



MAYOR'S HISPANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
CONSEJO ASESOR HISPANO DE LA ALCALDÍA

City of Tampa Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council 2021 Members Roster



MARILYN ALVAREZ, MASTER DEPUTY, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY HISPANIC LIAISON

I have been with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office for 24 years. I have been previously assigned to the areas of patrol, street crimes, school resource and crimes against children. I am currently assigned as the Hispanic Liaison for the Sheriff's office for the last 16 years. I serve as the liaison between the Sheriff's office and the Hispanic community. In addition to the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council. I oversee the Sheriff's Hispanic Advisory Council, in addition, I serve on the Moffitt Cancer Center Community Advisory Panel and the Tampa Bay Area Refugee Task Force. In 2017, I was honored with the 2017 Hispanic Woman of the Year award.



MARUCHI AZORIN, MBA – ENTREPRENEUR, OWNER OF VILLA ROSA LINENS SPECIALTY STORE SINCE 1984

My lifelong commitment to paying forward, by mentoring Hispanic students seeking opportunities for higher education, stems from my early childhood experiences in the U.S. I was born in Cuba and emigrated to the US in 1960. Our family settled in Plant City, FL. I graduated from PCHS with Honors and was named PCHS Girl of the Year. I received a BA and MBA, Cum Laude, from the University of Florida. By volunteering in leadership roles, I became the first Hispanic Woman selected to the UF Student Hall of Fame. Appointed by Mayor Sandra Freedman in 1987, I served the MHAC as Chair from 1992-2001. I was the Founding Chair of the Latinos Unidos Luncheon in 1998 and Co-Chaired the 20th Anniversary Luncheon in 2018.



VIVIAN CORTES HODZ, ATTORNEY, CORTES HODZ FAMILY LAW AND MEDIATION, P.A.

Vivian Cortes Hodz is an attorney practicing exclusively marital and family law with the law firm of Cortes Hodz Family Law and Mediation, P.A. She is a Supreme Court Certified Family Law mediator and a qualified Parenting Coordinator. Ms. Hodz is a Past President of the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association, serves on the board of directors of the Hillsborough County Bar Association and is the founding President of the Florida Hispanic Bar Association. Vivian has been consistently and extensively involved various local and statewide organizations and has held and many leadership roles. Vivian loves being engaged and involved in her profession and enjoys mentoring young attorneys and aspiring bar association leaders. Ms. Hodz received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology in 1999 from Florida State University and her Juris Doctor in 2002 from Florida State University College of Law. Vivian was born in Tampa to parents of Cuban and Puerto Rican descent. Her parents worked several jobs to provide her with a strong educational foundation and work ethic that lead her to become the first in her family to go to college and to which she credits much of her success today. This is her 1st year



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on the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council, and she looks forward to giving back to the community in which she was born and raised and where she now is raising her family and growing her business.



**LISA COSTAS, Ph.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST,
NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY-TAMPA**

I am committed to educating and mentoring Latino psychologists to lessen the significant need for culturally competent, bilingual providers. I have over 20 years of teaching experience at local universities and clinical experience working with diverse populations, especially Spanish-speaking populations. I have been a council member for 13 years, and a past president and lifetime member of the Hispanic Women's Association (HPWA) in Tampa, an organization that mentors and supports Latinas. I grew up in Puerto Rico and have resided in Hillsborough County since 1992. I am an advocate for education initiatives for Latino and other underserved communities as well as for services that address mental health needs of these communities and ensure the multicultural and language competencies of those who serve them.



MARIA ELENA ELIZALDE, MBA – IT GROUP MANAGER, CITI BANK

Maria has over 20+ years of banking experience. Maria, originally from Ecuador, obtained her MBA at the University of Tampa. She is currently serving as an IT Group Manager at Citi, managing a Budget of USD \$1 Billion, International operations, a series of restructurings and process improvements and third party contracting. One of Maria's passions is to work towards the professional advancement of others. She has been actively involved with Tampa Bay Area Community as a Board member of local and national non-profit organizations. As a result of Maria's successful career and extensive community involvement, Maria Elena was chosen as one of the finalists for Tampa Bay Business Journal Business Women of the Year Award and recipient of the Hispanic Heritage Award for Civic Involvement.



