

2019 *Distinguished* HISPANIC OHIOAN



Ohio

Latino Affairs
Commission

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2019

Distinguished
HISPANIC OHIOAN

AWARDEES



DISTINGUISHED HISPANIC OHIOAN

Angel Colón (Cincinnati)

Amy García (Bedford Heights)

José Luna (Holland)

Julio Mateo (Dayton)

Hector Medina (Mason)

Jorge Pérez (Cincinnati)

Yahaira Rose (Columbus)

Mary Lou Reyes (Youngstown)

Victor Ruiz (Cleveland)



NUESTRA FAMILIA "OUR FAMILY"

Dr. Christopher Babiuch (Lorain)

General Electric Hispanic Forum
Cincinnati Chapter

Nationwide Children's Hospital
(Columbus)

Nueva Esperanza Community Credit
Union (Toledo)

Rocking Horse Community Health
Center (Springfield)

Inna Simakovsky (Columbus)

Suzanne Smaltz (Copley)

Bryan Wright (Cincinnati)



MILITARY SERVICE OF DISTINCTION

Walter Bustelo, US Air Force Colonel
(Dayton)

Ezequiel Villa, US Air Force
Technical Sergeant (Toledo)



2019
Distinguished
HISPANIC OHIOAN
PROGRAM

WELCOME PERFORMANCE

Miss Ohio Latinas

COLOR GUARD

Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Tony Simms-Howell

National Anthem: Karen Labra

WELCOME

Mary Santiago, Chair, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Lilleana Cavanaugh, Executive Director, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

NUESTRA FAMILIA AWARDS

Dan Molina, Vice Chair, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Lilleana Cavanaugh, Executive Director, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Invocation

COMMISSIONER JUAN RIVERA

DINNER BREAK & ENTERTAINMENT

Singer: Karen Labra

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Judge Marylin Zayas

DISTINGUISHED HISPANIC OHIOANS AWARDS

Mary Santiago, Chair, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Lilleana Cavanaugh, Executive Director, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

LATINO MILITARY SERVICE AWARDS

Commissioner Michael Florez, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Lilleana Cavanaugh, Executive Director, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

CLOSING

Mary Santiago, Chair, Ohio Latino Affairs Commission



The mission of NiSource **GOLD (Generating Opportunities for Latinos and Diversity)** is to live the values of inclusion and diversity by promoting the advancement, professional development, recruitment and retention of Latinos within NiSource by creating strong relationships among all employees and providing a professional network with an emphasis on diversity, cultural awareness, education and professional excellence.

*2019 Distinguished
Hispanic Ohioan Awardee*



YAHAIRA PÉREZ-CARABALLO

*Congratulations from the
Dominican Sisters of Peace and Associates!
We are proud of you!*



Latino Affairs Commission

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Lilleana Cavanaugh, MBA, Director 42nd Board of Commissioners

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Aurora

Michael Florez
Cincinnati

Dr. Elena Foulis
Columbus

Gregory Guzmán, Ph.D.
Maumee

Manuel Lopez-Ramirez, MBA
Springfield

Rev. Juan Rivera
Campbell

V. Anthony Simms-Howell
Cincinnati

Emanuel Torres
Columbus

Tina Maharath
State Senator
District 3 ~ Franklin County

Nathan Manning
State Senator
District 13 ~ Lorain & Huron

Jessica Miranda
State Representative
District 28 ~ Hamilton County

Rick Perales
State Representative
District 73 ~ Greene County

Honored Guests,

On behalf of Governor DeWine and our Board of Commissioners, I am honored to welcome you to the Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Awards Celebration. Congratulations to all our Awardees!

Our partners will be recognized today with the Nuestra Familia Awards; outstanding Latinos will receive the Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Awards, and those serving or who have served in the military will be acknowledged with the Latino Military Service of Distinction Awards. These leaders and organizations demonstrate the collective commitment to invest in our communities, to rely on solid value systems and heritage and to ensure that together we build a safer and better future for all in Ohio. At a time when the national narrative is reframing the importance of Latinos for their economic and demographic impact, we also see how our culture, art, and values are permeating many stages in society for the better.

Indeed, we are honored to share with you the many dimensions of Hispanic/Latino/Latinx leaders and acknowledge their impact from the shores of Lake Erie to the Ohio River and everywhere in between. Together, they inspire our communities to thrive, connect, support and build each other as we prepare for important civic engagement efforts including the upcoming elections and the 2020 Census.

In closing, we want to thank all our partners for supporting tonight's event and joining us to celebrate each of our outstanding awardees.

