
WELCOME HOME RICK NEGRON!

Former AMS student and respected celebrity returns to AMS!



Mr. Negrón plays King George III in the Tony Award winning musical *Hamilton*.

By Sofia Altamirano, Sofia Calderon, Adriana Rodriguez

Antilles Middle School had the exciting privilege of welcoming the esteemed actor and its very own Boricua and Pirate, Mr. Rick Negrón. This talented artist is currently portraying King George III in the distinguished and critically acclaimed Broadway play, *Hamilton*, but Mr. Negrón's fame goes back even further, as far back as the era of Michael Jackson! Did you know that he danced in the music video 'Bad' with Michael Jackson? He also acted in Lin-Manuel Miranda's breakout Broadway musical, *In The Heights*.

Rick Negrón has a long history with DODEA. Not only did he attend all 3 DODEA Puerto Rico schools but his mother, aunt, and uncle were all teachers at Antilles Middle School. He graduated from Antilles High School with AES teacher, Ms. Calenzani and they remained friends. It is through her support we were all able to enjoy Mr. Negrón's visit to our schools.

When asked about his DODEA experience, Mr. Negrón shared with the students that his being a student in the Antilles schools set him up for success. He believes that studying in a host nation, enjoying its diversity and learning two languages allowed him to succeed in a global world. He considers himself very lucky to be a DODEA student. And we consider ourselves very lucky to have received a visit from him!

“A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.” Colin Powell

Positive Messages for AMS students

Mr. Dan Ausbury

Negrón delivered a positive message to students that was obviously heart-felt and certainly connected to our students' concerns and aspirations. Success comes from focus, hard work and discipline. Our students need more Rick Negróns to inspire them with that message and lead them forward.



AMS Journalism & AVID classes enjoying a private audience with Mr. Negrón.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Barbara Castro

Mr. Negrón's message on perseverance and hard work was perfect for our students. Any student wishing to master an instrument or a skill of any kind needs self-discipline. How do you get to Carnegie Hall: PRACTICE, PRACTICE, and PRACTICE!!! Unfortunately the only skill many students practice nowadays is the art of video gaming. Parents would be wise to allow the gaming only when all else is done, not before starting homework, music practice or chores.

I agree with Mr. Negrón's message to our student's about success! They must work hard, have discipline, read, and persevere. It is a message that is very important for our kids to hear. Mr. Negrón's talk to the kids was very inspirational!

Mr. Negrón graciously receiving a key chain of a crown representing his role as King George III.



Rick Negrón Visits The Students at AMS by Lukas Bramsen



On January 24, 2019, the students at AMS were lucky enough to have Rick Negrón, an alumni of our schools, come back to visit us. He talked about his career, college, and life experiences that shaped his success. We learned that Mr. Negrón loved acting early on and started acting in school plays when he was ten years old. It was exciting to discover that his acting career started at the Antilles Elementary School! Mr. Negrón has performed in numerous productions such as *In The Heights*, *Hamilton*, *Mamma Mia*, and was even in Michael Jackson’s music video, “*Bad*”. He talked to the students about his motivation and attitude and encouraged kids to see school as fun. Mr. Negrón emphasized that books are very important for our education and that they’re really fun to read. He stressed the idea that “Books are the gateway to your future.” His visit was very inspiring. He shared so much including why it’s important to take risks. I really liked how he said failure was a key part of success.

After his presentation, he took questions from the students in the audience. The students asked very good questions. We learned that success does not happen overnight. Mr. Negrón used to work as a waiter in New York and catered events in order to pay his bills while he was trying to build his acting career. He said that hard work, discipline, and never giving up, are very important to succeeding in life.

Mr. Negrón also talked to us about his role as King George III in *Hamilton*. It was fascinating to learn all about the behind the scene details. He told us that he got the role of King George because they needed an older person for the role and he fit the part. He shared that his crown is so heavy and his cape chokes him. These two elements require that he hold his cape away from his neck, keep his head straight, and walk very stiff. This actually helps him because it forces him to walk like a king would really walk; slow, stiff, and straight.



During his presentation he was even kind enough to sing for us one of his songs from *Hamilton*, “You’ll be Back.” The students loved hearing him sing!

At the end of the presentation Mr. Negrón received an official AMS school shirt along with a plaque. Everyone in the audience felt proud and happy to share with him a piece of our school. He was also very happy to receive the gifts from us.



Once a pirate, always a pirate!

Thank you letters from kids to Mr. Negrón:

By: Adriana Rodriguez

On behalf of the entire Antilles Middle School community, we would like to express our enormous gratitude to you, Mr. Negrón, for continuing to care and remember where you came from. We are so proud of your success. You are an inspiration to each of us here today. The fact that you took time to be here with us, despite your heavy schedule, means a lot to all of us. As a student, it means a lot to me to have you here because I can learn from your experiences and take your advice to support my dreams and goals. We are so grateful that you are part of the Antilles family, and that you, Mr. Negrón, never forgot your roots. Thank you for showing us that fame is attainable, and that staying humble, kind, and giving back, is an even greater form of fame.



