



# COALITION AGAINST VIOLENCE & EXPLOITATION Conference 2018

## Steering Committee

Betty Bautista  
Dianne Blankenship  
Marguerite DeWitt  
Cristel Escalona  
Lucas Espinoza  
Kim Nguyen-Finn  
Sandra Hansmann  
Florence Nocar  
Sandy Paredes  
Amanda Quintanilla  
Eddie Quintanilla  
Rosalva Resendez  
Gabriel Sanchez  
Martha Sanchez  
Douglas Stoves  
Francisco Tamez  
Karina Vega  
Carlos Villalon Jr.

## Committee Chairs

Cynthia Jones  
Priscilla Palacios  
Miguel Venegas

## OVAVP STAFF

Sarah Tamez

**SPECIAL THANKS TO**  
Mrs. Esperanza and  
Dr. Lawrence Gelman

## Building Together Against Violence

This interdisciplinary, panel-based conference addresses violence victimization in the Rio Grande Valley. Our goals are: to raise awareness regarding the impact on victims and survivors, to gather stakeholders for honest and productive discussions of how to best address violence victimization in our area, to educate others on the processes involved, to make transparent the role of victim advocates, and to promulgate a trauma informed, research-based, victim-centered approach to addressing violence victimization in the RGV.

### Panel Discussion Topics:

- What's Love Got to Do With It? Start by Believing/Community Building
- Thelma and Louise: Rape Culture: Historically and in the Institutions, from Government to academia
- Inside Out: Compassion Fatigue
- A Dog's Purpose: Animals in Therapy and How Animals are used Against People in DV Situations
- End of Watch: Red Flags for First Responders
- Lean On Me: Medical Students/Health Science Students and Unique Challenges
- Which Way Home: Immigration, Violence, & Vulnerability
- Lost in Translation: Language Differences Between Professionals and Why it Matters

**UTRGV**



**OVAVP**

Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention

**taasa**



***Building Together Against Violence***  
2nd Annual Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation  
(CAVE) Conference

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# ***Building Together Against Violence***

## **3rd Annual Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation (CAVE) Conference**

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### **WEDNESDAY, October 24, 2018**

- 8:30 a.m.** Breakfast and Registration
- 9:00 a.m.** Welcome and Introduction, Pretest for CEU recipients  
Cameron County District Attorney, Mr. Luis V. Saenz, J.D.
- 9:15 - 10:30 a.m.** **Panel 1** *What's Love Got to Do with It?* Start by Believing/Community Building  
**Moderator: Eddie Quintanilla**  
Panelists: Dr. Marguerite DeWitt, Florence Nocar, J.D., Yamile Sarkis, Justice Gina Benavides, Jo Anna Mendoza, Jason Campo, J.D.
- 10:45 - 11:45 a.m.** **Panel 2** *Thelma and Louise:* Rape Culture: Historically and in the Institutions, from Government to Academia  
**Moderator: Dr. Amy Hay**  
Panelists: Dr. Ernesto Ramirez, Dr. Cathryn Merla-Watson, Dr. Qing Zeng, Dr. Nilanjana Paul
- Lunch served at 11:45 for registered conference participants**
- 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.** **Student Panel 1** *Obsessed:* Stalking/Social Media/Hook-up Culture/Technology  
**Moderator: Francisco Tamez-Cavazos**  
Panelists: Sandy Paredes, Amanda Quintanilla, Selena Artiaga, Eduardo Esquivel, Steven Hughes, Miguel Flores
- 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.** **Keynote 1** Gabriel Sanchez  
*The Birdcage:* The Genderbread Person and an Introduction to Sexual & Gender Diversity
- 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.** **Panel 3** *Inside Out:* Compassion Fatigue  
**Moderator: Dianna Blankenship**  
Panelists: Kim Nguyen-Finn, Dr. Marguerite DeWitt, Judge Carlos Villalon, Dr. Cristel Escalona, Dr. Michael Sanchez, Jo Anna Mendoza
- 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.** **Panel 4** *A Dog's Purpose:* Animals in Therapy and Animals as Tools in Domestic Violence  
**Moderator: Kim Nguyen-Finn**  
Panelists: Victoria Lynn Glass, Hope, Angela M. Dunn, Cristian Juarez, Chubbs
- 5:00 – 5:15 p.m.** CEU/TCOLE forms completed

**THURSDAY, October 25, 2018**

- 8:30 a.m.** Breakfast and Registration
- 9:00 - 9:15 a.m.** Welcome and Introduction, Pretest for CEU recipients
- 9:15 - 10:30 a.m.** **Panel 5** *End of Watch*: Red Flags for First Responders  
**Moderator: Amanda Quintanilla**  
Panelists: Alma Munoz, Ruben Vasquez, Det. Brian Carpenter, Miguel Flores
- 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** **Panel 6** *Lean on Me*: Medical Students/Health Science students and unique challenges  
**Moderator: Martha Sanchez**  
Panelists: Dr. Marguerite DeWitt, Dr. Cristel Escalona, Leah Bryan, Dr. Stanley Fisch

**Lunch served at 12:00 for registered conference participants**

- 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.** **Student Panel 2** *Clueless*: Healthy Relationships and Boundaries  
**Moderator: Jackie Joy Ho-Shing**  
Panelists: Martha Sanchez, Freddy Jimenez, Ingrid De La Torre, Maria Saldivar, Miguel Flores
- 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.** **Case Study Keynote** Dr. Luis Espinoza: The Homicide of TWU Student Jaqueline Rae Vandagriff
- 2:45 - 3:45 p.m.** **Panel 7** *Which Way Home*: Immigration, Violence, & Vulnerability  
**Moderator: Dr. Rosalva Resendiz**  
Panelists: Abraham Diaz, Jennifer Clark, Mike Magee, Dr. Ernesto Ramirez
- 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.** **Keynote 2** Dr. Gordon Crews: Relationship between Violence & Exploitation and K-12 School Violence Perpetrators
- 5:00 – 5:15 p.m.** **CEU/TCOLE forms completed**

