



**MARILYN AGUIRRE-MOLINA,
ED.D., M.S.**

Marilyn Aguirre-Molina is a professor of public health with the City University of New York (CUNY), School of Public Health/Lehman - where she teaches graduate courses in health equity and social justice, and leadership for public health in the masters and doctoral programs.

In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she is the Founding Executive Director of the CUNY Institute for Health Equity (CIHE). The focus of Dr. Aguirre-Molina's work at the CIHE includes applied research and policy development that address the social determinants of health and the achievement of health equity among underserved populations. Prior to CUNY, she was a Professor of Population and Family Health at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University in New York City.

Dr. Aguirre-Molina has edited several books on Latino health, among them, *Health Issues in the Latino Community* (with C. Molina and R. Zambrana), and, *Latina Health: A Public Health Reader* (with C. Molina). More recently, with grant support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, she directed a study group at Columbia University addressing The Social and Structural Factors Affecting the Health of Latino Men in the US. This resulted in the book, *Health of Latino Men – A social and structural approach*, (2010) (with L. Borrell and W. Vega). Soon to be published is an accompanying practitioner's manual entitled, *Is it just a matter of 'descuido' (not caring)? : Structural Barriers and the Health Care Seeking Journey of Latino Men in New York City*. Presently, she and her co-editor, Carlos Molina, are in the early stages of preparing a two volume book for Prager Press on Latino health in the 21st century.

In addition to publications, Dr. Aguirre-Molina has produced several commissioned reports: *Latinos' Barriers to Primary and Preventive Services* (with E. Carrillo, et al.) for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and, *AIDS, Poverty and Gender Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean*, for the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) which entailed research in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Colombia.



WILMA ALVARADO-LITTLE, M.A., M.S.W.

Wilma Alvarado-Little received a grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH) in May 2009 as part of an award to the University's Center for Elimination of Minority Health Disparities, to support research to identify access and barriers to health care for populations in smaller cities and is the former Director of Community Engagement/Outreach.

For over 25 years, Wilma Alvarado-Little has been a strong voice advocating for linguistically and culturally appropriate health services. A healthcare interpreter and trainer, she has been instrumental in the development and implementation of hospital and clinic based interpreter programs. She works tirelessly to educate healthcare institutions on the partnership between the interpreter and providers. She has participated in efforts led by the Joint Commission, American Medical Association, and the HHS Office of Minority Health. She the former Co-chair of the Board of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care, is a member of the National Project Advisory Committee for the Review of the CLAS Standards, HHS Office of Minority Health, the Institute of Medicine Health Literacy Roundtable and the New York State Office of Mental Health Multicultural Advisory Committee and also serves on boards at the state and local levels. She has a Master of Arts degree in Social Work, a Masters of Arts in Spanish Literature and Bachelor Degrees in Spanish and Psychology.



HELEN C. BALLESTAS, PH.D.

Helen C. Ballestas is an Assistant Professor at Adelphi University – College of Nursing and Public Health. A nurse since 1996, she has worked in many acute care settings. Understanding that the nursing profession requires vision and leadership, she attained her Ph.D. from Capella University with a focus on Leadership of Higher Education.

As a scholar, she has focused her research studies on cultural diversity seeking to strengthened diversity in the nursing work force. This continued work is evidenced by the annual cultural course: On-Site Cultural Diversity - Costa Rica, where she has taken nursing students on an experiential cultural awareness. Her dissertation research focused on self-imposed health care disparities among migrant workers. With this in mind, taking care of these patients has become a paramount goal at every level.

In October 2012 the Long Island chapter at Adelphi University of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) was born. The chapter is very active in continuing education and community projects, integrating work of nursing students, faculty at near-by nursing schools and community nurse professionals. Dr. Ballestas is very active at the national level of NAHN as a member of the national nominating committee and as chair of the educational committee.

Under her leadership, the Adelphi University High School Nursing Summer Intensive program has just completed its fourth very successful year. Introduction to Nursing as a credit course is the first course of its kind in the United States.

As an adult nurse practitioner, Dr. Ballestas has experience in internal medicine and in cardio-thoracic management of surgical patients working at a well-respected Long Island institution.

Dr. Ballestas looks forward to furthering the mission of cultural diversity and in her own words "cultural responsibility" for all nurses. Her goal, as was her research goal, is to eliminate the disparities in health care and to encourage all nurses to become the best they can be while being culturally competent.

