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## IDRA Names Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez as the 2019 José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow

**Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez will study inequities in access to college readiness coursework**

San Antonio, May 7, 2019 - IDRA has named Howard University professor Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez as the 2019 **IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow**. The fellows program honors the memory of IDRA founder, Dr. José Angel Cárdenas. The goal of the program is to engage the nation's most promising researchers in investigating school finance solutions that secure equity and excellence for all public school students.

"Dr. Cárdenas' life was dedicated to his vision that every child deserves an excellent education, which requires strong instructional programs and school finance equity," said Celina Moreno, IDRA President & CEO. "We are so pleased to name Dr. Rodríguez as our fellow to advance research that informs IDRA's work and honors the legacy of its founder."



Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez is an associate professor of educational leadership and policy studies and is the director of graduate studies in the School of Education at Howard University in Washington, D.C. His research centers on diverse demographics and explores how policy and leadership influence equity and access for diverse populations throughout the educational pipeline. He received his Ph.D. in educational policy and planning at the

University of Texas at Austin, with an emphasis on education research, evaluation and policy analysis with a social and cultural historical focus.

"It is a distinct honor and blessing to have the opportunity to work with IDRA and the scholars leading this longstanding distinguished research organization that is centered in serving children across multiple communities." Dr. Rodríguez said.

As IDRA's school finance fellow, Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez will analyze the relationship of school finance policies and practices and their influence on equitable access to college readiness courses. Since its founding in 1973, IDRA has been at the forefront of legislative and litigation efforts to achieve equal educational opportunity through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

IDRA's fellowship was established to fund school finance research that builds cross-disciplinary and inter-sector perspectives on equity. Fellows dedicate themselves to a period of intense study and writing in school finance, culminating in an annual symposium that includes release of the fellow's research. The paper and findings will be published in the symposium proceedings and disseminated to the education research and policymaker community throughout the country.

Dr. Marialena Rivera was the 2016 José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow for the second round of the program. Her study, ["What about the Schools? - Factors Contributing to Expanded State Investment in School Facilities,"](#) was presented at IDRA's research symposium at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) conference in April 2017. Through case studies of five states, Dr. Rivera examined factors contributing to expanded state investment in equitable public school facilities and how those factors can be leveraged to encourage states that make minimal investments to expand support for facilities funding. Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas and Wyoming were the subjects of the case studies.



Dr. Oscar Jimenez-Castellanos was the 2014 José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow for the inaugural year of the program. The first symposium brought together more than 80 education and community leaders, and experts in law and education research around the critical question of how we can improve education quality and access for secondary English learner students. More information and videos of the event are online. See [Low Funding for Educating ELLs Affects Students Across Texas](#).



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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.