**FRIDAY, October 26, 2018**

- 8:30 a.m.** Breakfast and Registration
- 8:45 - 9:00 a.m.** Welcome and Introduction, Pretest for CEU recipients
- 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.** **Panel 8** *Lost in Translation*: Language Differences between Professionals and Why It Matters  
**Moderator: Dr. Lucas Espinoza**  
Panelists: Mike Sweeney, Karina Vega, Florence Nocar, J.D., Jason Campo, J.D.
- 10:30 - 12:30 p.m.** **Keynote 3** Michael Sweeney: Why is Getting Information so Hard? Experiential Trauma Interviewing
- 12:30 p.m.** **Closing and CEU/TCOLE forms completed**

# Keynote Speakers

## Gabriel Sanchez

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### Biography:

Gabriel Sanchez works at Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid doing outreach and community education on topics including immigration, special education, and LGBTQIA+ issues. This includes providing training to different nonprofits and community organizations on working with gender and sexual diversity and LGBTQIA+ clients and doing outreach with the LGBTQIA+ community around TRLA services. In the past, Gabriel has also worked with a variety of non-profits and social service organizations that work with the community.

## Gordon Crews, Ph.D.

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### Biography:

Gordon A. Crews, Ph.D., is Chair and Keith A. Ferguson Endowed Professor in Criminal Justice at the University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley (TX). Prior to this position, he was Professor of Criminal Justice & Criminology and founder of the Center for Justice and Social Research at Tiffin University (OH). In addition to over 29 years of post-secondary education experience, Dr. Crews has conducted POST certified law enforcement and correctional training in Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, in the areas of proper policy and practice. He has also worked with the Turkish National Police and Ghana National Police on community policing initiatives.

## Luis Espinoza, Ph.D.

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### Biography:

Dr. Luis Espinoza is social epidemiologist with training in public health, health promotion and sociology. He is a quantitative methodologist with a research focus in Latino/a health disparities, specifically sexual health behaviors, higher education success, and health among older adults. He is Assistant Professor in The School of Health Promotion and Kinesiology at Texas Woman's University.

## Michael K. Sweeney

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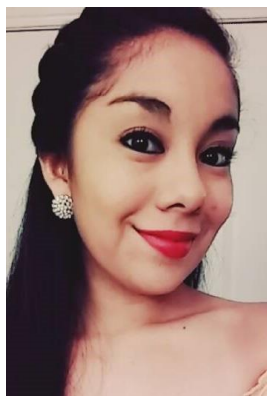


### Biography:

Michael Sweeney is a Training Specialist for the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault and brings with him 28 Years of Law Enforcement experience. Mike started his Law Enforcement career in the Aurora Police Department in Aurora, Colorado, and served as a Narcotics Detective from 1984-1998, receiving two Meritorious Service Awards, and in 1998 relocated to the Mississippi Gulf Coast joining the Ocean Springs Police Department in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, rising to the rank of Chief of Detectives. During his service with the Ocean Springs Police Department, Mike served as a Commander over Logistics and Operations throughout Hurricane Katrina, was Commander over Internal Affairs, Director of the Jackson County Mississippi Multi-Agency Training Academy, as well as the Accreditation Manager for the Ocean Springs Police Department. In 2008, Mike attended and graduated the 233rd Session of the FBI National Academy, specializing in interview interrogation and statement analysis. From 2011-2012, Mike was a Master Trainer for the National Alliance of Chaplains Corps., instructing courses on Conflict Resolution, Domestic Violence, Suicide, Death Notification and Critical Incident Stress Management & Debriefings. 2013-2014 Mike was a Law Enforcement Trainer for Texas Association Against Sexual Assault. 2014-2017 Mike was the Director of Investigations and Law Enforcement Development for International Justice Mission in Ghana, Africa, training and conducting human trafficking investigations of children on Lake Volta. Mike returned to TAASA on August 1, 2017.

## *Invited Panelists*

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**Selena Artiaga**

Selena Artiaga is a junior pursuing a Bachelor's of Science in Rehabilitation Services. She chose this career because she is passionate about defending the rights of People with Disabilities. She likes helping others and likes to be the voice of those who cannot speak for themselves. She was born in Harlingen Texas but lived the early years of her childhood she lived in Tampico, Tamaulipas Mexico. She then moved to La Feria, Texas where she have lived up to now. Her parents were both born and raised in Mexico and migrated to the United States to give their family a better quality of life. She is the youngest of four children and the second one in her family to pursue a career.

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**Justice Gina Benavides**

Justice Gina M. Benavides was first elected to the Thirteenth Court of Appeals in 2006 and re-elected to a second six-year term in 2012. She is currently seeking her third term on the court.

In 2007, Justice Benavides was named "Latina Judge of the Year" by the Hispanic National Bar Association and in 2014 the "Judge of the Year" by the Hispanic Section of the State Bar of Texas.

In 2008, Justice Benavides was appointed to serve on the Texas Center for the Judiciary Board of Directors (the "Texas Center"). The Texas Center provides continuing judicial education programs for the state's judiciary and support personnel. In 2011, she was elected Chair of the Texas Center by her fellow judges—the first Hispanic female to hold this position. In 2013, Justice Benavides received the Chair's Award of Excellence from the Texas Center. She is currently serving on the Board of the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas

In 2016, she was appointed to the Texas Legal Services Corporation after serving two terms to the Texas Access for Justice Commission. Access for Justice is a priority for her as she continues to serve on the legislative committee.

Justice Benavides is also serving as the chair of the Hispanic Issues Section of the State Bar of Texas.

