



**Victor Leandry**

Executive Director, El Centro de Servicios Sociales. Lorain, OH.

Mr. Leandry has been a tireless Latino community advocate for many years. He participates in national and state organizations and boards that seek to improve the life of Latinos in Lorain and across Ohio. He is the Midwest Region Director for NCLR. Since his appointment with El Centro four years ago, he has moved the organization to an exciting new level of effectiveness, placing important emphasis on our youth and capacity building. As an effective community leader, Victor inspires with a "can do" attitude and empowers his workers to believe that together we can create a better tomorrow.

(Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Wanda Canales**

Diversity Officer. Office of Admissions. Central State University. Wilberforce, OH.

Ms. Canales is a vigorous leader who advocates for access to higher education for Latino youth and the promotion of diversity and cultural understanding among everyone in the community. Her work with Latino social programs and diversity organizations allows her to share about the importance of education and inclusion. Wanda is member of NHI, ECHHO, LULAC, SOCHE, PRCS and PACO, among others. She is a great youth mentor who believes that every child deserves a chance to succeed and contribute to our community.

(Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Jason Riveiro**

Director of Business Development, The Spanish Journal. Cincinnati, OH.

Mr. Riveiro has a burning heart for justice, equality and empowerment of Latinos. He holds an excellent community standing as a leader in the Cincinnati area, concentrating his work as an advocate to integrate all immigrants, in particular Latinos to our communities. Jason's dedication is thorough in approach; he spares no effort in trying to understand the issues affecting our community, visiting organizations to provide support, and getting to know people and their lives. He is Deputy Director for LULAC, Cincinnati Chapter, Receiver of the Top 40 Under 40 Award, and The Freedom Fighter Award from NAACP.

(Country of Ancestry: Venezuela, Colombia)



**Tony Ortiz**

Director, Athletic Training Education and Sports Medicine Services. Dept of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Wright State University. Beavercreek, OH.

Mr. Ortiz impacts the Latino community as a leader, mentor, trainer, speaker, Spanish language teacher, and recruiter of Latino athletic talent. From his early years as President of La Union, Lorain Community College, and La Unión de Estudiantes Latinos at Bowling Green University, to his work at El Centro de Servicios Sociales in Lorain and his unequivocal dedication as an Athletic Training Educator at Wright State University, Tony has demonstrated a capacity to empower Latinos, inspire change, and envision challenging opportunities for all. Mr. Ortiz chairs LULAC's Scholarship Committee, is part of the Ohio Athletic Trainers Association, and many important committees at Wright State University. He has received multiple awards as a professional and a person of outstanding character.

(Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Sonia Troche**

Executive Director. Adelante Latino Resource Center. Toledo, OH.

Ms. Troche has an outstanding record of serving the Latino community in Ohio. Her community organizing skills around issues of education, economic and social justice were developed early on during her tenure as Senior Field Officer for the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, Government of Puerto Rico. Serving the communities of Cleveland and most recently Toledo, Sonia has dedicated her career to address and advocate for Latino issues, encourage civic participation, create educational opportunities for youth, collaborate and obtain resources to serve and integrate Latino communities statewide. Sonia has made Adelante The Latino Resource Center a shining example of effective educational learning models; her work has resulted in the recognition by the Ohio Department of Education for its program effectiveness. Ms. Troche serves in several community boards and commissions, including the Lucas County Commissioners Special Citizens Task Force for the Toledo Zoo, The Northwest Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the United Way's Latino Leadership Committee among others. (Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Maria Cruz Lucio**

Program Supervisor, Ohio Dept. Job & Family Services. Findlay, OH.

