



# SER America

Cultivating America's Greatest Resource: People™

Spring 2019



*Laura Quintana*

*Vice President and  
General Manager  
of Cisco Networking Academy  
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Stimulates Students  
to Pursue Engineering  
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*Dr. Marla E.  
Pérez-Davis*

*Deputy Director of NASA's  
John H. Glenn Research  
Center in Cleveland*





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# SER America™

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## Message from the Chairman of the Board



**Janey Camacho Appia**  
*Chairwoman*

Welcome to the 2019 SER National Conference, where the sky is the limit. That is something my father taught my sisters and me. It's the truth I've learned from SER in the past, and it's the future I see for SER and all those we serve.

As we witness divides in our country continue to widen, it is important to remember that SER is here to help those that are in need. That's what we do, and we do it well. Our programs – Early Head Start, STEM youth education, SER MUJER entrepreneurship opportunities, and SER SCSEP job training for those 55 and older – all make a difference in the workforce pipeline.

I've heard firsthand how our Early Head Start programs have redirected the course of a toddler and his entire family through educational childcare and parent engagement. I've met women who received the encouragement and guidance they needed to grow their dreams from hobbies into sustainable incomes for their families. I've spoken with senior citizens who were once considered a liability to their former employers, but with SER training, have become assets and valued employees at their new jobs.

Through our STEM program, I've personally witnessed bright students from different backgrounds and cultures coming together and working together to build robots. Not only are they learning about teamwork,

leadership and presentation skills, but their eyes are opened to STEM careers and the educational opportunities there are to build that career.

That's what SER is all about - bringing people together and helping those in need. SER's focus on our country's workforce is more than simply finding a job for someone. Our work supports the great needs of our country as a whole and the life-changing needs of an individual.

I have been blessed to have a father who worked hard and encouraged my sisters and me at every turn. He has been my biggest hero and champion. This was a man who washed dishes at a restaurant in which he was not allowed to dine. Despite his own hardships, he helped so many people. He would bring home strangers so they could use a clean bathroom and shower. He would help them find work. He gave me my sense of community to help people.

When my high school counselor told me college wasn't an option for me, I listened instead to my parents' encouragement to further my education, even though they didn't have the resources to support me in that dream. SER became the resource that would help propel me to my dreams.

After high school graduation, my best friend convinced me to enroll in a SER bilingual clerical program. After eight weeks, I graduated at the top of my class. Our teacher, Mrs. Martinez, helped me land interviews with several companies. My friend and I both landed a job as secretaries with the welfare department processing financial assistance and food stamps.

I worked hard to progress in my career until I needed a college degree to keep going. So, I earned my Bachelor of Arts Degree in Organizational Management with a minor in Marketing from Ashford University. This propelled me further in my career at 7-Eleven. My 37-year anniversary with 7-Eleven is this November. It was through 7-Eleven that I was asked to attend a SER Conference in the 1980s, and I was reunited once again with the organization that had helped me years before.

When I watched my father as a child, I learned how to serve. When I went through the SER bilingual secretary training program,

I was given more opportunity to serve. As the Program Manager of Customer Relations at 7-Eleven, Inc., I am here to serve.

I owe so much to SER. I've never forgotten what they gave to me as a person, as a female and as a Latina. They reinforced in me that the sky was the limit. I just had to go out there and work for it. I was paving the way for me and for other females within my own household. My sisters are SER alumni as well.

I am inspired by SER staff – the key to all of SER's accomplishments. They are the people that make it happen every day. It's a great team and a testament to Ignacio Salazar's leadership. He is the glue that holds the ship together when it embarks into the ocean.

Although I am honored to serve as Chairman of the Board for SER National, I am just a part of the SER team on that ship searching for new opportunities. I will ensure we continue on the path of obtaining more affiliates, sharing the wealth of knowledge we have with one another, and helping communities that aren't currently being represented. I'd like to see more programs support our veterans and senior citizens. They helped pave the way for us to get to where we are today. And, the sky is the limit for our young people. They will be the future and we are here to support them.

We are thankful for those that partner with us in our important work. Thank you to our affiliates that carry out the work. Thank you to those with whom we form strategic alliances to reach more people. Thank you to the corporations and organizations that support us with resources we need to continue.

I want to thank SER for being the organization that they are. They are committed to help support and develop the workforce of tomorrow. Take time to learn about the various programs that SER offers. Get involved. Volunteer. We would love to hear from our alumni and the limits you've surpassed.

Enjoy the conference!

*Janey Camacho Appia*



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## Message from the President and CEO

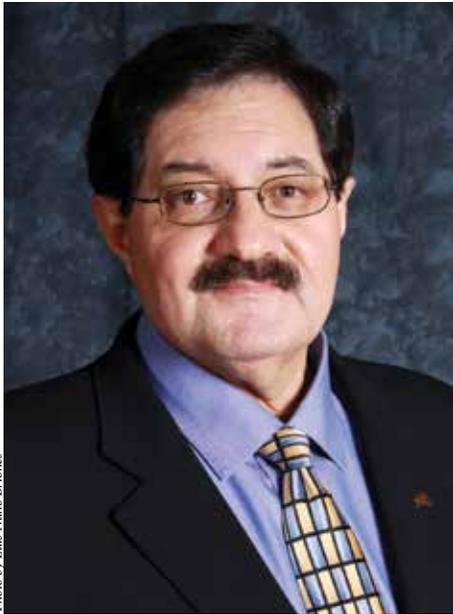


Photo by Luis Nuño Briones

**Ignacio Salazar, President & CEO**  
SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc.

Welcome to the 2019 SER National Conference, a gathering of innovation, inspiration and solutions!

Thank you for joining SER National in providing resources, services and hope to more people across the country each year. We are proud of our reach and even prouder of the changes we see in each individual benefitting from our programs.

The purpose of education is to prepare people to have a meaningful life through work and contribute to society. That is why the high school dropout rate among Latino and African-American students have been such a concern. A child that comes from a family in a lower economic situation, often times by the age of three if they are Latino and African American families, typically hears 30 million fewer words in the home than those in higher income households. As a result, they start their education at a deficit.

To make sure our children are on equal footing as they begin school, we must reach them as soon as we can after birth. That is why SER is expanding its high-quality, dual

language educational childcare efforts.

We also need to introduce them to STEM, as it is critical to the future of any community. STEM fields will see 3 times more growth than any other area. STEM is where we need to be, and it's where we are.

Tremendous gains have been made. The percentage of Latino students that graduate high school and go on to college is greater than whites. Latinos still have a higher dropout rate, but it has decreased significantly. We are moving in the right direction.

Our SER MUJER program encourages and supports women entrepreneurs building their own business. The country is creating 100,000 fewer entrepreneurs than 10 years ago, but SER MUJER is helping women of all ages with an entrepreneurial spirit and a drive to succeed.

The declining birth rate is yielding a shortage of workers despite a huge pool of resources for those 55 years and older. We provide education and retraining through our Senior Community Service Employment Program. We're proving to employers, and to seniors themselves, that they still have value. We help the economically disadvantaged earn additional income, acquire new skills and get back into the workforce, where they are retained.

SER provides hope to one million people every year. We have operations in over 200 cities across the country. That is a large footprint for a community-based organization focused on workforce development. We are altering the trajectory of lives, not just helping someone to make it through that day or year.

We have kept our hearts focused on the mission and our minds focused on best practices and innovation. We have moved far beyond trainings with typewriters and whiteout. Technology allows us to do so much more and reach so many more people. But needs have also expanded and new barriers have been created.

SER is focused on critical points in society where we can make an impact. Many people working jobs that pay \$20 or less an hour can't find affordable housing. We're looking at the implementation of our Community Development Corporation because the need for affordable housing grows as the gap between the haves and have-nots continues to widen.

