

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Great Minds in STEM™ Announces Class of 2014 Military & Civilian Honorees**

*Monterey Park, CA – August 5, 2014* - Great Minds in STEM™ proudly announces the class of 2014 Military and Civilian Award Winners. These exceptional role models who serve and work for our Armed Forces in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics will be honored at one of two recognition events taking place during the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual HENAAC Conference, “The Quest for Competitive Greatness” in New Orleans, LA, October 2-4, 2014.

For twenty-six years, Great Minds in STEM™ (GMiS) has showcased the achievements of America’s best and brightest engineers and scientists within the Hispanic community at our annual conference. In a much-honored tradition, GMiS pays tributes to those award winners who represent our nation’s military branches and have dedicated and shown their aptitude by protecting and leading the course of keeping our nation and war fighters safe through STEM. Please join us as we recognize the following inspirational Military & Civilian honorees.

**2014 HENAAC Award Winners**

The following individuals will be honored during the HENAAC Awards Show which will take place on Friday, October 3, 2014:

**Executive Excellence**

RADM Ronald J. Rabago  
Assistant Commandant  
Engineering & Logistics  
Chief Engineer  
U.S. Coast Guard

**Lifetime Achievement**

Hector Hernandez  
Armament Chief Engineer  
Air Force Life Cycle Management Center  
U.S. Air Force

**Pioneer Award**

Gloria L. Valdez  
Executive Director  
Program Executive Office, Submarines  
NAVSEA  
U.S. Navy

**Professional Achievement II**

Carlos E. Ruiz, Ph.D.  
Research Civil Engineer  
Water Quality and Containment  
Transport Branch  
Environmental Processes and  
Engineering Division  
Engineer Research and Development Center  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The following STEM Military and Civilian Hero and Military Luminary honorees will be awarded during the Salute to our STEM Military & Civilian Heroes Reception which will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2014:

**2014 STEM Military & Civilian Heroes**

Captain Jose M. Banales  
Chief Engineer  
25th Space Range Squadron  
U.S. Air Force

Mercedes M. Hughes, P.E.  
Registered Structural Engineer  
Louisville District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Lt Col Jose Rivera, P.E.  
United States Air Force  
Deputy for Programs and Project Management  
Joint Chiefs of Staff AFPAK - Hands Program  
Transatlantic Middle East District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Sergio Carzoli  
IT Logistics Management Specialist  
Space and Naval Warfare  
Systems Center Pacific  
U.S. Navy

Sonia C. Gallegos, Ph.D.  
Oceanographer III  
Naval Research Laboratory &  
NASA Applied Sciences Technology  
Project Office, Stennis Space Center  
U.S. Navy

**2014 Military Luminaries**

Alexei J. Lozada-Ruiz  
Chief Engineer  
Fighters & Bombers Directorate  
Light Air Support Branch  
Wright Patterson Air Force Base  
U.S. Air Force

Anthony L. Valdillez, Jr.  
Lead Systems Engineer  
IFF Mode 5 Program  
Cryptologic & Cyber Systems Division  
Lackland Air Force Base  
U.S. Air Force

Daniel M. Carrasco  
Supervisory Procurement Analyst  
Los Angeles District Office  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

LCDR Luis O. Carmona  
Port State Control  
Domestic Vessel Inspections  
U.S. Coast Guard

For more information on the 26th Annual HENAAC Conference or the Great Minds in STEM™ organization please visit [www.greatmindsinstem.org](http://www.greatmindsinstem.org).

**Great Minds in STEM™ Vision**

Be a national leader in keeping America technologically strong by promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers especially in underserved communities.