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**HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc. on Panel Celebrating the 20th
Anniversary of New Jersey's Abbott Preschool Program**

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Hoboken and Plainfield, New Jersey - On March 14, 2018, Joselyn Estevez-Vargas, Director of Early Childhood at **HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc.**, was among the early childhood education experts invited to participate on a panel to discuss best practices at the core of the Abbott program. New Jersey's Abbott Preschool Program came into existence by order of the New Jersey Supreme Court in the landmark *Abbott v. Burke* case, which specified age-appropriate curriculum linked to state standards, small class sizes and certified teachers for all 3- and 4-year-old children in New Jersey's poor urban communities. **HOPES CAP, Inc.** has had an Abbott program since 1998, and currently serves over 1,000 children, birth to 5 years old, almost 700 of which are funded in some part by State Preschool funding (Abbott).

Ms. Estevez-Vargas, who holds a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Bank Street College of Education, focused her discussion on the experiences and successes **HOPES** has had from the perspective of a Head Start/Early Head Start Grantee with district collaborations in Hoboken and Plainfield to deliver quality early childhood education to preschoolers. "The success story of Abbott at 20 is not only in the children but the parents who go on to become the biggest advocates for quality preschool," stated Joselyn. With almost 30 years of experience working with children and families in the fields of mental health, social services, and early childhood education, Estevez-Vargas has a proven ability to foster relationships with parents, staff at all levels, and community partners. She has been an integral part of the agency's state funded preschool (former Abbott) collaborations with the **Hoboken and Plainfield Boards of Education**.

The one-day conference was convened by **Educational Testing Service (ETS), Education Law Center, National Institute for Early Education Research, and Advocates for Children of New Jersey**.

About HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc.

HOPES CAP, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a member of the national network of Community Action Partnerships designated under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, with locations in Hoboken, Plainfield, and Somerset, New Jersey. HOPES has been serving primarily low-income individuals and families for over 53 years. The mission of HOPES is to provide services that respond to the social, educational and training needs of individuals in an effort to

overcome barriers and fight the causes of poverty. HOPES empowers people of all ages: more than 1,000 children from birth to 5 years old for school readiness, and over 3,000 youth, adults, and seniors towards economic self-sufficiency.

For more information about HOPES' preschool, please visit <https://www.hopes.org/preschooler>. Follow HOPES on Facebook and Twitter @HOPESCAPInc.



Left to right: Jim DiDonato, Superintendent of **Mount Holly Township School District**, Joselyn Estevez-Vargas, Early Childhood Director of **HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc.**, Grace Blanco, Early Learning Center Director of **Ironbound Community Corporation**, Cynthia Rice, Senior Policy Analyst, **Advocates for Children of NJ**

(Photo courtesy of Advocates for Children of NJ)



Left to right: Jim DiDonato, Superintendent of **Mount Holly Township School District**, Grace Blanco, Early Learning Center Director of **Ironbound Community Corporation**, Joselyn Estevez-Vargas, Early Childhood Director of **HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc.**, Cynthia Rice, Senior Policy Analyst, **Advocates for Children of NJ**, Evelyn Motley, Early Childhood Programs & Services Director of **Plainfield Board of Education**.

(Photo courtesy of Advocates for Children of NJ)

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