**MARIBEL R. GARRETT, MA. DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS, CORBETT PREPARATORY
SCHOOL OF IDS**

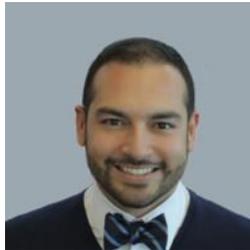
A native of Puerto Rico and Florida resident for over 25 years, I am currently Director of Admissions at Corbett Preparatory School of IDS. Over my lifelong educational career, I've focused on *access* to higher education, notably through a federal grant to help limited English or first in family to attend college students during my 16 years at HCC. I also worked at USF providing support to autistic persons and their families. At the civic involvement level, I serve on the Tampa Hispanic Heritage Executive Board, am a former vice-chair of this Council, and have membership in the Rotary Club of Ybor



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City. My bachelor's (Education) is from the University of Puerto Rico and my MA is from USF. I enjoy family, travel and helping my community.



GIOVANNI GUTIERREZ, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, JOFFREY'S COFFEE & TEA CO.

Born in Nicaragua and raised in Miami, my passion for education stems from being the first in my family to attend college and a desire to give back to others so they can achieve success. I am a Miami-Dade Community College and USF graduate. In 2011, I obtained an MBA and Master's in Marketing from UT. At the onset of my career in 2005, I was part of the team that launched the largest circulated Hispanic newspaper, CENTRO Tampa at The Tampa Tribune. Before my current post, I was an executive at Verizon. I've always thrived by giving back to the community and in addition to serving in MHAC I proudly serve on the Tampa Steering Committee for Equality Florida. In 2008, I was appointed by Mayor Iorio to serve on this Council and re-appointed by Mayor Buckhorn. I've served the Council in various roles including Chairman from 2013-2014.



Karla Guzmán-Mims, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager – The Mosaic Company

The value of giving back to my community was instilled in me from a very young age. This value has guided my high school, college, and professional career as a servant leader. I immigrated with my family from Costa Rica in 1982 and lived in Chelsea, Massachusetts until moving to the Tampa Bay area in 2008. I proudly joined MHAC in 2020 under Mayor Jane Castor.

I hold an MPA from USF, Tampa, and a BA from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. I reside in Valrico with my husband Tom, our two young sons and adorable bulldogs. I have been with Mosaic since 2012, currently responsible for the company's corporate community investment strategy and execution.



ILEANA ITURRIAGA GIORDANO, ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER – TELEMUNDO TAMPA & TELEMUNDO FORT MYERS, NBCUNIVERSAL

When I was seven years old, I joined my family in moving from my birthplace, Oriente, Cuba, and settling in Tampa shortly thereafter. I attended local schools and graduated from Plant High School and University of Tampa, from which I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication. It is an honor to serve on The Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council, to which I was appointed in 2017 by Mayor Bob Buckhorn and it has been exciting to see tremendous growth in Tampa Bay over the decades!



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My career has been in Media Advertising for nearly 20 years and for the past five years, working with Telemundo TV; in my time off, I enjoy precious time with family and traveling whenever possible.



Janice Justiniano, Assistant Director of Assisted Housing, Tampa Housing Authority

Housing fulfills a basic human need for shelter, but it also contributes to the wellbeing of both parents and children. I lived in public housing throughout my childhood, and I know from experience the importance of having housing stability and the opportunities it provides. I am extremely proud that I now work in the very program that provided an opportunity for my family and I to live the American Dream.

I am of Puerto Rican decent, born in Brooklyn, NY. I attended school and graduated in Lebanon, PA. At the age of 19, I told my parents I wanted more then what our small town could offer, so I packed my bags and moved to Florida. My parents were sad but knew the importance of finding my way and spreading my wings. I worked several jobs while attending college so I could support myself. Twenty-six years later, I am proud to be the Assistant Director for the Assisted Housing Department and a member of the Tampa Housing Authority's executive team. I have an associate degree in Business Management from Hillsborough Community College and a bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of South Florida. I hold over 10 NAHRO certifications in the Housing Industry and I have been a notary since 2009. I have been married for over 17 years and blessed to have two little boys.

I have always had a passion for giving back and helping others. I am dedicated to what I do, and I am committed to giving back to the community. I am fortunate to work with many organizations whose mission is to help families become self-sufficient, provide community resources, and more importantly ensure that all families are housed and have decent, safe, and sanitary housing. I am proud to currently serve as a member on the Mayor's Hispanic Council as well as the Tampa Bay Fair Housing Consortium.



