



**For Immediate Release**

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**IndyCar Star Milka Duno Partners with MANA on Academic Excellence Program**

*Wal-Mart, State Farm and Southwest Airlines to support 'MANA Milka Way' Initiative*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 9, 2008) -- MANA, A National Latina Organization, with headquarters in Washington, DC, twenty five chapters and six affiliates across the nation, is pleased to announce a new partnership with Latina IndyCar Series® driver, Milka Duno. MANA Milka Way is an initiative whose mission is to inspire Hispanic youth to “Aim for the Stars” and achieve academic excellence with a heavy concentration on science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields of study.

This partnership was formally announced on Wednesday, July 9, 2008 at the LULAC National Convention in Washington, DC. Luncheon keynote speaker and namesake to the foundation, Milka Duno made the announcement while giving remarks to the approximately 300 Latino leaders in attendance.

"I can't think of a more appropriate place to announce an education initiative than at the LULAC convention, whose President, Rosa Rosales, continues to uphold education as a primary focus," said Milka Duno. "I am very passionate about education and I want to do everything that I can to inspire young people to study hard and aim for the stars."

Ms. Duno is best known as the first Latina to qualify for and race at the Indianapolis 500 and received the MANA Las Primeras® Award in 2006 for that outstanding accomplishment. She has always attributed her personal and professional successes to her education and has recently published a children's book, "Go, Milka, Go!" Having four masters' degrees in Organizational Development, Naval Architecture, Fishing and Aquaculture, and Maritime Business, three of which were earned simultaneously, Ms. Duno stands as a shining example of the strong influence that education and mentoring can have.

"Milka Duno is an outstanding individual and a role model who can help bring attention to the need for mentoring and educational achievement in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics among Hispanic youth. MANA is pleased to continue to bring innovative educational programming to the Hispanic community through this initiative and is exceedingly proud to partner with Milka Duno, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., State Farm Insurance Companies, and Southwest Airlines all of whom continue to work tirelessly for the betterment of youth," said Alma Morales Riojas, President and CEO of MANA.

MANA Milka Way will help enhance the HERMANITAS® program which empowers Latinas through education, leadership development, health and fitness, cultural awareness and community action. The program is designed to instill within future Latina leaders strong family and cultural values, integrity, self-esteem, self-awareness, pride and civic and cultural responsibility.

In addition, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., State Farm Insurance Companies, and Southwest Airlines have agreed to join the efforts as Founding Corporate Sponsors. Wal-Mart, State Farm and Southwest have

a long-standing commitment to closing the educational gap for students in the Hispanic community, evidenced in their generous contributions and continued support for education and mentoring programs throughout the United States.

For more information on MANA and the MANA Milka Way, please visit [www.herMANA.org](http://www.herMANA.org)

For more information on Milka Duno and MD Racing, please visit [www.milkaduno.com](http://www.milkaduno.com)

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***About MANA:** MANA, A National Latina Organization, is a nonprofit advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, DC. With chapters across the country, it is the oldest national Latina membership organization in the United States. MANA, whose mission is to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy, envisions a national community of informed Latina activists working to improve the quality of life for all Hispanics. MANA also has the only national Latina mentoring program for girls 11 to 18, known as "HERMANITAS®".*