

Cecelia M. Espenoza

Cecelia Espenoza received an Honors Bachelor of Arts degree in 1979 and a Juris Doctorate in 1982, both from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. She was the second Latina admitted to the bar in Utah in 1982.

She was selected as a National Hispana Leadership Institute Fellow for 2003. She has a long history involvement in serving the Latino community. Since graduating from NHLI, Cecelia was a Charter Member of LULAC Chapter 4610 including serving as the Vice President in 2007 and Secretary in 2008. She has served as NHLI Class Representative since 2006 and has reviewed NHLI Executive leadership Program Applications since 2004. She facilitated a visioning process for the initial ALL IN class' project development and has reviewed Latina Learning to Lead (LLL) applications as well as attended LLL graduations for several years.

She was an Advisory Board member to the Arlington based Latinas Leading Tomorrow program from 2007-2010. Cecelia also served as the Chair of the first Northern Virginia Program Hispanic Youth Symposium in 2008. She also served as a Board Member on Governor Kaine's Virginia Latino Advisory Commission from 2005-2007 and as a Commissioner and Principal Author of the 2004 Commission Report (2004) to Governor Warner's Virginia Latino Advisory Commission.

She currently serves as Senior Associate General Counsel at the Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review. She came to Washington in 2000 to serve as Board Member, Board of Immigration Appeals. Prior to her appointment to the Board, Ms. Espenoza taught immigration law and trial advocacy as an associate professor of law at St. Mary's University School of Law in San Antonio, Texas, from July 1997 to August 2000. She also supervised law students in the Immigration Clinic at St. Mary's Center for Legal and Social Justice. From August 1990 to May 1997, Ms. Espenoza taught immigration law, criminal law, and evidence as an assistant professor of law at the University of Denver College of Law in Denver, Colorado, where she also developed an immigration externship program that placed students in immigration law positions. She has authored numerous articles on immigration matters in prominent legal publications.

She began her legal career in Utah, where she worked as a city prosecutor and a special assistant U.S. Attorney in Salt Lake City from 1986 to 1990, and as a city prosecutor in Sandy City from 1984 to 1986. She was director of the migrant unit and bilingual attorney for the Utah Legal Services, Inc., from 1982 to 1984. Ms. Espenoza has served on several immigration-related panels of the American Bar Association (ABA), including the Pro Bono Immigration Board and the Immigration Coordinating Council. She chaired the ABA's Young Lawyer Immigration Committee from 1987 to 1989. She was also a regional board member to the Hispanic National Bar Association.

Cecelia has always been active in education. She ran for the Arlington County school board as an independent candidate in 2005 and 2006. She has also held many leadership positions in education including: Chair - Schools Committee, Arlington Civic Federation, 2009-11; Chair, Countywide PTA Reflections Art Program Competition and County Council of PTAs Executive Board member, 2009-12; President Arlington County Council of PTAs 2007-09; NoVA PTA District Council Representative 2007-09; Arlington Public Schools Advisory Council on Instruction member 2005-07; Arlington Public Schools Strategic Planning Cultural Competency Task Force, 2004-05; President Claremont Immersion Elementary PTA 2003-05; Member of the Planning and Boundary Committee Arlington County Public Schools 2002-03.

Cecelia is a member of the Utah, Colorado, and Texas State Bars. She lives in Arlington Virginia with her husband and son.

