



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs
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OCHA Announces 2012-2013 Leadership

Salem, Oregon (June 22) – Leadership posts for the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) have been announced including the re-election of Andrea Cano as chair, and election of Gilbert Paul Carrasco as the new vice chair, by commission members during the May 21 OCHA meeting in the State Capitol.

Initially appointed by Gov. Kulongoski in 2009, Carrasco was re-appointed by Gov. Kitzhaber and confirmed by the Oregon Senate during its May session. The Senate also approved Alberto Moreno as a new OCHA Commissioner. Both commissioners will serve for a term of three years.

"As our community inches toward a half million in population in this state, it is a profound honor to continue to direct and coordinate the strategic work of OCHA in addressing the myriad issues of equity and the social well-being of the Hispanic/ Latino/Indigenous community in Oregon," expressed Cano, adding, "We also celebrate the reappointment of one of our key commissioners in Professor Carrasco whose legal acumen is valued in our discussion of constitutionality and justice, and welcome Commissioner Moreno, a long time advocate for health equity."

One of the State of Oregon's advocacy commissions, OCHA was established by legislative statute in 1983. Its commissioners are selected via an executive appointments process, nominated by the standing governor, reviewed by the Senate Rules Committee and confirmed by the Senate in a floor vote. The Governor appoints nine commissioners from the community and two are appointed by the Oregon Senate President and Co-Speakers of the House respectively. The legislative members of OCHA are Sen. Chip Shields and Rep. Chris Harker.

Background: Andrea Cano – A hospital chaplain for Providence Portland Medical Center, Commissioner Cano was appointed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski in 2010. She is the highest ranking non-elected and non-staff Hispanic state official in the state of Oregon. A social justice advocate and communications specialist, Andrea Cano has served the people in this state as the Executive Director of the Oregon Farm Worker Ministry, Summit Director for the Oregon Latino Agenda for Action, and consultant to multicultural, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations. She is a member of the Jobs with Justice Worker Rights Board and vice president of Communities Uniting People. Commissioner Cano is a former Robert F. Kennedy Fellow, founding director of the California Chicano News Media Association, and founding member of the Chicana Caucus of the National Women's Political Caucus. Her international work has taken her to 30 countries including many in Latin America and the Spanish –speaking Caribbean. Originally from California, she lived in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, and Quito, Ecuador, before settling in Oregon in 1999.

OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs

Chair:

Andrea Cano

Vice Chair:

Gilbert P. Carrasco

Commissioners:

John Haroldson

Lupita Maurer

Alberto Moreno

Judith Parker

Carlos Perez

Santiago Ventura

Legislative Liaisons:

Sen. Chip Shields

Rep. Chris Harker

Staff:

Lucy Baker, Administrator
Nancy Kramer, Executive Asst.

Background: Gilbert Paul Carrasco – A professor of Law at Willamette University, Commissioner Carrasco teaches Constitutional Law, Civil Rights Litigation, and Sexuality and Discrimination at Willamette's College of Law. He is author or co-author of several books, including *The Law of Discrimination: Cases and Perspectives* (2011); *Everyday Law for Latino/as* (2008); *Civil Rights Litigation* (3d ed. 2005); *Sexuality and Discrimination: A Rights and Liberties Perspective* (2005); and *Immigration and Nationality Law: Cases and Materials* (2d ed. 1992). He holds degrees in Philosophy, University of San Diego; in law, University of Santa Clara; and in Constitutional Law, Georgetown University Graduate School of Law. Commissioner Carrasco's experience includes positions as Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Attorney General and Trial Attorney with the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice in Washington; as Directing Attorney of the National Center for Immigrants' Rights (now the National Immigration Law Center), Los Angeles; and as National Director of Immigration Services for the United States Catholic Conference in Washington.

Background: Alberto Moreno - The Executive Director for the Oregon Latino Health Coalition, a statewide organization whose mission is to eliminate health disparities for Latinos in Oregon, Commissioner Moreno also worked as the Migrant Health Coordinator for the Office of Multicultural Health and Services for ten years, seeding new Migrant Health Centers throughout Oregon. Early in his career, he founded a Community/Migrant Health Center in Southwest Washington and later became the Health Services Director with Sea-Mar Clinics. He has also worked on various initiatives including development work related to starting a Human Rights Commission and continues to work to secure prenatal care access for unqualified immigrant women in Oregon. Additionally, he is a founding member and the past Chair of the Oregon Latino Health Coalition, Board Member of United Way, Board Member of CASA and Co-Chair of the Latina Maternal and Child Health Taskforce and past President of the Oregon State Hispanic Employees Network. Commissioner Moreno is a native of Durango, Mexico and is bilingual and bicultural. He earned his BS in Psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and his MSW from the University of Illinois-Jane Adams.

