



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

# Harckham Honors Hispanic Residents for Outstanding Achievements

[Pete Harckham](#)

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*Peekskill, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham marked Hispanic Heritage Month 2020 today by honoring three outstanding Latinx residents of the 40th Senate District, including the first Hispanic judge in Peekskill, during a special online ceremony.

“I congratulate our honorees, all of them immigrants, for their hard work and continued achievements,” Harckham said. “Their success in bettering their lives to the benefit of the community demonstrates that the American Dream is still possible. It is an enduring part of the classic immigrant story, which has contributed so much to the rich diversity of our District, state and country.”

Harckham presented state Senate proclamations to Peekskill Judge Lisette Fernández, and Maria and Manuel Quezada, the owners of Six Diamonds Tree Services and Landscaping, Inc. in Putnam County.

When she was appointed to the bench earlier this year, Judge Fernández became the first Hispanic judge in Peekskill. She emigrated with her family from Ecuador at age seven. She is a naturalized U.S. citizen and longtime resident of the city. Before her appointment, she managed her own Criminal and Immigration law firm that specialized in “crimmigration” and humanitarian forms of relief.

Judge Fernández began her career as an Assistant District Attorney at the Sex Crimes / Domestic Violence Trial Bureau of the Bronx District Attorney’s Office, where she conducted scores of grand jury presentations, hearings and trials. She also developed and implemented comprehensive domestic violence and sexual assault training for attorneys, law enforcement, social service providers, health care professionals and community-based organizations.

Maria and Manuel Quezada, who started from nothing, have built a successful landscaping business in Carmel Hamlet, which provides employment and a vital service to the community. The Quezadas immigrated to the U.S. from Guatemala about 30 years ago and have worked hard, often at multiple jobs during the same time, while running their own then-fledgling business.

Six Diamonds Tree Services and Landscaping, Inc. is a community-oriented, family run business. Alongside their six children, their spouses and three grandchildren, Maria and Manuel Quezada are not only experiencing success with their company, but also giving back to the community.

Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and Hispanic communities. The celebration, which spans from September 15 to October 15, commemorates how those communities have influenced and contributed to American society at large.