She has been named "Nurse of the Year - 2013" by the National Association of Hispanic Nurses and has currently earned a fellowship in the New York Academy of Medicine.



JOSÉ CALDERÓN

José Calderón is the President of the Hispanic Federation (HF), the nation's premier Latino non-profit membership organization. Mr. Calderón manages HF's overall operations with a primary focus on strategic planning, program development, public policy advocacy and resource development. He is a leading advocate for Hispanic grassroots organizations and pro-Latino legislation locally and nationwide.

Mr. Calderón has worked in various capacities for the HF since 2001, including Program Coordinator, Program Director, Vice President and Senior Vice President. During that time, he has helped develop and launch several of HF's most important initiatives including its Latino College Success Program, Workforce Development ABLE project, Board Leadership Development Initiative, DREAMers Scholarship Fund, Diabetes Awareness Campaign, Latino Immigration Task Force, among others. He has also spearheaded HF's civic engagement efforts, helping to register and mobilize hundreds of thousands of voters in key federal and local elections over the last decade.

As HF's principal spokesperson, Mr. Calderón works to disseminate the organization's public policy positions to the media, public officials, the private sector and the community at large. Through public hearings, weekly newspaper columns and Federation-produced radio and television shows, he also works to educate Latinos about issues and services of critical importance to them and their families.

Mr. Calderón currently serves as Co-Chair of the Immigration Committee of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of the leading Latino organizations in the nation. He also serves on the advisory committee for The Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Community Change. A recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, Mr. Calderón is most proud and grateful for the continued support and acknowledgments he receives from HF's network of Latino nonprofits.

Mr. Calderón received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Hunter College and a Master of Arts Degree from St. John's University with a concentration in Latin American studies, Spanish literature and political science. He is married and a proud father of two daughters.



ALVARO CARRASCAL, M.D., M.P.H.

Alvaro Carrascal, M.D., M.P.H., is the Vice President of Health Systems for the American Cancer Society, Eastern Division (ACS). He is responsible for leading and overseeing the planning, development, execution, and evaluation of cancer control initiatives in New York and New Jersey. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to, cancer prevention interventions

(i.e., policy and systems interventions to reduce tobacco use and other risk factors for cancer), cancer screening and early diagnosis, services to newly diagnosed cancer patients and families, survivorship and quality of life issues, public and provider education, interventions to address cancer disparities, etc.

Before joining ACS three years ago, Dr. Carrascal worked for more than 25 years in the field of HIV/AIDS and in his previous position he served as the director of the Division of HIV and Hepatitis Health Care at the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. He is also an Assistant Professor at the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health at SUNY Albany. He received his medical degree from Universidad Ind. de Santander, (Bucaramanga, Colombia) and his MPH from Columbia University School of Public Health.



GUILLERMO CHACÓN

Guillermo Chacón is the President of the Latino Commission on AIDS. Mr. Chacón is recognized for his great ability to build networks, coalitions and mobilize communities on health policy issues and program initiatives.

On April 29, 2013, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, invited Mr. Chacón to serve on the Advisory Committee on HIV, Viral Hepatitis and STD Prevention and Treatment for the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources & Service Administration (HRSA) until November 30, 2016.

On January 19, 2013, Mr. Chacón was appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo to serve on the New York State AIDS Advisory Council. On June 5th, 2012, Mr. Chacón was nominated by Governor Andrew Cuomo and confirmed by the New York State Health Committee of the Senate to serve on the New York State Minority Health Council until May 3rd, 2017. In November 2010, Mr. Chacón was appointed by Governor Elect Andrew Cuomo to serve on his transition team in the area of Education & Health.

Mr. Chacón serves as the Chair of the board for the New York Immigration Coalition, and as a board/advisory member the New York City AIDS Memorial, POZ Magazine national advisory board, AIDSVu.org, the Salvadoran American National Network (SANN), the National Alliance of Latin American, Caribbean Communities (NALACC), Salud Latina/Latino Health in Chicago.

Mr. Chacón was born and raised in El Salvador, Central America. He has studied education at the National University of El Salvador and is an undergraduate student at Fordham University in the Organizational & Leadership Program.