We're expanding trainings that make sense for the future. Auto mechanics now need to be trained to deal with the technology of new cars. There are more jobs in construction, electricity, plumbing, etc. We have a shortage of people in these fields, and they are good-paying jobs.

We're providing financial literacy programs so people know what to do with their paychecks. We're working with companies like Cisco, partnering to infuse the workforce pipeline in a way that makes good sense. We continue to be mindful of reaching young people to reduce the dropout rate and increase college retention.

I hope you will join us for Community Day to see that momentum. We are simulcasting and recording to reach far beyond the 1,500 in attendance that day. Young people need to hear that regardless of their gender, economic situation or culture, they can dream big and achieve those dreams.

So, what does the future hold? At SER, the future still holds hope. We are providing people with opportunities that give them a sense of self-worth and dignity, where they are contributing members of society.

I thank everyone who supports SER and hope you see the impact your support is making throughout the conference.

A FedEx Express airplane is shown from a low angle, flying through a dense layer of golden, sunlit clouds. The sun is visible in the upper right corner, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The airplane is white with the FedEx logo in purple and orange on its side. The tail fin is also visible. The overall scene is dramatic and inspiring, symbolizing reaching new heights.

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## SER SCSEP

### *Fourteenth Year Serving Over 3,500 Participants in 250 Counties and 6 States*

**The U.S. workforce is aging and often unprepared for changing job descriptions. The SER Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) bridges the gap.**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about “40 percent of people ages 55 and older were working or actively looking for work in 2014. That number is expected to increase through 2024.”

SER SCSEP is in its fourteenth year of operation serving over 3,500 participants in 250 counties and 6 states. The participants are all 55 and older and have diverse work experiences, educations, and backgrounds.



SER partners with local non-profit organizations to provide participants with training opportunities that will update and advance their skillset. The community service and work-based training program is authorized by the Older Americans Act and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

A recent Forbes article titled “We Must Reverse These Trends to Transform America’s Future Workforce,” notes that “by 2030, as many as 54 million American workers will need to learn new skills and change occupations because of advances in technology and automation.” Without the help of SER SCSEP, many aging employees would be left in the dark.

Jesse Vasquez, Director of Network Development at Cornerstone Assistance Network, understands the need for continued job training. Cornerstone is a host agency with SER SCSEP. “What SER provides is

invaluable for us. I see the benefit for the participant, the community, and us as a host agency,” says Vasquez.

Albert Claveran, 77, is a SER SCSEP participant through Cornerstone Assistance Network. Albert arrived at Cornerstone with a background in construction. With the help of SER SCSEP and Cornerstone, Albert has learned a new set of skills and is ready to find permanent employment. “I was on the verge of being homeless, and SER SCSEP helped me get this job. I was able to rent an apartment. It saved my life. I was thinking of going and sleeping under a bridge in my truck. Now I have a home to go to every day

and money to spend. I have a good life thanks to SER,” says Claveran.

Another participant was referred to SER SCSEP after applying for a job at Goodwill in Fort Worth. 78-year-old Maria Hero retired in 2012 after 50 years as a teacher in Arlington. She is a widow of 30 years and is service-connected, as her husband served in World War II and spent time as a POW.

“SER SCSEP has changed my life completely. I love my program. I love SER. I have learned to answer phones, file, fax and scan. Imagine, a 78-year-old woman doing this? I’ve also learned how to greet people. I greet veterans, the disabled and homeless people. There are so many people like myself that need training. With SER behind us, my goodness, we got it going!” said Hero.

Hero was thrilled when two of her fellow participants in training landed jobs recently. She said the lack of benefits for people 55 and older are one of the main reasons many are in training programs. They need a job with good health benefits.

“We provide the dignity that participants deserve. As they progress, they just get more confident and comfortable. When you get them to that point, they become more efficient and do a better job,” says Vasquez. Often times, host agencies end up hiring SER SCSEP participants full-time. Rudy came to

Cornerstone Assistance Network as a SER SCSEP participant. His former position in retail had been eliminated. Once Cornerstone Assistance Network learned Rudy’s retail background, they placed him in a security position at the Cornerstone store. Rudy grew his talents in the security position. “Rudy found a place here -- he found a home. We are so happy to have Rudy here. He came to us as a SER participant, but because of what he developed into, he became an employee of ours,” says Vasquez.

Karen Maben is a SER SCSEP participant in Topeka, Kansas. She came to the SER SCSEP program frustrated and discouraged. Even though Karen was capable and driven, she battled a criminal history that often caused employers to overlook her. SER SCSEP provided an opportunity for Karen to overcome her obstacles. As a participant in the SER Topeka office, Karen established a record-keeping and organization system that was so impressive, SER National relayed the system as an example to other SER offices. Karen worked hard to develop her skills and build relationships. Eventually, Karen was



offered a full-time position as the Emergency Services Coordinator with the Topeka non-profit, Let’s Help, Inc. Karen is one of many SER SCSEP success stories.

Vasquez says, “The biggest challenge of older folks is that they need to understand that there is still a place for them. There is a purpose for them being here. Even though they might have barriers, we can overcome them and get them out in the workforce.”



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## SER Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Collaborates with Child Care Partners

Latina Jackson was struggling when she found SER Early Head Start. As a working mom of seven, Latina was looking for high quality child care for her young child, which is scarce. Aamari, Latina's daughter, enjoys her time at Little Coyote Learning Center, a SER EHS-CCP center



Ivona Hill - Attends Little Coyote

located on the campus of Crosswinds High School in Grand Prairie, Texas.

"Aamari can count to 20, knows her alphabet, and is ready to sing her songs from school every time we get in the car. She is more independent now and loves coming to school," says Latina.

SER National, under the leadership of Araceli Paniagua, EHS-CCP Director, collaborates with Grand Prairie Independent School District and Texans Can Academies partners in Dallas County, Texas to increase the supply of high quality early care and education to children from 6 weeks to years of age. SER National assumes a leadership role in the development of community partnerships, and collaborates with agencies to best meet the needs of children and their families. Parents are provided free childcare, diapers, baby wipes, formula, and nutritious meals.

Although, the childcare partners' main objective is to provide children with a safe environment, the collaboration and alignment with Early Head Start offers other services that the childcare industry does not provide. This includes comprehensive services that are responsive to medical,

dental, nutritional, physical, and mental health needs of infants and toddlers. Family support services aim to strengthen the well-being of parents and their entire family.

With a teacher-student ratio of 1:4, the SER Early Head Start program is so in demand that waiting lists are always in place. Each center offers parenting classes to educate parents on

child development and best practices in parenting. Parents learn how to advocate for themselves and their children. Because of the huge support system provided by SER EHS-CCP, more than 80% of teen parents who participate, graduate from high school. Family Services Specialists assist parents with goal setting and transforming them into action plans. Dr. Yolanda Wilder, Family Services Specialist sums it up when she says, "Everything is possible, you have to find a solution."

Coraima Lopez is a Wee Can Academy Pleasant Grove parent. Her daughter Ariella is thriving in the SER EHS-CCP program. Ariella has several special needs including, epilepsy and microcephaly. As a single mom, the program provides a support system like no other. Before starting at Wee Can Academy Pleasant Grove, Ariella was very behind developmentally. Within two weeks of starting, she began holding her

own bottle and crawling, now she is taking her first steps and pushing her walker toy. "Thank you SER Early Head Start for the opportunities you've provided Ariella, for being so kind and flexible with my situation," says Coraima.

