

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 1, 2011

Event: Hispanic National Bar Association National Convention
Date: Sunday, September 4th
Location: Sheraton Hotel, Downtown Dallas, Texas

**HISPANIC NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION UNVEILS NEW INITIATIVE
AIMED AT GIVING BACK TO COMMUNITIES THAT HOST
CONVENTIONS AND EVENTS**

Dallas, Texas (September 1, 2011)—This week Dallas will host the Hispanic National Bar Association’s annual National Convention. Billing itself as the “national voice of the Hispanic community, and the Latino legal community in particular,” the HNBA has been working towards that goal for over 35 years.

This year, the convention will also serve as a forum for the unveiling of the new Feed the Children Initiative (FTCI), aimed at giving back to the host cities of future HNBA conventions and events. The FTCI will donate at least \$10,000 to a local charity in each host city, to go towards fostering education and community enrichment. The Dallas convention will kick off this initiative by donating \$10,000 to Mercy Street, a local children’s group. After noticing what they referred to as “thorns and thistles” taking root in West Dallas, the founders of Mercy Street decided to start an organization to change West Dallas from within.

Mercy Street seeks to “raise a new generation of leaders from the community to be the change agents of tomorrow” by providing area children with long-term friends and advisors in the form of volunteer mentors and coaches. Believing that the best results are realized from long-term relationships, Mercy Street pairs mentors with public school children in West Dallas, making all matches in elementary school, and extending through high school. Mercy Street also reaches out to children through sports, seeking to create another conduit of positive influence and role models through coaches, and provide a healthy, safe environment to compete in individual and team sports.

In addition to traditional and sports-based mentoring, Mercy Street also provides alternative vocational and educational opportunities to the residents of West Dallas through a program called Pathways. Pathways creates what Mercy Street refers to as empowerment activities, which give individuals in West Dallas opportunities to learn and grow in different areas of vocation. The program offers a wide variety of opportunities, including a bicycle co-op, vegetable garden, summer work crew, dance studio, and a landscaping company called “Roots and Leaves.”

Incoming National President Benny Agosto, Jr. will present a check to representatives of Mercy Street Sunday during a press conference held at 12:30 p.m. in Dallas. “The HNBA is at its core an organization devoted to inclusion and education. This new initiative helps realize a practical application of that devotion by contributing to the communities that graciously host our conventions,” said Mr. Agosto.

The HNBA National Convention began Wednesday, August 31st, and will Sunday, September 4th. The press conference will occur Sunday, September 4th at the downtown Sheraton Hotel in Dallas, Texas. If you would like more information please contact HNBA Executive Director Zuraya Tapia, or President-Elect Benny Agosto, Jr.

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