



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Senator Hinchey Honors Spanish Language Advocate Verónica Martínez-Cruz with Senate Commendation Award

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KINGSTON, NY – State Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) presented a New York State Senate Commendation Award to Verónica Martínez-Cruz for her work to bridge language barriers and ensure full and equal participation of Hispanic residents in all aspects of civic, economic, and cultural life in the Hudson Valley. Verónica, a Bard College student studying Human Rights and Global Public Health, has served as a Council Member for both the Kingston Food Co-op and the Kingston Land Trust and as a freelance interpreter and translator for area organizations, including the Hudson Valley Young Farmers Coalition, Kingston Midtown Arts District, Kingston YMCA Farm Project, and Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster Counties.

Senator Hinchey gathered community members at the Pollinator Garden across from John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Kingston to honor Verónica with the Commendation Award in the presence of organizational collaborators including Executive Director of Kingston Land Trust Julia Farr, Kingston Food Co-op Council Chair Joe Greenberg, Kingston YMCA Farm Project Director and Farmer KayCee Wimbish, Kingston YMCA Farm Project Education Director, Susan Hereth, and members of the YMCA Youth Crew.

“Verónica Martínez-Cruz is doing incredible work to build language justice in the Hudson Valley and create inclusive multilingual spaces that empower our Hispanic community to participate equally in our society,” **said Senator Michelle Hinchey.** “Language is power, and it can determine whether a person has access to resources, information, and decision-making processes that affect their daily lives. Verónica

possesses a deep understanding of these challenges, and despite being a full-time Bard College student and working other part-time jobs, she remains a committed advocate of our Spanish-speaking neighbors. For all of Verónica's efforts to build a stronger and more connected community, it was my honor to present her with a Senate Commendation Award."

"As a faithful believer in Language Justice, it has always been of the utmost importance to me that language resources exist so that Spanish speakers and other immigrants living in and around Kingston can have access to understand and be a part of the changes that are happening every day in our community," **said**

Verónica Martínez-Cruz. "Although I did not expect this recognition, as I am only a small piece of the giant puzzle that is mutual aid, I thank Senator Hinchey for this great honor. Immigrants are part of our community and if we work together we can ensure not only a better future for us but also for future generations."

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