CiCi and Nam Nguyen have two children, Nathan and Sophie. Nam is a full-time student studying for an advanced degree in political science who worked from home and kept his children. Because Nam was attending school full time and caring for his children, it imposed an undue hardship that prompted his wife Cici had to quit her job to take care of the children. Cici soon found Little Coyote; she immediately trusted the program and knew her daughter would thrive there. Little Coyote was a perfect fit. The family speaks Vietnamese at home, so Sophie knows three languages; Vietnamese, English and Spanish. CiCi was able to return to work and Nam was able to continue his degree. "We thank Little Coyote for their



Luca Cambronero – Attends Wee Can Academy

incredible care. It has helped us as parents improve our situation so we can have a better future for ourselves and our children," says Nam.

*Continued on page 12*

# LA DIVERSIDAD Y LA INCLUSIÓN SON LAS BASES DE NUESTRA INNOVACIÓN Y NOS IMPULSAN A SEGUIR HACIA ADELANTE.

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## SER Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Collaborates with Child Care Partners

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Screenings, home visits and parent conferences, and parent meetings are key components of the SER EHS-CCP program. Screenings help staff determine if a child's development is on target, or if they need a referral for special services. Home visits allow teachers to visit with parents in their own space. Parent conferences offer an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress and set new goals. Parent meetings provide families resources that help them to find housing, WIC services, apply for a driver's license, financial literacy training, and employment opportunities.

SER Early Head Start encourages all parents to read to their children and develop a love of books at an early age. According to Kids and Family Reading Report by Scholastic, "40 percent of parents with kids ages 0-5 read aloud to their children before three months." The report also states, "Hispanic families are aware of the importance of reading aloud at an early age, but are less likely to read aloud as frequently

as their peers." SER National aims to change that statistic by engaging parents in school readiness activities. The "Play and Learn" parent engagement program gives parents access to age appropriate books and educational materials they can use at home to extend their child's learning. These materials are rotated among families to provide a variety of learning experiences.

The SER EHS-CCP strives to provide a joyful and stimulating learning environment



*Wee Can Academy Natividad Family*

for infants and toddlers so that they can look forward to coming to school every day. A nurturing and loving environment that welcomes children and families is a signature component of SER Early Head Start. The SER National EHS-CCP team is committed to making a difference by planting seeds in early school readiness, and strengthening families. "SER National seeks to reduce the achievement gap of young Latinos by giving them an "Early Head Start" - Araceli Paniagua, EHS-CCP Director

## SER STEM Robotics

"You have grown so much," said senior student Angelica Vega to her friend, Yuliana Hernandez. Both girls attend Irma Rangel and are part of the SER STEM Robotics team at Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School in Dallas.

Angelica continued, "I always knew Yuliana as a shy girl. Because of her participation over the years in robotics, she has put herself out there and become a leader. She is the president of our team, and I am so proud of my friend."

The SER Robotics Program is designed to enhance students' academic, technical, and leadership skills for educational success. Intended to stimulate interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Art, the goal is to encourage students to attend college and pursue STEM degrees. Students are drawn into the

exciting world of robotics through building, designing, modifying and testing robots. Teams have the opportunity to compete alongside, and against, other school teams in exciting challenges.

Yuliana helped start Irma Rangel's high school robotics team after participating in a middle school robotics program. She had always been interested in problem solving after taking apart PlayStations as a child with her older



brother. She knew she wanted to be a scientist. "I have learned engineering, design, how to work with and guide a team – all

*Continued on page 14*



We're putting the needs of people, communities and the planet at the heart of how we work today, to help build a better tomorrow.





## SER STEM Robotics

*Continued from page 12*

through our robotics team,” said Yuliana.

Her dream is to attend The University of Texas at Dallas, where she hopes to join her love of helping people and STEM. She is interested in prosthetics and imagines a day when she can help design and create prosthetic organs as well as limbs. “SER, thank you so much for believing in us and believing in women in STEM,” she said.

Yuliana’s involvement in robotics drew in her friend, Angelica. She was amazed how her friends were starting with nothing and ending with a working robot! “I wanted to be a part of it,” said Vega. “At one of the competitions, I got to be a coach. I don’t have a title in our SER STEM Robotics Team, but that doesn’t mean I’m not a leader.”

Scott Stroud, a teacher at Irma Rangel, and the sponsor and coach of the school’s high school robotics team, said the school’s

According to the Pew Research Center, employment in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) occupations has grown 79 percent since 1990, outpacing overall U.S. job growth. Unfortunately, Hispanics and African-Americans are still underrepresented in the STEM workforce relative to their shares in the U.S. workforce as a whole. Among ACT test-takers in the 2017 graduating class, only 13 percent of African American and 26 percent of Latino high school students were prepared for college-level math. Just 11 percent and 22 percent, respectively, were ready for college-level science. Females lagged their male counterparts in both math and science by five points; 39 versus 44 and 35 versus 40 respectively.

This needs to change, because science and engineering employment is projected to increase 11 percent by 2024, according to the National Science Board in 2016. The 2018 College Salary Report from Payscale found that of the 25 highest paying jobs for bachelor’s degree graduates, 17 are some form of engineering.

SER also supports teams at Sunset High Schools in Dallas, Martin and Sam Houston High Schools in Arlington, and

Barbara Cardwell Career Preparatory Center, and Jack E Singley Academy in Irving, Texas. Students at these schools are reaping the benefits of their own hard work and dedication as well as SER’s support.

Elijah Macias, a senior at Sunset High School, is the co-captain of his SER STEM Robotics team. Before SER STEM, he hated math and science. “Robotics made math and science more applicable and a lot more interesting,” he said. Elijah will attend the School of Engineering at University of Texas at Austin and is interested in studying electrical and computer engineering.

Magaly Raymundo, another senior at Sunset High School, heard about the SER STEM program through her calculus teacher.



She worked on the engineering notebook for her team, which details all the work that went behind the robot and is reviewed by the judges at each competition. “My biggest accomplishment was helping my friends and getting the work done,” said Magaly. “I would encourage all students to get involved in STEM -- it is important in so many careers and hobbies.” She plans to attend a Texas college and study medicine.

At Sam Houston High School, students raced to the 3D printer to print out another part for their robot while senior Kendall Hayes talked about his experience on the team. He has learned life lessons about not giving up, even when a flood took out the robot they had been working on close to competition. His team could have walked away, but they didn’t. They kept going.

“I like science and engineering. When those two combine to build a robot, I couldn’t say no,” said Kendall. “I’ve learned to work with a team, turning thoughts and ideas into a creation that accomplishes a single goal. It’s weird but fun, seeing what seems like scraps turn into something that can accomplish that goal. I would 100% recommend SER STEM Robotics to other students. It teaches you things you need for college and work, and it prepares you for a better life and future.”

Kendall plans to attend the University of Texas at Arlington or the University of North Texas. Because of SER STEM Robotics, he is interested in an engineering path.

As needs continue to grow for STEM skills in the workforce pipeline, SER STEM Robotics is introducing and preparing young people for the opportunities that lie ahead.



robotics program ended at middle school until the students appealed for a high school team as well. “When I met these kids, they were so quiet, so ready to step back,” said Stroud, standing in an OSHA-certified workroom with students donning safety glasses and manning power tools. “Now they are running the show. They believe in their abilities and are not afraid to try new things. We couldn’t have reached the level we are at today without the help of SER. It’s been such a joy.” The levels they have reached include triumphing at UIL 5A-6A State Competitions in Robotics.

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# Workforce Development Transformation in the Age of Technology

## SER *Mujer* A SER National Program

“My first problem was that I didn’t see I could do more,” said Sara Rosado, a SER MUJER entrepreneur.

SER Mastering and Understanding Jobs and Entrepreneurship Relationships – SER MUJER – is a national women’s entrepreneurship program that supports Hispanic female entrepreneurs through training and development.

According to a 2017 study titled “State of Latino Entrepreneurship 2017” by Stanford GSB, “The Latino population has grown at a steady clip and now accounts for 18% of the U.S. population.” Of the Latino population, entrepreneurship is booming. “Latinas now own 44% of Latino business,” according to the study. Business Insider reports that as of 2017, “There are 11.6 million women-owned businesses.” Latina-owned businesses represent almost 2 million of that 11.6

relationship.

