



DR. PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS HIGH SCHOOL



# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## GALA CELEBRATION



IN HONOR OF OUR FOUNDERS



COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022

AT ARTIFACT EVENTS

4325 N RAVENSWOOD AVE, CHICAGO, IL







# 50 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE



For half a century, PACHS has stood as a beacon of hope and inspiration for its students and the community. PACHS remains devoted to living its mission and vision. During these five decades the school has developed a pedagogy grounded in the understanding of the Puerto Rican reality – at home and in the diaspora including its past, present, and future. The contributions of PACHS to its students and community are many: educational practice, professional development, community activism and servant leadership. Additionally, PACHS remains nationally recognized and acclaimed as a model for urban education praxis.



## Mistress of Ceremonies, ANA BELAVAL

With an unwavering passion for honoring her community, empowering the underserved, a proven dedication to excellence in journalism, a defiant pride for her mother tongue and native culture, and an innate desire to bring light and levity to the world, Ana Belaval personifies what it means to be a successful woman in business and a cultural trailblazer.

She established herself as a leader in the world of broadcast journalism with more than 20 years of experience in both Spanish-language and English-language markets. Since 2005, Ana has become Chicago's Very Own darling of morning TV, highlighting the entertaining and curious offerings around town. Oh, and earning 4 Emmy awards along the way too. WEPA!!!! Ana's greatest accomplishment remains her family. Every day she invests in her loving marriage of 20 years to her devoted husband, Steve. Together they are raising two bright and creative children, in a bilingual/bicultural world that celebrates differences, where respect is mutual, and possibilities are sin limite.



MUSICAL ACT  
**Willie García y la Orquesta Sabor**



MUSIC BY  
**DJ JULIO BISHOP**



# PROGRAM



• 6:30 P.M. Cocktail Reception

• 7:15 P.M. Program Dinner

• Special 50 Year Video

• Welcome - Ana Belaval

• La Borinqueña - Alumna Cassandra Figueroa

• Board Message - Evelyn Rivera-Swint, Chair -

Mike Staudenmaier, Treasurer

• Reading of the State Resolution -

Senator Cristina Pacione Zayas

*Break*

• Student and Alumni Recognition - Crystal Morales,

Dean of Students and Family Engagement

• Teacher and Administrator Recognition -

Alumna Angela Mijangos, Joshua Cohen

• Recognition of Community Partners -

Marie Snyder, Dean of Restorative Justice

• Honoring Our Founders - Melissa Lewis Principal,

Marvin Garcia Executive Director

• Closure - Ana Belaval

***Dancing and Celebrating!***

## La Borinqueña

Escrito por (Letra de Lola Rodríguez de Tió, San Germán, 1868)

¡Despierta Borinqueño  
que han dado la señal!  
¡Despierta de ese sueño  
que es hora de luchar!

A ese llamar patriótico  
¿no arde tu corazón?

¡Ven! nos será simpático  
el ruido de cañón.

Nosotros queremos la libertad  
nuestro machete nos la dará....

Vamonos borinqueno, vámonos  
ya,  
que nos espera ansiosa,  
ansiosa la libertad.

¡La libertad, la libertad,  
la libertad, la libertad!







# STATE RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY



## Illinois State Senate Certificate of Recognition

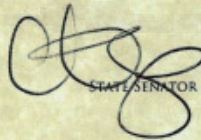
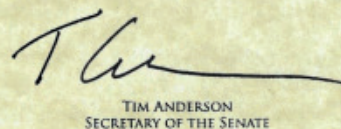


THE ILLINOIS SENATE  
OF THE 102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ACKNOWLEDGES

**Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School**

IN RECOGNITION OF  
ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY,  
CELEBRATING A HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE,  
AND EXTENDS ITS CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES  
ON THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION AND COMMENDS  
DR. PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS HIGH SCHOOL FOR ITS  
CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION EXCELLENCE.