Sincerely,

Mary Santiago
Chair



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OUR MISSION

- TO ADVISE** State Government on issues affecting Hispanic Ohioans
- TO BUILD** the diverse Latino communities across the state
- TO CONNECT** the capacity of community organizations so they may better serve the fast growing population of Ohio

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Emanuel Torres
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Dr. Elena Foulis
Columbus



Manuel Lopez
Springfield



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Aurora

OUR LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS



**Senator
Tina Maharath**
District 3



**Senator
Nathan Manning**
District 13



**Representative
Jessica Miranda**
District 28



**Representative
Rick Perales**
District 73

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Lilleana Cavanaugh, MBA, CPM
Executive Director



Carly McCain
Public Policy Officer



Lair Marin-Marcum
Community Liaison



Annette Reyes
Administrative Professional



Mary Grace Sanchez
Organizations Development
Coordinator
AmeriCorps Vista



Caeli Barnes
Outreach & Social Media
AmeriCorps Vista

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This award recognition was made possible through the hard work and dedication of H.O.L.A, an internal employee resource group committed to cultivating a culturally inclusive environment where Hispanic/Latino employees, families and patients are valued and treated with respect.



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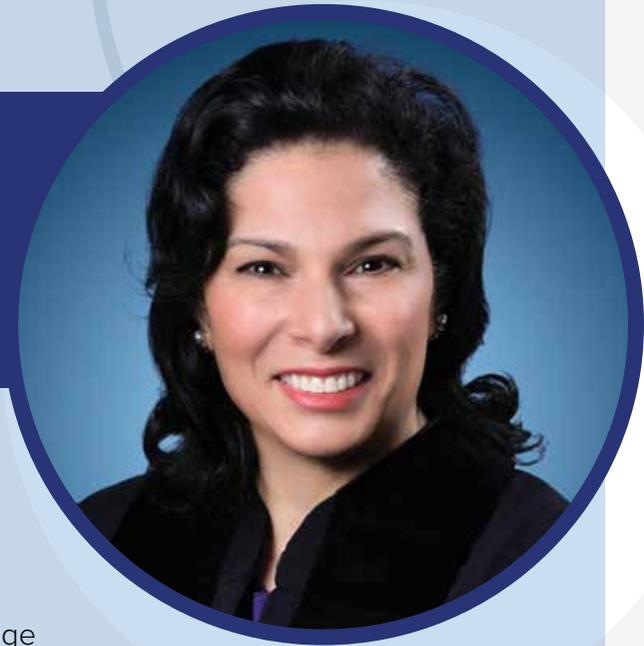
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HONDA
The Power of Dreams

Keynote Speaker

Judge Marilyn Zayas



Judge Marilyn Zayas is one of sixty-nine judges who serve at the Ohio Court of Appeals. She was elected to the First Appellate District in 2016 and re-elected in 2018. She is the first Latina elected to any Ohio Court of Appeals, the highest-ranking Latina judge in Ohio, and the first Latina judge to sit on any Ohio Supreme Court case.

Judge Zayas is a 2019 YWCA *Career Women of Achievement* award recipient, the recipient of the prestigious University of Cincinnati College of Law 2017 Nicholas Longworth, III Alumni Achievement Award, and was awarded the LULAC Women's National Convention Service and Commitment Award in 2014 and the Ohio Commission of Hispanic and Latino Affairs, Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan Award in 2013.

Judge Marilyn Zayas grew up in a tough New York City neighborhood. Her dad worked in a printing shop and her mom worked as a seamstress in a garment factory. Judge Zayas overcame numerous obstacles to earn a college degree in computer science. She made Cincinnati her home in 1988 when she came to work for Procter & Gamble. She left P&G in 1994 to pursue her dream to become a lawyer.

Prior to joining the First Appellate District of Ohio, Judge Zayas served the community as an attorney for nearly 20 years. In 2001, she founded a private practice and built a strong reputation by successfully handling complex cases. She has an extensive legal background including: investor, business and family immigration law; intellectual property; labor and employment; criminal; and juvenile law. Judge Zayas has practiced in numerous courts, including state and federal trial and appellate courts.

Judge Zayas created the "*Educating Tomorrow's Leaders*" program, an educational program for high school students. The program invites students to the Court of Appeals to interact with judges and attorneys, learn about the law, and inspire them to dream big. Judge Zayas is committed to promoting accessibility and accountability through student outreach and community forums.



