

## **President's Message**

I am honored and privileged to celebrate the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association's Past, Present and Future with all of you at tonight's 10th Anniversary Scholarship Gala Dinner. We will recognize and acknowledge our founders and past presidents with a special commemorative pin. The pin will be a symbol to mark this special occasion and it will serve as reminder to all who see the pin worn of their special role in THBA's history. We will remember our past events and will highlight the accomplishments of the organization as we watch photos of those wonderful moments scroll across the screen. We will celebrate our present by enjoying an evening of laughter, music and dancing with all of THBA's members and friends gathered together here tonight for this special celebration. We will enhance THBA's future by awarding scholarships to deserving students and by inspiring, hopefully, all of those present here tonight to become more involved with the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association to assist us in continuing our mission in the years to come.

In the past ten years the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association has made a significant impact on our members and in our community. We have assisted pro se litigants in family law cases through our award winning Family Law Forms Clinic En Espanol. We have received grant funds to establish and coordinate programs, like our Court Interpreter Project and the upcoming Voluntary Bar Leaders' Summit where we will convene with the leadership of our fellow local voluntary bar associations to collaborate. We have awarded numerous students with scholarship funds each year and intend to expand our scholarship programs next year. This year we have raised more sponsorship dollars and have received the support of more sponsors than ever before and that support allows us to do even more than has been done in the past. We provide our members networking opportunities at social events throughout each year as well as with educational opportunities at our monthly lunches. We enjoy and benefit from the strong relationships and strategic partnerships with community leaders as well as with our fellow voluntary bar associations that we have developed and maintain. And, most recently, we have been recognized as an organization on a statewide level with my appointment by Florida Bar President Bill Schifio to a non-voting seat on the Florida Bar Board of Governors as a liaison for the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association.

The Tampa Hispanic Bar Association has grown in strength, in numbers, in leadership and in recognition over the past ten years. We have so much to celebrate. I am so proud of all that the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association represents. We are rich in our Hispanic culture and have so much diversity among our membership and supporters. We are an organization that feels like a family and I am so lucky to be part of it. On a personal and professional note I have been blessed with amazing opportunities as a direct result of my service over the past five years of service as an officer of the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association. I am thankful for those

opportunities and for the friendship and support of the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association's members, officers, board of directors and advisory board. I cannot begin to express how this organization, its' people and my role as a leader in this organization over the years has impacted my life in ways I never could have imagined. I remain forever grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to all the good that lies ahead.

All my best,

Vivian Cortes Hodz