

PRESS RELEASE  
06/23/2023



**Black, Latinx, Asian  
Charter Collaborative**

New York, N.Y. -- Black Latinx Asian Charter Collaborative (BLACC) hosted their inaugural Mosaic gala on Thursday, June 15th at the CAPITALE in Lower Manhattan. CEO Miriam Raccah served as emcee and presented the Educator of the Year awards, BLACC Board Chairman and Founder & Executive Director of Lamad Charter School Reverend Alfred Cockfield introduced the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, David C. Banks, who gave the keynote address, Founder & CEO of BRICK Education Network Dominique Lee presented the UNITY Award to civil rights attorney and CEO of the KIPP Foundation, Shavar Jeffries, and Founder & President of Latino Pastoral Action Center Bishop Rivera introduced Mosaic Award winner Dr. Elaine Lopez, Founder & CEO of the International Leadership Charter High School.

BLACC was joined by over 200 public charter school educators and educator advocates representing 19 member schools led by people of color. The Mosaic Gala celebrates the exceptional individuals who do the hard work of educating the children of New York City.

“As public charter school educators, we [have] long appreciated the transformative power of culturally-affirming institutions - places where our lived experiences, our culture, was placed at the center and were not an after-thought. All of us believe deeply in centering communities of color so that the families we serve could exercise self-determination in education, choosing what is best for our children. “ said Miriam Raccah, CEO of the Black, Latinx and Asian Charter Collaborative.

"To be in a room filled with hundreds of educators and leaders of color was truly an inspiration. As an Afro-Puerto Rican woman, it was a privilege to be recognized by my colleagues and I share this recognition with all charter leaders of color devoted to providing a high-quality education to black and brown children from marginalized communities. We do so much with less and still manage to achieve greater results." said Dr. Elaine Lopez.

Black, Latinx, Asian Charter Collaborative (BLACC) is a membership-driven non-profit organization that impacts the capacity of charter schools founded and led by people of color to provide an excellent education foundation to traditionally underserved communities by increasing their financial, academic, programmatic, advocacy, and management capacity. BLACC represents 22 public charter schools serving over 13,000 students in New York City.



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2023 Educator of the Year Award Winners

**Victoria Lewis:** Algebra teacher and 8th Grade advisor, *Amani Public Charter School*

**Mia Thomas:** Principal, *Amber Charter Schools*

**Johanna Quizhpe:** HS Spanish Teacher , Sp. Dept Chair, Seal of Biliteracy Coordinator, Student Council Advisor, *American Dream Charter School*

**Marlene Torlentino:** Art Illuminator Teacher, Capital Preparatory Schools

**Jaleel Johnson:** 6th Grade English Language Arts, *Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School*

**Kenisha Fraser:** Junior Associate, Grade Lead Teacher, *Ember Charter Schools*

**Shavoncka Dupree:** Coordinator Special Education, *Family Life Academy Charter Schools*

**Viviana Benjumea:** Director of Family and Community Programs, *Forte Preparatory Academy*

**Marcelo Oscar:** Teacher/11th Grade Pre-Calculus, *International Leadership Charter High School*

**Carmen Sterling:** Office Manager, *Lamad Academy Charter School*

**Chantel Lewis:** 4th Grade Teacher, *Merrick Academy - Queens Public Charter School*

**Noelani Gabriel-Holt:** Principal, *Public Preparatory Network*

**Kimylene Hove:** Assistant Principal, *Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School*

**Olympia Haynes:** Teacher, *Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem*

**Travis Hamilton:** Physical Education and Health Teacher, *Summit Academy Charter School*

**Abigail Edmunds-Bruno:** 3rd Grade Special Education, *WHIN Music Community Charter School*

**Anthony Morris:** Physical Education Teacher, Activities Coordinator, *Bronx Arts and Science Charter School*



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2023 Unity Award Winner

**Shavar Jeffries:** *CEO KIPP Foundation*

2023 Mosaic Award Winner

**Dr. Elaine Lopez:** *Founder & CEO of the International Leadership Charter High School*