Justice Benavides serves an active role in the State Bar of Texas, the National Association of Women Judges, the Hidalgo County Bar Association, and Texas Women Lawyers. She is past President of the Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas, past President of the Cameron County Bar Association, and a former Vice-President of the Texas Association of Defense Counsel. Justice Benavides is also a frequent speaker and presenter throughout Texas and is currently chairing the Education committee for NAWJ Annual Meeting in San Antonio in October of 2018.

Justice Benavides is originally from Corpus Christi and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1985 from the University of Texas in Austin. She then attended law school at the University of Houston Law Center and was admitted into the State Bar in 1988.

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**Dianna Blankenship, J.D., Ph.D.**

Dr. Blankenship earned her J.D. from Texas Wesleyan University School of Law (now Texas A & M University School of Law), was on the Law Review staff, and received the AmJur Award for Academic Excellence. Her Ph.D. and M.S. are from Texas Woman’s University and her B.S. is from Texas Christian University. While at TWU, she was an Allsup-Lane Graduate Fellow and Scholar and a State of Texas Doctoral Fellow. After receiving her law degree, she worked as a legal research trainer, edited the third edition of Texas Hospital Law, and practiced as a research attorney. She has taught at the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth, Tarrant County Community College, the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College, and UTRGV. After retiring from UTB/TSC, and prior to returning to UTRGV, she served as Program Attorney, Research and Grants Program Manager, and Director of Curriculum for the Texas Center for the Judiciary

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**Leah Bryan**

Leah Bryan is in her third year of training at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine. She is the founder of an interpersonal violence workshop that trains medical students and residents to respond to cases of sexual assault and domestic abuse. Before moving to the Valley, she volunteered as a victim advocate at the East Texas Crisis Center. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Neuroscience from the University of Texas at Dallas and her master’s degree in Biotechnology from the University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler.

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**Jason Campo, J.D.**

Jason Campo attended The University of Texas at Brownsville for his undergraduate degree, where he earned a Bachelor of the Arts in Government. He then attended Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law for his Juris Doctorate degree.

Jason has been an assistant district attorney in Cameron County, Texas since December of 2015. At this time, he currently holds the position of felony prosecutor and supervisor of the Family Violence Unit for the district attorney's office. Jason has been leading the family violence unit since November 1, 2016.

Jason currently is a board member for the Salvation Army of South Texas, and the chairman of the board of directors for the Valley Aids Council.

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**Det. Brian Carpenter**

My name is Brian Carpenter. I moved to the valley in 2013 from Elm Mott, Texas (North of Waco). I have been in Law Enforcement for a total of 6 years. For the first five plus years, I was a patrol officer, and the last 8 months I have been a Detective with the UTRGV Criminal Investigations Division. I began my career with the Brooks County Sheriff's Department and in October of 2015 began my time with the UTRGV Police department.

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**Jenny Bryson Clark**

Jenny Bryson Clark is Associate Professor of Political Science and chair of Women's Studies at South Texas College. Her areas of expertise are forced migration, human trafficking, and gender inequality. Clark is co-editor of *Human Trafficking: A Complex Phenomenon of Globalization and Vulnerability* (Routledge, 2015) and *A Global Handbook on Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery* (Sage, forthcoming 2017). Her recent research (2015-2016), which was funded by the U.S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, involved working as part of a team of faculty from three institutions to study trafficking in Central America and along Mexico's eastern migration routes. She is currently engaged upon an examination of bonded labor, gender inequality, and trafficking in India. She is a founding board member of the Rio Grande Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition, and she received the 2009 South Texas Civil

Rights Project's Emma Tenayuca award for her work bringing to light the forms of trafficking and coercion that affect women.

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**Francisco Tamez-Cavazos**

Francisco (Frank) Tamez is a Security Analyst for the Information Security Office at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). Frank graduated Cum Laude from UTRGV, where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Computer Information Systems.

Frank's passion of cybersecurity started from a Social Media point of view and continues with the protection of computing systems. This led to an emphasis in Cybersecurity Awareness and technical vulnerabilities for computers. When Frank is not working on computers, he enjoys spending time with family and friends, looking at the stars as an amateur astronomer, and reading.

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**Ingrid De La Torre**

Ingrid De la Torre is a junior majoring in Communication Studies with a minor in Political Science. Ingrid's love for public service has driven her to be very active in student organizations that include the International Student Organization, Catholic Campus Ministry, Young Women for America and the Student Government Association. When she is not on campus, Ingrid spends time dancing and listening to music. Ingrid currently serves as the Vice President in Brownsville for the Student Government Association and works as a Peer Educator for the Superhero Project under Student Rights and Responsibilities.

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**Marguerite DeWitt, M.D.**

Dr. Marguerite DeWitt is a physician who also holds a degree in law. She is a retired forensic pathologist who has investigated many cases dealing with domestic violence, as well as child physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. She has testified as an expert in many criminal trials, and has been on state panels overseeing cases of abuse and neglect. She was the chairperson of the committee that established the Child and Adult Abuse Response Team at Valley Baptist Medical in Harlingen, Texas. Her continued interest in and dedication to the importance of these cases, and with the help of others equally dedicated, she initiated the Annual Rio Grande Valley Seminar in Forensic Sciences, now in its 15th year. Dr. DeWitt currently teaches in the department of Criminal Justice at the University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley.

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**Abraham Diaz**

Abraham Diaz was born in the city of Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. At a very young age, his family decided to migrate to the United States to be able to provide him and his siblings with better educational opportunities and lives.