The SER MUJER entrepreneurs are encouraged to return to SER MUJER when questions arise. As she tells everyone, “They can always come back to Emma.”

Iris Berrios moved to Dallas, Texas, from Acapulco. She is a single mother raising her two children Lane, 13, and Alexander, 9. She works full-time at Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas for a family care practice. In 2016 while attending a Mexican candy expo in Mexico, an idea sparked for Iris. As a child, she had enjoyed candy apples. She remembered how beautiful they were and how delicious they tasted as a little girl. Iris was excited to share the childhood sweet with her own children. And as a mom, she was happy to have a healthier option for a treat.

Iris began making the candy apple treats

for her daughter’s birthday party and to deliver as thank you gifts. Her apples were enormously popular and people couldn’t get enough of them. What began as a small indulgence for friends and family quickly expanded. Iris sold the apples at her children’s school, church, and garage sales. Iris had a business.

She attended a SER MUJER conference and learned ways to continue the growth of her business. She was educated on marketing materials and administrative processes. SER MUJER equipped Iris to take her idea and develop it beyond her dream; into a true business. “SER MUJER is a good opportunity for Latinas to start a new business,” says Iris. “They give you the support and tools you need.”

Eventually, Iris will return to the University of North Texas and seek her Master’s degree in Marketing. As Iris tells others looking to start a business, “Never give away your ideas. Start a business doing what you know. Any idea is good for a new business if you have the spirit to succeed.”

Sara Rosado is growing her food business with the help of Emma Trevino and SER MUJER. Many years ago, Sara fulfilled her dream of being a professional baker when she opened two bakeries in Puerto Rico. However, Sara was young, inexperienced, and didn’t yet have



million.

Despite the growth, capital, however, continues to be an issue. “There is a continuous need for funding,” says Emma Trevino.

Emma Trevino, Director of Special Projects at SER-National, works directly with Latinas to start and grow their own businesses. The SER MUJER training program consists of 10-12 modules, classroom training, and free online platforms to help with marketing and business plan development. Once women have received the training they need to launch their business, SER MUJER continues to foster the





## SER *Mujer* A SER National Program

*Continued from page 16*

the business expertise needed to maintain the bakeries. She soon filed for bankruptcy. After moving to Arlington, Texas, in 1998,



Sara vowed she would never bake again. She worked a series of jobs with Sheraton, Embassy Suites, and American Airlines before injuring her back. The combination of injury and working in jobs for which she lacked passion, landed Sara in a battle with severe depression and pain.

Her emotional and physical distress was compounded when her husband was disabled and unable to work. The Rosados inched ever closer to losing their home. Out of desperation, Sara began making and selling her pastries again. Through Sara's determination of selling her pastries while continuing to work two jobs outside the home, she and her husband were able to keep their home. By 2016, Sara's love for baking re-emerged and Sara was able to work at home full-time, caring for her husband and selling pastries.

Sara says, "I did a lot by myself, but Emma and SER MUJER are taking me to the next level with the support I need."

Sara's hope is that her collaboration with SER MUJER continues to grow and develop her business. She would love to own her own bakery again, and be able to sell and ship her pastries all over the world. For now, she's honing her craft at home and taking orders over the phone. SER MUJER has provided Sara with both resources and helpful mentors.

SER MUJER will continue to seek out Latina entrepreneurs and empower them to not only launch their businesses, but surpass their goals.

## SERJOBS Houston

### *SERJobs Supports, Trains, Educates and Places Thousands of Job Seekers Each Year*

After the long-term ramifications in the Houston area brought on by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, SERJobs continued to move forward successfully in 2018 with a new location, new executive director, and expanded geographical reach and services.

SERJobs supports, trains, educates and places thousands job seekers each year who come from low-income backgrounds or who have barriers to employment. The goal is to break the cycle of poverty by helping low-income individuals reach long-term financial stability while simultaneously responding to the region's ever-changing workforce needs.

"SERJobs is unique because we serve individuals that are often facing more challenges than most, including those returning to communities after incarceration and youth or young adults ages 16-24 who are disconnected from school and work," said Sheroo Mukhtiar, Executive Director and CEO of SERJobs in Houston.

The agency's services are provided at no cost to the participant, including career coaching, occupational training, job search assistance, and financial coaching. The organization also places an emphasis on Paid Work Experience (PWE) and On the Job Training (OJT) whenever possible, both as a tool for employer engagement, an opportunity for hands-on learning, and as a tool for participant retention. This is particularly critical for participants who are already at a low income level, as dedicating several weeks in a full-time training program without income is a major hardship. Whenever possible, SERJobs offers paid work experience or some sort of stipend to help minimize barriers to success. Further, SERJobs truly engages its employer partners at various levels – from helping design or modify curriculum to interacting with students during classes, to hosting mock interviews and/or hiring events directly.

According to Ciara Major, Senior Manager of Grants and Communications at SERJobs, corporate partners understand what SER brings to the table. Just as they listen to clients in need of better jobs, the SERJobs

team listens to what a business needs and creates services and connections to meet those needs. They have worked closely with companies to come up with specific curriculum they need to fill their workforce gaps. "They are investing in SER because in doing so, they are investing in their own people. When you invest in people, they turn around and invest back into you. It just makes business sense," said Major.

The more invested corporate partners become with SERJobs– even beyond funding - the more benefits they see. One company abandoned all its other hiring pipeline contractors because the SERJobs process brought them trained employees more quickly, shortened the onboarding process and reduced turnover.

SERJobs operates a youth and young adults service contract through the local workforce board, and their performance was so impressive in the 9 counties they served previously that the workforce board expanded their reach to the 13 counties that make up the Houston-Galveston Area Council region last year.

When asked what makes SERJobs so good at what they do, the SERJobs team is the common answer.

"They have local knowledge and are strongly cemented in the community throughout all of our counties. You can't force your own priorities on a person. You must listen to their needs and respond to those needs. The staff speaks their language, literally and figuratively. They help them find their special gifts and where they can flourish, transforming their own lives, their family's situation, their employers and the community in which they live," said Mukhtiar.

As part of the agency's move to their new location, SERJobs opened La Chamba Coffee & Careers as a social enterprise that also provides transitional job placement and hands-on training. In 2018, SERJobs also rebranded and launched a new website. All of these changes are helping SERJobs create

*Continued on page 18*



## SERJOBS Houston

*Continued from page 17*

more opportunities and services for Houston areas residents.

The organization's move to a new location had been a labor of love for several years, and when Harvey hit, the standing water was so bad in the renovated building they had to repour the foundation. But the SERJobs team did what they needed to do to keep providing the services on which so many rely. Today, from SER's new Workforce Opportunity Center in Houston's East End, they provide access to education, training, employment, and financial empowerment for disconnected youth and adults.

In order to address the needs of the community today and tomorrow, SER has launched an \$11 million Investing in the Future Capital Campaign. Funds will support SER's proposed 20,000-square-foot Workforce Training Center (WTC), which will provide critical space for hands-on training and economic mobility for neighbors in need of opportunity. The WTC will provide a direct pipeline of specialized trainings, especially to prospective employers of industries involved in Hurricane Harvey and similar recovery efforts, to more than 800 low-to-moderate income individuals annually. SERJobs will continue to be a training hub for a variety of industries: construction, manufacturing, transportation, and infrastructure. They will launch and expand training for disaster recovery areas of the construction trades and develop new training tracks based on labor market demands.

"SERJobs understands that there is a lot of human potential that doesn't get realized because opportunities are not availed to them," said Janey Appia, Chairman of the SER National Board of Directors. "The unemployment rate may be low, but too many are underemployed. People need to feel power and purpose in their lives to make sustainable changes for themselves and their families. We need to put them in family-sustaining jobs and careers to make a valuable impact. We are thankful for the transforming work that SERJobs takes on each day."

