



# Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

*Eva Irizarry*

Eva Irizarry has been working in education for over 20 years.

After completing a volunteer art residency at an elementary school in Bushwick in 2000, Ms. Irizarry began envisioning herself as an educator. In 2001, she applied to the New York City Teaching Fellows Program and began her first teaching job at P.S. 257 in Brooklyn's District 14.

During her first two years of teaching, Ms. Irizarry completed her Master's degree in Childhood Education, and shortly thereafter pursued an Educational Leadership certification program on full scholarship. As a classroom teacher, she made many contributions to her school community, including developing the Young Leaders Program and managing a full renovation of the school's unused library.

Throughout her 10 years as a classroom teacher, Ms. Irizarry was a Grade and Region 8 Teacher Leader, where she served as a mentor and provided staff development. In 2011, in partnership with two of her colleagues, Ms. Irizarry wrote a proposal for a new NYC Department of Education public school. After a rigorous application process, the proposal was accepted, and the new school was slated to turn around a low-performing school located in South Williamsburg. Brooklyn Arbor Elementary opened its doors in September 2012, with Ms. Irizarry as its Founding Principal. With a strong environmental mission, Brooklyn Arbor emphasizes wellness through connecting students to the natural world.

What started as a small K-2 school in 2012 soon became a highly sought-after PK-5 school with over 600 students. Today, Brooklyn Arbor boasts a Spanish Dual Language Program, a championship debate team, one of the first elementary-level computer science programs, Big Apple Award-winning teachers, a Reggio Emilio pre-kindergarten model, and an outdoor classroom.

With Ms. Irizarry at the helm, the school has won many awards and recognitions for its success. Over the past 11 years, it has been visited by two Chancellors, several Deputy Chancellors and other notable school leaders in recognition of its exceptional practices.

A staunch advocate for education, Ms. Irizarry continues to fully dedicate her life and career to serving her school community. She provides students a safe and joyous learning environment, where – like their school's namesake – they too, can grow and thrive.

***Eva Irizarry was selected as a  
2023 Women of Distinction honoree by Senator Julia Salazar***