OFFERED BY: SENATOR CRISTINA H. PACIONE-ZAYAS

  
STATE SENATOR  
DON HARMON  
SENATE PRESIDENT  
TIM ANDERSON  
SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

NO. 102-2142

OCTOBER 21, 2022





# CURRENT STUDENTS AND ALUMNI



The students that attend Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School are resilient young women and men. Some are parents, others care givers to their siblings, and many have jobs after school. The students are engaged in a transformational process where they name their world and act upon it. They study and question content, they are exposed to career pathways and are engaged in civic activities within their community.

Over 50 years, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School boasts thousands of alumni. Students have been impacted by participation in civic action, creating youth culture through the "Morivivi" musical group, the youth initiative "Batey Urbano" which engaged the four elements of hip hop, the "Humboldt Park No Se Vende" campaign against gentrification, and

the fights to free political prisoners. Our alumni have become doctors, engineers, earned Ph.D.'s, are social workers and own businesses.

Others have returned to the school and taught or have become administrators. Many have become community residents and have sent their children to the school and have been part of community building in Paseo Boricua. The director of the PRCC childcare, Consuelo Lee Tapia Corretjer for over 40 years is a graduate of PA-CHS. All who have attended Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School have one special experience in common, they have studied and lived "familia" at La Escuelita. OL Every current student and alumni attending this event will receive a commemorative pin in celebration of this milestone.







# OUR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS



## EDUCATORS OF EXCELLENCE

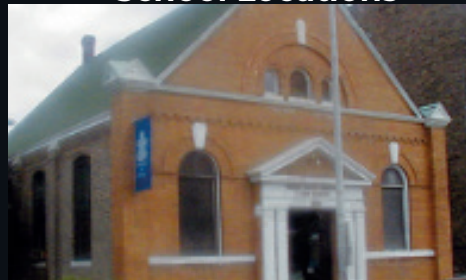
Over 600 teachers have contributed to the 50-year history of our school. They have been passionate and committed to a pedagogy of anti-colonialism. In the first 25 years, half the teachers were volunteers. One of our math teachers during that era authored two mathematics textbooks that we used in the school. Our teachers have been cultural workers who have engaged in community initiatives against police brutality. They have organized for resources and support for people stricken by AIDS, a project that later led to the creation of Vida/SIDA.

One teacher became the Board Chair of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools, networking with hundreds of schools nationally and internationally. Our teachers have taken students to compete in history fairs and poetry slams, bringing back trophies. Many of our teachers have gone on to teach at universities across the country and here in Chicago. Some have gone to the Chicago Public Schools, others became executive directors of foundations.

Some have served as elected officials at the city, state, and national levels. Our current teachers are heroes who, during the worst of the COVID pandemic, stayed connected to their students. They assisted their students' families when mutual aid efforts lacked the needed resources. They responded to the strain of isolation and the impact of domestic trauma on our students. Every present and former teacher and administrator attending this event will receive a commemorative pin in celebration of this milestone.



## School Locations



2028 West Augusta



1520 N. Claremont



1671 N Claremont



2739 W Division Street

## School Directors and Principals

- 1972 - Myrna Salgado – Founder
- 1978 -Steven Guerra
- 1983- Ferd Eggan,
- Marvin Garcia, Co-Directors
- 1984 -Marvin Garcia,
- Jose Hernandez, Co-Directors
- 1985 - Marvin Garcia
- 2000 - Lourdes Lugo
- 2007 - Matt Rodriguez
- 2015 - Danette Sokacich
- 2017 – Carmen Rodriguez
- 2018 - Melissa Lewis



# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



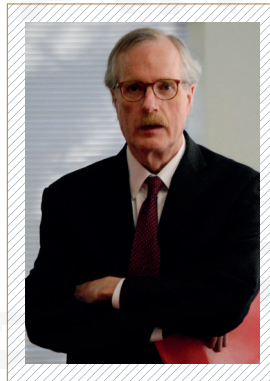
## THANK YOU!

The Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School celebrates all our partners of which many are listed prominently on the back page of our commemorative program. Tonight we recognize six organizations that over time have worked towards community building within the areas of education, workforce development, art and culture, housing and leadership. Over the 50 years of the existence of the school we have collaborated in the fight for community services, justice and transformation.



The Puerto Rican Cultural Center was founded on the same principles of self-determination, self-actualization and self reliance. Many of the school founders participated in the creation of the PRCC. Affiliate organizations for 48 years.

