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Honor Roll / Recognizing the accomplishments of Western New Yorkers

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Nestor Hernandez, executive director of the Belle Center, has been named a 40 Under 40 Rising Latino Star for the Western Region by the Hispanic Coalition New York.

A recognition reception was held April 2 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Albany highlighting accomplishments and achievements by Latinos in the New York region who have demonstrated leadership and excellence in their communities.

Hernandez has transformed the Belle Center into an all-encompassing human service center on the Lower West Side. The Center provides educational, social and community-building services, including day care, educational courses, AmeriCorps, youth programs and a food pantry.

The mission of the Hispanic Coalition New York is to empower through education and serve as a forum for engaging the public in cultural exchange of ideas on social, civic, educational and economic issues affecting the Hispanic-Latino community.

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Jorge Gracia, SUNY distinguished professor in the Department of Philosophy and Department of Comparative Literature at the University at Buffalo, is the recipient of the Aquinas Medal by the American Catholic Philosophical Association.