Nuestra Familia



Christopher Babiuch, MD

Cleveland Clinic Community Care, Cleveland

Christopher Babiuch, MD, is a Family Medicine Physician practicing in Lorain and Wellington where he is the Section Head for Family Medicine. Dr. Babiuch specializes in primary care of the entire family from newborns to the elderly. He is Dr. Babiuch attended college at Miami University, earned his Medical Degree from University of Toledo College of Medicine and completed residency at the MacNeal Family Medicine Residency in Berwyn, Illinois where he served as Chief Resident.

Dr. Babiuch is currently the Medical Director for Specialty Integration for Cleveland Clinic Community Care. In this position he is leading efforts in collaboration between primary care teams with hospitals and specialty care teams to provide ever improving, high quality, cost effective care. Dr. Babiuch is past Medical Director of the Lorain Family Health Center from 2016-2019 where he oversaw growth in medical services to the community and lead two Successful Minority Men's Health Fairs, providing health screenings for several hundred men. He also teaches the next generation of medical students as Assistant Professor of Family Medicine for Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, Ohio University Heritage college of Medicine and Case Western Reserve University.

Dr. Babiuch is Passionate about improving the health of all members of the Lorain County Community. He has pursued this as former member of the Lorain County Board of Mental Health, involvement with Lorain County Community Health Improvement Plan and current Chair of United Way of Greater Lorain County Campaign Cabinet.



Nuestra Familia

General Electric

Hispanic Forum Cincinnati Chapter, Cincinnati



GE's Hispanic Forum Cincinnati Chapter (GEHF Cincinnati Hub) was formed in 1998 with a focus to attract, retain and develop Hispanic talent and increase Hispanic community outreach. GE's Hispanic Forum Cincinnati Hub has grown from a founding group of 5 GE Hispanics to over 500 members today of both Hispanic and non-Hispanic descent and is currently GE's 2nd largest Hispanic Forum Hub in the US. The GEHF Cincinnati Hub has won the prestigious recognition of the best Hispanic Hub within the General Electric Company 7 times at a national level. This award recognizes all the work around attracting, retaining and developing Hispanic talent and its impact on the community through the years. In addition to membership growth, the GEHF Cincinnati Hub has built strategically important relationships with community organizations such as the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Hispanic Scholarship Fund and the Cincinnati Hispanic Chamber, among others. Since its inception, the GEHF Cincinnati Hub has made connecting with the community a vital and existential priority. Hub members have staged countless community enriching events such as STEM, tutoring and parent/teacher support groups, among others. In addition, has built partnership with other community members to increase the outreach and drive Hispanic talent to the Cincinnati community.



Nuestra Familia



**NATIONWIDE
CHILDREN'S®**

When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Columbus

Nationwide Children's Hospital opened in 1892 with 9 patient beds, which quickly grew to 15 beds. In 1923, the cornerstone for the new hospital was laid, and in 1924, the new hospital opened accommodating 75 patients with the ability to expand to 150 beds immediately (eventually going to 300 beds).

NCH is a primary pediatric hospital with more than 1,379 medical staff members and over 11,909 total employees. In recent years, the hospital has been ranked as one of America's Best Children's Hospitals by US News & World Report. It is also the pediatric teaching hospital for The Ohio State University College of Medicine.

In 2018, Nationwide Children's Hospital had 18,128 inpatient discharges, performed 38,036 surgeries and saw 1,468,343 outpatient visits. The hospital system has 125 specialties within its main downtown campus and its 34 outpatient care centers throughout the central Ohio area. These include sixteen Close To Home Centers, which offer diagnostic and therapeutic services, and eleven Primary Care Centers, which offer primary care check-ups for children from birth to age 18.

The hospital provides "family centered care", focusing on the family's needs, as well as the child's, to promote and maintain the health of the child in the context of the family and community.



Nuestra Familia



Toledo

Nueva Esperanza Community Credit Union (NECCU) was chartered in 2010 to provide bilingual financial services to the largely underserved Hispanic population in Toledo and surrounding counties. NECCU is the first Latino Community Credit Union in the state of Ohio and the 3rd in the nation. NECCU is a community member owned low-income designated financial institution offering savings and loans. Chartered in 2010 with less than 10 members, it currently has over \$2 million in assets, close to \$2 million in loans and over 800 members.

NECCU was awarded the Louise Herring Philosophy-In-Action Award. The award recognizes credit unions that do an extraordinary job incorporating credit union philosophy into daily operations. Louise Herring started numerous credit unions and believed strongly in applying credit union philosophy as an operating principle. NECCU received first place in 2016 in the state of Ohio and also at the national level.