When he was told that undocumented students were not eligible to attend college, Abraham was determined to find a way. After receiving his work permit in 2012, he continued from high school to college. He was able to graduate at the top of his high school class with honors and went on to study at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, where he majored in Mexican American Studies and History. While in college, Abraham found out about organizing and fighting for immigrant rights when he joined the Minority Affairs Council, an immigrant-student organization, where he felt kinship among the stories of over 950 undocumented students on campus. Through this organization, he was able to speak on behalf of immigrant students on campus and find resources to help them succeed. Abraham continues his advocacy work now as the education specialist at La Union del Pueblo Entero, an organization that focuses on various issues such as fighting deportations, providing immigration and social services, and organizing for infrastructure needs in *colonias* in the Rio Grande Valley.

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**Angela Dunn, LPC-S**

Angela Dunn is a Brownsville-based Licensed Professional Counselor who has been providing therapeutic services on a full-time basis in the Rio Grande Valley since 2012. Angela has been able to acquire vast experience working as a counselor and she has worked for entities such as Tropical Texas Behavioral Health and Texas State Technical College. Angela received training in counseling from the University of Texas - Pan American and completed her 3,000 hours of postgraduate training at the Counseling and Assessment Preparation Clinic (University of Texas-Pan American) under the supervision of the late Dr. Santiago Silva. She has experience working with individuals' ages 3 to 81 with various diagnoses.

Angela currently works for Texas Southmost College and sees adults for a variety of reasons, including divorce, relationships, grief, depression, anxiety, trauma, life changes, etc. She strives to create

a safe and nurturing atmosphere in which individuals can be supported in their efforts to reach their goals. Angela practices Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and incorporates expressive arts into her counseling.

In addition, Angela works with up and coming clinicians to achieve full LPC licensure and supervises interns throughout the Rio Grande Valley. Angela is a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor (LPC-S), licensed through the Texas State Board of Professional Counselors.

Outside of the office, Angela likes to read, spend time with her dogs and cat, paint, and spend time with friends and family.

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**Cristel Escalona, M.D.**

Dr. Escalona graduated from the University of Texas - Pan American with a bachelor's degree in chemistry. She received her medical education at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston Texas. She is the current Medical Director for Student Health Services at UTRGV and is a Clinical Professor at the School of Medicine. She is the liaison to the Institute for Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault's CLASE Health Consortium, which aims to address the issues faced by medical students and health profession students who have experienced violence victimization or harassment. She is a board-certified pediatrician and a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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**Eduardo Esquivel**

My name is Eduardo Esquivel. I am currently a senior at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and I'm majoring in Rehabilitation Services with a concentration in addictions. I will be graduating this December with a bachelor's in Rehabilitation Services and I plan to continue to the Master's program. I am looking forward to using the knowledge that I have gained in the rehabilitation program for this conference.

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**Lucas Enrique Espinoza, Ph.D.**

Dr. Lucas Enrique Espinoza is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Affiliate Faculty of Gender & Women’s Studies, Affiliate Faculty of Mexican American Studies, and Affiliate Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. His research areas examine culture and identity; Latin@ disparities and social justice rights/issues. At UTRGV, he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on criminal justice research methods; statistics; criminology, restorative justice; environmental crime, gender and crime. He can be reached at [lucas.espinoza01@utrgv.edu](mailto:lucas.espinoza01@utrgv.edu).

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**Kim Nguyen-Finn, LPC-S**

Kim Nguyen-Finn, MA, LPC-S, has been a mental health counselor since 1998 and is a Texas Licensed Professional Counselor Board-approved Supervisor. Aside from providing individual, family, and couples counseling for a wide range of issues, including anxiety disorders, OCD, depression, trauma resolution, and gender identity, she is a lecturer and doctoral candidate at the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley in the School of Rehabilitation Counseling and Services. Currently, Ms. Finn also works in private practice, serves as consulting counselor for UTRGV’s Office for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention, and is an expert witness for domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Ms. Finn was raised in a military household and earned her Masters of Arts in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

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**Miguel Flores**

Miguel is 37 years old and has been a resident of Hidalgo County all his life. He has dedicated the past 12 years of his life to protecting and serving the citizens of South Texas. He began his Law Enforcement

career with the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office as a Detention Officer on November 2006. He earned his Peace Officer license from Mission Police Academy on January 2009. He was hired as a Deputy Sheriff with Hidalgo County from March 2009, until July 2013 where he served as a Patrol Deputy, Narcotics Investigator, SWAT operator and ASP Baton Instructor. On April 2014, he was hired by La Joya Police Department as a Patrolman and Narcotics Investigator. He was promoted to Patrol Corporal and then Patrol Sergeant. Miguel has extensive Personal, law enforcement, and Academic experience responding, documenting, and assisting: Assaults, Robberies, Burglaries, Juvenile cases, Narcotic cases, Human trafficking/Smuggling, Stalking, Dating Violence, Sexting, and other major crimes that affect our community. He has worked hi-risk/covert undercover operations with Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies regarding corruption within law enforcement.

Miguel worked for the Rio Grande Valley Empowerment Zone from November 2015 to May 2018 as their Director of Education and Training. As Director of Education and Training, he assisted in developing and strengthening more effective law enforcement, prosecution and court strategies to combat violent crimes against persons in 11 South Texas Counties: Most of the trainings he instructed were designed to prevent and deter: Stalking, Dating/Family Violence, Human Trafficking, Sexual Assault, Homicide, Identity Theft, Property Crimes, and Active Shooters. He educates police officers, parents, juvenile-adult students, teachers, and other members of the community. Miguel is an adjunct instructor for the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office Training Academy where he teaches basic, intermediate and advanced TCOLE courses for local and State Law Enforcement agencies. Currently, Miguel is employed as a Patrol Deputy with Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office. He works the streets of Hidalgo County with the same goal in his heart: Protect and serve, and empower every person he encounters. He is a true public servant who seeks to improve quality of life.

