

SWRMC celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

By Cassandra Eichner, Southwest Regional Maintenance Center Public Affairs

San Diego—Southwest Regional Maintenance Center (SWRMC) hosted a Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration complete with guest speakers, music, artwork, and traditional Hispanic fare Oct. 15 at Bainbridge Park.

SWRMC Sailors, civilians, and members of the San Diego community came together to embrace and celebrate the history and legacy of Hispanics.

“This event is an opportunity for both Hispanics and non-Hispanics to come learn about Hispanic culture,” said Capt. Heidemarie M. Stefanyshyn-Piper, SWRMC Commanding Officer. “America is a melting pot made of many ethnicities, and each and every one of us has a story. It is the blending of all of us that makes this country what it is, what makes the Navy what it is, and it is what makes SWRMC what it is.”

San Diego native David Alvarez, San Diego Councilmember 8th District, which borders the Naval Base, spoke at the engagement.

“Latinos strengthen America’s communities by serving as educators, health care professionals, and social workers, to name a few,” said Alvarez. “We enhance America’s culture, thanks to the many bold and original Latino performers who have become household names across the country. Latinos also strengthen America by nurturing loving and devoted families, teaching our children right from wrong, and instilling in them an appreciation and love for this great nation. And we strengthen and protect American values and our democratic way of life by serving with distinction in our nation’s armed forces.”

“If I could summarize into a couple of words what Latino means for me it is family,” said Alvarez. “It is about culture, and it is sacrifice and hard work. That is the legacy my parents left for me and that is the legacy I hope to leave to my children. And that is the legacy that prevails from Latino’s in this country. Working hard, striving to be successful, sacrificing, and looking to be a part of this nation that has given every single one of us so many opportunities that you all defend day to day and that hopefully we will continue to receive and be a part of for many generations to come.”

The celebration also featured performances by Petty Officer 2nd Class Mary Grace Lacroix, Israel Maldonado, and Mariachi Real de San Diego.

National City Chief of Police Manuel Rodriguez also attended the event. National City also borders Naval Base San Diego.

Local artist Jose Luis Nunez, native to Mexico City, exhibited his artwork during the celebration.

“It doesn’t matter where you are from, your culture, or your race,” said SWRMC Chief Petty Officer Luis Morales, a featured speaker at the event. “It’s about how you come together for the Nation.”

For more information about SWRMC please visit <http://www.swrmc.navy.mil/>