HUMBERTO CRUZ

Humberto Cruz served in management positions in New York State government and community based organizations for almost 30 years. He worked with the New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute for 23 years and served as the Director for more than six years. His well-deserved retirement from State government began in April, 2013.

During his tenure, Mr. Cruz was instrumental in the development of a comprehensive continuum of care for people with HIV and AIDS in New York. Among his major accomplishments were the development of enhanced Medicaid rates for HIV care, the implementation of client-centered programs that reimburse providers for the delivery of care to the uninsured, the development of managed care for persons with HIV, the advancement of service programs that target specific populations impacted by the epidemic, the initiation of programs that provide training and skills-building for persons living with HIV/AIDS to facilitate their participation in program planning, and the development of initiatives to address the aging of the epidemic.

Mr. Cruz played a pivotal role in expanding the role of the AIDS Institute to be inclusive of Hepatitis C, STD and Epidemiology. Consistent with CDC recommendations, in this expansion, STD's has been fully integrated within the AIDS Institute's overall service delivery activities.

Mr. Cruz's involvement in HIV/AIDS policy extended well beyond New York State. As an Executive Committee member and one of the founders of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), he deliberated HIV/AIDS policy at the national level. In February, 2010, he was appointed to serve on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA) which provides advice, information, and recommendations to the President through the Secretary of Health and Human Services on domestic and global HIV/AIDS policy issues.



MICHELLE S. DAVIS, PH.D.

Michelle S. Davis currently holds the position of Regional Health Administrator (RHA) with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) New York Regional office. The RHA serves as the principle federal public health authority on overall health assessment, needs identification, resources, and issues in the region, and contributes to the development of national health policies, priorities, plans, objectives, and strategies of the Secretary of DHHS and the Assistant Secretary for Health. The RHA also assures collaborative promotion of the Surgeon General's initiatives.

Prior to her current position, she served as the Deputy Regional Health Administrator for the Mid-Atlantic region (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WVA) where she served as the health liaison between DHHS and state and local agencies, coordinated regional and national programs within the region, recommended policy based on regional issues and concerns, oversaw fiscal, personnel and administrative matters and served on the federal emergency preparedness, response and recovery team.

Dr. Davis has worked as a public health professional in a variety of positions at the federal, state and municipal levels. This included being appointed to serve as the Deputy Secretary for Health for the Pennsylvania Department of Health where she advised the Governor's office on public health issues and managed a portfolio that included the state public health laboratory, emergency medical services, epidemiology, community health, health planning and public health preparedness. She was responsible for oversight of over 600 staff and a budget of \$250 million.

Before working with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania she held positions as Deputy Health Commissioner for Policy and Planning with the City of Philadelphia and Senior Epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She has also held positions with the states of South Carolina, Indiana and New York, at the municipal level with the City of Detroit and the District of Columbia as a CDC federal assignee. Dr. Davis has held several elected positions within professional organizations including; President and Chair of the Board of the Pennsylvania Public Health Association (PPHA), President and Vice-President of the Black Caucus of Health Workers of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and Governing Councilor for the Epidemiology Section of APHA.

Dr. Davis completed her undergraduate education at the University of Michigan and her Master's and Doctoral training in epidemiology at the University of South Carolina, Johns Hopkins and the University of North Carolina.



JOAN EDWARDS

Joan Edwards currently works for the New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute. She is the Associate Director, of the New York City Office and began her tenure with the Department of Health in 2002. Ms. Edwards earned her Bachelors in Psychology at S.U.N.Y at Stony Brook University and Masters in Social Work from Fordham University.

Ms. Edwards has more than 30 years of professional experience in the social service and public health field including directing substance abuse treatment and HIV/AIDS programs, within nonprofit organizations, working in tandem with the NYC Board of Education HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Project and Columbia University's research initiative, Women on Recovery To Health (WORTH) Program. She is also an Adjunct Professor at the Adelphi University's Graduate School of Social Work and the Derner Institute of Psychology and Mental Health Counseling



ANTONIO ESTRADA

Antonio Estrada has been employed with the Erie County Department of Health for ten (10) years. Mr. Estrada is deeply entrenched in the Erie County community and highly visible and valued in the Latino communities.

Mr. Estrada is a certified HIV Test Counselor, and is very involved in the Erie County ESAP (Expanded Syringe Access) Program. For the last eleven (8) years has held the position of chair of the “National Latino AIDS Awareness Day,” Buffalo Chapter. Each year the event gets bigger and more creative. Throughout his career in HIV service, Mr. Estrada has led many initiatives to bring important health messages to the community. He is also an honorary member of MODEP (Minority Organ Donation Education Program).