Miguel continues to serve Hidalgo County residents and other counties with more knowledge, experience and passion than he did 12 years ago. He is always dedicated and determined to protect life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

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**Victoria L. Glass, RN**

Victoria L. Glass, RN, has been a domestic violence survivor since the age of 19, a rape survivor since age 34 and an RN since shortly thereafter. Shortly after giving birth to a child who was the product of rape, she embarked on a trip halfway across the country to serve the border community by providing labor and delivery services. This was in fulfillment of a calling that was received prior to all of that, and was heeded in a church in sunny southern California. Shortly after arriving to the border, she and her infant son adopted a Rottweiler from a local shelter. For ten years, the dog named Schatzie was her friend, protector, sister, daughter, and confidante until she was lost to cancer. Upon losing her, she and her children embarked on an adventure of animal rescue. Hope was next on the euthanasia list in a kill shelter outside of Corpus Christi, and was their first pull. Hope had been a street dog, unaccustomed to indoors, car rides, and collars/leashes, and was emaciated, covered in ticks, had heartworms, and STUNK. Six

months later, she was heartworm-free, spayed, and spoiled, and played a huge part in filling the paw prints left by Schatzie.

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### **Hope**

Hope had been a street dog, unaccustomed to indoors, car rides, and collars/leashes, and was emaciated, covered in ticks, had heartworms, and STUNK. Six months later, she was heartworm-free, spayed, and spoiled, and played a huge part in filling the pawprints left by Schatzie.

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### **Amy Hay, Ph.D.**

Amy Hay is an Associate Professor of History at UTRGV. Her research interests include women's & gender history, the history of activism, and American medicine and the environment. Her book manuscript, "The Defoliation of America" is under external review at the University of Pittsburgh Press. She published a blog on the #MeToo movement and the Sexual Revolution, "Now I try to live my feminist politics in bed as well as elsewhere," in *Nursing Clio* last May. Her new research project will examine the health and well-being in the Rio Grande Valley over the course of the long 20th century.

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### **Jackie Joy Ho-Shing**

Jackie Joy Ho-Shing is a border native and graduate from UTRGV with a B.A in English. Upon graduation, she has worked at Access Esperanza Clinics as a Community Health Educator, promoting and

teaching the importance of family planning, birth control, healthy relationships and STI prevention to community members. She has always been passionate about her community and in the importance of community based work through various non-profits. When she is not working, she loves cooking, being outdoors, writing poetry and drinking copious amounts of coffee.



**Steven Hughes**

Steven Hughes, a Studio Art sophomore with a minor in Mass Communications, currently works as the Online and Social Media Editor for the university's magazine *Pulse Magazine*. He is also involved with the Student Government Association as the Senator for the College of Fine Arts.

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**Freddy Jimenez**

Freddy Jimenez is currently a student at UTRGV studying Political Science and minoring in Mexican-American Studies. He is a local activist involved in mobilizing working-class people, and he is the editor for the San Benito News.

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**Cristian L. Juarez**

Cristian Juarez has been working at the Brownsville Animal Regulation & Care Center for over three years now as the Adoption Specialist. One of the biggest parts of her job as an Adoption Specialist is to try

finding homes for all of the homeless pets in the facility through adoption or rescue. She tries to make sure all these pets are going to a great home with the right family.

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### **Chubbs**

“Meet, Chubbs! This handsome guy came into the animal shelter as an owner surrender because he couldn’t be cared for anymore. He arrived to the shelter 09/17/2018 and he is available for adoption. Chubbs is 3 years old and he weighs about 90lbs. He loves to be petted, is very smart and patient. He does great with kids and other dogs.”

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### **Robert Michael (Mike) Magee**

Mike Magee is a Lecturer in Criminal Justice at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. He has over thirty years of experience in criminal justice practice, consulting, contracting and education. Mr. Magee has been a university instructor since 2010 but he spent most of his career with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). He was the ICE Deputy Field Office Director in San Diego, California and Chief of the National Criminal Alien Program at ICE Headquarters in Washington, DC. He has testified before Congressional Committees and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Forum. He has appeared in the national media and made presentations at national professional conferences. During his career he also served as the National President of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) employees’ labor Union representing 15,000 law enforcement, adjudication and support employees around the world.

Mr. Magee has completed eight graduate criminal justice courses in the doctoral degree program at Walden University and Sam Houston State University. He has a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree with a Graduate Specialization in Alternative Dispute Resolution from National University, San Diego, California. He is a graduate of the San Diego County Sheriff’s Academy, the U.S. Border Patrol Academy, the Federal Executive Institute and the MIT Sloan School of Management Executive Education Program.

He has been a volunteer Arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau (BBB) since 2010. A native of Miami-Dade County, Florida, he is a veteran that served as a First Class Hospital Corpsman aboard Navy ships, with Marine Corps units and hospitals in California, Texas and Asia. He has four adult children and three grandchildren. He and his spouse live in Harlingen, Texas.

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### **Jo Anna Mendoza**

Jo Anna Mendoza is the Outreach Case Advocate at Friendship of Women, Inc. located in Brownsville, TX and has been with the agency for the past 5 years. While working towards her B.A in Criminal Justice and Spanish from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX she volunteered at SAAFE House, a rape crisis center where she first gained education and experience in working with domestic violence cases, and later went on to do an internship with Mujeres Unidas, Inc. in McAllen, TX. Currently Jo Anna is enrolled at UTRGV-Brownsville working on her M.Ed. in Counseling and Guidance degree and will be pursuing full LPC licensure after graduation.

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### **Cathryn Merla-Watson, Ph.D.**

Dr. Cathryn Merla-Watson is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Literatures and Cultural Studies and affiliate faculty in Gender and Women's Studies at UTRGV. Her research interests broadly include Latinx Studies, Latinx speculative aesthetics, queer theory, political theory and philosophy, Chicana and Latina feminisms, critical race theory, feminist and social geography, and social justice research methodologies. She recently published with B.V. Olguín the anthology *Altermundos: Latin@ Speculative Literature, Film, and Popular Culture* (2017) with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, the first anthology to coalesce scholarship theorizing and codifying this new and emerging field of study.

