



# SAVES

## Ms. Ira Guevara, Winner of ACE of Florida's 2008 Media Promotion of the Year

# Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Congratulations to Ira Guevara, editor of *El Paracaidista*, for being selected as the winner for the ACE of Florida 2008 Media Promotion of the Year. Ms. Guevara was presented with her award at the 18th Annual Adult and Community Educators (ACE) Conference during their Awards Brunch, held in Weston, FL in September. It was a special occasion where ACE selects those who go above and beyond in their efforts to improve the lives of adult learners. Ira Guevara's work for her creation, *El Paracaidista*, absolutely exemplifies this selfless spirit.



Ms. Ira Guevara (center)  
 (L to R) Dr. Alex Penn-Williams,  
 Mr. James F. Notter (Superintendent of Broward Schools), Mr. James Giompalo and Mr. Robert Breitbart.

As a little girl in Venezuela, Ira Guevara already embraced the passion for social work and helping others, volunteering to take care of younger children. She studied journalism as her profession, and made a vow to help the community. She graduated in 1994 and moved to South Florida to pursue career opportunities and face new challenges. She had worked for different magazines, then for Univision.com, Mia Films, and finally began, along with Cynthia Zak, *El Paracaidista*, in 2001.

*El Paracaidista*, (The Parachutist, a Newcomer's Guide) is a monthly orientation periodical in print and online ([www.elparacaidista.com](http://www.elparacaidista.com)) devoted to help residents of South Florida, as well as Hispanics elsewhere, navigate the system in the United States. Ms. Guevara's duties include research, interviews, production of articles, and supervision of photography, layout design for the paper and the website, along with its maintenance. Ira also develops content agreements with local, national and international media, and establishes work agreements with governmental, educational and community associations. This includes the SAVES Program, which advertises in and has been recognized by *El Paracaidista* for the excellent educational opportunities and services SAVES provides to the refugee, parolee, entrant and asylee community.

Ira Guevara takes part in community and M-DCPS events, such as employment and health fairs, to reach out to the community. There, she and her team provide guidance and orientation information. She also presents the "*Seminarios de Revalidación de Títulos*", created in 2004 to help professional Hispanic immigrants navigate the licensing process in Florida so they may obtain their certification to work again in their fields. These seminars have been an invaluable contribution to the community, and they reflect this through the professionalism with which they are conducted for an audience that is so needy for honest and well-grounded information.

Yahoo! en Español awarded [www.elparacaidista.com](http://www.elparacaidista.com) the Worldwide Prize "Best Website in Spanish" in 2003 for its excellent journalistic articles, high traffic volume, and quality of design., and The Miami New Times awarded *El Paracaidista* the "The Best of Miami" in "Best Resource for Recent Arrivals" category in 2002. Ira Guevara can now add the ACE of Florida award to her list.

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For more success stories, go to <http://saves.dadeschools.net>

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