Mr. Estrada has served on the Global Concepts Charter Schools Board of Directors for twelve (12) years and for the last four (4) years has held the position of Co-Vice President.

Mr. Estrada is a long time member of Saint Anthony’s Church and a member of their choir. Antonio’s real musical talents and interest lie in Conga playing, which he has enjoyed since the age of seventeen, mostly in R&B groups.



SADY FISCHER

Sady Fischer is currently the Associate Director of Minority Health Initiatives at Trillium Health (formerly AIDS Care), a regional nonprofit organization that provides specialty medical care and support to people from diverse communities. She leads a passionate and dedicated team and oversees its various programs, such as the “Get It Done” initiative and the Women’s Health Project.

As part of the Women’s Health Project at Trillium Health, Ms. Fischer educates high-risk communities on HIV prevention and facilitates weekly support groups for those living with HIV/AIDS. Through the “Get It Done” initiative, Ms. Fischer and her team provide sexual health information, HIV testing and high blood pressure screenings to communities of color in local barbershops and salons.

For over 13 years, Ms. Fischer has worked in the human service field with a focus on sexual health. She believes in sex-positive, comprehensive and inclusive sexual health education for everyone. Ms. Fischer has received numerous awards and accolades recognizing her work as a community educator and prevention specialist for Trillium Health. She is a much sought after speaker and has over a decade of experience working with high risk populations, such as ethnic/racial and sexual minorities, within the community, including human service organizations, educational institutions, and county and state correctional facilities.

As a result of her passion for women, Latino and LGBT health issues, Ms. Fischer is involved with many events and coalitions related to these groups. She has a B.A. in Gender Studies, is an Alum of the Latino Leadership Development Program through the United Way of Rochester, the former chair of Rays of Hope, one of the founders of RATED F (a grassroots feminist group in Rochester), a member of the Latino Public Relations Advisory Group through the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, an active member of the Latino and African American Health Coalitions, a former volunteer facilitator for the Gay Lesbian Straight Educational Network (GLSEN) and the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, and an annual volunteer with at least one of Planned Parenthood’s *V-Day* Events.

Ms. Fischer’s personal experiences are as diverse as her professional work. She was born in Honduras, raised in Europe, and is fluent in both English and German. As a proud bisexual woman of color she believes that “It is not our differences that divide us, it is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences.” (Audre Lorde)

Ms. Fischer’s pride and joy is her teenage son, Ariel. She has raised him with a sense of social justice and activism. He is a born non-conformist, like his mother, and is a huge part of her continued growth. “He is my vision of what the world can be if we allow people to be themselves while teaching them to embrace and celebrate diversity. We can be the change and he inspires me to keep working towards that change!”



NIKKI GEORGES-CLAPP

Nikki Georges-Clapp is the Program Manager for Upwardly Global's New York Office. Upwardly Global is a national, award-winning nonprofit organization, founded in 2000, with offices in New York, San Francisco, and Chicago. Upwardly Global helps work-authorized, skilled immigrants rebuild their professional careers in the U.S. by providing professional job-search training and access to companies with global talent needs, including recognized local and national businesses, Fortune 500 companies, and global organizations. For more information about the organization, please visit www.upwardlyglobal.org.

The New York program is the organization's largest operation serving over 300 skilled immigrants a year. Prior to joining UpGlo, Ms. Georges-Clapp served for two years as the Assistant Director of Adult Education, Training, and Employment for the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Department of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability. Ms. Georges-Clapp created, designed, and implemented strategic partnerships with nonprofit organizations and city agencies in the areas of adult education, vocational skills training, and employment. Ms. Georges-Clapp also spent two years working for the NYC Economic Development Corporation as the Senior Project Manager for Workforce Development managing the HireNYC program. Ms. Georges-Clapp has a Masters in Urban Planning from New York University and a B.A. in Urban Studies from Barnard College at Columbia University.



YVONNE J. GRAHAM, R.N., M.P.H.

Yvonne J. Graham is currently an Associate Commissioner with New York State Department of Health, and serves as Director of the Office of Health Disparities Prevention. In this capacity she is responsible for working with State Health Department programs to ensure that everyone - regardless of ethnic or racial background or the community in which they live - has access to the resources and services they need to be healthy.

