias y oficinas de la ciudad de Nueva York. Entre ellas, la Autoridad de Viviendas, Comisión de la Ciudad para las Naciones Unidas, Cuerpo Consular y Protocolo, Departamento de Record e Información, Comisión sobre asuntos de la mujer, Oficina para combatir la violencia doméstica, Comisión de Arte, y la oficina de asuntos de los veteranos, solo para nombrar algunas. Además es la portavoz y el contacto del alcalde Bloomberg.

Con una herencia dominicana y libanesa, esta joven mujer, de apenas 25 años, nació y creció en Nueva York. Se graduó en el Marist College en Comunicación y Relaciones Públicas, además de psicología. Luego, estuvo en la universidad de West Virginia en la que obtuvo una maestría en Estudios de Comunicación.

Al llegar a Nueva York con los títulos obtenidos, Antón trabajó como productora en proyectos como 2001 MTV Movie Awards y TV Funhouse en el canal Comedy Central. Su experiencia abarca un internado como reportera de WNBC, canal 4 y como Supervisora de Encuestas del Instituto Marist Poll.

Lark-Marie es una fiel creyente del poder de la educación y ha participado como instructora adjunta en el Marist College y como asistente de profesor en la Unversidad de West Virginia.

ALEXANDRA VENTURA

Nacida y criada en Queens, de raíces dominicanas, Alexandra Ventura es la Directora de la Unidad de Ciudadanía del Estado de Nueva York. Ventura con su dedicación ha logrado crear un puente entre la comunidad dominicana y el gobernador George Pataki, llevándole a este, las inquietudes y necesidades de los inmigrantes dominicanos, y por supuesto de otras nacionalidades.

La directora de esta unidad, creada por Pataki en año 2001, trabaja al lado del gobernador desde el año 1997 con las labores

como Asistente Especial de Proyectos Especiales y Protocolo. La señora Ventura ha desempeñado funciones de gran importancia para la comunidad hispana, abogando por mejores condiciones, y desarrollando programas en beneficio de los hispanos de Nueva York. Desde su posición Alexandra ha desarrollado interesantes campañas y ha permitido la integración del gobierno estatal en asuntos relevantes para los inmigrantes dominicanos. En el año 98, debió asumir la tarea de asistir al alcalde Guiliani en los trabajos de ayuda a la República Dominicana tras el paso del huracán Georges. Graduada en Syracuse University, con una maestría en Estudios Políticos y otra en Administración Pública, en el año 2002 la Mesa Redonda Dominicano-americana la designó como miembro del Consejo Directivo y prestó servicio como Secretaria Asistente del mismo. Además la Ventura es miembro de varias organizaciones como "100 Hispanic Women and the American Society for Public Administration.

DIANA REYNA, CONCEJAL DE LA CIUDAD DE
NUEVA YORK, DISTRITO 34

Diana Reyna, representa a Williamsburg, Bushwick y Bedford-Stuvesant en el Consejo de la Ciudad. Ha desarrollado una carrera distinguida por el servicio público, destacándose como parte del personal de La Asamblea Estatal, abogando por los asuntos de la comunidad.

Desde 1997 hasta su juramentación como Concejal en el año 2001, Reyna trabajó como jefa de personal del asambleísta Vito J. López, antes de esta designación, fue ayudante legislativa.

Su trabajo como concejal ha sido activo y constante en la comunidad a la que representa. Como ejemplo podemos citar que, en respuesta a la necesidad de servicios bancarios en la comunidad de Bushwick, cooperó en la fundación de una unión federal cooperativa, en la que fungió como miembro del consejo directivo. La cooperativa provee a la comunidad donde opera servicios que antes estaban ausentes.

La concejal Reyna también ha realizado actividades comunitarias. Actualmente es la coordinadora de Brooklyn Unidos y "South Side Task Force", agrupaciones latinas que proporcionan a los residentes locales un foro para expresar sus intereses sobre los temas de sus vecindarios. Ella es también la facilitadora de la Coalición de Viviendas Públicas del Norte de Brooklyn y de la Coalición de Padres de Bushwick, otras dos organizaciones que ayudan a los residentes a involucrarse en los procesos de toma de decisiones.

Reyna es graduada de la Pace University de Pleasantville, Nueva York, nació en Brooklyn y es hija de dos inmigrantes dominicanos que llegaron a Nueva York a principios de los años 60.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL
JAMES P. GARRISON

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to recognize Army Lieutenant Colonel James P. Garrison for his outstanding service to our Nation as a member of the Army House Liaison Division. Lieutenant Colonel Garrison will be leaving his position in the House Liaison Division on June 3, 2003, for an assignment as the Commander of the 121st Signal Battalion, 1st Infantry Division in Kitzingen,

Germany. His illustrious career as a Signal Officer embodies all of the Army's values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. During his tenure on Capitol Hill, Lieutenant Colonel Garrison has distinguished himself as a friend, trusted resource, and an officer who epitomizes the modern American professional soldier.

Lieutenant Colonel Garrison has demonstrated his outstanding tactical and operational expertise in numerous command and staff positions overseas and in the continental United States. Continually serving in positions of ever-increasing responsibility, the highlights of his career include serving as a Battalion Signal Officer with the 6-27th Field Artillery (MLRS) during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; a Company Commander with the 17th Signal Battalion; Presidential Communications Officer for President William J. Clinton; and a battalion and brigade operations officer for the 7th Signal Brigade. As evidence of the quality of Lieutenant Colonel Garrison's leadership, management, and inter-personal skills, he was specially selected to serve as a Congressional Fellow for the United States Army, serving on the personal staff of former Arkansas Senator Tim Hutchinson, prior to joining Army's House Liaison Division.

Upon leaving Capitol Hill, Lieutenant Colonel Garrison will return to Germany for his fourth European tour, where he will continue to serve our nation by leading some 600 "Big Red One" soldiers. Accordingly, I invite my colleagues to join in offering a heartfelt thanks to Lieutenant Colonel James Garrison for his selfless service. He represents the very best that our great Nation has to offer and we wish Lieutenant Colonel Garrison and his wife, Sarita, continued success and happiness in all of their future endeavors.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
WHITMORE-BOLLES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize and pay tribute to Whitmore-Bolles Elementary School on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary. The school's long and successful history began in 1927 when Laura Whitmore donated the land for the purpose of an elementary school. Currently, Whitmore-Bolles schools 367 students, preschoolers through fifth grade. In addition, Whitmore-Bolles schooling includes a central program for hearing impaired/hard of hearing elementary students. A reflection of Whitmore-Bolles outstanding faculty, students and education can be seen in the various third and fourth generation families that remain in this elementary program.

Whitmore-Bolles Elementary has flourished because of its dedicated and exceptional staff. There are a number of highly qualified and enthusiastic teachers that have spent their entire careers at Whitmore-Bolles. Every year several teachers from Whitmore-Bolles are nominated for the Alberta Muirhead Teacher of the Year Award. In addition to the admirable teaching staff, Whitmore-Bolles has also prospered because of its committed and highly regarded principals. Since Miss Marguerite Fay