



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Celebrating John Orozco - And His Mother

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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You should know that many years ago when I was first elected to the New York City Council, John Orozco's mother, Damaris, came to my office to ask my son, Ruben Diaz Jr., and myself for any assistance that we could offer. She was determined to find a way for her Bronx family to afford to send John to a school where he could properly train in gymnastics.

We told her that we would do our best to help her and her family. As a City Councilmember and later as a New York State Senator, together with my son, who

was a New York State Assemblyman we helped her family raise some money to send her son to train as a gymnast.

You should also know that as part of my outreach for help, I wrote to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg to ask for any assistance he could offer. Someone from Mayor Bloomberg's office did call me to ask what the letter was all about. I explained that there was a poor family in my district who was reaching out for help for one of the children so that the child could have an opportunity that would never be possible without the generosity of others. The Mayor's aide explained that the Mayor doesn't make personal donations and only gives to organizations or not-for-profit groups, but that he would see what he could do.

That was the last I heard about that.

Raising money was not easy, but John's mother never gave up. Damaris Orozco is an incredibly determined and dedicated mother. She made sure that her son would be able to achieve his goals. When the residents of Harding Park held their Family Day, Damaris Orozco sold rice and beans to help raise money for John to attend gymnastics classes. She drove him near and far so that he could train and so that his dream to compete in the Olympics could come true.

Now the world celebrates the achievements of Team USA Men's Gymnastic Star John Orozco as he competes in the 2012 Olympics in London. John's mother must be very proud. He certainly makes the Bronx proud, the United States proud – and he most definitely has made me proud!

Ladies and gentlemen, while I'm sorry that Mayor Bloomberg never came through with help for John Orozco, maybe it's not too late. Maybe, just maybe, there is something Mayor Bloomberg can do to show his concern for John Orozco and his mother, and find ways to honor more families and individuals who also strive to achieve their dreams.

I am Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz and this is what you should know.