## SER Metro-Detroit

### *Annually Serving Over 500,000 Job Seekers*

Pennsylvania CareerLink is just one example of the services provided by SER Metro-Detroit, a SER Affiliate that has grown from a small community resource serving Southwest Detroit residents in 1971 to a multi-service, multi-state corporation serving as a direct link to gainful employment of diverse populations.

"At Pennsylvania CareerLink, we meet our job seekers right where they are and gauge their needs so that they can achieve their professional and personal goals," said Gizela Burnside, EARN Director, reminiscing on a past job seeker. The woman had experienced

Administrator for Pennsylvania CareerLink and SER Metro-Detroit's Regional Director for Pennsylvania.

CareerLink has paired with major employers in the Philadelphia area to provide jobs for the unemployed, including the University of Pennsylvania, Jefferson Hospital and Drexel University.

Recently, CareerLink hosted a job fair with more than 80 employers and 700 job seekers in attendance. Over 100 job seekers were hired instantly and dozens more were hired after the companies completed the hiring process.



many personal and physical challenges, but she obtained a full-time job with the help of the SER team and her Workforce Advisor through CareerLink.

The CareerLink West office, located in West Philadelphia, is made up of 64 full-time staff and seven interns. These advisors, job developers and instructors specialize in a broad array of services, such as job matching, obtaining employment and training referrals, and instructing workshops and orientations.

"SER Metro has taken the worst-performing CareerLink in the Philadelphia system and turned it around. We are now number one in Philadelphia. Not only has our performance increased, but we are working to get our customers jobs that pay a higher rate which lead to more self-sufficiency," said Chris Paul, Site

"In fiscal year 17-18 we enrolled 90 percent of the clients who walked through our door, we continued to strengthen our returning citizens programs, and we helped over 1,000 Philadelphia residents obtain and maintain employment," said Paul.

Last year, CareerLink serviced about 40,000 job seekers, mostly from inner-city communities in Philadelphia.

"After spending my early years at SER Metro-Detroit, it is wonderful to see the excellence of that affiliate's programs continuing to create so many opportunities and change lives," said Ignacio Salazar, president and CEO of SER National. "SER Metro-Detroit is an example of how hard work, commitment and compassion can help people get back on their feet and on the road to a fulfilling life."



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## Centro CHA Improving Latino Neighborhoods

Latinos make up 44.5 percent of the population in Long Beach, Calif., making it the city's largest demographic but also one of the poorest. Latinos in Long Beach work mainly in service and manual labor jobs and many do not have health insurance, according to the Economic Profile of the Latino Community in Long Beach.

The profile was spearheaded and presented by SER affiliate, Centro CHA, a grassroots, community-based nonprofit organization providing quality, necessary and compassionate services to more than 5,000 families from underserved, impoverished Latino neighborhoods. The driving force of the report was the question – how do we increase the quality of life for Latinos in the city of Long Beach?

The profile provided key data on population, education, employment, income, poverty and health for the 214,000 Latinos that live in Long Beach. Attendees at the first Latino Economic Summit had the opportunity to not only learn more about the Latino community in Long Beach, but also to engage in meaningful conversations about public policy, community engagement strategies and the need for future research.

“Centro CHA is advancing the community by working to promote economic equity and civic engagement for Latino youth and families in Long Beach,” said Jessica Quintana, the organization’s executive director.

In order to keep up with the growing rate of Latinos in Long Beach and to successfully carry out its mission, Centro CHA activated programs throughout the community that include workforce development, parent services and citizenship/immigration integration.

In one participant’s own words, “Robby and Denny were such helpful case managers. I now have two jobs and I am returning for more training. When you are serious about employment, they match that energy and help you get it done.”

Over the last year, Centro CHA has made significant impacts in the community, including providing legal application services

Certification, Customer Service and Retail Certification and Guard Card License.

Centro CHA continues to serve and improve the Long Beach Latino community through partnerships and collaborations.

One partner, the Long Beach S.A.F.E. Initiative, focuses on reducing violence and encouraging youth development throughout the community. The initiative hosts the “Summer Night Lights” program, which keeps parks open late through the summer and provides a safe place for families and kids to interact.

Centro CHA has also experienced success through the Every Student Matters (ESM) campaign, which led to the Long Beach



and assisting 974 residents to successfully pass the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Exam to become new U.S. citizens and voters.

Centro CHA also made an impact in the lives of 200 youth through its Face Forward Youth Diversion/ Reentry Program. The program targets at-risk youth ages 16-24 and offers free job training in many areas, including CA Food Handler Certification, Personal Caregiver and CPR/First-Aid Training, Forklift Operator Certification, Refinery Safety Overview

Unified School District passing a resolution to terminate the use of suspensions and expulsions as disciplinary actions in schools.

Through another Centro CHA collaboration, California State University hosted a summit that strictly focused on the Boys and Men of Color Initiative. The summit encouraged students to graduate high school, provided college and career options, and prepared them to become constructive citizens.

“The leadership, research and outreach of Centro CHA truly fulfill SER National’s promise to transform lives and communities through education, employment and empowerment,” said Ignacio Salazar, president and CEO of SER National. “We thank them for their important work that results in changed lives.”





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## Tejano Center for Community Concerns (TCCC)

SER National could not educate, employ and empower Latinos throughout the country without the on-the-ground work and commitment from affiliates like the Tejano Center for Community Concerns in Houston.

In its 25-year history, the center's mission has remained constant: to develop education, social, health and community institutions that empower families to transform their lives.

“By providing comprehensive social services programs that respond to essential community needs, the Tejano Center has

including the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) Charter School, Affordable Housing Program, VOCA – Victims of Crime Act Outreach and Support, Youth Shelter and Foster Care Program, and the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic.

“RYSS provides a K-12 college preparatory educational experience for children from surrounding neighborhoods and is committed to the success of every student, regardless of his/her academic or economic background,” said Dr. Tamez. “I am so proud to lead a school district that devotes so much energy and so many resources to the hopes and dreams of every child who enters our doors. We have an awesome responsibility to the children and their parents, but we have proven that we are up to the task. We welcome and cherish our scholars and dedicate ourselves every day to their success.”



emerged as an important local resource for families and neighborhoods,” said Dr. Adriana Tamez, Interim President & CEO.

The Tejano Center was established as a nonprofit community organization to serve the East End, a predominantly low-income Hispanic area of Houston. Tejano Center offers a variety of impactful programs,

working alongside its parent organization—the Tejano Center for Community Concerns—to ensure effective teaching and learning for all scholars and proactively engaging parents and local businesses and organizations to share in the development of productive and responsible citizens.

“A great education reveals the great potential in every child. That’s what we strive to do at the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success. We are committed to ensure a

success story for all students in our Houston and Brownsville campuses by creating safe environments where high-quality teaching and learning can flourish and where scholars learn to be responsible citizens of our community, our state, and our nation. All of our faculty and staff are united in opening doors to college and careers for our scholars, leading them to live up to their potential and take their rightful place in moving our diverse and boundless society forward,” said Dr. Tamez.

The Tejano Center’s Affordable Housing Program aims to provide opportunities to citizens who lack resources to access affordable, quality, and safe housing. Since 2005, the program has helped more than 2,500 new homeowners and 3,500 mortgage-ready homebuyers, providing a strong foundation and empowerment for these individuals to succeed. Tejano Center serves some of the most vulnerable populations, including but not limited to, low income families, families with children, senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, non-English speaking individuals and undocumented residents.

