



RAYMOND OCASIO

Mr. Ocasio is semi-retired and engaging in limited consultancy work, after a twenty three tenure [1988-2021] with La Casa de Don Pedro, a community based service and development agency in Newark, New Jersey.

During his time at La Casa, Mr. Ocasio shepherded the agency through phenomenal organizational and programmatic growth. He initially took on a modest neighborhood services and advocacy agency with some three million dollars budget and some seven-five employees and reframed it into an anchoring and model entity for Newark and New Jersey. He did so by consolidating its organizational structure, developing and nurturing its management team, enhancing its services and programming as well as expanding them through synergic expansion to new areas of work. When confronting the programmatic and financial challenges during the recession [2007-2009] after initially sustaining its position; he engineered and executed a financial restructuring plan that positioned the agency for its most impressive growth from seventeen million to twenty six million annual budgeted agency with a sound financial structure that employed some two hundred sixty employees with the resilience to be able to continue the serve the targeted populations of Greater Newark.

Among La Casa's initiatives Mr. Ocasio guided during his tenure were:

- The structuring of a solid financial framework with policies, procedures and a talented team,
- Transitioning a modest day care program into a major early childhood provider,
- the expansion of the reach of the youth and social services programming,
- Broaden the adult education work into a recognized and valued job development agent for governmental and private entities,
- The conversion from an dependent external housing operation into effective in-house development entity,
- Steered the energy assistance programs through the roller coaster policy and program changes
- Provided relevant and expanded personal benefits for the employees.

While engaged in Newark, Mr. Ocasio was actively involved in a number of local, state and national initiatives related to housing and community development work, such as the City's master plans, neighborhood planning & development work, such as the development of the Prudential Arena. He was also active in preserving and expanding the social safety net, children's and educational opportunities and public safety concerns, by his role in the Newark Early Childhood Coalition, the Newark Trust for Education, Newark Community Development Network, the NJ Housing & Community Development Network, NJ Citizen Action, the Newark Civilian Police Review Board, the Mayor's Inclusionary Zoning Advisory Committee, and the Equitable Growth Advisory Commission as well as other city initiatives and forums. Mr. Ocasio's values his role as a founding and longtime board member with Newark Leadership that fosters local leadership.

Mr. Ocasio services to the Newark community go back to the Gibson Administration where he served in the Business Administrator Office as a Deputy Director. Prior to coming to La Casa he was Vice President for the Local Initiative Support Corporation [LISC] with responsibilities for programs for Greater Newark, the New Jersey Multi-Cities programs as well as programs in Indiana, Ohio and New York City.

Beyond his Newark engagement and over the course of Mr. Ocasio professional life he has broad and extensive experiences that include his role as the Director of Housing for NYC's Department of Planning, Development Officer for the Harlem Urban Development Corporation, Project Director for NYC's West Side Urban Renewal Program. On the international level he held management roles for comprehensive social services programs in Bolivia and Peru with Plan International and provided oversight of technical assistance programs for the Cooperative Housing Foundation under contract for US Agency for International Development with work in Jamaica, Guatemala and Honduras as well as several short term assignments throughout the developing world. His profession work was influenced by his early community development work in Colombia, South American as a Peace Corp Volunteer.

Mr. Ocasio is a graduate of the City College of New York and holds a MS in City and Regional Planning from Pratt Institute as well as a wealth of certifications and experiences during his professional career.

In his personal life, Mr. Ocasio comes from a large and tight family that fostered a loving marriage that just rolled past its 52nd anniversary, with two professionally successful off-springs and five grandchildren.