

Press Release

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with

Access to Justice After a Catastrophic Event: Challenges to Puerto Rico's Recovery After Hurricane María



Friday, October 5, 2018, 2:00 pm

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana (August 9, 2018): On Wednesday, September 20, 2017, Hurricane María pummeled Puerto Rico as a Category 4 hurricane. Winds of 155 miles per hour and heavy rain wreaked havoc on the island, killing scores of people and decimating the island's infrastructure. In the aftermath of the storm, Puerto Ricans faced a number of challenges—including access to the legal system. A number of organizations and agencies aided residents, and at the forefront of these efforts was Dr. Adi G. Martínez Román, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Access to Justice Fund Foundation.

On Friday, October 5, 2018, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana and the Indiana State Bar Association Latino Affairs Committee will welcome Dr. Martínez Román as the keynote speaker at their second annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration. The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana will host the event at 2:00 pm in the Sarah Evans Barker Courtroom (courtroom 216) at the Birch Bayh Federal Building and United States Courthouse, 46 East Ohio Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Dr. Martínez Román will speak about the challenges presented by the hurricane and ways in which the legal community was able to provide relief.



Since April 2017, Dr. Martínez Román has served as the Executive Director of the Access to Justice Fund Foundation (FFAJ), which seeks funds for the provision of civil legal services to low-income and vulnerable populations. In these efforts, and in the context of the emergency caused by Hurricane María, she pushed for the creation of an Emergency Legal Aid Fund to bring funds to organizations that provide emergency legal services to those affected by the hurricane. Before working at the FFAJ,

Dr. Martínez Román was the Auxiliary Dean of Students of the University of Puerto Rico Law School for seven years, where she also taught several courses on the Legal Profession, Law and Poverty, and Law and Social Change. She has also been part of several boards, including the Board of Directors of Puerto Rico Legal Services Corporation, where she was president for a year and a half. She also directed the Student Pro Bono Program.



Dr. Martínez Román has two decades of experience working in community legal aid and empowerment, through her work and in volunteer activities. She holds a bachelor's degree from Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy and International Affairs, a law degree from the University of Puerto Rico, and received both her Master of Law and Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas of the Universidad Carlos III of Madrid (Spain).

The program will last one hour and one hour of Continuing Legal Education credit has been applied for. **Pre-registration IS required and available [by clicking here](#).** There is no cost to attend and the program is open to the public. Photography will be permitted during the program. If you would like to send a photographer and/or reporter to cover the program, or if you have other questions, please contact Doria Lynch at 317-229-3729 or Doria_lynch@insd.uscourts.gov.