



## **CITIZEN EQUALITY INITIATIVE INTRODUCED DURING BARBOSA CELEBRATION IN NYC**

The Council participated in a celebration of the life Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa in New York City, July 27 with the Center for Puerto Rico Equality and Advancement (CPREA) and the Puerto Rico Statehood Students Association (PRSSA). The event, entitled “A Celebration of the Life, Work and Legacy of Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa” took place in Midtown New York City and was hosted by Mr. Jim Montes of Nixon Peabody LLP. Council Executive Director Justin O’Brien represented the Council at the event and was joined by Jorge Torruella (NYU) of PRSSA. CPREA President Rafael Rodriguez served as the master of ceremonies for the event.

The Council and its cause partners used the occasion of Dr. Barbosa’s birthday to introduce attendees to their soon to be launched joint educational campaign for Citizen Equality and unveiled their. A formal launch of the joint campaign will take place at a date to be determined.

### **Presentation on the Barbosa Legacy**

Ms. Soraya Rodriguez Capo de Balzac delivered well-received remarks on Dr. Barbosa’s life and his dedication to the ideals of equality for Puerto Ricans and Puerto Rico within the union of the United States. Born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico and educated as a physician at the University of Michigan, Dr. Barbosa was a believer in the promise of the United States ideal and a foremost proponent of Puerto Rico’s full integration to the United States as a full and equal state of the union. Dr. Barbosa (1857-1921) was a tireless advocate for the admission of Puerto Rico as a state, recognizing the union as an opportunity for all Puerto Ricans to gain and maintain equality and equal citizenship and at the same time be assured of political representation with fully represented self-government. Dr. Barbosa was the founder of the Puerto Rico Republican Statehood Party and is recognized as the father of the Puerto Rico statehood movement.



### **Citizen Equality Campaign**

The national education campaign in partnership with SequentialT centers on a ‘wearable social network’ concept in which the ideals of Dr. Barbosa are exposed to the public to contrast the

continued inequality that Puerto Ricans have been forced to endure for 112 years. T-shirts bearing Dr. Barbosa's likeness and message of equality for Puerto Ricans along with Sequential T™ unique numbering of the shirts. A macro number describes global support of socially responsible causes. A special campaign number will describe the level of support for the Citizen Equality Campaign. Through its unique numbering sequence, Sequential T creates virtual eco-friendly petitions for advancing socially responsible causes.

In his remarks during the activity, Council Executive Director Justin O'Brien noted that the joint campaign and collaboration would serve to build bridges and awareness outside the Puerto Rican community and that of the pro-equality faithful.

It will also expose uninformed citizens about Dr. Barbosa and his ideals, and the unequal conditions that Puerto Ricans live under due to the current unequal territorial status of the island. Puerto Rico has been a territory of the United States since 1898. Although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, under territorial status they are not permitted to elect a full complement of voting representative to the United States House of Representatives. Instead, they are permitted to elect a non-voting delegate to the U.S. House. Puerto Ricans do not have any representation in the United States Senate and they are not permitted to vote in presidential elections.

Learn more about the joint educational campaign at [CitizenEquality.org](http://CitizenEquality.org), via the Council's webpages at [PRStatehood.org](http://PRStatehood.org), or via Facebook at [facebook.com/USCPRS](https://facebook.com/USCPRS)