

# Early & Contemporary Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in

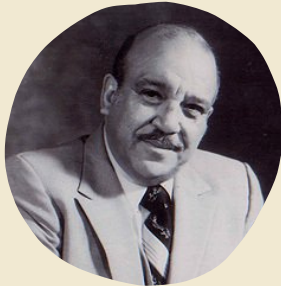
*Psychology & School Psychology*



# Early Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in Psychology

## **GEORGE I. SÁNCHEZ, EdD**

As the first Latino psychologist, Dr. George I. Sanchez was recognized as the father of Chicano psychology. He received his doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, and was a faculty member of education at the University of New Mexico. Later, he was a professor of Latin American education at the University of Texas, Austin. As an advocate for social justice and activist for the rights of Chicanos, Sanchez was known for his contributions on the topic of intelligence testing of Mexican American children. Through his publications, Sanchez was the first to argue that IQ tests lacked the validity to assess children of Mexican descent. He argued that Chicano children did not have the same experiences or English-language proficiencies as the majority group children on which these tests were standardized. In 1940, Sanchez became the national president of League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC, a civil rights organization for Latinos in the United States.



## **CARLOS ALBIZU MIRANDA, PH.D.**

Carlos Albizu Miranda, Ph.D., was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, and lived most of his life there. After completing his Bachelor of Arts in Education and Psychology, Albizu joined the United States Army. Shortly after serving, he returned to work as a psychometrician for the Veteran's Admiration and subsequently served as chief of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Center in Puerto Rico.

Later, Carlos Albizu pursued graduate studies and became one of the first Hispanics to earn a doctorate in clinical psychology from Purdue University. After returning to Puerto Rico, Albizu became a professor at the University of Puerto Rico. There, he became increasingly concerned with the circumstances Puerto Ricans faced as Latinos due to the commonwealth status with the United States. In the United States, Puerto Ricans were marginalized because of their culture, language, and skin color. Albizu founded the Instituto Psicológico de Puerto Rico in 1966, intending to provide culturally appropriate training in clinical psychology. In 1971, the name changed to Caribbean Center for Advanced Studies. The school is recognized as a significant influence in Latino psychologists' clinical and research training in Puerto Rico and throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States. In 1980, Carlos Albizu received special recognition for his work in the professional development of psychologists in the Caribbean. Carlos Albizu is also recognized for being elected the first president of the National Hispanic Psychological Association.

# Early Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in Psychology

## **RENE A. RUIZ, PH.D.**

Latino psychologist Rene Ruiz was born and raised in Los Angeles. After graduating from the University of Southern California in 1954 with a major in psychology, he pursued his doctoral degree in clinical psychology in 1963 at the University of Nebraska. Ruiz began his academic career as a lecturer, followed by an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Kansas.



Later, he became an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Arizona. He is best known for focusing on Latino mental health and publishing over 60 book chapters, research articles, and his co-authored books, *Latino Mental Health* and *Chicano Aging and Mental Health*. In 1971, Ruiz published "Relative Frequency of Americans With Spanish Surnames in Associations of Psychology, Psychiatry, and Sociology." According to Ruiz, total APA membership during 1970 included less than 1% of Spanish origin surnames. Ruiz was dedicated to working with the APA to highlight minority issues and served as an APA visiting psychologist, consulting and lecturing on emerging themes in Latino psychology. Ruiz's focus was on increasing the number of Latino students in psychology and emphasizing the importance of implementing minority-related content into graduate curricula.

## **MARTHA BERNAL, PH.D.**



Martha Bernal is best known for being the first Latina to receive a Ph.D. in psychology in the United States and for her overall contributions to multicultural psychology. In her autobiography, Dr. Bernal described over 20 years of efforts to increase multicultural training in clinical and counseling psychology. Her research contributions were similarly aligned and focused on empirically-based interventions in child development treatment, specifically Mexican-heritage children's development of ethnic identity.

She also focused her research on how children process information about ethnicity and form their first impressions of ethnicity through socialization by parents, other adults, and peers. Throughout her career, Dr. Bernal contributed to establishing the APA Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs and the National Hispanic Psychology Association (NHPA). In addition to receiving numerous awards, Dr. Bernal received the Distinguished Life Achievement Award from APA's Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues, APA's Distinguished Contribution to Psychology in the Public Interest Award in 2001, the Carolyn Attneave award for lifelong contributions to ethnic minority psychology.