AMS students thank Mr. Negrón for his visit and give him an official AMS shirt!



By Sofia Barreiro

Dear Mr. Negron,

Thank you for coming to our school. Your visit enriched our lives. You inspired us by sharing your college and career experiences. The students walked away motivated and really thinking about their future.

I used to think that celebrities let fame go to their heads, causing them to forget their roots. I no longer believe this because of your visit. Your talk not only taught us to become academically wiser, but it showed us to always be proud of where we are from and to give back when we can.

I would also like to really thank you for sharing your good advice in such a kind and comfortable way. Throughout your presentation your voice was happy and encouraging. Your sincerity made me admire you so very much. Knowing that such a

famous and well known actor was getting down to a middle schooler's level just to convey his message in the most effective way possible, is truly incredible. It made us feel so much more special, important, and valued than you could ever imagine.

Lastly, I would really like to thank you for taking time out of your busy day just to come to AMS and talk to us about your college and career experiences. When you shared that you worked long days and nights and also on weekends and that your only day off is Monday, I felt even more grateful and proud that you would still come visit us despite such a busy schedule. I am proud that you still remember that you are a Buccaneer and a Pirate. Thank you for giving back Mr. Negron and caring enough to visit us. I know I speak for so many when I say that your visit was one that we will remember forever. Just know that there aren't words that can describe how much we appreciate the time you gave us. Thank you again, Mr. Negrón!!

"I am proud that you still remember that you are a Buccaneer and a Pirate." Sofia Barreiro 7th Grader AMS Student

A visit becomes and inspiration

By Nora Cruz



On January 24th, I was extremely lucky to have asked a very important question to a very important person. I was able to ask Rick Negrón (King George III) whether at any point in his acting career, he ever felt like giving up. His answer was very inspiring. He said that there was a time he did feel like giving up. He lived through a six-month period where he did not get any role and

because of this, his agent

let him go. However, he kept his hope and never gave up. He was able to do commercials and voice overs and finally, because of his perseverance, he got bigger roles in other productions such as *"In the Heights"*. As he spoke to us, I felt inspired about my own acting dreams and about working hard and taking risks.



Q & A's with Mr. Negrón and the AMS Journalism and AVID students.

THE EXCITEMENT WAS PALPABLE!



Ms. Castro sporting a Hamilton cap



The team of escorts are all SMILES!



Anxiously awaiting Mr. Negrón's visit! (Ms. Williams, Ms. Ramy, and Ms. Sandoval)



Bellas Artes Performing Arts Center is all lit and ready to receive the thousands who have come to watch Lin Manuel Marin bring *Hamilton* home!



8th grade student, Laurimar Baez posing with Mr. Negrón!



Photo credit: Ms. Ellen Fox in Yauco

Hollywood rolls out its red carpet, Puerto Rico rolls out its “bandera!”



Teachers were just as excited as the kids!



Many hoped to get tickets....

only a few succeeded!

The following members of our community were among the lucky few that were able to attend the Hamilton Puerto Rico performance in Bellas Artes Puerto Rico.

- Ms. Williams
- Ms. Giraud
- Ms. Castro
- Ms. Ruiz
- Ms. Ramy
- Ms. Cruz
- Ms. Sandoval
- Ms. Cuba
- Ms. Soldevila
- Ms. Melendez and family
- Ms. Gonzalez and Husband
- Jose Claudio
- Jedaleys
- Kamilha Soto - 6th Grade
- Alondra Hernandez - 8th grade
- Fabiola Arroyo - 8th grade



In their words...

Barbara Castro

Hamilton was by far the most inspiring story, had the most emotional songs, the most erudite, clever, rhyming lyrics I've ever heard in a musical. The rap beat served as a vehicle to reinforce repeated sounds and word endings which made me marvel at how Lin Manuel had managed to find so many perfect words to rhyme with each other and still tell the story accurately. I am reading the biography of Hamilton by Ron Chernow that Lin Manuel based his musical on and I have to say he sticks to the biographer's facts very closely. Playing Hamilton he BECAME Hamilton, bringing to life a person nearly forgotten in history and highlighting all his achievements and family life in an exciting way. History came alive!! It was an energizing experience!!! I would recommend it to anyone over age 8!!



Mrs. Ramy

Watching the creative reenactment of our nation's beginning and witnessing the joy and excitement that *Hamilton* in Puerto Rico brought to our shores, was one of those lifetime experiences I will always remember. Being in Bellas Artes on the last day of the show and having the privilege to be part of such a historic event, made me feel very patriotic. I have lived in Puerto Rico for 21 years. I raised my children here, taught hundreds of Puerto Rican kids, visited so many beautiful corners of this island, and ached deeply alongside every Puerto Rican when Hurricane Maria struck this beautiful island. When Lin Manuel took the final bow and waved the Puerto Rican flag, I teared up with the same pride and love that every Puerto Rican in the audience felt in that moment. It was all so moving.

