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## North Bergen Police Department Praised for Diversity by Hispanic Law Enforcement Organizations

NORTH BERGEN, NJ – The North Bergen Police Department "exceeds expectations" on diversity in its hiring and promotional practices, according to a departmental audit performed jointly by the National Coalition of Latino Officers and the Hispanic American Law Enforcement Association on behalf of the Latino Action Network, a civil rights organization focused on advocating for Hispanic communities. Taking into account the department's composition, community relations, hiring, promotions and much more using data provided both by the department and by outside sources, the audit found the department to be a leading example of diversity in policing in New Jersey.

"A review of the Equal Employment Opportunity data indicates that the North Bergen Police Department exceeds our expectations in the hiring and promotions of Latinos," said Antonio Hernandez, President of the NCLCO. "The Chief of Police has implemented policies prohibiting racially influenced policing, commonly known as racial profiling. In addition, he has assigned Latino detectives to the Internal Affairs unit which enables the Spanish speaking community to file complaints with ease. The department practices a community policing philosophy and provides information to the community in the Spanish language. We find their efforts in this regard to be exemplary and worthy of praise."

The North Bergen Police Department consists of 118 sworn officers, 55% of whom are Hispanic. In addition, 73% of new officers hired within the last three years are Hispanic and 41% of the department's Superior Officers are Hispanic. These numbers compare favorably to other similar-sized and nearby departments in the state and show the township's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The township uses a Resident-Only hiring policy to ensure that civil service applicants are representative of the North Bergen community.

"Making sure that our police force is representative of the community it serves is tremendously important to Public Safety Commissioner Allen Pascual, Chief Robert Dowd and I because we all recognize the need for people to feel comfortable and secure with the men and women sworn to protect them," said North Bergen Mayor Nick Sacco. "It is very gratifying to have our efforts in making the North Bergen Police Department a model of diversity recognized by the NCLCO and HALEA and I thank the members of both organizations for their strong support."

Last year the department promoted two Hispanic officers to Lieutenant, further bolstering the diversity of its superior officers. The department also hired five new officers, all of whom are Hispanic and also North Bergen residents.

"The Township of North Bergen Police Department appears to be conducting itself with great distinction and in fact exceed our expectations in the area of hiring and promotional practices," said Hernandez.

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