On the day that Bernie Williams had his No. 51 retired and saw the plaque bearing his likeness that will hang forever in Monument Park unveiled, the 46-year-old smiled as he stood on the Yankee Stadium infield. Not only did he appreciate the love that his family, friends, former teammates and a Sunday crowd of more than 45,000 fans showered upon him, but he could feel the positive energy that millions of fellow Puerto Ricans directed his way.

During his induction speech, Williams reflected on his journey, stating how proud he was to represent Puerto Rico. That pride went both ways. From San Juan to the Bronx and everywhere in between, seeing Williams take his place among the Yankees’ pantheon of legends was an extraordinary feeling.

“I feel] extremely proud, absolutely,” said Yankees third base coach Joe Espada, a native of Santurce, Puerto Rico. “Anytime we have a Puerto Rican reach the major league level, a player or coach, it’s huge, but when you wear the pinstripes, it’s a little bit bigger. Having Bernie — his face — put in Monument Park is great. We’re proud of him.”

Hiram Williams felt much the same way, reflecting on the countless hours that their father spent hitting buckets of balls to the two brothers. When asked about the significance of the day’s events in Puerto Rico, where he is a lawyer, Hiram proudly took out his phone and displayed a photo of one of the 50 billboards that went up around the island congratulating Bernie on this accomplishment.

“It’s big,” said Hiram Williams, who is a year and three days younger than his brother. “He was also recognized by the legislature; the House of Representatives and the Senate. That happened before we came. Baseball’s still big in Puerto Rico, and Bernie’s sort of a national hero.”

The current Yankees lined up along the top rail of the dugout to watch the ceremony prior to the 8 p.m. game. Dellin Betances, who grew up a Yankees fan in Lower Manhattan and is of Dominican descent, was especially interested to see the man he called “the ultimate winner” be honored.

“It’s special for the Latin community to have one of their own go into Monument Park,” Betances said. “We all know the meaning and the significance of being put in there, so it’s something special for those guys, and I’m just happy to be around to watch it.”

After his speech ended and he threw out the game’s ceremonial first pitch, Williams spoke to the media, where he explained why he felt so proud to represent Puerto Rico and what impact he hoped his induction might have on the next generation of ballplayers there.

“I hope it has a profound impact on young players who see my example as a person that was pretty much the same — with the same upbringing — who didn’t grow up wealthy,” Williams said. “The sports part is something that everybody can relate to. The hard work and the discipline; it’s not always easy. It’s a hard road, but it’s not impossible. To me, that’s the most important thing that I wanted to relay out there. A young kid sees me out there talking about how important for me it was to be representing my island and my country, in this melting pot that is New York. To make it here, and to be successful, with my upbringing, it can be possible for anybody. I hope it really impacts people and they see that they can do it.”

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