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### **Alma Munoz, LPC-S**

Alma Muñoz is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She holds a Master's Degree in Education, Counseling and Guidance and a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. She am currently the Director of Client Services and one of the therapists for Friendship of Women, Inc. She has been a counselor for approximately 25 years and has worked with survivors of family violence and sexual assault for approximately 18 years. She obtained her clinical supervision and licensure while working as a therapist for the Incest Recovery Program at the Family Place in Dallas, Texas. The Family Place is the largest family violence service provider in North Texas. Her experience includes Expert Witness testimony for the Cameron County District Attorney's Office during my work with Monica's and Maggie's House, the Cameron County Advocacy Center for Children.

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**Florence Raven Nocar, J.D., SPHR, SCHRMS-SCP**

Florence Raven Nocar serves as the Chief Equity Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator. In her role, she furthers UTRGV's commitment to equal access, equity, non-discrimination, and to diversity and inclusion on behalf of staff, faculty and students.

She has a law degree from The University of California, Los Angeles, is a certified mediator, and is an ATIXA-certified Title IX Coordinator. She received her B.A. in Psychology with Honors from Stanford University.

Florence has over 18 years of diversity and inclusion higher education experience. At Stanford, she did thesis work on conflict resolution strategies and was an active member of the Stanford Native American Indian Organization (SAIO). At UCLA, she served as Vice President of the Native American Law Students' Association and was an active member of the La Raza Law Student Association. She also served as an Associate Editor for the Indigenous Peoples' Journal of Law, Culture & Resistance. She has provided pro bono legal services to homeless LGBTQ youth through the Outside In Legal Clinic and advocated on behalf of marginalized women through the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). She also served on the Multnomah County, Oregon Diversity committee. In 2011, she was honored with a Diversity Achievement Award presented at the decennial Oregon Bar's Convocation on Equality.

She has served as one of UTRGV's Deputy Title IX Coordinators since 2015 and comes with prior Deputy Title IX experience from The University of Texas - Pan American. She was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley and is a graduate of the Science Academy of South Texas.

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**Sandy Paredes**

Sandy Paredes is a Legal Advocate for Friendship of Women, Inc. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Texas in Brownsville, Texas. As a Legal Advocate; she provides support services, court and law accompaniment, & referral regarding victim's rights. She provides a wide variety of duties in providing support and advocacy rights for the protection of victims. She has been in the agency for about 12 years and continues to advocate for victims' rights. [legaladvocate@fowinc.com](mailto:legaladvocate@fowinc.com)

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**Nilanjana Paul, Ph.D.**

Dr. Nilanjana Paul is an Assistant Professor of History. She teaches courses in South Asian, World, and Women's History. She is currently working on women's educational institutions in India. Her research interests also include women's movement in the Global South.

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**Amanda Quintanilla**

Amanda Quintanilla is a Victim Service Specialist with The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Police Department. Amanda graduated from the University of Texas Pan- American with a Bachelors of Art in Psychology and English. Amanda has worked in the Social Service field for over 10 years. She has worked with children to adults with issues ranging from: Drug/Alcohol Abuse, Mental Health Issues, At Risk, and Victims of Domestic Violence. Amanda likes to help others whether it be through her work, or helping in the Community.

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**Cesar Eddie Quintanilla**

Cesar Eddie Quintanilla is the Health Educator for UTRGV. For the past fifteen years, he has dedicated his career to promoting health education among the college community. His health education programs won Health Education Program of the Year in 2014. In 2016, he won meritorious award for his dedication in creating a food pantry for UTRGV students. His is currently the Chair for the UNIDAD coalition, a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing underage drinking and drug abuse prevention. Mr. Quintanilla is dedicated to his community and is always promoting prevention education.

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**Ernesto Ramirez, Ph.D.**

Ernesto Fidel Ramírez has a 20-year career in education from the public schools to the university, from paraprofessional aide to university staff and as faculty. He has been employed at this institution since 2003 serving in a variety of capacities with the University Retention and Advisement Program, AVID for Postsecondary, the Center for Mexican American Studies, and as a Faculty Community Coordinator with the Office of Interprofessional Education in the UTRGV School of Medicine. He has held appointments with the Department of Criminal Justice, University College, and the Department of Modern Languages.

He is currently serving at UTRGV as a Lecturer III in the Mexican American Studies program and as a faculty affiliate with the Gender and Women's Studies Program. He has master's degrees in Criminal Justice; Guidance & Counseling; and Educational Administration with additional graduate study in Business Administration, English, Higher Education Administration, Bilingual Studies, School Psychology, Rehabilitation Counseling, Sociology, Social Work, and Educational Psychology; and an earned Graduate Certificate in Mexican American Studies. He completed doctoral coursework in Psychology and earned his doctoral degree in Educational Leadership.

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**Rosalva Resendiz, Ph.D.**

Rosalva Resendiz is an Associate Professor in Criminal Justice at UTRGV. She identifies as a Chicana indigenous mestiza social justice scholar/activist. Her interests include critical race theory, decolonial theory & methods, postcolonial studies, critical criminology, Chicana feminism, Mexican American/Border Studies, organized crime and social justice. She is the co-author of *On the Edge of Law: Culture, Labor and Deviance on the South Texas Border* and author of the textbook *Gender, Crime & Justice: Critical and Feminist Perspectives*. She is author of "Mestiza/o Discourse: Soldaderas in the Corridos of the Mexican Revolution." She also co-authored "Apache Resistance, 1849-1886" in *50 Events that Shaped American Indian History: An Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic* and "Colonialism and Imperialism: Indigenous Resistance on the US/Mexico Border," recently published in the *Journal of Perspectives on Global Development & Technology*. She is co-director and producer of the documentary, **El Muro|The Wall**, which focuses on the border wall.