In 2016 they also became the first credit union in Ohio to obtain the JUNTOS AVANZAMOS designation (Together We Advance) which is given to credit unions committed to serving and empowering Hispanic consumers.

Nueva Esperanza Community Credit Union believes financially stable, thriving families create economically stronger communities, and that access to financial services is the pathway to that goal.

Since 2010 Sue Cuevas has been the President and CEO.



Nuestra Familia



Rocking Horse Community Health Center

Springfield

Rocking Horse Community Health Center (RHCHC) provides care that is accessible, continuous, comprehensive, family-centered, coordinated, compassionate and culturally effective. It is our mission to create a caring environment where quality services empower adults and children to improve their physical and emotional health. The Center staff is proud to serve everyone regardless of ability to pay and without regard to nationality or country of origin.

Opened in 1998, Rocking Horse Community Health Center was created to serve the community's impoverished and vulnerable children. Built in an area that was greatly underserved, the Center soon grew from treating 1,700 children to more than 5,000. By 2008, RHCHC had become a Federally Qualified Health Center for all ages in the community with services including family practice, behavioral health, pediatrics and pre-natal care. In 2013 the Center greatly increased its footprint in the community with an expansion and new building that tripled the original physical space. In the past few years, RHCHC has added dental and chiropractic care in addition to substance use disorder treatment. Material assistance and patient advocacy offered to all patients, in addition to health and behavioral health care, help patients with a myriad of needs.

Accredited and certified as a Primary Care Medical Home by the Joint Commission, Rocking Horse Community Health Center currently has nearly 14,000 patients and provides upwards of 65,000 patient visits a year. In addition to the main location in Springfield, the Center has an office in the Springfield City School of Innovation, in Mulberry Terrace, a permanent supported housing project and a full service office in Madison County.



Nuestra Familia

Inna Simakovsky

Columbus

Ms. Simakovsky's commitment to immigrant advocacy started when she emigrated from the former Soviet Union as a refugee in 1976. The experience of coming to the United States with nothing but hope shaped her worldview, instilling in her the desire to provide guidance to those taking similar journeys.

After graduating from the Ohio State Moritz College of Law in 1998, Ms. Simakovsky worked for immigrant non-profits in Washington and California before returning to Columbus, Ohio in 2004 to run the largest non-profit immigration legal services.

Simakovsky Law was founded in 2007 with the mission of bringing affordable and professional immigration legal services to the various immigrant communities in central Ohio, while also being a resource for information, education, support and advocacy. They are now a law firm of ten committed people, serving clients nationwide, doing everything in their power to support those in need of legal process and human decency.

Ms. Simakovsky volunteers her time with several immigration organizations including League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Vineyard Church Legal Clinic. She serves on the Elevate Northland Advisory Board and the Legal Committee of the New African Immigrant Commission. She is a panel attorney for the Ohio Domestic Violence Network and the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence.



In 2018, Simakovsky Law represented the first person to leave sanctuary with legal status in Ohio. In 2019, Simakovsky Law became the hub of the Columbus Immigrant Transit Assistance organization that brings supplies to asylum seekers leaving detention and traveling to their sponsor through Columbus, Ohio.

Ms. Simakovsky resides in Bexley, Ohio with her husband David (who has vowed never to work for her again) and her three sons. Her parents live several blocks away (and David has also vowed not to move closer).



Nuestra Familia



Suzanne Smaltz

Northeast, Ohio

Suzanne Smaltz, Licensed Independent Insurance Broker with HealthMarkets Insurance Agency. My practice offers counsel to small businesses from 1-50 employees to create and manage custom designed benefits portfolios. This includes individual, group and Medicare health insurance including ancillary products such as dental, vision, disability, cancer, illness and life insurance. I serve Northeast Ohio, including our neighbors in Cuyahoga, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Summit, Stark, Trumbull, Tuscarawas and Wayne Counties. In 2017, I joined the Bienvenidos a Cleveland resource group to assist with changes to Medicare plans and connecting members to the appropriate resources.

A California native, I moved to Ohio in 1996 and consider it home. Growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area, I started to learn Spanish as a kid. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish Language & Literature from the University of Michigan. I worked as a paralegal in Phoenix during Amnestia, assisting clients with permanent residency.

Over the last ten years, I have become a member of the Northeast Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, a scholarship committee volunteer with Esperanza, Inc., and work alongside OCHLA in establishing the Latino Networking groups in Akron, Canton and Youngstown. My home church, St. Paul's Episcopal in Akron has a Community Meal program that I helped launch in 2012.