The Home Repair Program began operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike in 2008 and has repaired over 120 homes, mainly for minority homeowners. The Disaster Case Management and Home Repair program have been revamped as a response to the immediate and long-term needs resulting from the devastation left by Hurricane Harvey. The Tejano Center is currently providing Hurricane Harvey Disaster Case Management and Home Repair services for homeowners whose primary home suffered damages from the storm and its aftermath. Through Tejano Center’s Disaster Case management, the applicants are provided with financial tools to become self-sufficient.

The purpose of the VOCA program is to provide direct services to victims of crime through a systemic approach, supporting and guiding clients in their journey towards healing and self-sufficiency.

The Youth Shelter and Foster Care Program helps children that have been neglected and/or abused by providing a

*Continued on page 24*



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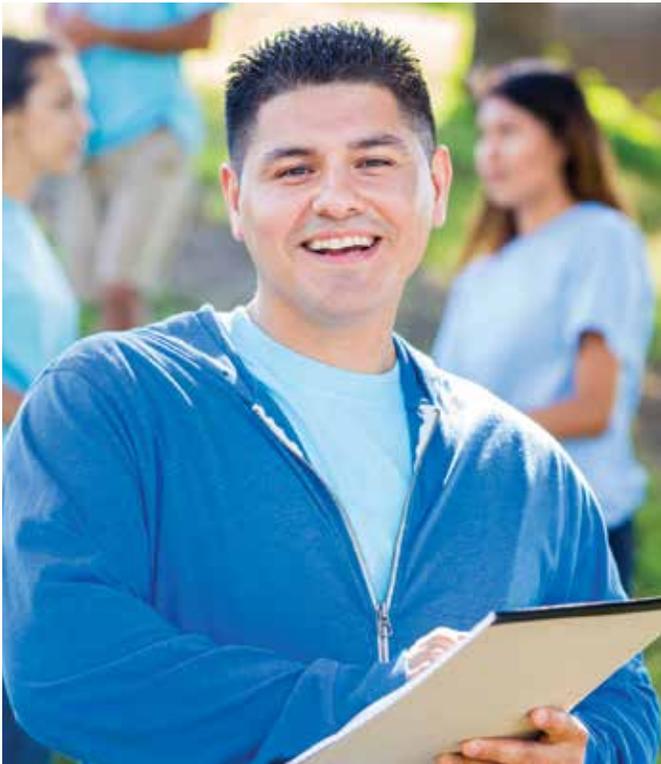


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## Tejano Center for Community Concerns

*Continued from page 22*

safe and loving foster home to meet their basic needs. The Tejano Center has been extremely effective in connecting qualifying foster parents to children in need of positive relationships and healthy living conditions.

Located on the RYSS campus, the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic is open to RYSS scholars and their families as well as the community. The clinic serves young men and women ages 13 to 24 providing immunizations, wellness exams, treatment for minor illness, birth control, STD testing and counseling, health education, pregnancy testing and counseling, sports physicals and health screenings.

“The impacts the Tejano Center is making in the community directly align with the goals of SER National,” said Janey Appia, Chairman of the SER National Board of Directors. “It’s not just about placing people in jobs. It’s about providing them with the education, empowerment and support they need to infuse their lives with sustainability and value.”

## Cisco’s Impact on Workforce Development Cisco Networking Academy

Cisco recognizes the need for global problem solvers – global citizens ready to thrive in a connected and digital future by thinking like entrepreneurs, innovating like technologists, and acting as agents of social change. Piloted in the United States and France, Global Problem Solvers: The Series targets students during middle school, a critical development period and inflection point in STEM adoption.

By leveraging an engaging combination of animated stories and activities, students learn important skills like complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork. It also emphasizes social consciousness, entrepreneurship, and the potential of technology to accelerate positive change.

Students focus on real-world social, economic, and environmental problems, learning that coming up with ideas is just the first step in problem solving. Making ideas real requires business planning, funding, designing and manufacturing, deployment, testing, measurement and promotion. Students are challenged to find solutions that are scalable and sustainable, and in doing so, they also learn the skills they will need to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Learn more at [gpstheseries.com](http://gpstheseries.com)



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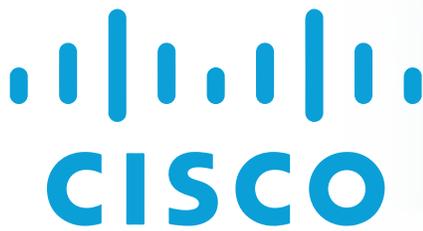


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# Laura Quintana



SER National is honored to welcome Laura Quintana, Vice President and General Manager of Cisco Networking Academy, as a keynote speaker at the 2019 conference. Her global expertise and leadership in education and workforce solutions have positioned her as a voice for today and the future, in support of diverse communities everywhere.

Quintana is the daughter of immigrant parents from Mexico and a Stanford University graduate with a degree in engineering. “My mom only had a middle school education, but she was wise, loving, and she pushed me to excel because she wanted a better life for me,” said Quintana. She attributes her success and work ethic to her parents, who always stressed the value of education. Her mom also used to tell her “querer es poder” (where there is a will there is a way). Growing up, she felt empowered to think big and have an optimistic outlook. Her parents also taught her to be compassionate toward others. The values and lessons she learned from them have shaped her as a person and a leader.

She also credits mentors and sponsors for her accomplishments, and stresses that this is an integral part of accelerating and advancing one’s career. According to the

Center for Talent Innovation, people with sponsors are 23% more likely to move up in their careers than people without sponsors. However, there is a gap: while one in five Caucasian men has a sponsor, only one in eight women and one in 12 minorities has a sponsor. To address this gap, Cisco established the Multiplier Effect Pledge in partnership with other tech industry leaders, with the objective of accelerating the pipeline of diverse talent in tech through the power of sponsorship. The pledge is a personal commitment that encourages leaders at all levels to sponsor at least one extraordinary diverse candidate for career advancement. Thirty-six percent of Cisco VPs have taken the pledge and Cisco is extending this initiative beyond its own company and

industry.

In her role at Cisco, Quintana leads a global organization based in 50 countries, including strategy, product management, product development, global field, and operational services for the Cisco Networking Academy. Over the past 21 years, the Networking Academy has benefited 9.2 million students in 180 countries by providing education, workforce development, and digital skills training through public-private partnerships. Courses are taught by over 24,000 instructors and are delivered in collaboration with 11,400 schools, community colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations.

*Continued on page 27*

Quintana stresses that collaboration and teamwork are a necessity in addressing the digital skills gap that challenges countries around the world.

“It’s a broad team of passionate and committed individuals that have made Networking Academy successful. We at Cisco could not accomplish this level of impact without our education, government, non-profit, and business partners. I don’t think any one of us could do this alone. It takes an ecosystem of committed partners,” said Quintana.

Quintana notes SER National as an example. “The opportunity to partner with SER is significant because of the work SER is doing in the education space – both training and re-skilling. Cisco currently has our Networking Academy in over 40 percent of U.S. community colleges. We can work together to connect the dots. We have partnerships that we can both leverage to reach more and more of the Latino community,” she said.

In addition, SER’s impact and reach to 1 million Latinos across the United States could be a bridge for Cisco’s education programs for middle schools, high

schools, and higher education.

SER National has benefitted greatly from recent partnerships with Cisco, including a product donation valued at \$461,982 to help SER transform operations and digitize the organization.

“SER leadership recognizes the value of digitization. The product grant allows them to be more efficient and effective in delivering innovative programs. SER’s current impact is already amazing. By leveraging digital solutions, SER can now scale and expand its reach even further,” said Quintana.

Rafaela Schwan, SER National’s Vice President for Program Operations, shares that the collaborative technologies provided

by Cisco will affect all SER programming, from video conference training for staff to providing the latest curriculum and lesson plans to Early Headstart teachers. From an education perspective, SER can now bring in an expert at one location that can reach multiple locations, creating a multiplier effect for the organization.