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**Martha Sanchez, LPC**

Martha Sanchez has an Associates in Social Work, Bachelors in Psychology and a Masters in Counseling and Guidance. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Registered Play Therapist and a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional through the International Association of Trauma Professionals. She is trained in Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Eye Movement, Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Cognitive Processing Theory, and Prolonged Exposure.

Her work with survivors of abuse began during her undergrad internship at Children's Advocacy Center, Monica's House that later led to her employment. She moved on to work at Texas Workforce Center as a career counselor and then at Tropical Texas Behavioral Health as an IDD Coordinator. As a graduate student, she worked at the University of Texas at Brownville as the Collegiate Recovery Center Coordinator and the Family Crisis Center as a graduate intern. This later led to her employment with Family Crisis Center where she counseled children and adults who survived Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She is currently working as a Clinical Therapist at UTRGV in Brownsville.

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## **Michael Sanchez, Ph.D.**

I am a native of East Hampton, New York; however, I have been living in Texas since 1997. I have over 22 years of experience in all aspects of criminal justice; including policing, jail and detention, training, firearms, investigations, and police administration. I have a Master Peace Officer license in the State of Texas and have served in the following areas: Detention and Jailor, Patrol, Investigations, Training Coordination, Firearms Instructions, Administration, Operations, Personnel and Hiring, Logistics and Purchasing, First Line Supervision, Lieutenant of Investigations, Deputy Chief of Police, Interim Chief of Police, Director of Personnel and Administration, Regional Commander, and Acting Deputy Commissioner.

I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Police Science from Ottawa University, my Master's Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Utica College, and my PhD in Business Administration with a Specialization in Criminal Justice through Northcentral University.

I am still active in law enforcement. I am a Lieutenant with the Precinct 2 Constable's Office in Brownsville. I write policies, conduct firearms training, and conduct Internal Affairs Investigations.

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## **Yamile Sarkis**

Officer Yamile Sarkis graduated from the TSC Police Academy in October 2014. Soon after graduation, Sarkis began her law enforcement career with the University of Texas at Brownsville Police Department, which transitioned into The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Police Department in 2015. As a Probationary Police Officer Sarkis began to become proficient in DWIs and began to pursue that field of law enforcement. Sarkis received a Commitment Hero Award from MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers) in 2015 and Enforcement Hero Award in 2017 for active DWI enforcement in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Sarkis received an award for Rookie of the Year in 2015 and Officer of the Year in 2016. Sarkis is a certified Mental Health Peace Officer, Field Training Officer, IMPBA Bicycle Patrol Officer, and an Instructor under the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). Sarkis recently completed the first course for Crime Prevention, and currently assists with presentations for the UTRGV community as well as the School Districts in the Rio Grande Valley.

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## **Ruben Vasquez**

Ruben Vasquez is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the state of Texas. He has a Masters of Education in Counseling and Guidance and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. He has been providing counseling services for 5 years that include individual, group, and family therapy. He has experience working with children, adolescents, and adults with a wide array of problems. He is currently working at Friendship of Women and is providing counseling services to women, men, children, and adolescents that have undergone domestic violence and sexual assault. His theoretical orientation includes client-centered therapy, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), and solution-focused therapy.

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**Karina Vega**

Karina Vega, is the Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Advocate at the Friendship of Women, Inc. As been in the agency for 6 years, she provides a wide variety of duties involved in providing support and advocacy for the rights and protection of victims of stalking, sexual assault, domestic violence, and dating violence. On call advocate, that provides support during forensic examinations for sexual assault victims. Works with other community resources to fulfill the needs of victims and collaborates with the District Attorney's office, Law enforcement and Medical professionals to provide support for victims needs during crisis. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice- University of Texas at Brownsville. [saadvocate@fowinc.com](mailto:saadvocate@fowinc.com)

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**Carlos Villalon Jr., J.D.**

The Honorable Carlos Villalon Jr. was appointed as Associate Judge for the Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande Valley West on June 4, 2012, and presides over CPS cases in both Hidalgo and Starr Counties. He also serves as a Commissioner on the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families by Supreme Court of Texas. His court participates as one of eight model courts in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Implementation Sites Project. Judge Villalon earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Texas-Pan American in 1991, and after teaching middle school students for two years in La Joya, Texas, he completed his post-graduate education at St. Mary's University-School of Law, where he earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree in 1997. His career as an attorney has spanned both the private and public sectors with an emphasis in Child Advocacy, Indigent Representation, Family Law, and Bankruptcy Law. His previous public service includes practice as an Assistant Criminal District Attorney, Assistant Attorney General, and Regional Attorney with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

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**Qing Zeng, Ph.D.**

Qing Zeng's teaching and research interests include Developmental Psychology: Infancy-to-Adolescence/Lifespan, Cultural Psychology and Psychology of Gender; cultural identity development in children of immigrant families, and socialization and gender role formation. She published and presented on topics of parenting and gender identity development, attitudes to reproductive rights & psychological effects of abortion, and ambivalent sexism and sexual harassment recognition. She received her BA from Hunan Agricultural University in China, and her masters and doctorate degrees from Brigham Young University, and taught in public and private colleges such as Wells College, SUNY Tompkins Cortland Community College, Arkansas Tech University, University of Minnesota Duluth, and Louisiana State University in Shreveport before joining in UTRGV in 2015.