# Early Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in Psychology

## **STAR VEGA, PH.D.**

Dr. Star Vega is best known for being the first Latina to serve as the California Psychological Association (CPA) president. Prior to serving as president, she completed her doctorate degree at the University of Southern California in clinical psychology. Dr. Vega's dissertation was one of the first to examine the effects of culture on psychological assessment. She remained active in the psychology community and received numerous awards recognizing her efforts within the community and beyond throughout her career. Dr. Vega was recognized as being the voice of the Latino and psychological community.



## **CARMEN INOA VAZQUEZ, PH.D., ABPP**

With over 25 years of experience as a clinician, teacher, research, author, and experience in both Spanish and English-speaking populations, Dr. Carmen Inoa Vasquez is recognized as one of New York City's most prominent Latina psychologists. Dr. Vasquez was born and raised in the Dominican Republic before moving to the United States at 16. After graduating from Queens College, she obtained her Ph.D. from the City University of New York.

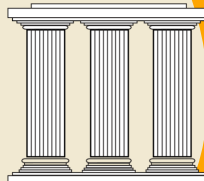


Throughout her career, she's held positions as a professor of psychology at the City of New York, New School, SUNY, and others. Dr. Vasquez also founded the Bilingual Treatment Program Clinic at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan. There, clinicians provide mental health services to patients from diverse backgrounds, including non-English speaking Hispanic populations. Today, Dr. Vasquez dedicates her time to supervise graduate psychology students at Bellevue throughout their doctoral training. Her contributions to the field have been recognized, and she's been the recipient of numerous awards, including but not limited to the Clinical Excellence Award from Bellevue Hospital Center and Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Career Achievement from Nassau County Medical Center.

# Early Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in Psychology

## MELBA VASQUEZ, PH.D

Dr. Melba Vasquez began her career in psychology after being encouraged to apply to the University of Texas's doctoral program. Born and raised in Texas and as a first-generation student, Dr. Vasquez did not consider a doctorate but was on the path of obtaining her doctorate soon after being encouraged. During her graduate training, she was among the first cohort of Minority Fellowship honorees at the American Psychological Association (APA). Upon graduating, she worked as a psychologist at UT Austin's counseling center and directed the internship training program. Dr. Vasquez also taught in counseling psychology doctoral program at Colorado State University, followed by Texas. After 13 years, she decided to hold her private practice while remaining dedicated to her contributions in scholarship, mentoring, professional leadership, and advocacy. She served various roles in APA governance, including serving on the APA Board of Directors and chair several boards, committees, and task forces. In 2011, Dr. Vasquez was elected the first Latina president of the APA. Today, Dr. Vasquez is the Executive Director and a practicing psychologist at Vasquez Associates Mental Health Services.



# Contemporary

## Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in School Psychology



### **ENEDINA GARCÍA VÁZQUEZ, PH.D.**

Dr. Vázquez received her PhD from The University of Iowa in school psychology. She is a Distinguished Visiting Professor at The University of Iowa, helping to coordinate the program and rebuild the PhD in school psychology. Prior to her recent appointment at Iowa, she served as professor of school psychology at New Mexico State University, where she created and implemented both the EdS and PhD degrees in school psychology.

Over the years her research has focused on supporting students of color and examining social emotional factors, acculturation, phenotype, and cultural identity on academic success of Latino/a children and youth. More recently her research has focused on workforce development; specifically, the role schools play in developing skills needed to succeed in the workforce. Most recently, the focus of her research is on financial resiliency, cultural intelligence, emotional intelligence and grit among engineering students in minority serving institutions (HBCU's and MSI's). She has seen many firsts in her professional career in various leadership positions, such as deputy director/associate dean of the NMSU Physical Science Laboratory, Honors College, Graduate School and College of Education. She was the first and only person of color to serve as NASP Program Accreditation Board chair, a position she held for nine years. She served as President of APA Division 45-The Society of Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race and currently serves on APA's Council of Representatives as Division 45 representative. Her passion has always focused on helping the underserved and mentoring. As the first Division 16 Latina president, her social justice commitment was well noted in the Unified School Psychology Anti-Racism Statement and Call-to-Action she led. As part of the call, she is leading the launch of the Transforming, Engaging, Achieving Mentoring (TEAM) Program for school psychology students and early career school psychologists of color. She is chair of the Ethnic and Minorities Issues in Psychology Caucus, and sits on the APA Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subsidiaries in Psychology of CRSSPP. Learn more about Dr. Vázquez [here](#).