Prior to assuming this role, Ms. Graham was the Deputy Borough President of Brooklyn, where she served for 10 years working alongside Borough President Marty Markowitz on all issues pertinent to the borough, with primary responsibility for health policy and all human services. Among her major accomplishments are: the co-founding of the Brooklyn Center on Health Disparities which is working to reduce health disparities among minorities and new immigrants through clinical and community-based research, education, outreach and training; the Brooklyn Community Transformation Coalition established to respond to the structural and systemic factors which undermine well-being; the Brooklyn Public Health Funding Task Force which advocates for equity in funding for health care; and the Brooklyn Young Women's Leadership Initiative to serve as a pipeline for women's advancement.

A pioneer in the field of public health, Ms. Graham founded and was executive director of the Caribbean Women's Health Association (CWAHA), a community-based organization which provides comprehensive, culturally-sensitive health care, immigration, and social support services to diverse communities.

In addition to being a Registered Nurse, Ms. Graham holds a Bachelor's Degree in Health Administration and Community Health from St. Joseph's College and a Master's Degree in Public Health from Hunter College. She also completed the Executive Program in Business Administration at Columbia University School of Business, and an Honorary Doctor of Law degree was conferred on her by her alma mater St. Joseph's College.

Ms. Graham was one of the original members of the New York City HIV Planning Council and has served on the Board of Trustees of several health care and academic institutions. She is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for her contribution to community development, has written and published many professional articles, and is the co-author of a textbook that serves as a seminal guide to the operations and management of community-based health organizations and their role in improving health outcomes.



JOHN HELLMAN

John Hellman is the Director of Advocacy for the Latino Commission on AIDS, joining in November of 2010. In this capacity, he does local, state, and federal work on a broad range of issues that impact Latinos affected by HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis C, and other health challenges.

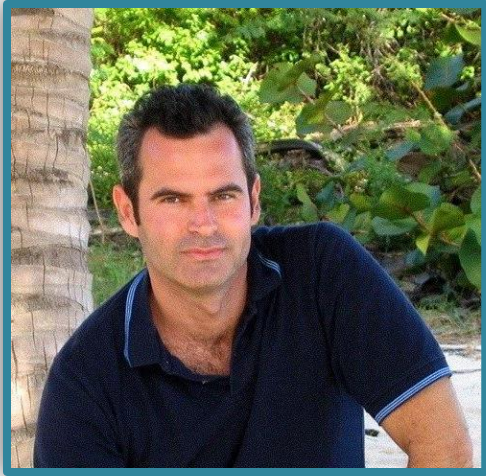
Mr. Hellman has successfully led efforts to restore HIV prevention funding cuts in NYC, ensured vital patient protections for NYS Medicaid patients, and developed a bilingual video series to promote strategies for Latinos/Hispanics living with HIV/AIDS and HIV/AIDS service providers to identify and overcome barriers to effective HIV care. He earned his Master's degree in Humanities and Social Thought from New York University and currently resides in New York, NY.



JENNIFER MANGANELLO, PH.D., M.P.H.

Jennifer Manganello is an Associate Professor at the University at Albany School of Public Health. She is a health communication scholar who conducts research on health literacy and media influences, and typically focuses on the health of youth and parents. She has also focused on populations impacted by health disparities in her research, including those who are African American, Latino/Hispanic, low-income, or living in rural areas.

Before starting at UAlbany, Dr. Manganello was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg Public Policy Center, and earned her Ph.D. from the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.



AXEL FRANCISCO MONROIG, M.P.H.

Axel Monroig currently works for the New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute as a Health Program Administrator within the Legal and Supportive Services Initiative of the Bureau of Community Support Services. He has earned his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Master's in Gerontology from the School of Public Health and Biosocial Sciences of the University of Puerto Rico.

Since 1994, Mr. Monroig has worked in the field of HIV/AIDS for both the Puerto Rico Department of Health and the New York State Department of Health by providing education, service coordination, program evaluation, administration of programs and contract management. Mr. Monroig has served on a variety of committee's and workgroups sponsored by the AIDS Institute including the New York State Prevention Planning Group, the Substance Use Learning Network, Gay/MSM Workgroup, and the Latino/Hispanic Health Equity Initiative.