ARASELI MARTINEZ PENA, COORDINATOR OF HISPANIC & MULTICULTURA OUTREACH FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I currently serve as the Coordinator of Hispanic & Multicultural Outreach for Hillsborough County Public Schools. I have been an educator for almost 20 years serving in K-12 and higher education institutions as a counselor and administrator. My specialty is international comparative education, college and career readiness, and school parent community partnerships. I have served my community as Founder of ALAS, Co-Founder for the Florida Dreamer Scholarship Foundation, Chair for Israel's Social Service Agency, Board Member for Florida School Counselor Association and Board Member of the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council and this year's Latinos Unidos Scholarship Luncheon Co-Chair. My



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commitment to developing equity and access opportunities for students and empowering families through capacity building, leadership and advocacy is inspired by my own education journey as the child of migrant farmworkers.



MARTHA MURILLO, FIELD TRAINING LIEUTENANT, TAMPA POLICE DEPARTMENT

I am the daughter of immigrants (Peru & Colombia) who raised me in Springfield, Virginia; I earned my BA at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. I've lived in the Tampa area for over twenty-four years. I am currently a Lieutenant with the Tampa Police Department overseeing the Field Training Program in District Two. In my twenty years at TPD, I have worked as a patrol officer in all 3 districts, plain-clothes officer on the Street Anti-Crime Unit, various training, and supervisory positions, and as a detective in Internal Affairs.

The reason I joined the Council is to assist in developing meaningful projects that promote positive relationships between the police and the Hispanic community. By being a positive role model for Hispanic youth, not only as a police officer but also as a responsible Latina, I am also furthering that commitment.



SYLVIA PARKER, DISTRICT SALES SUPERVISOR FOR OASIS OUTSOURCING, PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATION

In 1999, I started my career in the Professional Employer industry. Five years later, my career turned for better with Oasis, by far one of the most rewarding aspects of my career. As a rookie PEC I worked hard to attain success, in turn I became "Rookie of the Year." Now, I am ONE of the top PRODUCERS and continue to soar. A native of Chicago, I am a second-generation Puerto Rican, who's lived in Tampa

for 25 years. I am extremely proud of my heritage and serving our community. In 2016, I was president of Tampa Hispanic Heritage; am a member of HPWA and have volunteered with Eckerd Kids. I cherish weekends with my husband, our combined family of six amazing children and ten beautiful grandchildren, ages 3-16.



DONNA PARRINO, RETIRED EDUCATOR, USF

As the descendant of Cuban-Spanish cigar-workers, I am a life-long advocate of helping others achieve the American dream. Those roots also nurture deep affection for my two languages and cultures, and for Tampa's very diverse history. With two degrees (BA & MA), I spent 33 years at USF in several academic (librarian) and administrative (assistant to the president, friend- and



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fund-raiser, student success and Hispanic advocate) positions. I am proud of receiving several local and national recognitions, but more so, of pioneering Hispanic bridge-building for USF and being the founding director of the USF Latino Scholarship Program.

Council-wise, in 2016-17 I led the Salcines Statue/West Tampa Library Project and in 2020-21, the Hispanic Heroes Book Club for our school district's 5th and 6th graders. Through my church-related volunteering, I am a case manager in a program that helps economically distressed families with rent, utilities, and referrals. This effort reveals to me up-close the realities faced by our "working poor."



ANTHONY PEREZ, V.P. AND COMMERCIAL BANKING RELATIONSHIP MANAGER, BANK OF TAMPA

I am a Vice President and Commercial Banking Relationship Manager for the Bank of Tampa, and a former chairman of the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council. As a first-generation American, I was born in Chicago to Cuban-born parents. Growing up I found inspiration in my parents' story of sacrifice. Today that inspiration has transformed into a passion of giving back to disadvantaged Hispanic youth. I earned a Master's in Business Administration from the University of South Florida and serve on the USF Latin Community Advisory Committee. I also serve on the Board of Directors of the Judeo-Christian Clinic.



ANH-KAY PIZANO, ASSISTANT DEIRECTOR OF MD ADMISSIONS, USF MORSANI COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

I have been a member of the council since 2014. A native of Cuba, I consider Tampa my hometown. I am the product of the public-school system, as well as a proud two-time graduate of the University of South Florida, earning a PhD in Higher Education Administration. My passion for college students has led me to my current position as Director of MD Admissions within the USF Morsani College of Medicine. My role is rewarding because aside from recruiting new students, I get to work with a diverse team of creative thinkers. My greatest pride is my sixteen-year-old daughter, from whom I learn every day. Not only can we teach future leaders, but we can learn from them as well.