**Partners since 1974**  
**José López, Executive Director**



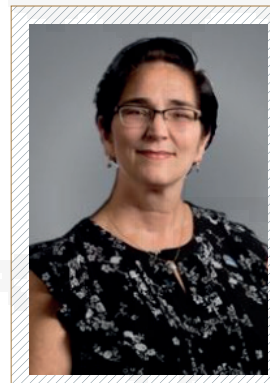
The Alternative Schools Network of Chicago is a major advocate for community-based alternative schools leading policy work that leads to additional resources to all its member schools and programs. The PACHS participated in its creation. Both ASN and YCCS work in behalf of out of school youth.

**Partners since 1974**  
**Jack Wuest, Executive Director**



The Youth Connection Charter School, is the oldest and largest umbrella organization in the country that partners with community-based alternative schools. PACHS staff participated in its creation.

**Partners since 1997**  
**Sheila Venson**  
**Executive Director**



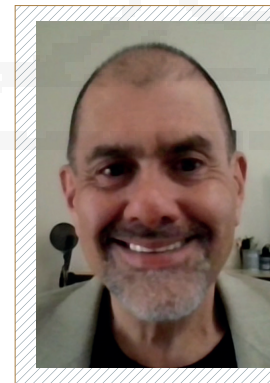
Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation is a major housing corporation providing quality affordable housing, working in partnership with PACHS and the PRCC to fight gentrification and displacement. It is a key partner in the development of the High School's Trades Program.

**Partners since 2004**  
**Joy Aruguete, Executive Director**



BUILD is a critical partner who provides full-time case managers that work with school staff to provide wrap around services to students with a mission of leadership development and a healing approach to trauma.

**Partners since 2017**  
**Adam Alonso**  
**Executive Director**



YouthBuild Illinois is the High School's trades partner providing resources to train students and placement in apprenticeship programs with a vision to participate in the construction of affordable housing to fight displacement.

**Partners since 2020**  
**Mervin Mendez**  
**Executive Director**





# OUR FOUNDERS



The Founders of The Puerto Rican High School, La Escuelita,  
Rafael Cancel Miranda High School, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School.

**OSCAR LÓPEZ**



**REVEREND  
JOSE TORRES**



**JOSÉ LÓPEZ**



**MYRNA SALGADO**



**CARLOS  
ALBERTO TORRES**



STUDY & STRUGGLE



**Norma Reyes  
Joan Melendez  
Linda Coronado**

**Monserate Diaz  
Jose Negrón  
Marta Rodríguez  
Gilbert Justiano**

**Reverend Suarez  
James Blaut  
Steven Rayder**

Early Supporters of The Puerto Rican High School Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos

**CARMEN  
VALENTIN**



**RICARDO  
JIMENEZ**



**ALEJANDRINA  
TORRES**



**IDA LUZ  
RODRIGUEZ**



**Maria Gallegos  
Dora García**

**Antonio Dos Santos  
Felix Rosa**

**Josefina Rodríguez  
José Hernández**





# SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

FOR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO THE DR. PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS PUERTO RICAN HIGH SCHOOL



## Milagros De la Rosa

By: Dr. Melissa Lewis



Milagros De La Rosa Figueroa is a Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School board member since 2017 and during her tenure she has secured needed resources for the school as well as introducing students to the fascinating world of marketing and design through the giant marketing company Leo Burnett. As a product of the Humboldt Park community, she grew up blocks away from the school and attended and graduated from Roberto Clemente High School. Milagros has a heart of gold raising a family as a single mother.

She is a true philanthropist raising funds and awareness for multiple worthy causes with very little fanfare or public accolades. Throughout her time on the board she has challenged school leadership to connect to the Puerto Rican Diaspora and ensure that graduates are exposed to a high quality college and career pathways. Always active in the Puerto Rican movement and its struggle for justice while in high school in Chicago she continued her activism in Puerto Rico. The Board and the school community honors her commitment to education and her community.