Mr. Monroig is also a Ph.D. Intern in Clinical Psychology at the Trinitas Regional Medical Center Inpatient Psychiatric Hospital in New Jersey, where he provides individual and group psychotherapy, assessments, and clinical consultations for adults with psychiatric and psychological disturbances.



JOSÉ LUIS MORÍN

José Luis Morín is a Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY) in the Latin American and Latina/o Studies Department. His areas of academic specialization include domestic and international criminal justice, civil rights and international human rights law, race and ethnicity in the United States, Latina/o studies, and Latin American studies.

Professor Morín has held a faculty position at John Jay College since 1998 and has also been a member of the criminal justice doctoral program at the college. In addition to his career as a CUNY faculty member, Professor Morín has held numerous administrative positions within the City University of New York. Most recently, Professor Morín served as the founding Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost of Stella and Charles Guttman Community College (formerly The New Community College at CUNY). As the second highest ranking administrator of Guttman Community College, he was responsible for establishing and developing both academic and student affairs at this new college dedicated to innovation and high-impact, student-centered practices.



DAN O'CONNELL

Dan O'Connell is the Director of the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. Over the past 26 years he has successfully served in a variety of positions within the Institute. Just prior to being appointed to Director, Mr. O'Connell was the Deputy Director for HIV, STD, Hepatitis C Prevention and Epidemiology, where besides disease specific programs, he also oversaw initiatives for LGBT and drug user health.

As Director, Mr. O'Connell is responsible for overall Institute-wide management and policy development, and has recently led efforts to implement New York's revised HIV testing law and to enact a comprehensive modernization of the State's STD control statute. In addition, he chairs the Interagency Task Force on HIV/AIDS, is an Executive Committee member of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, and has been an invited presenter at numerous meetings nationwide, including for the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS.



ANGELICA RAMIREZ, C.A.S.A.C., M.P.A.

Angelica Ramirez, CASAC, MPA, Regional Resource Coordinator, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Region II, Regional Resource Network Program, has worked in Human Services and Public Health, specifically the substance abuse and HIV/AIDS field for over eleven years. She is an experienced public health education provider, assessment specialist, trainer, substance abuse counselor, program coordinator and technical assistance provider.

Ms. Ramirez has a wealth of experience working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and other governmental and non- governmental entities. She currently provides capacity building and technical assistance in the area of HIV/AIDS at the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) at U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for Region II (NY, NJ, PR and VI) as the HIV/AIDS Regional Resource Coordinator. She holds a CASAC (Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor) and a Masters in Public Administration.



TANIA RAMIREZ

Tania Ramirez holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from the Silberman School of Social Work and a B.A. in Black and Puerto Rican Studies from CUNY Hunter College. Since 2005, Ms. Ramirez has worked with the Center for Immigrant Education and Training (CIET) at LaGuardia Community College as a counselor and educational case manager for its various programs that integrated workforce development training and English for Speakers of Other Language instruction.

Ms. Ramirez's most recent role as an Educational Case Manager with NYC Welcome Back Center has allowed her the opportunity to provide professional advisement and counseling to over 325 internationally trained health professionals. Prior to her work at LaGuardia, Ms. Ramirez worked as a counselor, case manager, program coordinator, and workshop facilitator for various non-profit organizations serving the immigrant community.



BLANCA RAMOS, PH.D.

Dr. Blanca Ramos holds an affiliate appointment in the Department of Latin American and Caribbean Studies. She teaches courses on clinical social work, diversity, immigrants, Hispanic cultures in the U.S. and research in Latino communities. Her international work includes partnership building with higher education institutions and communities and with the national association of social workers in Peru.

Dr. Ramos serves on a variety of local, regional, and national boards and commissions and has extensive experience as a practitioner and community organizer. She is the past First Vice President of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and has served in the National Board of the Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research. She is a current member of the editorial board of Social Work and the NASW National Committee on Inquiry.



ELENA V. RIOS, M.D., M.S.P.H.

Dr. Rios serves as President & CEO of the National Hispanic Medical Association, (NHMA), representing 45,000 Hispanic physicians in the United States. The mission of the organization is to improve the health of Hispanics. Dr. Rios also serves as President of NHMA's National Hispanic Health Foundation affiliated with the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University, to direct educational and research activities.

