

Martha Ramirez Accepts Position in Washington, D.C.



Martha Ramirez, Access and Assistance Coordinator for AACOG's Bexar Area Agency on Aging (BAAA), has accepted a position as a Management Analyst with the Health Resources and Services Administration (US Department of Health and Human Services). Her last day was July 9, 2010.

"As I prepare to set sail on my next journey, I find myself reflecting on the past three years. At the time, the Alamo Service Connection (ASC) was a written grant that transitioned into a living, breathing program to aid many who did not know where to go for help.

"The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) known as the Alamo Service Connection (ASC) functions as a highly visible and trusted source of assistance for individuals with multiple needs, requiring solutions from multiple agencies and resources. ASC brings together the social services industry to focus on and address the needs of our community, and offers educational workshops/seminars to those who seek knowledge about resources, benefits counseling, and much more.

I encourage for-profit and non-profit agencies alike to give thought to the paradigm shift that is changing the way people access help. The overall mission is for elders and people with disabilities to access services through one phone number, one website, and one place to go for assistance--a highly trusted entity that will actively listen to their needs, and guide them through a process that leaves them feeling they have options, can make choices, and are empowered.

"I am grateful to be given the opportunity to work closely with many highly talented and skilled professionals--individuals who care about the community, especially those who are underserved.

"I wish the Partners, Steering Committee and extended network much success as you continue to move forward to assure the ASC is on solid ground."

A Little About Martha's Background

Martha joined the BAAA in June, 2007, to become the lead developer for the Alamo Service Connection. She has a Bachelor of Science in Social Psychology from Park University in Parkville, MO, and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Texas in San Antonio.

For the past fifteen years, she served in middle management roles in large and midsize social service agencies serving low-income seniors, and people with disabilities residing in the most ethnically diverse and densely populated neighborhoods in Corpus Christi, El Paso and San Antonio.

Prior to working in social programs, Martha served in the U.S. Navy for ten years in the communications field. While on active duty, she was stationed onboard the USS Sierra AD-18 out of Charleston, S.C. Her adventures as a sailor included going to Spain, France, Italy, Turkey, Diego Garcia, and Corpus Christi, to name a few. She has actively participated in American Legion Alamo Post 2, and considers travel, hiking, and listening to live music among her favorite leisure-time activities.

Tributes from Martha's Colleagues

Martha Spinks, Ph.D., BAAA Director: "A lot of people in San Antonio who have worked with Martha have told me how much they will miss her energy, enthusiasm and good will---she has really had impact in the community. She has done a great job getting the Alamo Service Connection up and running, and she has turned it into an award winning program. I am grateful to Martha for all she has done. I am very excited that her talent has been recognized by a federal agency by recruiting her to their leadership development program."

Patricia Bordie, Grants Coordinator, Access and Intake Division, Texas Dept. of Aging and Disability Services: "Congratulations on your new position. Sounds like a great opportunity. We are sorry to see you go. I wish to thank you personally for your 'pioneer' efforts in the Texas ADRC movement. The Alamo Service Connection has a sound base thanks to your energy and expertise. Good Luck on your new journey."

Nancy Dunn Thompson, Ph.D., Director, Elizabeth McGown Training Institute: "You set into place a strong, innovative program to serve caregivers, older adults and those with disabilities. It is a national model. You

initiated programs (I immediately think of the Cool Neighbor program) that will continue to serve older adults and others for many years to come. Your impact is lasting. The mixed emotions come from how much you gave and how much you gained--and as you suggested--life is a journey and the ending is always a new beginning. Great things are ahead of you."

Lonna Ayres, Member, Bexar Senior Advisory Committee (BSAC): "Wow--you talk about big footprints to fill! You are awesome--and it will be difficult to replace you. I know you have put much thought into your decision. Good luck and may the Lord bless your work. Your heart is so big."