## Michelle Morales

By: Dr. Marisol Morales

How can a few paragraphs capture the depth of a friendship that has existed for over 25 years or the awesome force that is Michelle Morales? I first met Michelle when we were sophomores at DePaul University and taking the same class "US colonialism of Puerto Rico" taught by Dr. Jose Solis. We not only share the same last name, which instantly made us related and would forever have people who know both of us always confuse one for the other, but also created in us the same desire to learn more about our motherland of Puerto Rico. This transformative class sowed the seeds of our activism and became the field by which our friendship grew and flourished. I am forever grateful for that class for bringing Michelle into my life. She is not only my best friend, she is my soul sister, and my family.

Anyone who knows Michelle also knows of her deep commitment and drive around community justice. She has been a teacher, mentor, and leader. She is someone you can always count on and who deeply loves the Puerto Rican community. She is beautiful (what a fashion style), wickedly intelligent, and deeply principled. She works hard for what she believes in and I am in awe of her strength, resilience, and vulnerability as she navigates her health issues and shares her story as a way to bring awareness to cancer survivorship.



This recognition for her various roles at the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School is so well deserved as PACHS celebrates its 50th anniversary. Michelle's contribution to students of the school and community is part of her legacy as a leader and community activist. Michelle's continued connection to PACHS as her career has flourished and brought her to her prestigious and well-earned role as President of the Woods Fund demonstrates the impact of the school on those who have had the privilege of being associated with it. Congratulations to Michelle for her contributions to our beloved community by being loved by the community through this recognition.





# FLASHBACK TO THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY

## WHAT BEGAN AS A SMALL EXPERIMENT

### EDITORIAL

Alyssa N. Villegas & José E. López

January 26, 2013

On Saturday, January 26th, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School celebrates 40 years since its foundation with an all-day symposium and gala. What began as a small experiment of building an organic educational practice has since become a pedagogical model for reflection and emulation. From its inception, the school's educational program was framed on the philosophical foundation of self-determination, the methodology of self-actualization, and the ethics of self-sufficiency.

Contrary to the predominant societal motto of "Live and let live," this is best expressed in the words of our great poet,

Consuelo Lee Corretjer: "Live and help to live." Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School (PACHS) began its operation in 1972 in a dingy church basement located at 2048 West Augusta with 12 students and no budget, at a time when the dropout rate among Puerto Rican youth in the public schools was an appalling 72.9%. First named the Puerto Rican High School, it later took on the name of Rafael Cancel Miranda, the Puerto Rican national hero who was then a political prisoner, before its final renaming for El Maestro, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos. After one year it moved to a rental space at



St. Aloysius School at 1520 North Claremont with nearly 60 students. Three years later it would occupy its own building at 1671 North Claremont, and in 2003 it moved to its present location at 2739-41 West Division on Paseo Boricua. These moves were informed by encroaching gentrification that has displaced the Puerto Rican presence in West Town and Humboldt Park. Que Ondee Sola is proud to dedicate this issue to the 40th anniversary of the founding of this unique educational experience of the Puerto Rican diaspora. PACHS is the only school in the US with a curriculum focused on Puerto Rican culture, while continuing innovative learning practices—for example the emergent program in urban agriculture—which speak to the future of any educational model. Without a doubt, Pedro Albizu Campos High

School has remained true to its precepts, which the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire articulated in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In this issue you will find re-reflections of this incredible educational experiment from scholars, students, teachers, administrators, community activists, and founders of the school. From these the reader will be able to surmise how the school has engaged students and community in a Freirian "dialogical" process. Its innovative vision projects into the future an education premised on a holistic approach, based on a social ecology model, in a school that has indeed served as a "sanctuary".





# READING, WRITING AND DECOLONIZATION



## DR. PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS HIGH SCHOOL, A CONTROVERSIAL ALTERNATIVE FOR HISPANIC YOUTH

Jane Juffer October 22, 1987

When Robertico Medina dropped out of Roberto Clemente High School four years ago to escape the gang warfare and the teachers' inattention, he nearly joined the Army. Only at his mother's urging did he enroll in West Town's Doctor Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School. But he was still reluctant to get up and go to school. Marvin Garcia, the school's director, had to go to his house and literally drag him out of bed.

"When Marvin would come to pick me up, I would hide behind the curtains and see him coming. Then I'd go back to bed and pretend I was sleeping," Robertico remembers.

