



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

## Zenaida Mendez

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT May 15, 2012



*Women of*  
**DISTINCTION**  
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

***Zenaida Mendez***

*Zenaida Mendez was selected as a 2012 Woman of Distinction by  
Senator Adriano Espaillat*



Zenaida Mendez

**Award:** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

**Year:** 2012

Zenaida Mendez was born in the Dominican Republic and immigrated to the United States as a teenager with her family. She earned a Bachelor's degree in government and public administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in public administration from the City University of New York, Graduate School of Public Affairs.

As a result of her hard work and dedication, Mayor David Dinkins appointed Ms. Mendez to his office of Latino Affairs in 1990. From 1992 to 1994 she served as special assistant to the New York City Commissioner of Human Rights, and for five years she was legislative assistant to Representative Charles B. Rangel.

In 2001, Ms. Mendez was one of the Women of Color Resource Center's delegates to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances in Durban, South Africa. In 2002, she was invited to address the forum of the Puerto Rico and United States International Dominican Leadership Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

An avid voice for tolerance, Ms. Mendez served for almost three years as director of Racial Diversity Programs at the National Organization for Women (NOW) where she successfully spearheaded a diversity and inclusion training program, a woman of color and allies summit, and the campaign on the femicide of the women of Juarez and Chihuahua, Mexico among other initiatives. She served most recently as the project director for the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. Ms. Mendez also holds the esteemed position of president and founder of the National Dominican Women's Caucus.

Ms. Mendez's selfless activism and leadership have earned her recognition from local, national and international organizations. She has spoken on behalf of women and children on various issues including, women's rights, equal pay for equal work, educational, housing,

daycare, racial and environmental justice, electoral politics, parenting, immigration, health, economic and environmental justice.

Ms. Mendez is currently the director of external affairs at Manhattan Neighborhood Network, the Public Access Cable Television facility in Manhattan. She is also the proud mother of three daughters.