

Beat: Local

## National Puerto Rican Day Parade 2015

### A day of national pride for Puerto Rican

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**USPA NEWS** - The National Puerto Rican Day Parade is celebrated in honor of all Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico and all others who are residing in the United States and around the world. The first parade was held on April 13, 1958, in Spanish Harlem "El Barrio"<sup>[1]</sup>. It is the city's largest parade in New York.

Another National Puerto Rican Day Parade took place on Sunday, June 14th, 2015, from 11 AM to 5 PM on Fifth Avenue, from E. 44th street to E. 79th street. Hundreds of thousands of people packed New York City's Fifth Avenue for this historical parade, which was led by Governor Alejandro García Padilla, governor of Puerto Rico. Spectators began gathering around Fifth Ave., early Sunday morning, just to say "hola"<sup>[2]</sup> to their fellow countryman, who were marching on the Parade. Security was tight and all areas were well protected with both uniformed and undercover personnel.

The National Puerto Rican Day Parade is celebrated in honor of all Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico and all others who are residing in the United States and around the world. The first parade was held on April 13, 1958, in Spanish Harlem "El Barrio"<sup>[3]</sup>. The Parade promotes cultural awareness, education, leadership and community engagement among Puerto Ricans, according to the National Puerto Rican Day Parade Organization. This Parade is the city's largest parade and the second biggest public event after Labor Day.

National Puerto Rican Day Parade 2015 was a day of national pride for Puerto Ricans living around the world. We had celebrities, such as actress Roselyn Sánchez, Puerto Rico's Governor Alejandro García Padilla, and boxer Félix Verdejo, on the Parade. New York politicians including Bill de Blasio and others were also present at the Parade. This was a day filled with dancing, happiness and Puerto Rican pride. Everyone was waving the Puerto Rican flag and singing Puerto Rican songs.

This year, the National Puerto Rican Day Parade Organization wanted to honor two Tony-Winning Broadway Stars on this magnificent day, for their spectacular contribution to society and to the Puerto Rican community. It was a great pleasure to have, among us, Oscar, Emmy, Grammy and Tony-winning actress Rita Moreno and Tony Award winner Lin-Manuel Miranda. Rita Moreno served as the Parade's Grand Marshal. Community organizations joined the Parade on foot and on floats as well.

According to the National Puerto Rican Day Parade Organization (nprdpinc.org), they also wanted to honor the "Afro4Boricua Heritage and the State of Connecticut."<sup>[4]</sup> Furthermore, the National Puerto Rican Day Parade Organization Press Release stated that they wanted to launch "a new campaign in 2015 focused on the environmental, social and economic crisis at Caño Martín Peña, a 3.75 mile-long canal located at the heart of San Juan's metropolitan area, home to 8 communities with over 25,000 residents."<sup>[5]</sup>

On the other hand, Wikipedia has stated that "The theme of the 2015 parade will have a strong historical focus. The year 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Pedro Albizu Campos, who spent 25 years in prison and dedicated his entire life to the independence of Puerto Rico."<sup>[6]</sup>

Don Pedro Albizu Campos "alleged that he was the subject of human radiation experiments in prison and said that he could see colored rays bombarding him"<sup>[7]</sup>, according to Wikipedia.

Don Pedro was my neighbor when I was a child. Don Pedro Albizu Campos was a "Puerto Rican attorney and politician, and the leading figure in the Puerto Rican independence movement. Gifted in languages, he spoke six; graduating from Harvard Law School with the highest grade point average in his law class," according to Wikipedia. Wikipedia also stated that "During his time at Harvard University he became involved in the Irish struggle for independence."

My family visited Don Pedro when he was taken to the hospital and I saw all kind of sores all over his body. My father, a WWII veteran, told me that those sores were marks produced by radiation burns, whereas Albizu had been tortured by the American Government, according to his own words, when Albizu was serving time in prison. "Years after his death, it was confirmed that Albizu Campos had been tortured and experimented on with radiation, which led to his declining health and death"<sup>[8]</sup>, according to telesurtv.net.

At the end of day, everyone was chanting "What a beautiful flag!" in Spanish: "Qué bonita bandera, Qué bonita bandera, Qué bonita bandera es la bandera Puertorriqueña."

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**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

United Press Association, Inc.  
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168  
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA  
(702) 943.0321 Local  
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile  
[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)  
[info@gna24.com](mailto:info@gna24.com)  
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