



First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 2016 Inaugural Excellence in Business Awards Finalists

The 2016 Excellence in Business Awards Winners:

Business Advocate Award - Small Business Administration

Rising Star Award - Andrea Reyes

Up and Coming Business of the Year - Mi Pueblo 2

Business Leader of the Year - Dr. Rene Pulido MD

Small Business of the Year - Brunet-García Advertising

Corporate Business of the Year - AT&T

Diversity Impact Award - Arlene Ortiz

Lifetime Achievement Award - Tomas Jiménez

Finalists

Up and Coming Business of the Year

Reyes Legal, PLLC

Reyes Legal was created on the notion that immigration not only affects the individual but it also extends to families, communities and the economy. Providing quality exclusive immigration legal services allows them to focus on the needs of each one of those entities. Andrea Reyes is the owner and immigration attorney.

Fresh Start Realty, LLC

Fresh Start Realty is a real estate brokerage firm that takes pride in servicing customers and agents with integrity. Fresh Start agents are high energy, knowledgeable about the Jacksonville and surrounding markets and are experts in their field. Fresh Start Realty's agents specialize in a variety of backgrounds ranging from residential buyers and sellers to international and military relocations. Jose F. Cuetos is the owner and an accomplished real estate broker.

Mi Pueblo 2

Mi Pueblo 2 is a meat market located on Beach Boulevard which offers Spanish foods from most Spanish speaking countries and specializes in all types of foods from steak to vegan. Mi Pueblo 2 is operated by Fausto Alvarez.

Business Advocate

Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) North Florida District Office is located in Jacksonville and serves 43 counties. SBA was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. Wilfredo J. Gonzalez serves as the District Director.

Univision 18 Jacksonville

Univision 18 Jacksonville launched in 2015 as a Spanish Language Univision affiliate TV station serving northeast Florida. Watsnu Media Inc./dba Univision Jacksonville is the Univision Television Network affiliate for Jacksonville, Florida, and Gainesville, Florida. With a reach of over 165,000 people, this Spanish language TV giant has established a foundation to bring local news and business platform in the Jacksonville and Gainesville areas. Chad Dominicis is the President and General Manager.

WCI

Group

WCI Group was founded more than half a century ago in 1950 and started in St. Augustine offering all types of home remodeling and improvements including replacing windows, siding and more under the name Wilson Construction Industries. As Wilson Construction Industries expanded its service area north to Jacksonville and beyond, the company's offices were moved to Jacksonville Beach and the company name was shortened to WCI Group Inc. Darren Lee is the president.

Small Business of the Year

Brunet-García Advertising

Established in 2003, Brunet-García is a team of "change agents" who create, develop, and sustain brands that enrich lives and inspire meaningful change. The agency provides cross-cultural communications and public involvement strategies, crafting powerful and compelling messages that reach diverse audiences and promote behavior and social transformation. Most recently, Brunet-García Advertising became the only company in Florida to win a \$100 million contract from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Jorge Brunet-García is President/CEO and Diane Brunet-García is Partner/Vice President.

Central Southern Construction Corp.

Central Southern Construction Corp. (CSC) is a heavy civil federal contractor who specializes in road and airfield construction, site preparation, underground utilities and earthwork. Kelly Muñoz, Owner and President, is a Civil Engineer.

Morales Construction Company

Morales Construction is a design/build general contracting company specializing in estate custom homes in Northeast Florida. Morales Construction is one of Northeast Florida's most respected general contractors. Rick Morales is President and Chief Operating Officer of Morales Construction Company.

Corporate Business of the Year

AT&T Services

AT&T Services is a major corporation that delivers advanced mobile services, next-generation TV, high-speed internet and smart solutions for people and businesses as a fully integrated solution provider. AT&T has been a great supporter of the Achieving the Dream Scholarship program funding over 26 scholarships for deserving Hispanic students. Heather Duncan is the Area Manager for External Affairs and is currently responsible for legislative and community affairs for Northeast Florida.

BBVA Compass Bank

BBVA Compass is a leading U.S. banking franchise recognized as one of the nation's leading Small Business Administration (SBA) lenders with three business units: commercial banking, retail banking and wealth management. Headquartered in Spain, BBVA is dedicated to the growth and development of Hispanic businesses in the Jacksonville area through their contributions of funding, resources and facilities. Nelson Bradshaw is the NE Florida CEO for BBVA Compass Bank.

Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo is a provider of banking, mortgage, investing, credit card, insurance, and consumer and commercial financial services. It is one of the nation's largest financial institutions and the largest bank in Jacksonville, Florida. Wells Fargo promotes a diverse workforce and is dedicated to the betterment of the Jacksonville community. Gina Stapp ensures that Wells Fargo contributes to the overall progression of the Hispanic Community in the Jacksonville market.

Diversity Impact Award

Victor Cora

Victor "Vic" Cora is a native of New York City of Puerto Rican descent who came to Jacksonville by orders of US Navy 32 years ago. He has an extensive background in organizational leadership, community outreach, business development, event management and production. Through his many accomplishments and first time events over two decades, Victor is a champion for the both the underserved and Hispanic communities. Victor is a recipient of numerous awards and recognition as a well-respected community trustee and conduit for diversity in Jacksonville. Most recently, Victor was instrumental in launching Univision 18 Jacksonville and serves as the VP of Business Development and Community Affairs.