Such personal attention from teachers, along with an increasing pride in Puerto Rican history and culture, kept Robertico in school. When he graduated last spring, he became the first of his five siblings—the rest are older—to complete high school. He is now a freshman at Northeastern Illinois University.



Albizu Campos, a private school in its 16th year, shines in an age when Hispanic youth, particularly Puerto Ricans, have the highest dropout rate of any minority group. While the dropout rate among Puerto Rican students in West Town is between 65 and 75 percent, more than 90 percent of Albizu Campos students finish school. All eight graduates from the last two years are attending college now. Director Garcia isn't a bit shy about promoting Albizu Campos as a model for Latino youth in a society uncertain how to educate the growing number of Hispanics. "We offer the advantage of being bilingual and bicultural. Young people can come here and feel at ease. They can learn their history and culture in an environment conducive to learning," Garcia says.

But Albizu Campos's philosophy doesn't stop with bilingualism and biculturalism. Ever since the school opened, an important and controversial element has been its support for Puerto Rican independence and its alleged ties to the FALN Puerto Rican independence movement. History and English teacher Ferd Egan calls this the "decolonization model," as opposed to the approach used at Latino Youth, another private Chicago alternative school for Latinos, which Egan says stresses integration and the "I'm OK, you're OK" philosophy. The Albizu Campos teachers and staff believe that by stressing the importance of Puerto Rican independence, they can break the mentality of welfare dependency and low self-esteem that they believe is responsible for many dropouts.

This philosophy has not made Albizu Campos a favorite with U.S. government agencies. In addition to battling the problems of drugs, gangs, and poverty, Albizu Campos has battled the FBI and the U.S. Department of Education, both of which have, directly or indirectly, implied that the school teaches terrorism. Albizu Campos has been controversial from the start. The impetus to found it came from a group of eight students kicked out of the old Tuley High School for leading a student strike over the lack of bilingual education and Puerto Rican history classes. Since then, its enrollment has grown to between 30 and 40, and it has moved from a church basement to an old film-processing center at 1671 North Claremont, where it shares a colorful facility with the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center. Brightly painted portraits of 14 Puerto Ricans imprisoned for their political activities cover the building's exterior. Inside, the walls are crowded with posters vividly supporting both the Puerto Rican cause ("Libertad Para La FALN" and "Viva Puerto Rico Libre y Socialista") and other struggles ("Repression Breeds Resistance: Chicano-Mexicano, Puerto Rican, Black, Native American"). The library features crafts from Nicaragua, displays of newspaper articles on FALN members, and pictures of Puerto Rican leaders—such as Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos, for whom the school is named, a leader of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico in the first half of this century. He spent 24 of his last 28 years (he died in 1965) in prison for his political activities. Although he's best known in the United States for the fact that, in 1950, two of his followers attempted to assassinate then-President Harry Truman (following a National Guard attack on Jayuya, Puerto Rico), among Puerto Ricans he's widely

CONTINUE NEXT PAGE





# READING, WRITING AND DECOLONIZATION

revered as a leader of the independence movement. Although the students are interested in the present, Hernandez gently pulls them back to Puerto Rico's roots, tying the island's history to their own. He tells them, for example, that they are a blend of black, Indian, and Spanish blood. "That means I'm black?" asks one girl incredulously. "You have black blood in you, yes," Hernandez answers.

Students are encouraged not only to ask questions, but also to answer them. When the class is discussing the Spanish colonizers, one student recently arrived from Puerto Rico, Nilsa Fe Corretjer, tells in Spanish what she knows about the conquerors, holding the class spellbound with a story of Spanish baptismal rites. Other students translate for those who don't understand Spanish. Nilsa Fe's family is related to Juan



Antonio Corretjer, the late Puerto Rican revolutionary poet for whom the cultural center is named. Hernandez, in his calm, soft-spoken manner, ends the three-hour class with a forceful message. "Today a lot of people have problems with violence [within the independence movement]. But many people believe we can only be freed through the use of violence. Write this down, it's very important: Violence was used in the colonization of Puerto Rico. For 89 years, we have been controlled by the U.S. We are a colonized people."



