



Freedom Team Salute

The Borinqueneers

A Story Worth Telling

A Story Worth Remembering

Hispanics in the Army: Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment

In advance of National Hispanic Heritage Month – observed from September 15th to October 15th – a new film remembers and honors Hispanics in the U.S. Army. *The Borinqueneers* (pronounced boh-rin-keh-neers) vividly portrays their experiences and considers their significant contributions.

More specifically, *The Borinqueneers* presents the never-before-told story of the 65th Puerto Rican Regiment, the only all-Hispanic unit in the history of the U.S. Army. The feature includes interviews with the regiment's veterans and rare archival footage. PBS stations nationwide began broadcasting the 60-minute program in August. (Check your local listings.)

Borinquen – which means “the land of the brave lord” – was the name given to Puerto Rico by its original Taino Indian inhabitants. The Borinqueneers adopted the name for themselves, and formed a tight-knit unit bound by a common language and a strong cultural heritage. Originally organized in 1899, the regiment fought in the Korean War, earning praise from General MacArthur and receiving the Presidential and Meritorious Unit Commendations, two Korean Presidential Unit Citations and the Greek Gold Medal for Bravery.

First-time director and producer Noemí Figueroa Soulet spent eight years researching the story and locating veterans of the regiment. “The men of the 65th will finally get the recognition they deserve,” she said. Seven 65th Infantry Regiment veterans received Freedom Team Salute Commendations during the premiere of *The Borinqueneers* on July 13th at the Newark Museum in New Jersey. The event was held in conjunction with the New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center (NJHRIC) of the Newark Public Library. Honorees included: PFC Abdon Acevedo, PFC Wendell Vega, PFC Eugenio Quevedo, CPL Jaime Lopez, SFC Angel Arroyo (Ret.), CPL Guillermo Alamo and SGT Jose Perez Soto. COL Gilberto Villahermosa, Massachusetts National Guard Inspector General, presided.

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