I live in Copley with my two fur babies Benjamin and Lulu (named for Lourdes Garcia Navarro!) My daughter Jen lives and works in the Youngstown, OH area.



Nuestra Familia

Bryan Wright, Ph.D

Cincinnati

Bryan Wright currently serves as the Interim Executive Director for Cincinnati Compass. Bryan is a dedicated connector and collaborator committed to inclusion, equity, and community building. His work focuses on creating a more welcoming and inclusive region for immigrants and refugees. In his role as Interim Executive Director, he advocates for social and economic inclusion; connects individuals and organizations to resources and to each other; and celebrates the cultural and economic contributions of immigrants and refugees in the Cincinnati region.

He previously served on the Mayor's Task Force on Immigration as part of the Education & Talent Retention Subcommittee and later with the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber's Working Group to help launch Cincinnati Compass. Bryan has served on multiple boards and steering committees for various organizations including LULAC, Live A Language Foundation, RefugeeConnect, and the Ohio Welcoming Initiatives Network (OWIN).

Most of his professional career has been dedicated to working with immigrant and refugee communities to improve access to education, employment, legal services, and health care, while advocating for more inclusive and welcoming policies and practices. He is the former Manager of International Student Affairs at Cincinnati State Technical & Community College, working with current and potential students, regardless of immigration status, and worked for several years in refugee resettlement in Nashville, Tennessee as a Case Manager and an Employment Manager.



Throughout his career he has developed detailed working knowledge of local, state, and federal resources, laws, and policies related to immigrant, refugee, and international populations. He holds a Master's degree in International Studies from Florida International University and a PhD in Geography from the University of Cincinnati. His doctoral research focused on immigration, immigrant representation, and urban regeneration in the Cincinnati region. His doctoral research focused on immigration representation, and urban regeneration in the Cincinnati region.



Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan



Amy Garcia

Lorain

Amy Garcia is the Service Manager/Community Development Representative at Third Federal in Cleveland. She started her career with the company in 1996. Amy Garcia is married to Nathaniel Wright Jr and have 3 children; Eli S. Ramos Jr., Erica Lee Casañas (Deceased) and Pharon Wright.

As a part of the Third Federal community development team in Northeast Ohio, Amy works to develop financial literacy seminars, and reviews and promotes products and services that address the needs of those customers. Amy cultivates and maintains relationships with both customers and outreach organizations in Northeast Ohio, embracing the Third Federal value system of love, trust, respect and a commitment to excellence.

Amy currently serves as Vice President for El Centro Servicios Sociales in Lorain, Ohio; she is a member of Union-Miles Community Development Corporation, the Spanish American Committee, and the LATINA group (Leading and Advocating Together in New Arenas). She has also previously served as co-chair of Community Development for the Hispanic Round Table and as a Board Member for Hispanic UMADAOP.

Born in New York, and raised in Cleveland, Amy has a bachelor's degree in Science of Business Management from Indiana Wesleyan University, graduating *magna cum laude*. As a member of the community development team at Third Federal, she continues to advocate for services to low-to-moderate income customers. She is proud of her Hispanic heritage and continues to support and promote Hispanic causes and programs throughout Northeast Ohio.



Angel Colón

Cincinnati



With 30 years of experience in the grocery industry, Angel Colón is not only a veteran in the field, but a champion of diversity and corporate change.

Mr. Colón earned a bachelor's degree in Marketing from Olivet Nazarene University, a master's degree in Business Administration from Cardinal Stritch University and graduated from the Dale Carnegie Professional Leadership Training Program. His career began with Goya Foods in Puerto Rico and Chicago where he acquired foundational knowledge he would build upon throughout his career. In 1991, he joined the Kellogg Company where he served for seventeen years in numerous states. Mr. Colón served in many roles for both companies and was a charter member of the Latino ERG's at the Kellogg Company and at The Kroger Company.

Mr. Colón joined The Kroger Company in 2008 as the Director of Multicultural Business Development. He led a team of multicultural professionals and was responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy that establishes Kroger as a destination for its diverse set of customers. In 2017, he was promoted to Senior Director of Diversity, Supplier Inclusion, and Multicultural Business Development. Angel ensures that Kroger has diverse talent, minority suppliers, and engaged Associate Resource Groups such as the Latino Resource Group, KePasa. He is also an advocate for the Hispanic community and represents Kroger as a supporter and partner to all nationalities living in the state of Ohio.