Arlene Ortiz

Arlene Ortiz was a Navy wife for 20 years. Her husband is now a retired veteran and her desire to give back to the community through volunteer work has led her to launch efforts such as the JAX Community Health Fair and Festival, a free event that has been successful over the past five years. She currently hosts an internet radio program, "Conexion a las Naciones". Her vision and mission is to connect with and to be a bridge between organizations, businesses, churches and the community.

Annie Grogan

Annie Grogan is the founder and Board Chair of The Hispanic Institute for Life and Leadership, (The H.I.L.L.), of Northeast FL, Inc. A workforce and professional development agency focused on the Latino labor force of Florida's First Coast region. The H.I.L.L. focuses on building and developing competitive business acumen and assisting in employment efforts for Latinos and serves as a resource in educating local companies about the value and importance of the Latino consumer and Latino employees for vital long-term business strategies. Annie is a military veteran who was recognized as a 2015 Woman of Influence by the Jacksonville Business Journal.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Nelson Estepa

Nelson Estepa was born in New York City and raised in Puerto Rico. He married his lovely wife, Gloria (pictured), whom he has been happily married to for 50 years. Nelson is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army who served his country faithfully for over 30 years after retiring from U.S. Civil Service with the Department of Veterans Affairs. He is a true role model for the community and continues to serve as a valued volunteer for the FCHCC for over 10 years. He has been instrumental in the success and growth of FCHCC and plays a critical role in key initiatives such as the Achieving the Dream Scholarship program.

Clark Vargas

Clark Vargas is the founder and president of C. Vargas and Associates Consulting Engineers, now a 39-year-old company with more than 800 projects valued at over \$900 million in construction. Clark is a nationally recognized authority in the field of environmental engineering and shooting range design, publishing numerous articles and a presenter at several national conferences. He is a registered Professional Engineer in 17 states. Clark is a founder of the First Coast Hispanic Chamber's predecessor HABA (Hispanic American Business Association) and has been a cornerstone of the Hispanic community in Jacksonville for almost 40 years.

Tomas Jiménez

Tomas A. Jiménez, President and CEO of Jiménez-Bellisario Enterprises that specializes in business operational and regulatory issues in Latin American and European markets. He consults with, and advises both private and public sectors entities on corporate market expansions and negotiations in the Western Hemisphere, government affairs, business strategy and corporate communications. Tomas is one of the most accomplished Hispanic Americans in the City of Jacksonville as recognized by numerous awards. He has a long history of serving the community and is a strong advocate for philanthropic efforts and moving Hispanics forward. Tomas has played a key role in many local efforts including the initiation of the Achieving the Dream Scholarship Program which has awarded over \$200,000 in scholarships to deserving Hispanic students.

Business Leader of the Year

Giselle Carson

Giselle Carson is a senior attorney and shareholder with Marks Gray, P.A. She practices business immigration and compliance as well as serving as President of the Jacksonville Bar Association. Giselle represents employers and talented individuals in immigration matters. She is known among clients and peers for her passion and dedication to the Hispanic community receiving many awards and recognition for her contributions and distinguished service.

Willie Gonzalez

Wilfredo J. Gonzalez, District Director for the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has served the small businesses of North Florida since December 1996. Gonzalez served as the District Director for the Washington D.C. District Office and is responsible for delivering SBA programs and services to 43 counties in North Florida. He oversees the daily operations in Jacksonville and Orlando, Florida. A great community trustee, he has been instrumental in the success of many efforts within the Hispanic businesses community in north Florida.

Dr. Rene Pulido, MD

Dr. Rene Pulido opened EMED Primary Care and Walk-in Clinic in August of 2010. At Emed, the staff and physicians are committed to providing outstanding primary care services. Experts in primary care, they work together as a team to deliver comprehensive and compassionate care with minimal waiting times. Emed is a one-of-a-kind center offering a wide variety of services servicing the Hispanic community.

Rising Star Award

Emmanuel Matias

Emmanuel Matias is a Senior Financial Analyst for Southeastern Grocers where he helps analyze the company's profitability. Prior to working at Southeastern Grocers, Emmanuel was a Financial Representative with Northwestern Mutual where he worked on acquiring new clients. Born in Puerto Rico, Emmanuel holds a Bachelors degree from the University of North Florida in Finance. In addition to his professional and personal accomplishments, Emmanuel serves the community in many ways including Chair of Business Development where he is responsible for FCHCC Membership.

Andrea Reyes

Andrea Reyes is the owner and immigration attorney at Reyes Legal, PLLC. She was born in Bogota, Colombia and immigrated to the United States at a young age. Andrea graduated from Florida State University with a double degree in Psychology and Criminology and later earned her J.D. from Florida Coastal School of Law. Andrea is a role model in the business community, as business owner and adjunct professor. She also works hard to advocate for the at-risk population including those affected by human trafficking.

Madelene Skinner

Madelene Skinner is a public relations and marketing executive passionate about promoting diversity in the community and creating change. Her experience ranges from strategic communications to media relations, crisis and issues management, social media and marketing. Madelene's entrepreneurial spirit combined with her knowledge and passion to create experiential campaigns led her to launch MadFab Media, a creative, savvy lifestyle public relations consultancy developing strategies for nonprofits, weddings and local businesses. Madelene serves the diverse community of Jacksonville including her tireless service to the FCHCC overseeing all media and public relations efforts. Madelene is also co-founder of Friday Night Live Music Festival, a music competition that has brought multicultural diversity to downtown Jacksonville.