In addition to Cano, Carrasco, and Moreno, OCHA commissioners include:

- **John Haroldson (Corvallis)** – As Benton County District Attorney, Commissioner Haroldson holds the honor of serving as Oregon's first Latino District Attorney. Commissioner Haroldson also serves on the Oregon State University Board of Visitors on Minority Affairs, and the Advisory Board for the César Chávez Cultural Center. He is a regular presenter for the Oregon State University CAMP and 4H Programs, and actively supports the national and regional work of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI). Commissioner Haroldson has been recognized by the Oregon Crime Victims Assistance Network, the Oregon Humane Society, the Oregon State Bar Association, the Oregon Hispanic Bar Association, and the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. He serves as adjunct faculty for Willamette University School of Law, National College of District Attorneys, and the Conference of Attorneys General.

- **Lupita Maurer (Aloha)** - An engineer in the high tech industry, Commissioner Maurer recently penned a guest column titled "Latinos in Oregon – We're Us not Them" for the *Hillsboro Argus*. Along time social justice advocate, she was appointed by Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian to serve on the Oregon Council for Civil Rights from 2009-2011. Prior to that she served as the chair of a political party in Washington County from 2004 to 2008 and now represents Oregon at the national level. She brings national policy perspectives on critical issues of import to the Hispanic community, among them immigration reform, tuition equity, housing and discrimination. Commissioner Maurer also speaks to student groups to promote and math science education.

• **Marcela Mendoza (Eugene)** -The Executive Director of Centro LatinoAmericano, a community-based organization in Eugene, on behalf of OCHA, she has served on the state's Environmental Justice Task Force. Originally from Argentina, she is an anthropologist with a career in academics. Marcela co-authored a book with another former OCHA commissioner Erlinda Gonzales Berry titled *Mexicanos in Oregon: Their Stories, Their Lives* (OSU Press 2010). Commissioner Mendoza has also served as adjunct professor and researcher at the University of Oregon of Oregon. Commissioner Mendoza's rich contributions to OCHA has included the research and editing of the commissions annual reports, and translating the OCHA power point presentations into Spanish.

• **Judith Parker (Portland)**, an attorney specializing in professional liability defense and labor and employment law, Commissioner Parker is a member of the Oregon Hispanic Bar Association. Her professional memberships also include the Oregon State Bar and the Hispanic National Bar Association. At the 2011 Convocation on Equality, she was honored for her extensive work in advancing the cause of diversity. Prior to her legal career, Ms. Parker worked for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service) as a district adjudication officer. Before that, she was an immigration caseworker and congressional speechwriter for former U.S. Representative Darlene Hooley (D-Oregon, Fifth District).

• **Carlos Perez (Portland)**, - An educator, Commissioner Perez retired from the Hillsboro School District in 2009 after 10 years as Deputy Superintendent and 31 years overall in the district. He is a founding member and current president of the Oregon Association of Latino Administrators (OALA,) a founding member and former chair of the Human Rights Council of Washington County and former chair of the Latino Leadership Network of Washington County. Commissioner Perez is also a dialogue facilitator with the Uniting to Understand Racism Foundation of Portland.

• **Santiago Ventura (Gervais)** - A paralegal with the Oregon Law Center, Commissioner Ventura is co-founder of OCIMO, the statewide organization of the Oaxacan indigenous community. An advocate for farm worker rights in California and Oregon for more than 10 years, in areas of housing rights, field sanitation and related labor conditions and employment issues. Previously he was a natural resources advisor to a city government in Oaxaca, Mexico, and oversaw natural resource development as part of "cargo" service to the community: a self-governance group of indigenous communities where town members serve in positions of power on a volunteer basis. He is fluent in Mixteco Bajo, Spanish, and English.

• **Senator Chip Shields - D-Portland, District 22** - Sen. Shields has served in the Oregon House and Senate since 2005 where he focuses on living-wage jobs, health care, schools and equality. In the 2009 session, as Co-Chair of the Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways & Means, Chip protected services for domestic violence survivors, funding for drug and alcohol treatment, and negotiated and passed a bill that invests \$1.5 million in pre-apprenticeship training for women and people of color. In the 2012 regular session he served on the committees of General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection, Chair Health Care, Human Services and Rural Health Policy, and the Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education.

• **Representative Chris Harker - D-Portland, District 34**

Rep. Harker was appointed to the Oregon House of Representatives in June of 2008, filling the seat left by the now-Senator Suzanne Bonamici. He looks forward to representing House District 34 and using his experience in health care and as a small business owner to find solutions to the tough challenges

ahead. In the 2012 regular session Chris served as Co-Chair of the joint Committee on Legislative Audits, and Information management and Technology, as well as a member of the Human Services Committee and the Education Subcommittee on Higher Education.

OCHA is authorized by legislative statute Chapter 185 to:

- work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal and political equality for Hispanics in Oregon.
- make recommendations to the Governor and report to each regular session of the Legislative Assembly.
- Monitor existing programs and legislation designed to meet the needs of Oregon's Hispanic population.
- Identify and research problem areas and issues affecting the Hispanic community and recommend actions to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly, including recommendations on legislative programs.
- Maintain a liaison between the Hispanic community and government entities.
- Encourage Hispanic representation on state boards and commissions.
- Hold meetings to conduct its business.

For further information and OCHA annual reports see <http://www.oregon.gov/Hispanic/index.shtml>