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**Dr. Stanley Fisch**, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at the UTRGV School of Medicine  
**Maria Saldivar**, Friendship of Women

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## Conference Co-Chairs

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**Cynthia M. Jones, Ph.D.**

**Associate Professor of Philosophy, Director of the Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**

Dr. Cynthia Jones received an undergraduate degree from Creighton University, a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Missouri, and is currently an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. In addition to areas of Professional Ethics, such as Bioethics, Business Ethics, Technology Ethics, and Academic Ethics, Dr. Jones conducts research and publishes on issues of gender, violence, culture, and marginalization. She has extensive experience as a volunteer for domestic violence and rape crisis programs. She served as a board member for five years, as well as vice chair of the Board of Directors, for Mujeres Unidas/Women Together. Along with Dr. Sandra Hansmann, Dr. Anne Stachura, and local community members, Dr. Jones founded the CAVE (Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation) Project in 2011, to bridge the gap between the community and the campus and to provide support, promote research, and organize education and prevention programs for addressing issues of interpersonal violence. She currently serves as the founding director of OVAVP (Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention) and the Gelman Constitutional Scholars Program, and is the past director and co-founder of the university's ethics center. Her office regularly organizes trainings and prevention and education events, including Art Against Violence, Stand Up Against Violence, ¿Podrias Caminar Una Milla en Tacones?, Take Back the Night, Remember Me: Confronting Violence Against Women in the RGV, and a local exhibit of Project Unbreakable. Dr. Jones served as the Principal Investigator on a Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women grant for addressing sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking on campus and she is the current PI on a grant from the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division for organizing a coordinated response and resource team to address violence victimization. She serves pro bono as an expert witness for the Cameron County DA's Office on domestic/dating violence and is a survivor of domestic violence. She is also the proud mother of three amazing teenagers, Sophia, Jose, and Genevieve.



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## Priscilla Palacios, MSSW

### **Edinburg Program Coordinator, Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**

Priscilla Palacios joined The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, formally The University of Texas-Pan American, in May of 2013, as the Program Coordinator for a Department of Justice/Office of Violence Against Women grant. The grant's focus was addressing gender-based violence issues on the university campus by providing direct services to victims and survivors. Prior to working at UTRGV, Priscilla was the Sexual Assault Program Coordinator and the Prevention Education Coordinator at Mujeres Unidas/Women Together in Hidalgo County. During her time with the rape crisis center, Priscilla coordinated numerous events, including their annual 5K run/walk "Walk a Mile in her Shoes", provided educational and training workshops for numerous schools and agencies, and accompanied clients to the local hospital as a sexual assault advocate, serving over 500 clients in her tenure at Mujeres Unidas. During her time at UTRGV, Priscilla has dedicated her work to helping students, staff, and faculty gain the knowledge, education, and resources available to them, not only on the campuses, but also throughout the Rio Grande Valley. Priscilla began her work as a Victim Advocate after obtaining her Bachelors in Social work in 2007 and received her Master's in Social Work in 2016. Because Priscilla is a childhood survivor of domestic violence, she has dedicated her career to educating, advocating, and empowering those who are or have been victims or survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Priscilla is the proud mother of three sons, ages 14, 11, & 5.



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## **Miguel Venegas, M.A.I.S.**

### **Brownsville Program Coordinator, Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**

Miguel Venegas is a proud native of the Rio Grande Valley and graduated from PSJA North in 2008. He attended Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK) where he joined Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity, Inc., The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society. He earned his B.A. in Communications Speech and Theater Arts in 2014.

He began attending UTRGV in 2015 and was the Graduate Assistant for the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS). In the summer of 2016, he began working with Student Rights & Responsibilities as the Graduate Intern for the Superhero Project, a UT System Active Bystander Initiative. Through his collaborative work, he assisted in the creation of a collaboration coalition with different university programs and community entities and agencies. He has done collaborative programming on healthy relationships, academic integrity, stalking awareness, and smoking cessation.

Through his work with the Superhero Project, he became a Campus Ambassador for the One Love Foundation. Founded in 2010 to honor Yeadley Love, One Love works to ensure everyone understands the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. His work gained the attention of the One Love Foundation such that the Superhero Project at UTRGV was featured in One Love's Giving Day in 2018.

Miguel graduated in 2018 with his M.A.I.S. in Mexican American Studies from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Currently, he is continuing his work of educating UTRGV students about dating violence as the Program Coordinator for the Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention on the Brownsville Campus. Miguel also works part-time with La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE) as a Citizenship and ESL Instructor and he has had over 50 students become citizens in the last two years.

## Numerous resources exist for victims, survivors, and advocates, including:

Information for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and for advocates:

[http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications\\_RSP\\_Action-engagement-rememberingservices-for-adult-survivors-child-sexual-abuse.pdf](http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_RSP_Action-engagement-rememberingservices-for-adult-survivors-child-sexual-abuse.pdf)

Info for each state at: Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network at <https://rainn.org/publicpolicy/laws-inyour-state>

Stalking resources: <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>

General resources for crime victims: <http://www.ovc.gov/help/>

Information on crime reporting: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/>

Information on Title IX and Higher Education/K-12 requirements via the Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/category/keyword/title-ix>

Clery Act (for colleges and universities): <http://clerycenter.org/>

Information on “healthy” relationships: <https://www.joinonelove.org/> <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>

Information on legal needs for sexual assault victims: <http://www.victimrights.org/about-vrlc>

## Local Resources:

UTRGV: [www.utrgv.edu/OVAVP](http://www.utrgv.edu/OVAVP)

Cameron County:

Harlingen: <http://www.familycrisisctr.org/>

Brownsville: <http://www.fowinc.com/>

Cameron County DA: <http://www.cameroncountyda.com/Victim-Assistance.htm>

Hidalgo and Starr Counties: <http://mujeresunidas.org/>

Hidalgo County DA: <https://www.hidalgocounty.us/1690/Crime-Victim-Assistance>

## Texas Resources:

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA): <http://taasa.org/>

Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV): <http://tcfv.org/>

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Mrs. Esperanza and Dr. Lawrence Gelman  
divergentthinking.org