Dr. Rios also serves on the Campaign Against Obesity, Care First Blue Cross Blue Shield, Commission to End Health Disparities, Nurse Family Partnership, and the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda Boards of Directors, and the National Quality Forum's National Priorities Partnerships Steering Committee. Dr. Rios has lectured and published articles and has received several leadership awards, including awards from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American Caucuses, American Public Health Association Latino Caucus, Association of Hispanic Health Executives, Minority Health Month, Inc., Hispanic Magazine, Verizon's First Pollin Community Service Award, and Amerigroup. Dr. Rios was appointed to the Minority Alumni Hall of Fame of Stanford University in October, 2006 and as a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine in 2007.

Prior to her current positions, Dr. Rios served as the Advisor for Regional and Minority Women's Health for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health from November 1994 to October 1998. In 1998-2004, Dr. Rios served as Executive Director, Hispanic Serving Health Professions Schools. In 1993, Dr. Rios was appointed to the National Health Care Reform Task Force as Coordinator of Outreach Groups for the White House. From 1992-94, Dr. Rios worked for the State of California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development as a policy researcher.

Dr. Rios has also served as President, Chicano/Latino Medical Association of California, Founder of the National Network of Latin American Medical Students, as member of the California Department of Health Services Cultural Competency Task Force, the Stanford Alumni Association, Women's Policy Inc., and Partnership for Prevention Boards of Directors, PacifiCare-UnitedHealthcare California Investment Committee and the AMA's Minority Affairs Consortium Steering Committee.

Dr. Rios earned her BA in Human Biology/Public Administration at Stanford University in 1977, MSPH at the UCLA School of Public Health in 1980, MD at the UCLA School of Medicine in 1987, and completed her Internal Medicine residency at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose and the White Memorial Medical Center in East Los Angeles in 1990, and her NRSA Primary Care Research Fellowship at UCLA Division of General Internal Medicine in 1992.



PAUL RUCHAMES, L.C.S.W.

Paul Ruchames has been practicing as a licensed clinical social worker since his graduation from the Washington University School of Social Work (St. Louis, Mo.) in 1978. Since 1980, Paul has worked as an administrator in a variety of practice settings; non-profit, public and private.

Recently, Mr. Ruchames has served as the Executive Director of the Backstretch Employee Service Team of New York (known as B.E.S.T.) for the past 4 years and he has led the program to prominence, as it has become a model healthcare program for racetrack migrant workers with free primary health care, access to affordable or free health insurance, substance abuse counseling, case management services including food, clothing, transportation, translation services and more.

Before leading B.E.S.T., Mr. Ruchames served as Executive Director for 2 different social service organizations (the Counseling Service of EDNY and the N.Y. Center for Living) for more than 2 decades. Mr. Ruchames also served as Deputy Director for the Division of Substance Abuse Services of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. His organizations focused on the needs of marginalized and indigent populations such as individuals from the criminal justice system, adolescents, substance abusers and immigrants. Mr. Ruchames passion for these populations was the inspiration to author dozens of grant proposals which resulted in grant awards totaling over \$75,000.000.

Mr. Ruchames has been a private practicing psychotherapist situated in Floral Park, N.Y. for individuals and couples since 2007 and in this practice he has specialized in the treatment of addictive and anxiety disorders.

Mr. Ruchames has been a member of number of boards and committees serving the communities in which he has worked and as a result he has been given a number of awards including; the “Social Worker of the Year” (National Association of Social Workers/Nassau Division), “Person of the Year” from the 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, “Business Visionary” from the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the “Volunteer of the Year” award from the Peace Valley Haven homeless shelter and the “Exemplary Social Worker” award by the National Association of Social Workers (New York City Chapter).



LORELEI SALAS

Lorelei Salas joined Make the Road New York (“MRNY”) on March 12, 2012. As Legal Director for MRNY, Ms. Salas heads the housing and benefits litigation team, the employment team, the health advocacy team, and the newly formed immigration unit. In that capacity, she directs litigation, supervises the provision of direct legal services, and helps develop policy and campaign work around issues that affect the MRNY community. Prior to MRNY, Ms. Salas worked for over a decade in New York State government.

