

LAYLA P. SULEIMAN GONZALEZ, Ph.D., J.D.

Biographical Notes  
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Dr. Layla P. Suleiman Gonzalez, J.D., has been an advocate, policymaker, professor and evaluator, advancing access and equity for Latinos and other minority groups for almost 30 years. Throughout her career in government, consulting, and higher education, Dr. Suleiman Gonzalez has dedicated her life to serving others --students, nonprofits, and the community at large. Her practice and scholarship focus on capacity building, performance management, and civil/human approaches to health and human services.

In 2007, she wrote legislation to establish the State of Illinois Latino Family Commission and in 2013 she became its founding Executive Director. In this role, she was a fierce advocate for Latinos in state government, writing several pieces of legislation and promoting equity in state programs, employment, grants and contracts. She has represented the Latino community on numerous Boards, Commissions and Task Forces. She previously served as the Federal Court Appointed Monitor for the Burgos Consent Decree, based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which demands fair treatment of Latino families in IDCFS.

As a consultant, she has worked with nonprofits, foundations and government to build capacity and deepen understanding of the Latino community. She has provided training and technical assistance, to facilitate growth and sustainability, through strategic planning, change management, performance and outcome measurement and monitoring, collaborative facilitation, policy development and evaluation. She is an expert in aligning mission and vision with outcomes, and served as the Director of Strategic Planning/Chief Results Officer (CRO) for the Illinois Department of Human Services where she led the Budgeting for Results implementation efforts for a 6 billion dollar state agency with over 200 programs. She has recently joined Aunt Martha's Youth Service and Health Center as Senior Advisor to the CEO, providing leadership in change management, excellence and innovation.

Dr. Suleiman Gonzalez is the director of the Human Services interdisciplinary undergraduate program at Loyola University Chicago and previously taught in its School of Education. She also served as faculty at DePaul University for ten years. In the classroom, Dr. Suleiman Gonzalez is grateful for the opportunity to inspire students to commit to social justice and to realize their professional goals through advocacy, policy and service provision.

She has received several awards in recognition of her work including the "Cook County 7<sup>th</sup> District Women's Recognition" from Cook County Commissioner Garcia, "Distinguished Alumna" award from the DePaul University Latino Law Student Association, "Community Advocate" from Healthcare Alternative Systems, "Community Advocate for Renewal and Empowerment" Award from Rincon Family Services, the Celeste Peña "Beacon of Light" award from the IDCFS Latino Advisory Committee, and the "Si Se Puede: Por Los Niños Award" from the CWLA National Council of Latino Executives.

Dr. Suleiman Gonzalez received her degree in Applied Developmental Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago and her J.D., with a certificate in International Law and Human Rights, from DePaul University.