

[http://www.heraldtimesonline.com/news/local/hispanic-heritage-month-award-winners-honored/article\\_e8d0c402-afe5-5be2-9a7e-5c4fc8c169ac.html](http://www.heraldtimesonline.com/news/local/hispanic-heritage-month-award-winners-honored/article_e8d0c402-afe5-5be2-9a7e-5c4fc8c169ac.html)

CENTERPIECE FEATURED

## Hispanic Heritage Month Award winners honored

By Megan Banta 812-331-4368 | [mbanta@heraldt.com](mailto:mbanta@heraldt.com) Sep 16, 2015



Ellen Vaughan

This year's recipients of the National Hispanic Heritage Month Awards described the recognition both as humbling and an honor.

On Tuesday, Raquel Anderson, Ellen Vaughan and Volunteers in Medicine of Monroe County were honored with the Latino Leader Award, the Latino Advocate Award and Outstanding Agency/Organization Award, respectively.

Anderson, who's a professor in the department of speech and hearing services at Indiana University, called the award a humbling recognition that something she's doing is working and that her work has had positive results.

She directs the STEPS — Speech Therapy Education, Practicum and Services — program, a bilingual program in the university department that she helped develop.

Anderson said while she's been working with the Latino community "for a while now" and has spearheaded some initiatives, including the STEPS program and writing a grant approved through the Indiana Minority Health Coalition during her time as board president for IU's Latino Cultural Center, most of that has been a collaborative community effort.

And she certainly hasn't expected an award for any of her efforts — she does what she does because she views it as a responsibility, she said.

"I think I was brought up ... to always think that even though I might have had struggles, I've always had privileges," Anderson said. "I have a role to play to help other people and to empower other people."

It's that desire and passion for social justice that keeps Anderson involved, she said.

Passion also is a big motivation for Vaughan, who has a background in counseling psychology and has worked largely with the Spanish-speaking Hispanic community before coming to Bloomington.

During her time in Bloomington, Vaughan has served as a faculty member in the counseling and educational psychology program in the education department at IU. In conjunction with area agencies, she helped set up CHGUnido, a specialty services program for students who also speak Spanish to allow them to receive training to provide mental health services in the community. Services are available through the Center for Human Growth, the university's training clinic.

That program, which offers things as simple as workshops and as complex as therapy services, has grown over the years, she said.

“It’s been great. It’s been really nice to see it grow and to see that the community can benefit,” Vaughan said. “It’s so rewarding to have this passion and see this vision and see it come to fruition.”

Vaughan traces her passion for advocacy back to her upbringing in New Mexico, where she said she learned the “importance of connecting with others and connecting with others in their own language.”

She said she originally had thought she would be a Spanish teacher, but she developed an interest in psychology and then in helping to meet the needs of an underserved population.

“I also just feel strongly that when you’re struggling, and you’re struggling with something that might need therapy or counseling, that being able to get those services in your own language is important,” she said.

Vaughan said she was surprised when the city notified her that she would be receiving the award, which she described as a honor that means a lot to her.

The award also means a lot to the staff at Volunteers in Medicine of Monroe County, said Nancy Richman, the local nonprofit’s executive director.

“It is an incredible affirmation of our efforts,” Richman said. “We have spent a lot of time, and it’s very important to us to be welcoming to other cultures.”

Richman said the clinic is the only health care facility, to her knowledge, in the county that provides free services to people in the Latino community.

Some may be undocumented and so are not eligible for health insurance products and often fall through the cracks, she said — but “we think it’s really important that people not fall through the gaps and be left without any medical care.”

Volunteers in Medicine provides free medical care and medications, preventive screenings and health education.

And the nonprofit has a number of staff members and volunteers who are bilingual (both in Spanish and other languages) and offers lessons to its staff. It also employs a part-time community health worker who does outreach to the Latino community, and has certified medical interpreters.

“We have done a lot by way of making our services accessible and really making sure people have health care, and in the language that they’re most comfortable with,” Richman said. “We want to have a clinic culture where we’re welcoming of people from other cultures.”

She said the award is a huge honor and an affirmation of the results of the hard work the staff feels privileged to do.

In addition to Anderson, Vaughan and Volunteers in Medicine, three seniors from Bloomington High School South — Juan Pablo Perez Soto, Jose Y. Adorno-Cancel and Ana Olavarietta — also were honored Tuesday with Outstanding Latino High School Senior Awards.

The six recipients were selected by members of the Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs and will be recognized throughout National Hispanic Heritage Month, which kicked off with the Tuesday awards ceremony and runs until Oct. 15.

## You May Like

Sponsored Links by Taboola

### Charlize Theron's Vogue Cover Drops Jaws

Vogue on The Scene

### You're In For A Big Surprise in 2016 If You Own A Home in Indiana

Comparisons.org Quotes

### 23 Unreal Photos Taken Before Most Tragic Moments In History

Your Daily Dish

### The Wedding Photographer Wasn't Expecting To Capture This

WorldLifestyle

### 3 Billionaires Say: Something Big Coming Soon In U.S.A.

Stansberry Research

### Only 1 In 50 Americans Can Name These Iconic Women. Can You?

Topix Offbeat