“Cisco is helping us transform SER to reach more people with more speed,

“Technology is going to continue to change at a rapid pace. We need to focus on up-skilling and re-skilling, with a mindset to never stop learning”

efficiency, and greater service. In addition, having access to an individual like Laura, one of our own in this global leadership role, is a life-changing inspiration to our community. It’s an incredible opportunity to motivate and empower, and we’re thankful for the partnership,” said Schwan.

Cisco offers its own employees opportunities to continuously evolve and develop different skill sets. The company supports employees to further their education and earn graduate degrees while they are working and offers leadership programs spanning various leadership groups. Cisco has also partnered with Degreed, a new learning platform, to expand the training and development content available to employees. This allows employees to customize their own learning paths, and enables them to remain lifelong

learners and stay on the cutting edge of their own personal development.

“At Cisco, we want to ensure we create a culture and environment where everyone feels included and that they belong here,” said Quintana. “One area that has been critical to our DNA is giving back. In 2018, our employees dedicated 424,000 volunteer hours in support of nonprofit organizations and generated \$21.4 million in charitable donations and matching gifts from the Cisco Foundation. Upholding an environment where an individual can work with great teams, continue to develop, grow, and give back to the communities in which they live enables us to attract and retain great talent.”

With every opportunity comes a challenge, and Quintana acknowledges that constantly changing technology drives a skills gap in the workforce. “There are millions of jobs and opportunities for those with digital skills, but employers can’t find enough individuals with those skills to fill jobs. It’s a challenge for us at Cisco, our industry, our customers and across every sector,” she said.

“Mobile app developers, data scientists, cloud computing specialists – these roles didn’t exist fifteen years ago. Today we have entirely new great-paying jobs and careers created by technology. I believe there are significant opportunities to step into jobs that help solve problems for business and that drive great social and environmental impact,” she continued.

Quintana’s advice is that everyone become a life-long learner. “Technology is going to continue to change at a rapid pace. We need to focus on up-skilling and re-skilling, with a mindset to never stop learning,” she said. She noted that diverse skill sets are like adding another language to your toolkit. Programming or cybersecurity can enhance a toolkit as well as skills like creative thinking, negotiation and persuasion.

Her advice for young people is the same she shares with her own children.

“Focus on your education and be a strong learner. Your circumstances don’t define you. Know what you want, set goals and go after them. We don’t know what many of the jobs of the future will be, but we do know that every industry will be transformed by technology and most jobs will require digital skills,” Quintana said.

# SER Welcomes New Leadership

## The SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc., Board of Directors has welcomed four new members:

- **Monica Valdiviez-Wiley, State Commander for the American GI Forum (AGIF) of the U.S.**
- **Felicita Lugo, American GI Forum of the U.S. National Chairwoman, Emeritus**
- **Manuel G. Escobar, Jr., active member of LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens)**
- **Jesus Padron of SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc. of San Joaquin Valley in Fresno, California.**

Also, during the SER National Board's October meeting, **Janey Appia**, Customer Relations Manager at 7-Eleven, Inc., was elected



as Chairman, and Roman Palomares, President of Palomares Consulting Group, was elected Vice-Chairman.

The board membership of SER National consists of leaders from Fortune 500 companies, community-based organizations, and SER Affiliates.

"We are confident that this uniquely experienced and dedicated board will provide the necessary oversight and focused direction to ensure that SER

National is fulfilling its mission of transforming lives through education, employment and empowerment," said Ignacio Salazar, President & CEO of SER National. "Their leadership will pave the way for SER to make more significant impacts in the U.S. workforce and in individual lives.

**Monica Valdiviez-Wiley**, a United States Army Veteran with over 20 years of service, was born into a military family in Brownsville,



Texas. She served as a public affairs advisor to both military and civilian C-suite leadership in the National Capital Region (NCR) and military installations here and abroad.

Ms. Wiley continues to work with veterans as the appointed State Commander for the American GI Forum (AGIF) of the U.S. She represents AGIF leadership in conducting forum business and project management related to the

2018 National Veterans Day Committee meetings and reception. On Capitol Hill, she visits congressional representatives and staffers voicing concerns related to deported veterans, access to care and benefits.

Ms. Wiley was appointed to the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV), by the Veterans Affairs Secretary. ACMV advises the Secretary and Congress on the VA's administration of benefits, healthcare and services. The committee also provides an annual report to Congress on the VA's delivery of services to minority veterans.

Ms. Wiley serves as a board member and strategic communications director with Operation Renewed Hope Foundation,

a veteran's service organization that has housed and assisted over 500 homeless veterans and their families in the last six years in the NCR. In addition, she served as a board member of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR). HACR serves 13 national Hispanic organizations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico with a mission to advance the inclusion of Hispanics in corporate America focusing on corporate social responsibility and market reciprocity, employment, procurement, philanthropy and governance.

Ms. Wiley is the founder of a small public relations firm, a nonprofit art agency for veterans and an online health website geared to Latinos. She also advises minority women business owners.

**Felicita Lugo**, U.S. National Chairman, Emeritus of the American GI Forum (AGIF) of the U.S., has served the AGIF for over 38



years. During that time, she has served in many capacities including every position at the local level; all areas at the state level, except for State Chairwoman; and most recently the National Chairwoman from 2015 - 2017. Her volunteer work with the AGIF includes serving the Hispanic Education Foundation, visiting VA hospitals to hand out care packages, working with homeless veterans at Picket Square, and participating in Wreaths

Across America. She has also spent over 20 years encouraging, training and assisting youth competing for college scholarships. A lifetime member of the AGIF, she will continue the work and advocacy needed to support veterans and their families.

Professionally, Ms. Lugo is an active Certified Public Accountant for Ford Motor Company with over 20 years of experience in accounting and finance. A member of the Ford Hispanic Network, she is a two-time recipient of the Ford Global Diversity and Achievement Award.

Her commitment to the community has led her to serve on the Girl Scouts of Michigan Hispanic Advisory Board, as Vice-Chairwoman for the Michigan Spanish Speaking Democrats and as a volunteer with the Accounting Aide Society. Ms. Lugo has also served as an Executive Board and founding member of the Foster Care Alumni Association of Michigan and Women in Action Board Member.

**Manuel G. Escobar, Jr.**, was raised in a Mexican-American family with two sisters and two brothers in the Westside of San



Antonio. He graduated from Sidney Lanier High School in 1972. After being admitted to various East Coast colleges, he decided to pursue his undergraduate education at Yale University. While at Yale, Manuel participated in a myriad of undergraduate organizations. He was most involved in the MECHA chapter, serving as its chairperson his senior year.

After graduating from Yale in 1976, Manuel returned to San Antonio where

he chose to work in the antipoverty programs of the Johnson administration. He married Yolanda Rodriguez, had two daughters, and continued his education at Trinity University in the graduate

# SER Welcomes New Leadership

urban studies program. Before completing the program, he was admitted to the Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California at Berkeley. He concluded that program of study in 1981 with a J.D. degree. At that time, his spouse Yolanda was also attending the University of California at Berkeley for her bachelor's and master's degrees in Social Work.

For the past 30 years, Manuel has been an active member of LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens. He has held positions within LULAC at the District, State, and National levels. More recently, he has served as the LULAC National Legal Advisor. However, of all his accomplishments, Manuel is most proud of the fact that all of his children have attended college and obtained degrees, totaling four bachelor's degrees, three master's degrees, and one law degree. During that same period, his spouse was awarded a Doctorate in Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin and currently teaches social work at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio. His daughter Felicia was the first Chicano legacy to attend and graduate Yale University.

**Jesus Padron**, Vice President of Project Development at SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc., in Fresno, Calif.,



for the past 12 years, has over 30 years of administrative experience with 25 years of experience in developing and managing affordable

housing (farmworker, tax credit, and senior housing). Mr. Padron graduated from the University of San Francisco in California and also has an M.A in Educational Administration.