Outside of his work accomplishments, Angel has championed diversity locally and globally. He has served on the boards of the Santa Maria Community Center, local churches, the Ohio Minority Supplier Diversity Council, and is a member of the Billion Dollar Roundtable. Travelling to Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico, Mr. Colón has assisted in community building projects and cross-cultural communications and continues to invest in the next generation of Latinx professionals through mentorship opportunities and by funding a scholarship for a Hispanic student at his alma mater.

Angel and his wife Naomi recently celebrated 30 years of marriage and have 3 children: Alexis, Alyssa and Andrés. In his free time, Angel loves to run half marathons, serve in the Cincinnati prison ministry, listen to Latin music, and cheer for the Green Bay Packers. In reflecting on his years of service, Angel says that he has learned, "It is our responsibility to continue to elevate our reputation as Latinos and to give back to the communities that have helped us achieve our dreams."



Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan



Hector Medina

Cincinnati

Hector Medina leads the Information Technology team at Topco America with over 25 years of extensive, global expertise in leading business technology organizations in several countries. Prior to his current role, Hector spend 4 years at Macy's as VP of Technology, 4 ½ years at Luxottica as Sr. Director of IT and 17 years at Procter & Gamble, in various global leadership positions, in Technology and Supply Chain.

A native of Mexico, Hector holds a BS degree in Biochemical Engineering from the ITESM an MBA from UoP and a MSIT from the University of Cincinnati.

From a community involvement standpoint, Mr. Medina worked with several non-profit organizations and as mentor for minority students and professionals in several diversity groups in his current and previous companies. He is a founding board member of the Cincinnati chapter for Prospanica aka NSHMBA, the former Vice-president of Corporate Relations at LULAC Cincinnati chapter, a mentor at the HITEC executive development program and the Macy's diversity council. He is the chair of the Advisory board of directors at the IT school at University of Cincinnati and a board member of the Advisory board of directors of the Bethesda foundation.

Mr. Medina was named in the top 100 most influential and notable Hispanic Professionals in the Information Technology Industry in 2016, 2017, 2018 by Hispanic IT Executive Council for his contribution in the Hispanic community in technology.



Jorge Perez

Cincinnati



Jorge Perez’s family originates from the central plains of Mexico. He is the first in his family to be born in the United States, a former migrant worker, a first-generation college graduate, a husband, and a father of gifted daughters. His life-long drive to live out his calling and fulfill the hopes of his family has resulted in a 31-year career of improving the lives of others.

Among his many accomplishments, Jorge has mentored hundreds of first-generation Latino youth, launched national programs designed to close the achievement gap, led youth development programs that served over 9 million youth and 700,000 volunteers. Jorge has improved the quality of some of the Ys most extensive programs (Day Camp, Afterschool, Swimming, Group Exercise, Achievement Gap, College Readiness, and Togetherhood).

Currently, Jorge serves as the President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati serving over 150,000 individuals. Cincinnati area programs include supporting college readiness and resident camp for Black and Latino youth. Jorge currently serves on several local and national boards and has served Ys in Dallas, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and YMCA of the USA.

Jorge (a native Texan) is married to Amy, and they have two daughters: Olivia and Isabel. Jorge earned a Bachelor’s degree in Education (Calvary Bible College), and two Masters Degrees in Christian Education (Dallas Theological Seminary) and Business Administration (University of Dallas). Jorge is a graduate of multiple city leadership programs, including Dallas, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Cincinnati.



Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan



Jose Luna

Toledo

I was born in the small town of O'Donnell, TX on August 30th, 1954. I'm one of six children to Josè and Elena Luna. I have one brother and four sisters. My older siblings and I worked the cotton fields starting at the age of "eight." I lived in O'Donnell until age of twelve then moved to Lubbock. The next year we moved to Hamler, OH for a summer of harvesting cucumbers and tomatoes then moved to Defiance, OH. The next year we moved back to Hamler. I attended Patrick Henry HS. I graduated in 1972. I got a job at GM Central Foundry. I worked and enrolled at BGSU. Went to college part time and graduated in 1990 with a BA in Education. While attending college, I was introduced to freestyle Frisbee. I competed nationally & in 1986 placed 4th in the world championships. I also became a musician/songwriter and toured with original music bands.

In 1992 I was hired by Toledo Public Schools as the Hispanic Outreach Coordinator. I enrolled in Siena Heights University and received a Master's in School Counseling. In 2001 I married Maria, the best move I ever made. Maria and I are writers. We started our own publishing firm, Dove Inflight Publishing LLC. We have published several books to date. I continue to work at TPS doing program development and counseling Hispanic youths.



