



PRESS RELEASE

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MLB MANAGERS JOE ESPADA, CARLOS MENDOZA RETURN TO PENSACOLA ROOTS FOR COMMUNITY FORUM

PENSACOLA, FL – The Pensacola Blue Wahoos announced Tuesday that Houston Astros manager Joe Espada and New York Mets manager Carlos Mendoza will participate in “An Evening with Joe and Carlos: From the Pensacola Pelicans to Major League Managers” at the Brownsville Community Center on Friday, February 6.

The event will mark a long-awaited return to Pensacola for both Espada and Mendoza, who shared an infield and host family as teammates for the independent Pensacola Pelicans in 2004 and 2005. The success of the Pelicans, both on the field and in the community, paved the way for the construction of Blue Wahoos Stadium and the arrival of affiliated professional baseball in 2012.

“As the former owner of the Pelicans, I am one of the many fans who stayed in contact with Joe and Carlos over the years,” said Blue Wahoos owner Quint Studer. “In December at the Winter Meetings, they shared with me how much they loved Pensacola. While it was a long shot with Spring Training starting, I invited them to return so our fans could express appreciation for their time in Pensacola and how they continue to pay homage to our community.”

Espada enters his third year managing the Astros after winning a World Series championship as the club’s bench coach from 2018 to 2022. The Puerto Rico native attended the University of Mobile before a nine-year MiLB career that included time in the Athletics, Marlins, Rockies, Royals, Cardinals, Rangers and Devil Rays organizations. After ending his playing career with the Pelicans in 2004 and 2005, Espada served on the coaching staffs of the Marlins (2010-13) and Yankees (2015-17).

Mendoza enters his third year managing the Mets after serving as an infield and bench coach for the Yankees from 2018 to 2023. The Venezuela native played two seasons for the Pelicans in the middle of a decade-long MiLB career in the Giants and Yankees organizations. His coaching career began in 2009, working in player development in the Yankees organization and eventually managing the GCL Yankees and Charleston RiverDogs.

The event will be moderated by retired WEAR sports director Dan Shugart, who covered both Espada and Mendoza during their time with the Pelicans. Doors open at 5:30, and the forum will run from 6:00 to 7:00.

Admission is free, though a ticket is required for admittance. Fans are encouraged to reserve their tickets in advance at bluewahoos.com.

The Blue Wahoos begin their 2026 season on Friday, April 3 as they welcome the Montgomery Biscuits, Double-A affiliate of the Tampa Bay Rays, to Blue Wahoos Stadium. For ticket information, visit bluewahoos.com or call the box office at (850) 934-8444.

The Pensacola Blue Wahoos are the Double-A affiliate of the Miami Marlins. Founded in 2012, they have won Southern League Championships in 2017 and 2022. Their mission is to create memorable experiences.