Mr. Padron's experience and expertise is vast. He served as Executive Director of the Cornerstone Foundation of Fresno, directing the growth of the Cornerstone Church nonprofit organization for several years. As the Director at CT Learning, Inc. he established curriculum, vocational training development, job development and participant services along with general program development. As an Associate

Pastor within the federal prison system, Mr. Padron taught, preached and ministered to the needs of the Christian community.

Mr. Padron has also gained valuable insight as the Director at SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc., CEO at Urbanomics, Inc., and Business Manager at Parlier Unified School District. In addition to his roles in finance, program development, nonprofit management, ministry and business, Mr. Padron is a professor in Colegio De La Tierra-Humanities at California State University Fresno (CSUF). He teaches Latin American studies, creative writing and literature, and the Sonoma State-Graduate Course of Ubiquity and Non-Linear Education.



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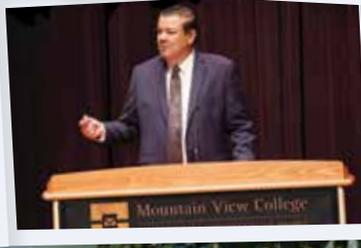
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# SER *National 2018 Conference*



Photos by Luis Nuno Borges

# SER Network Directory



## **SER National - Headquarters**

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Irving, TX 75039  
Tel: 469-549-3600

## **SER National Program Dev. Office**

1133 19th Street, N.W., Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20036  
Tel: 202-833-3384

### **Maryvale Revitalization Corporation**

- Phoenix, Arizona

### **Campesinos Unidos**

- San Diego, California
- Brawley, California

### **SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc. of San Joaquin Valley**

- Fresno, California
- San Andreas, California
- Fresno, California
- El Centro California
- Bakersfield, California
- Oceanside, California
- Stockton California
- Hayward, California
- Ventura California

### **Latino Educational Fund**

- Pomona, California

### **Project S.O.Y**

- Inglewood, California

### **Centro CHA**

- Long Beach, California

### **El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center**

- San Bernardino, California

### **Barrio Station**

- San Diego, California

### **Pueblo y Salud**

- San Fernando, California
- Palmdale, California

### **Centro Latino**

- San Francisco, California

### **American GI Forum Education foundation of Santa Maria**

- Santa Maria, California

### **Veterans in Community Service Inc.**

- Whittier, California

### **Multicultural Career Intern Program**

- Washington, DC

### **Florida SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc.**

- Miami, Florida
- Miami Springs, Florida

### **La Amistad**

- Atlanta, Georgia

### **Central States SER Jobs for Progress Inc.**

- Chicago, Illinois
- North Riverside, Illinois
- Aurora, Illinois

Southeastern Massachusetts SER

- Fall River, Massachusetts

La Alianza Hispana

- Boston, Massachusetts

SER Metro Detroit, Jobs for Progress, Inc

- Detroit, Michigan (Main Office)
- Detroit, Michigan (Annex Office)
- Detroit, Michigan (Samaritan Office)
- Stecker Dearborn, Michigan (Workforce Center)
- Detroit, Michigan (Northwest Activity Center)
- Detroit, Michigan (Southwest Ford Resource & Engagement Center)
- Detroit, Michigan (Eastside Ford Resource & Engagement Center)

Puerto Rican Unity for Progress

- Camden, New Jersey

SER Jobs for Progress, Inc.

- Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Grants, New Mexico
- Raton, New Mexico
- Gallup, New Mexico
- Farmington, New Mexico
- Espanola, New Mexico
- Las Vegas, New Mexico
- Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Taos, New Mexico
- Central Workforce Region Offices
- Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Moriarty, New Mexico
- Los Lunas, New Mexico
- Bernalillo, New Mexico

Neighborhood Association for Inter Cultural Affairs, Inc.

- Bronx, New York

Southside United Housing Development Fund Corporation

- Brooklyn, New York

SER of Westchester, Inc.

- White Plains, New York

Adelante Mujeres

- Forest Grove, Oregon

Hispanic American Organization, Inc

- Allentown, Pennsylvania

SER Jobs for Progress, Inc (Rhode Island)

- Pawtucket, Rhode Island
- Providence, Rhode Island
- Warwick, Rhode Island

People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources

- Austin, Texas

SERJobs

- Houston, Texas

La Cocina VA

- Arlington, Virginia

Centro Latino SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc.

- Tacoma, Washington

Michigan SERCO – Headquarters

- Detroit, Michigan

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## SER National Hosts STEM-Focused Community Day for 1,500+ Students

SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc. Hosts Community Day - March 28, 2019

Activities include robotics demonstrations, hands-on science experiments and an inspiring and motivational presentation by former NASA Astronaut Jose M. Hernandez.

Students from numerous school districts in the Dallas/Fort Worth area are expected to participate in SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc.'s Community Day at the Tarrant Community College (TCC), South Campus, on Thursday, March 28, 2019.

SER Community Day has been added as part of SER National's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs as interest in SER's year-round Robotics Program has grown. SER's hands-on educational experience is led by engineering students and professionals. The program also enhances middle and high school students' academic, technical and leadership skills.

Former migrant worker turned NASA astronaut and engineer Jose M. Hernandez will be the featured keynote speaker. He decided as a high school senior that he wanted to travel into space and made that dream a reality. Dr. Dionne Hernandez-Lugo, of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's John H. Glenn Research Center in Cleveland will also address the students and inspire them with NASA successes, new research and opportunities for the future.

These distinguished speakers will also address student on Community Day to share their success stories and career achievements.

- Oscar Vazquez, BNSF (member of Carl Hayden High School Robotics Team from Arizona depicted in the movie Spare Parts starring Jorge Lopez)
- Dr. Andrea Ramirez, Interim Executive Director of the White House Initiatives on Educational Excellence for Hispanics
- Executives representing corporations to include Lockheed Martin, General Motors, Raytheon, AT&T, and others will deliver concurrent informational workshops addressing educational topics focused on pursuing a college education and preparing for STEM careers.

The SER Community Day will also feature a job fair, where young people will have an opportunity to apply for jobs, internships and co-ops or work-study programs. A large exhibit area will offer valuable information and displays from an array of corporations and the



Armed Forces, including the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, NASA, CIA, FedEx, Ford, and Comcast. Representatives from these organizations will be present to interact with students visiting the exhibit area.

"We are thrilled to join forces with SER to foster greater awareness, knowledge and excitement about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines and careers among P-12 and college students," said TCC South Campus President Peter Jordan, Ed.D.



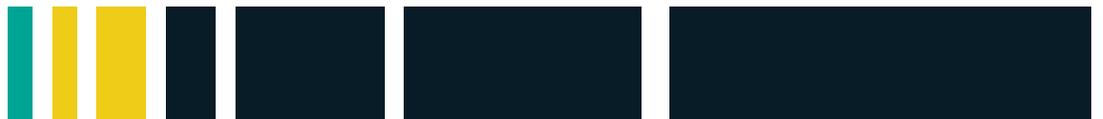
# Coming to a City Near You

## 2019 Community Day at the following locations:

Fort Worth, TX ■ Midland, TX ■ Houston, TX ■ Santa Fe, NM

- STEM Competitions
- Past Keynote speakers:  
Jose Hernandez,  
Retired NASA astronaut,  
Keynote Speaker
- Breakout Sessions  
on STEM careers and  
STEM-related topics
- Hands-on activities
- Exhibits
- Volunteering  
Opportunities

**Interested in Sponsoring or Hosting a Community Day,**  
please contact Rafaela Schwan at  
[rschwan@ser-national.org](mailto:rschwan@ser-national.org) or 469-549-3694



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Ford Motor Company Fund salutes  
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