Julio Mateo

Dayton



Born in Pamplona (Spain) to a Puerto Rican mother and a Spanish father, Julio has been living in the Dayton area since 2002. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in Salamanca (Spain) and a Master of Science in Human Factors Psychology at Wright State University in Dayton. While in graduate school at Wright State, he was recognized as *Outstanding Graduate Student by the School of Graduate Studies in 2010* and received a *Golden Spoke Award from the Office of Disability Services in 2011*. Since 2012, Julio has worked as a Senior Research Scientist at 361 Interactive, LLC, where he focuses on understanding, training, assessing, and supporting complex cognitive skills such as systems thinking and cross-cultural competence. He is currently President-Elect of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Southern Ohio Chapter, where he will serve as President in 2020.

Outside of work, Julio has participated as a volunteer in various organizations and projects within the Dayton community, including *Start Downtown, The Longest Table Dayton, Gem City Market, Big Brothers Big Sisters*, and the *Dayton Mediation Center*. Julio is also a member of the *El Puente Community Agency Task Force; Puerto Rican, American, and Caribbean Organization (PACO) Board; Montgomery County Arts and Culture District Board; Community-Police Council; Citizens Appeal Board; New Leaders Council - Southwest Ohio Board; and Levitt Pavilion Community Engagement Committee*. Julio received a *Community Impact Award from the Dayton Human Relations Council in 2018* and a *Forty under 40 Award from the Dayton Business Journal in 2019*.



Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan



Mary Lou Reyes Youngstown

Mary Lou serves as Executive Director for the Organizacion Civica y Cultural Hispana Americana (OCCHA). A social service agency serving the Hispanic and multicultural community in Youngstown, Ohio, that engages in the improvement of the quality of life for Hispanics and others by providing social, economic, cultural and educational programs.

Mary Lou prior to becoming the Executive Director of OCCHA, worked for the Girl Scouts of Lake to River for 25 years, an affiliate of Girl Scouts of the USA, the organization that builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. She retired as a Girl Scout Executive in 2008 and is a life time member.

Mary Lou received the Girl Scouts Thanks Badge, the highest adult award in Girl Scouting. The Ebony Lifeline Support Group, Community Service Award, Youngstown League of Women Voters Hall of Fame valuable contributions to the Youngstown Community, YWCA Women of the Year Award in the Human and Social Service

category, OCCHA Outstanding Hispanic Volunteer Award in recognition of Volunteer Service, and the Warren Chapter 9 to 5 National Association of Working Women-The Susan B. Anthony "Spirit Lives on" award.

Mary Lou has been actively involved in the community and served on many Boards and in various capacities of the Youngstown Area Regional Airport Authority, appointed first female (Latina) by the Mahoning County Commissioners, Yo-Mah-O Chapter, International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP), Treatment Alternatives to Street Crimes (TASC), Mahoning Youngstown Community Partners (MYCAP), Leadership Mahoning Valley Alum, Youngstown Warren Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Mahoning Valley Historical Society.

Mary Lou is certified in Non-profit management from Case Western Reserve University and a graduate of The Rayen School.



Yahaira Rose

Columbus



Yahaira Rose, MPS is the Director at Martin de Porres Center (Dominican Sisters of Peace) and Nonviolence Grant Coordinator (Catholic Health Initiatives) with a focus on women and youth development. Yahaira Rose, a native from Puerto Rico came to Ohio after graduating high school. Her parents followed soon after and have been a source of support for her.

Yahaira is the founder of Proyecto Mariposas (established in 2011), a non-profit organization with a focus on Latina Mother – Daughter Relationship in Columbus. The Proyecto Mariposas’ mission is to empower, mentor and support Latina women and girls with tools, knowledge and leadership skills to lead brave and strong lives. Proyecto Mariposas offers programming throughout the year that fosters culture, family relations and self-esteem. The Valiente | Fuerte Program provides participants with skills and tools to lead lives that are present with courage and strength.

Yahaira has a Bachelor’s Degree in English Literature and Education from The Ohio State University, a Master’s Degree in Professional Studies with a specialty in Leadership Development from the University of Denver. Yahaira has over 20 years of experience in Leadership Development Programs. She has developed and implemented a number of experiential programming for youth and adults. She is a skillful professional in the area of program development, and community engagement. She is a strong advocate for mentoring and lifelong learning.

Yahaira currently lives in Westerville, Ohio with her husband and her beloved beagle Maia.



Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan



Victor Ruiz

Cleveland

Victor A. Ruiz is the Executive Director of Esperanza, Inc. The mission of Esperanza is to improve the academic achievement of Hispanics in Greater Cleveland by supporting students to graduate high school and promoting post-secondary educational attainment. Under his leadership, Esperanza has grown tremendously and has been a leader in addressing the educational needs of Cleveland's growing Hispanic community. Victor leads a team that has successfully worked with the Cleveland Municipal School District to move the needle on Hispanic graduation rates from 30% to 77%. Additionally, Esperanza has awarded over \$1.7 million dollars in scholarships throughout its history. The organization has received national and local recognition for its work, including being named the 2019 UnidosUS Midwest Affiliate of the year, a program to watch by Excelencia in Education, and a 2015 Bright Spot in Hispanic Education by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics.

Victor lives in Cleveland with his wife and three children. He has a Bachelor's Degree in English from Baldwin Wallace College and a Master's Degree in Education from Cleveland State University. He has also completed executive education courses from the Harvard Business School. He serves on several boards and committees in leadership roles, including Past-Chair of The Cuyahoga Community College. Victor is currently a *National Institute for Latino School Leaders* **Fellow with UnidosUS and a past W.K. Kellogg Foundation Fellow.**

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Latino Military Service of Distinction



Walter Bustelo

Dayton

Colonel Walter A. Bustelo is the Senior Materiel Leader for the Financial Systems Division and Program Manager for the \$2.4B Defense Enterprise Accounting Management System (DEAMS) in the Business and Enterprise Systems Directorate, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Col Bustelo is responsible for delivering the Air Force's upgraded financial system to enable timely, accurate and reliable decision making by Senior Leaders in support of worldwide Air Force operations.

Prior to his current duties, Col Bustelo was the F-16 Director of Foreign Military Sales where he led a 230 member team responsible for a \$27B portfolio producing, developing and sustaining more than 1,950 F-16 aircraft from 26 partner nations.

Colonel Bustelo was also the Materiel Leader at the Air Force Security Assistance and Cooperation Directorate, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. In this position, he provided security assistance for countries within NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM and PACOM.

Colonel Bustelo developed, negotiated and executed international agreements through Foreign Military Sales to include acquisition and sustainment for nearly 950 programs for 30 countries valued at \$35B.

He graduated in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science (Civil Engineering) degree and received his commission from the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez Campus. He also completed a Master of Science (Aerospace Engineering) degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology (1997).

Colonel Bustelo is an Air Force Test Pilot School Graduate and a program manager who has served in a variety of positions in Special Programs, manned spaceflight, satellite operations, research and development, scientific/technical intelligence, and fighter/heavy aircraft flight test, including the F-22 and Special Operations aircraft.

Colonel Bustelo is married to Mariluz Bustelo and has a daughter Adriana and a son Manolo.



Ezequiel Villa

Toledo



Ezequiel Villa was born 1934 in Cristal City, Texas in a train caboose. His father was a railroad worker and Ezequiel was the youngest of three sons. Villa worked as an agricultural worker until the age of 14. Having grown tired of working in the fields, his two older brothers took the army exam in 1948 and after accidentally being handed a test, Ezequiel Villa took it and was the only one to pass. He joined the U.S Army Air Corps, which later became the U.S Air Force. When questioned about his education, Villa held up four fingers indicating he had only completed fourth grade. The Sergeant, however, mistook this to mean he had completed four years of high school. When it was revealed that Villa had not disclosed his real age when enlisting, he was sent to the Korean war. During his service in Korea, Ezequiel was captured and beaten by Chinese and Korean forces. Unrecognizable from the beatings, US troops misidentified Villa and took him as a POW, effectively saving his life.

Villa finished his career stateside in downtown Toledo, retiring on August 1st, 1969. In March of 1968, Ezequiel and his wife Consuelo established “El Tipico”, Toledo’s oldest Mexican Restaurant that uses only fresh and organic ingredients. Villa went on to graduate from Toledo Bible College and was ordained in 1972. That same year, he started the Christ Latino Mission inside Christ Presbyterian Church, the first bilingual church in the Toledo area.

In 2013, the Toledo City Council renamed the intersection of South Ave. and Spencer St., in Toledo, Ohio, the “*Ezequiel Villa Corner*” in honor of Villa’s dedication and long-time service to his community and country. Ezequiel Villa is the father of Francisco and Dina Villa with whom he lives with; the father-in-law of Jan Villa; the grandfather of Isaac, April and Isaiah and is the proud great-grandfather of Chloe, Ethan, Makenzie and Ellie.



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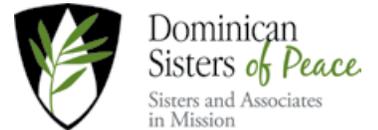
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