



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera on the Passing of Dr. Richard "Doc" Izquierdo

GUSTAVO RIVERA June 29, 2020

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"Today, I pay tribute to the extraordinary life of the trailblazing founder of Urban Health Plan, Dr. Richard "Doc" Izquierdo, who sadly passed away yesterday at the age of 90. The death of the People's Doctor of the Bronx, as Dr. Izquierdo was lovingly known, leaves an immense void in our borough.

In many ways, Dr. Izquierdo, the son of New York City's first Puerto Rican bodegueros, was ahead of his time. When he opened the doors of the first Urban Health Plan (UHP) location on Southern Boulevard in 1974, a year before my birth, he understood the enormity of such an endeavor. He knew he was filling a critical void in providing culturally competent, accessible healthcare services to the growing Latino population settling in The Bronx as well as to native Bronxites who had seen their health outcomes rapidly decline due to an overall disinvestment from all levels of government, which included the closure of local hospitals. Through the years, UHP has expanded tremendously with a dozen sites across the City.

Dr. Izquierdo created an innovative healthcare system that had health equity at the core of its operations. He believed that everyone, especially the most disadvantaged among us, deserved to be treated with care, respect, and dignity. He believed in The Bronx and in Bronxites, and that's why he heavily invested in our borough, not only through UHP, but in

educating the next wave of health leaders, born and bred in The Bronx.

In his honor, I will continue fighting to implement policies such as the New York Health Act that will build on Dr. Izquierdo's legendary efforts, and help our communities thrive.

Rest in Power, Doc.

¡Pa'lante, Siempre Pa'lante!"

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