RAFAEL PIZANO, FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC-CITY OF TAMPA

My name is Rafael Pizano. I am a first generation American of Cuban descent. I was raised in Tampa, Florida and am a product of the Hillsborough County school system. Upon graduating high school, I enlisted in the United States Army and served as an infantry/paratrooper. After completion of honorable service, I advanced my education at Hillsborough Community College in Emergency Medicine and Fire Science to further serve my community. I am currently employed by the City of Tampa as a Firefighter/Paramedic.



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In addition to serving through my field of work, I enjoy volunteering for civic duty, including at veteran organizations, and non-governmental ones dedicated to advocating for human rights, as my family had to flee the totalitarian government of their native land. To me serving is an opportunity to bring humanity together. It is a blessing.



JOSE RINCON, OWNER OF HOMEWELL CARE SERVICES TAMPA

From my first step off the plane from Colombia in 2000, I fell in love with Tampa and decided to make it my home. I received my education from Hillsborough Community College, The University of Tampa, and The University of South Florida.

Over the past 21 years, I have worked in the public and private sectors in various industries. An entrepreneur at heart, I have been a small business owner since 2016. In 2021 my wife, Katie, and I opened a HomeWell Care Services franchise. We provide peace of mind by offering in-home care services to aging adults and others in need, to allow them to live independently. We want to continue investing our time and resources in Tampa to create opportunities for others, including our daughters, Olivia and Mia.



BRIAN SERRANO, MBA - SAMPLE INSIGHTS LEADER FOR NIELSEN

I am a Sample Insights Leader for the Nielsen Company, where I lead a team of TV sample strategists that build and maintain samples of the population that produce ratings for TV stations across the US. As an advocate for clients, I lead the business relationship between Nielsen and TV media clients, and champion new initiatives and innovations for building media samples. In 2012 I moved to Tampa, and I currently reside in the historic Seminole Heights district. In December of 2020 I graduated from Southeastern Oklahoma State University with a Master of Business

Administration with honors.

Having a strong passion for advocacy and community outreach, I am currently the proud serving Chair of the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council and have served on the Council since April of 2017. I helped create the Development Acceleration for Latinos Education project (DALE), and I am a former board member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Tampa Bay. At the office, I led Nielsen's employee resource group Hispanic Organization of Leaders In Action (HOLA) for 2 years, and I am the recipient of the 2013 Nielsen Diversity Champion Award.



MARIA T. STEIJLEN, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, TAMPA BAY HISTORY CENTER

As Chief Financial Officer of the Tampa Bay History Center, I have been blessed to spend the last thirteen years working for an institution that has a mission centered



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on education. I am a native of Puerto Rico, have an MBA and more than 25 years' experience in my field. My passion for education has led me to serve in community organizations that help low income college students attain their goals. It was an honor to be appointed to this Council in 2002 and lead the organization as Chair from 2003 to 2008. Being named Hispanic Business Woman of the Year and Hispanic Woman of the Year by Tampa Hispanic Heritage, Inc. further solidified my commitment to helping others. Married, with two sons, I have lived in Tampa since 1985 and love working and living here!



MYRIAM WARREN, CENTRO TAMPA EDITOR

My passion is journalism and hunting stories to share with our growing and diverse Hispanic community. I graduated from Xavierian University (Colombia) and am an award-winning journalist. In Colombia I worked at Diners Magazine and at a government publication; I also wrote for a children's magazine. My journey to the U.S. started in 2004 and I soon joined The Tampa Tribune as multimedia journalist of CENTRO Tampa. Then I had the opportunity to become editor of CENTRO Tampa, now part of the Tampa Bay Times. I have become very involved in the Hispanic community and am always available for local events and breaking stories. I enjoy good movies, following soccer, boxing and practicing extreme sports with my husband. I've always had dogs. Last year my two dogs went to the canine's heaven and said goodbye to their feline brother 'Bernie' who has graciously allowed us to share his home.



RAY WONG, ARCHITECT – BAKER BARRIOS

My "story" and the challenges I faced are like that of others' in our Hispanic community. And, as a recently naturalized citizen I also understand the fears and concerns of those who aspire to citizenship. Born in Panama and the son of immigrants, I'm the first in my family to graduate college (UF) and attain advanced degrees (Architecture & Business). Through my success as an architect, I hope to inspire others to aim high.

Devotion to service rings strongly in me because I want to give back to the community which has given me so much, thus my involvements in the Greater Tampa Chamber, the Downtown Advisory, architectural organizations, and this Council. My name is Ramon "Ray" Wong and I am at your service.