

LONG ISLAND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
FINAL SCRIPT

Narration: The National Medal for Museum and Library Services is the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums that are serving their communities in exceptional ways. Long Island Children's Museum director Suzanne LeBlanc (the a is like "launch") and community members Francisco and Ruth Quijada (sounds like key – ha – da) traveled to Washington from Garden City, NY to receive the national medal and spoke to IMLS about how the museum impacts the community.

Suzanne: The Long Island Children's Museum was founded by a group of parents who were really concerned about having a high-quality children's museum. They consciously called it Long Island Children's Museum so that they would consider they were serving all of Long Island, but also from the beginning, it was very important to them to serve a broad range of people both culturally, economically, to be a place, a community gathering place where everyone could come together.

Francisco: We were looking for a program where we can put our son, and we found out about Juntos al Kinder in Long Island.

Suzanne: Well, the Long Island Children's Museum from its beginning has had a commitment to be this community gathering place and to serve a broad range of people, and we believe that the kinds of programs that we do for the community, like Juntos al Kinder /make us a really important anchor in the community.

Francisco: It's the ages of 4 years old. One of the things is that they help the kids to get ready for school, and one of the things that they learn, how to write their names, how to relate with other kids, how to share with them.

Suzanne: Juntos al Kinder runs primarily in the summertime, and we have 20 kids who come for a month every day, half a day, and they have everything you would do in a preschool. We send the busses to pick them up so they learn how to leave home on the bus, right? And we have a staff person on the bus with them. And they come into the museum. They use the museum as a classroom. For every four or five children, we have a teacher, all bilingual teachers.

Francisco: They help the kids in our own language and at the same time they're teaching English, and that's one of the beautiful things.

Suzanne-The parents come for half a day a week. Part of what we do in the Parent's class, and it's taught in their language of origin, is what's different about the school system here, what are the expectations here of you as a parent, and how to help support their children's education.

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Francisco: At the museum, we learned, first of all, how to help our kids to do the homework. We learned the rules, how to do the homework, have their own place, not bouncing around, just have one place to do the homework. We used to have Francisco, Jr. with us all the time until we go to sleep, and we learned at the Juntos al Kinder program that he had to have time to go to sleep. We learned that he had to go to sleep at eight o'clock and how to treat them better, how to have patience with them, which is very important.

Suzanne: The mission of all the community programs is to really assist people in whatever they need to be more successful, as parents, in particular, as families, and as citizens of the world.