

PR PROfile: Mickey Ibarra, President of Mickey Ibarra & Associates,

By Amanda Pérez
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Mickey Ibarra founded Mickey Ibarra & Associates nearly six years ago and has since established a successful government and public affairs firm in our nation's capital far beyond his expectations. Having achieved some level of success as a teacher, union organizer and White House aide over a 20-year period, Ibarra wanted to test his ability in the private sector. "I am very grateful for the opportunity my business has given me to continue my advocacy work on behalf of our government, associations, and corporate clients," said Ibarra.

He recently announced the formation of the Latino Leaders Network (LLN), a non-profit organization, which will assume responsibility for the Latino Leaders Luncheon Series™ starting on November 15 featuring actress Eva Longoria. Additionally, the LLN will host and support the Latino Leaders Issue Hour, a key component of the Luncheons, and the annual Latino Mayors Dinner. The LLN will be dedicated to bringing our leadership together through existing events and new ventures.

How has the development of the Latino Leaders Luncheon Series helped Mickey Ibarra & Associates provide better service to their clients and the industry?

Building strategic alliances for our clients is a primary service provided by Mickey Ibarra & Associates. The Latino Leaders Luncheon Series™ is a valuable platform for bringing leaders together from government, corporate, labor, arts, entertainment, education and other sectors of our society to get better acquainted with each other on a quarterly basis. The Series has helped establish us as able conveners of our diverse Latino leadership community.

The quarterly luncheon has hosted a variety of keynote speakers, the most recent being Father Virgilio Elizondo and the upcoming will be Eva Longoria on November 15. A widely recognized priest followed by a provocative actress, what do you feel the benefits are in having these speakers versus primarily governmental figures?

Father Elizondo clearly inspired the 250 guests who attended the September 6th event just as other featured speakers have from the government sector.

The Latino community of faith and Father Elizondo spoke to us in a most powerful way- spiritually. He demonstrated that the Latino community has leaders outside the government arena as well. What all our speakers have in common are personal stories of obstacles overcome to achieve success-stories that need to be told, stories that inspire us all.

Do you remain involved in politics that affect Hispanics?

While Mickey Ibarra & Associates is not a campaigns and elections firm- we do not represent political candidates or parties- I participate in the political process as a volunteer and donor for people and causes that I believe in. The Latino community is diverse culturally, linguistically, and politically. A winning Latino voter strategy starts with that understanding.

Given the history of your family, how do you maintain objective on the issues and the wishes of your clients?

As the son of a Mexican migrant worker, the issue of immigration reform is more than a policy debate for my family and me - it is personal. Most Democratic and many Republican officials including President Bush, understand that comprehensive immigration reform is required to both secure our borders and keep the American dream alive.



Mickey Ibarra

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How have you and your associates been dealing with the increased attention on immigration law?

Mickey Ibarra & Associates has the good fortune of representing NCLR and LULAC- strong advocates of comprehensive immigration reform. We are delighted to assist both with their efforts to achieve meaningful reform that includes a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers in America. I have also had the opportunity to speak out on this issue personally, both in media interviews and in public forums. "Ending the Culture of Illegality" is the title of a keynote address on immigration reform I recently delivered at The University of Utah (Copy of speech is available at www.IbarraAssociates.com.)

You began your interest in politics in high school, how do you hope to influence students today?

Having started my professional career at the top as a teacher, I remain very committed to improving education opportunities for all children, including our Latino youth. In addition, whenever possible, I accept speaking invitations to address student audiences. It gives me the opportunity to share the story of my journey that started in the foster care system, led me to the White House and now Mickey Ibarra & Associates. Opportunity, responsibility and community are values I talk about

Where do you see the NHMC's efforts regarding obscenity in radio leading? What is special about this client?

By speaking out about obscene Spanish-language radio programming, the National Hispanic Media Coalition is demonstrating it's willingness to stand up against those -both Latino and non-Latin- who dishonor our community and the image of the American Latino.

What PR strategies have been the most successful for you?

The most effective advocacy strategy includes crafting the right message for delivery to the right people by the right messengers again and again and again.

What client has come the furthest since you have been working with them? How so?

Our client, SiTV, the first national Latino-themed TV network in English, is a wonderful success story. It took 6 years of hard work by founder Jeff Valdez, and others to raise the \$60 million required to launch in 2004. It is now available to over 13 million cable subscribers and on Echostar Dish. Verizon and ATT carry SiTV also on their new video systems.

What do you see for Mickey Ibarra & Associates in the future and for the industry in general?

Mickey Ibarra & Associates has a very bright future. We have experienced significant growth in 2006 and expect more. Matt Looney will join us as our fourth associate next month to ensure we continue to provide our clients with superior service for success.

Mickey's Thoughts on the Upcoming Elections:

"Political ads and mudslinging will not decide the election -- the issues will. Issues like... how we can secure our borders and provide a pathway to earned citizenship for 11 million undocumented workers who are living and raising families on American soil without resorting to mass deportations, criminalization of working families and building a fence around our nation... [issues] will decide the election two weeks from now."

— Mickey Ibarra

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