

## SESAME STREET STAR DISCUSSES VALUING DIVERSITY

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**Sonia Manzano**, who played the character Maria in the popular children's series, addressed 125 people on campus in February 2007, delivering a presentation on valuing diversity in the classroom. She also discussed the life of pre-schoolers post-9/11 and provided information on teaching children to deal with issues like loss and grief.

The program, sponsored by Rivier's Office of Student Life and the Student Government Association, attracted Rivier students, faculty, and local teachers. "She was very well received," says **Paula Randazza**, Assistant Vice President for Student Development. After the presentation, Manzano spent time answering questions about her views on education, as well as personal questions about her time on *Sesame Street*.

Manzano became a positive role model for millions of children when she accepted the role of Maria in the 1970s, when the show began including a greater range of ethnicities. She has 13 Emmy Awards to date as part of the *Sesame Street* writing staff, and has been nominated twice for an Emmy as Outstanding Performer in a Children's Series. She has also written a children's book, "No Dogs Allowed," and a parenting column for the Sesame Workshop website. ■

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