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New IDRA President & CEO Named

Celina Moreno, J.D., Will Assume New Role February 1, 2019

San Antonio (September 12, 2018) - IDRA is pleased to announce that Celina Moreno, J.D., has been selected as IDRA's new President & CEO. Ms. Moreno will begin the new role on February 1, 2019. She succeeds Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel who will retire at the end of January 2019 following 42 years of remarkable service to IDRA, including 26 years as its leader.

"We are happy to welcome Ms. Moreno back to IDRA, where she served as an executive program assistant a number of years ago," stated Mr. Juventino "Tino" Guerra, IDRA Board Chair. "Her expertise and passion for advocacy in education and civil rights has been the foundation of her career and will serve IDRA brilliantly as we move into this next era of work to achieve equal educational opportunity for all students."



Currently the interim Southwest Regional Counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), Ms. Moreno focuses on litigation and policy work serving several states, including Texas, Colorado and New Mexico. Over the years, she has co-lead with IDRA the Texas Latino Education Coalition, which was founded by IDRA to be an effective collaborative of organizations and individuals who advocate the rights of Latinos at the local, state and national levels.

"I am so pleased to welcome Celina back to IDRA," stated Dr. Robledo Montecel. "I know I will be leaving IDRA in excellent hands to carry IDRA's national voice for action and change in ways that benefit all children."

Ms. Moreno has analyzed legislation and advocated for the protection and promotion of civil rights in the areas of political access, education, immigration, employment and access to justice for the region. She has testified in numerous state legislative hearings on issues ranging from public school finance reform to immigrant rights. And she has led statewide coalitions to protect rights of students, voters and immigrants and co-chaired a coalition of business, religious and advocacy organizations that responded to harmful proposals for families and communities.

Prior to joining MALDEF, Ms. Moreno served as an attorney and Equal Justice Works Fellow at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA), where she directed the organization's School-to-Prison Pipeline Project, seeking to obstruct the forces channeling students from schools into the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.

Ms. Moreno received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, a law degree from the University of Houston, and a master's degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.

In consultation with the IDRA Board of Directors, Azzani Search Consultants conducted a national search for candidates that yielded interest from dozens of individuals. IDRA's board reviewed the top applicants, interviewed the finalists and selected Ms. Moreno as the next IDRA President & CEO.

Dr. Robledo Montecel will serve as IDRA's President Emeritus after her retirement and will assist Ms. Moreno during the transition period. With strong leadership since its founding in 1973 by Dr. José A. Cárdenas, IDRA this year is celebrating 45 years of working to secure equal educational opportunity for every child.

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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.