Even math class is geared specifically toward these students; its teacher, Wayne Strnad, has written two books, based on his 14 years at Albizu Campos. Word problems deal with situations the students understand: unemployment, strikes, and the homeless. They use names such as Lopez and Rodriguez. Strnad says his students, who often enter Albizu Campos with a fifth- or sixth-grade math level, progress between two and four years in their first year at the school.

The school also has eight computer terminals, a complete biology laboratory set up by students (with the help of donations), a silk-screen room, and a student newspaper and yearbook. Of the 11 teachers, 3 are full-time, funded by grants. The rest schedule classes around other jobs and receive virtually no pay. The school meets its \$60,000 annual budget through tuition (\$465 per student per year), donations, and grants. The West Town community has come through in times of cri-

sis. When the FBI raid caused \$25,000 in damage, the community raised that amount in two weeks. "This is a place designed to serve the needs of the Puerto Rican community," Eggan says. "When students leave here, they feel they can make a difference." Students are apt to use the word "struggle" to describe their studies and other activities, reflecting the school's attitude that students must not be passive, that learning and coping are indeed struggles. Even learning not to be the stereotypical Latino macho is a struggle, says 16-year-old Ulysses Albarran. "I grew up in Mexico, and when I came here, I had never heard of feminism. I agree we shouldn't view women as objects, but it's a struggle." "Machismo is still here, but they usually get better," says Caryn Creamer, the school's only Anglo student this year. "I have a Puerto Rican boyfriend, and he's better now. He used to say, 'Do this, do that.' Now he doesn't."

Another struggle is with drugs and gangs. While students say both are minimal in comparison to other area schools, they say they do exist—although not within the school. "Some kids are into drugs, yeah," says Catalina Torres. "But we're trying to help them out. We explain that their brain cells are dying."

Once a week, all the students gather in a "unity" class to discuss such problems as drugs, gangs, machismo, and discipline. "We struggle problems out," says 16-year-old Luis Martinez. "We don't kick anybody out. We give them choices, and we help them change if they want to."





# OUR PRESENT AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



## Our Community of Practice

Honoring our legacy is always a priority for us as a school community. We live a purposeful mission of intentionally celebrating our students as scholars with lived experiences that are rich in community and family. Our school is a welcoming home to scholars who commute by bicycle, who tend the gardens that provide food for school lunches, who use their entrepreneurial skills to organize community festivals, who lead sports leagues and mindfulness practices, who are caring for each other's children in loving environments, and who are helping family members secure safe housing with walls as beautiful as our own campus.

And they are designing these life-affirming projects in class with support from community organizers from around the city. They graduate confident, proud, and prepared, ready to learn how to continue to care for our school community because once an Albizu scholar, always an Albizu scholar.



## Our Community of Practice of the Future

As we look forward 50 years, we ask students what they hope for the future of our school, and they describe a sanctuary for everyone. Their imaginations are boundless! We envision these dreams, these roots, 50 years from now, as full and abundant trees.

Our school is a welcoming home to scholars who commute by bicycle, who tend to the gardens that provide the school lunches, who use their entrepreneurial skills to organize community festivals, who lead the sports leagues and mindfulness practices, who are caring for each other's children in loving environments, and who are helping family members secure safe housing with walls as beautiful as our own campus. And they are designing these life affirming projects in class with support from community organizers from around the city. They graduate confident, proud, and prepared, ready to learn how to continue to care for our school community because once an Albizu scholar, always an Albizu scholar.



## Ensuring our Future

The future of PACHS will be shaped by the staff, students, our steady leadership, and our partners. Our goal is to provide a world class education in Humboldt Park and beyond. Yet our future will be effected by forces that will impact our students and community such as gentrification, health, and economic disparities which are heightened by the rooted colonial reality.

Our future as a school will be secured by providing a pedagogy of hope, resilience, healing, and transformation and reverting to what makes us human, our culture and language. We need to fortify our partnerships and create an environment where students experience academic

success and career opportunities. Students can follow their passions but more so we must instill a sense of purpose and engage our students in civic and leadership opportunities and redefine success as agents of change.