# Contemporary

## Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in School Psychology



### JOEL BOCANEGRA, PH.D.

Dr. Bocanegra's research interests include the recruitment of minoritized populations, the shortages crisis, and multicultural research. Learn more about Dr. Bocanegra [here](#).

### CARLOS CALDERÓN, PH.D.

Dr. Calderón's research interests are focused in cognitive and academic assessment, mathematics learning development, bilingual and multicultural psychology practice issues, and acculturation and identity processes. Learn more about Dr. Calderón [here](#).



### SARA CASTRO-OLIVO, PH.D.

Dr. Castro-Olivo is an associate professor of School Psychology at Texas A&M University. Her research focuses on the development and validation of culturally responsive social-emotional and behavioral interventions for immigrant/refugee youth and families. She also studies the application of culturally responsive interventions within school-based multi-tiered systems of supports. Dr. Castro-Olivo serves as Chair of APA's Division 16 Children Youth and Families (CYF) committee. She has also served in Division 16's CEMA and as equity advisor to CASEL's Collaborate State Initiative.



Dr. Castro-Olivo is proud to be Latina and an immigrant from El Salvador. At the time she was born, her country was in the middle of civil war, which forced part of her family to move to the U.S. She was finally moved to the U.S. at age 14 to reunite with part of her family. As a freshman in high school, she experienced firsthand the many academic, social, and emotional challenges newcomer ELLs face in our school system. These experiences marked her academic destiny. Seeing how many socio-cultural factors influenced the academic performance and social-emotional development of her peers, motivated her to study psychology as an undergraduate and then pursue a doctorate in School Psychology at the University of Oregon. She has been working with ELL youth and families since the early 2000's and finds great gratification in mentoring graduate students who are as passionate as she is in improving the lives, and academic experiences, of immigrant and refugee children, youth, and families. Learn more about Dr. Castro-Olivo [here](#).

# Contemporary

## Latinx/Hispanic Leaders in School Psychology



### **JORGE GONZALEZ, PH.D.**

Dr. Gonzalez identifies as Mexican-American.

Dr. Gonzalez's scholarship focuses on the causes and correlates of early language and literacy difficulties in young children with a focus on adult-child interactive reading in the context of dual language learners. His works address inquiries relevant to children's home literacy environment (HLE), the effects of teacher talk around shared reading, longitudinal effects of evidence based shared reading interventions, and investigating the heterogeneous nature language and literacy subtypes of at-risk children. Learn more about Dr. Gonzalez [here](#).

### **MARIA HERNÁNDEZ FINCH, PH.D.**

Dr. Maria Hernández Finch identifies as a culturally and linguistically diverse Latina.

Dr. Maria Hernández Finch is the director of the Educational Specialist (EdS) and Masters (MA) Programs in School Psychology at Ball State University. She is a research affiliate with the Ball State Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder (CASD) and is currently working on research for a transition to work program, ASDachieve. Dr. Hernández Finch researches the intersection of diversity with assessment, prevention efforts, and consultation. She is particularly interested in the young learner and current research efforts with this population include gifted/high ability, diverse early learners and the impact of parental education/income on assessment with the young learner. Learn more about Dr. Hernández Finch [here](#).



### **DESIREÉ VEGA, PH.D.**

Dr. Vega identifies as Afro-Puerto Rican and was born and raised in Brooklyn and Queens, New York.

Through primarily qualitative inquiry, Dr. Vega's scholarship focuses on three main areas: 1) fostering the academic success of African American and Latinx youth; 2) resilience in higher education among African American, Latinx, and first-generation college students; and 3) preparing culturally competent school psychologists. Learn more about Dr. Vega [here](#).





# RESOURCES

[TSP Resources on Race and Diversity](#)

[NASP Latinx Community](#)

[NASP Bilingual School Psychology Community](#)

[APA Division 16](#)

[APA Division 45](#)

[The National Latinx Psychological Association \(NLPA\)](#)

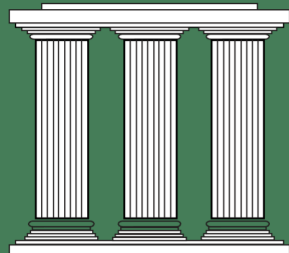
[National Latino Behavioral Health Association](#)

[NAMI's Compartiendo Esperanza: Mental Wellness in the Latinx Community](#)

[American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry](#)

[Therapy for Latinx](#)

[The National Hispanic and Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center \(MHTTC\)](#)



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[https://yeshiva.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9vIF02xh4gVauVg](https://yeshiva.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9vIF02xh4gVauVg)