Ms. Vanessa Ruiz

"I feel fortunate to have been able to see and feel the magic of *Hamilton PR*"!
"Truly an experience I will never forget."





Ms. Melendez & family

Hamilton was a big opportunity for Puerto Rico, not only because it shed positive light on our island, but also because it gave the people of Puerto Rico an opportunity to be part of something so educational, so beautiful and so powerful.

Ms. Sanchez, AES

Attending the musical *Hamilton* was an awesome experience. I love musicals and seeing *Hamilton* in Puerto Rico was an exciting experience for me. I wish more people could have seen the musical but I appreciate being among the lucky few who was able to enjoy all the energy and emotion of the whole experience.



Wanda Billoch, AES



It has been the best weekend of my life. The perfect birthday gift...to watch *Hamilton* with Lin Manuel and Rick Negrón in the cast! This event meant a lot to this 63-year old, especially when inside this body hides a lady who loves music since she was a little girl. As a teacher, I am glad to have this musical as another tool to induce students to imagine, dream, research.

I am grateful that Rick Negrón so graciously agreed to share precious time from his busy schedule to be with us. This noble (pun intended) gesture has initiated the spark that will provoke a key ingredient in the learning process of our students; curiosity. It is so exciting when we see in our students the desire to learn more about history, new careers, and new ventures. Learning has no limits!

Ms. Billoch and Ms. Ramirez

Hamilton in Puerto Rico: A Teacher's Perspective

By Elena Ortiz, 8th grade student

Ms. Gonzalez, an occupational therapist in the Antilles Middle School, had the pleasure of seeing the Hamilton play last Sunday. She had to wait almost 5 hours in a line, but the wait was made short by the eager and enthusiastic crowd waiting to also purchase tickets.



Hamilton is already a huge hit worldwide, but it resonated deeply within the hearts of Puerto Ricans because of the appearance of the one and only Lin-Manuel Miranda. Ms. Gonzalez recalled that when he first walked up on stage, the show came to a stop with the jubilant standing ovation of the audience. Mr. Miranda was touched by the warm welcome from the audience evidenced by him placing his hand over his heart in gratitude.

What makes this musical so special is the mixing of the music from hip hop to rap to tell our nation's story. The musical achieved a rather impressive feat by making history come alive with modern hip hop and rap beats. According to Ms. Gonzalez, the historical content of the show makes it especially interesting to middle school students because of its ties to US History.

Ms. Gonzalez believes that the play lived up to all of her expectations, and that it was very refreshing to see a fellow Puerto Rican showing patriotism for his hometown in such a creative and unique way.

EVERYONE HAD HAMILTON FEVER!



Bellas Artes Performing Arts Center ready for Hamilton!



**Ms. Cruz:
"JUST AWESOME!!!!"**



**Maribel Campbell, AES
"Extraordinary" experience!"**



**Eva Coriano, AES
"We were so lucky to be able to take a photo with Rick Negrón!"**



AES teacher, Cary Wright and her son on opening night.

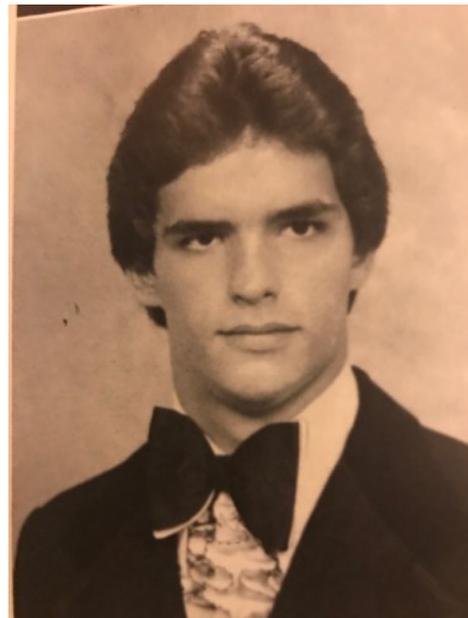
“We were blessed to have won lottery tickets. It was an AMAZING experience! I feel so proud to be Puerto Rican.”

*Fabiola Arroyo
8th grade AMS student*



THANK YOU MS. CALENZANI

On behalf of both Antilles Elementary School and Antilles Middle School we would all like to extend our gratitude to Ms. Calenzani for her big role in bringing Mr. Negrón to our schools. This was an unforgettable experience that each of us will cherish for many years. The magic of the Hamilton in Puerto Rico experience was made complete with Mr. Negrón's visit to our schools. For the many who could not get tickets to the show, this was almost, if not, better than going. We got a personal show and an inspirational message from a kind, humble and caring superstar!



Ms. Calenzani and Mr. Negrón's Senior picture at
ANTILLES HIGH SCHOOL!