In sum, in moving to the future we must honor those who laid the seeds 50 years ago against a tide of repression and isolation of the 1970's and 80's, and those who continued growing an exemplary school in the 1990's and 2000's to the present efforts of our staff who are promoting a community of care and healing addressing generational trauma. Our school is a beacon in our community and so our future will be bright if we remain steadfast to our mission and community building in the diaspora and with Puerto Rico.





# THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEADERSHIP



**Evelyn Rivera-Swint**  
**M.A.Ed., Board Member since 2014**

Evelyn is the Board Chair; who was raised in the Humboldt Park community. She attended Northeastern Illinois University for her undergrad and received her Master's in Higher Education on 2008. Evelyn worked as the Registrar at PACHS and became an active member within the Humboldt Park and surrounding Latino communities.



**Mike Staudenmaier**  
**Ph.D., Board Member since 2017**

Mike serves as the Board Treasurer. He is Assistant Professor of History at Manchester University in Indiana, where he teaches courses on United States and Latin American history. He has been connected to Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School for more than 25 years, serving as a grants writer, history teacher, and fiscal manager. He regularly describes those years at PACHS as the most important and transformative educational experience in a lifetime of active learning.



**Milagros Fernandez**  
**Board Member since 2020**

Milagros Fernandez, LCSW was born and raised in Humboldt Park and proudly raised her daughters in the same home in which she grew up. She and her family feel a deep sense of pride in their Puerto Rican culture and it brings her great joy to give back to the community as a member of the PACHS board of directors. Milagros possesses over 20 years of experience in clinical social work in the areas of community mental health and child welfare.



**Jaime Moctezuma**  
**Board Member since 2019**

Jaime was born and raised in Humboldt Park and being a board member for PACHS is an absolute honor and privilege. Jaime is currently the Patient Experience Officer for Humboldt Park Health which affords him the opportunity to assist our community directly when they come in for healthcare services. He is also the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for the NMPRAC; a major beacon in our community raising awareness of the Puerto Rican culture, and future in Chicago and across the diaspora.



**Milagros de la Rosa**  
**Board Member since 2020**

Milagros de la Rosa has been on the board since 2017. She has a Degree in Marketing and has worked as a Marketing Producer. She has most recently started her own firm.



**Rebekah Marciano Sierra**  
**Board Member since 2022**

Rebekah Marciano is a wellness consultant and advocate with over 20 years of experience with corporate, clinical and community facilitation. She is currently a member of the Puerto Rican Agenda Health and Education committee and facilitates yoga and mindfulness programs in Humboldt Park for students and parents. With a deep sense of commitment to family, continuing education and purposeful work, Rebekah became a member of the PACHS board of directors in 2022.

**Melissa Lewis**  
**School Principal**



Dr. Melissa Lewis is a graduate of DePaul University and National Louis University. With over 15 years of experience in education, she is a community leader at heart. Her focus is always on safety and security of all staff and students, developing an educational experience built on a strong curriculum and engaging instruction and upholding the mission of PACHS through a community-focused approach.

**Marvin Garcia**  
**Executive Director**



Marvin has over 40 years of service in alternative education working with the most under-resourced schools in disinvested communities. He served 17 years as the Director of the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School, including 15 years as the Board Chair. Currently he is the Executive Director. He first visited the school's second location as a teenager in October 1974 – 48 years ago.

## Former Board Members Over the Years

**Nancy Kurshan**  
**Veronica Crespo**  
**Michelle Morales**  
**Sandra Cartagena**

**Juan Rodriguez**  
**Angela Acevedo**  
**Carlos DeJesus**  
**Catherine Delgado**

**Edgar Delgado**  
**Ida Roldan**  
**Wilma Valero**

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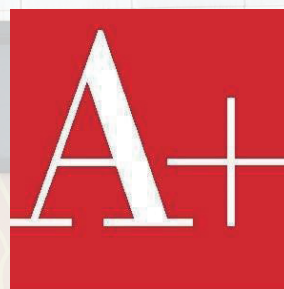
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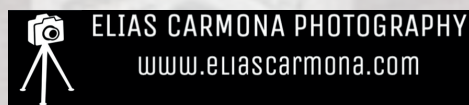


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