Ms. Cruz Lucio is a respected leader who demonstrates unselfishness, dedication and commitment to her job and her community at every turn. Maria's ability to build awareness and appreciation for diversity has resulted in numerous initiatives to promote inclusion in our communities. By empowering others and providing a vision of what can be done, Ms. Cruz Lucio has led many Latinos to success and new opportunities. A good example of this work includes the Hispanic & Multicultural Celebration in Findlay, Ohio sponsored by the Black Heritage Library and Multicultural Center. Maria has also developed the first Multicultural Grant for teachers to promote cultural diversity in the schools and the Community. She also supports the planning of the Salsa Festival Celebration in Henry County. Ms. Cruz Lucio serves in many community organizations and boards, including the Hancock Leadership Program, American Red Cross, Camp Fire Boys & Girls, Casa GAL, Findlay Area Arts Council, and the Black Heritage Library and Multicultural Center. (Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Juan Jose Perez**

Attorney, Perez & Morris, LLC. Columbus, OH.

As the proud the proud son of migrant workers, Mr. Perez knows and understands first hand the challenges and opportunities facing our Latino community. Mr. Perez is a dedicated Latino community advocate, leader, mentor and advisor. Juan Jose always challenges Latinos to give their best, and to actively participate in the discovery of opportunities to improve their lives. Starting his legal career as a law clerk for a federal judge in Toledo, Juan Jose has continuously progressed professionally. He has been a law firm partner, and presently runs his own practice, Perez & Morris, LLC, a Hispanic owned business law firm with ten attorneys who represent clients across the United States. Community involvement is of great importance to Mr. Perez. For the past five years, his law firm has helped sponsor El Día de Los Reyes – The Day of the Three Kings – for Hispanic children who are not able to participate in toy drives. He also assisted with a toy and blanket drive to provide toys and blankets to children hospitalized in the poorest of hospitals located in Guadalajara, Mexico.

(Country of Ancestry: Mexico)



**Guadalupe Velasquez**

New American Initiative Coordinator, City of Columbus. Columbus, OH.

Ms. Velasquez is an advocate, volunteer and community leader not only for the Latino population, but for all immigrant communities in Columbus. Her vigor, devotion, perseverance and commitment to improve the lives of Latinos is building a legacy of change and action for local organizations. Guadalupe serves in many boards and community organizations, including the Huntington Community Advisory Council, the West Side Community Task Force, the Latino Empowerment Outreach Network (LEON), Grassroots Leadership Development Planning Committee, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Columbus and Ohio Girl Scouts. Most recently, she was appointed to the position of Field Executive for Girl Scouts – Seal of Ohio council, Inc. In this role, she will be responsible for the recruitment and retention of girl/adult membership and volunteers within the Greater Columbus area. Velasquez has co-founded and served as president for Creative Marketing Division, Alianza Media, while working as the Community Outreach Liaison for the Columbus Metropolitan Area Community Action Organization and Special Events Coordinator of the Ohio Hispanic Coalition.

(Country of Ancestry: Mexican/Cuban)



**Gilbert Silva**

Senior Pastor, House of Praise. Amherst, OH

Mr. Silva has been serving the community since his youth. A deep commitment to teaching has directed his efforts and focus; he aims to empower others to reach their God given potential and serve the community where they live. Gilbert’s vision and dedication have resulted in many community outreach initiatives. He is particularly involved with initiatives that focus on youth programs, programs for drug and alcohol related issues and rehabilitation. Mr. Silva is instrumental in working with other partners in the community to improve the lives of everyone in our neighborhoods. He interacts frequently with elected officials to ensure they serve the needs of our population and is constantly working to help families in need. Mr. Silva has served and provided advice to many organizations and strives to make a difference for Latinos in his community.

(Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)



**Joe Santiago**

City Councilman of Ward 14. Cleveland, OH.

Mr. Santiago is the second Latino to become councilman in the history of the Cleveland City Council. He represents the ward with the greatest concentration of Latinos in the city. Joe is deeply committed to helping and supporting Latinos and all citizens in Ward #14. He has provided significant leadership in the revitalization of the Ward, including community development initiatives, business incentives, the formation of the East-West United Neighbors Coalition, and other initiatives that seek to improve the quality of life within this Ward. Mr. Santiago is dedicated to the ideal of making our communities safe, affordable and a better place to live. He is a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion, leading by example as he works hard to create opportunities for progress and success within the community he serves.

(Country of Ancestry: Puerto Rico)