Most recently, Ms. Salas was the Acting Deputy Commissioner for Worker Protection in the New York State Department of Labor, supervising three enforcement divisions. At the Department of Labor, Ms. Salas also previously held the position of Director of Strategic Enforcement in the Labor Standards Division, and back in early 2007; she spearheaded the former Bureau of Immigrant Workers' Rights. In 2009, Ms. Salas was nominated for a position with the Federal Government and spent a couple of months consulting for U.S. Department of Labor’s Secretary Solis in Washington D.C.

After graduating from law school, Ms. Salas served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Honor’s Program of the New York State Attorney General's Office. In this position, she investigated businesses for violations of state and federal labor laws and represented the Department of Health in defensive litigation. Prior to becoming an attorney, Ms. Salas worked for several years for a global monitoring company conducting audits in the field of social responsibility. Ms. Salas graduated cum laude from Hunter College and received a J.D. from Benjamin N. Cardozo Law School where she was a Writing Competition and Articles Editor for the Cardozo Journal of International and Comparative Law. During law school, Ms. Salas gained experience in criminal defense work; she represented victims of domestic violence in family court, and worked on trafficking and deportation issues.



GABBY SANTOS

Gabby Santos is the Director of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Health Services for In Our Own Voices. She has worked with victims of trauma since 1994 in roles ranging from inmate support group facilitator, to policy work on behalf of LGBT People Of Color (POC). Racial justice work, transgender activism and criminal justice reform are at the heart of her passion.

Ms. Santos is committed to promoting the sexual health of LGBT POC and their communities in order to end health disparities. Ms. Santos provides leadership to various projects, including Unity Through Diversity, a National LGBT POC Health Summit, and the Annual Black & Latino Gay Pride of the Capital District of NY. Ms. Santos is also a member of the Arte Sana board of directors and ALAS, the national Latina alliance against sexual violence.



CLAIRE SIMON

Claire Simon is currently a Health Program Administrator/Contract Manager at the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. Claire earned her Bachelor's Degree in Health Education Hunter College. For over 25 years Ms. Simon has developed and implemented programs for in communities of color on HIV/AIDS and STI prevention, treatment and care, healthy relationships, leadership development, advocacy, class, gender and domestic violence issues.

Ms. Simon is the former Deputy Director for Programs at Love Heals, the Alison Gertz Foundation for AIDS Education. Ms. Simon is a member of various community coalitions and planning groups in NYC including NYC HIV Prevention Planning Group. She served as the interim executive director for the Women's HIV Collaborative of New York and is a co-founder of the Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition in New York City.



MAYRA D. VALDEZ

Mayra D. Valdez currently works with the New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute as a Health Program Administrator/Contract Manager in the Women's Services Unit, Bureau of Special Populations. Ms. Valdez began her tenure with the Department of Health in 1994. During her close to twenty years with the AIDS Institute, Ms. Valdez has worked with various departments in both the Divisions of HIV & Hepatitis Healthcare and HIV/STD/HCV Prevention such as the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, Substance Abuse and Primary Care Sections.

Ms. Valdez earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at SUNY, University at Albany in History/Ibero-American Studies. Ms. Valdez' passion has been to inform and educate the Latino/a community in HIV/AIDS prevention which, in 2000, led her to create her sorority's national initiative entitled Project L.E.A.A.P. (Latinas Educating on AIDS Awareness and Prevention). Her current focus is in educating and informing Latinos/Latinas about health disparities and health equity.



CARMEN VÁZQUEZ

Carmen Vázquez was born in Puerto Rico and grew up in Harlem, New York. Among her many accomplishments, Ms. Vázquez was the Founding Director of the Women's Building in San Francisco, helped found the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center in San Francisco, and the LGBT Health & Human Services Network, a coalition of over 55 organizations and groups in New York advocating for LGBT Health and Human Services. The Network has secured over \$54 million dollars in state funding for

its members. Ms. Vázquez is a founder and principal author of Causes in Common (a national coalition of Reproductive Justice and LGBT Liberation activists) and of the Pride in Action programs at Empire State Pride Agenda.

Ms. Vázquez is the recipient of an Honorary law degree from CUNY School of Law and her papers are part of the permanent collection at the Sophia Smith Archives at Smith College.

Ms. Vázquez serves on the National Advisory Boards of the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance.

Her essays have been published in several anthologies. Ms. Vázquez is currently the Coordinator of the LGBT Health and Human Services Unit with the AIDS Institute of the NYS Department of Health and lives in Brooklyn, NY.