



Sara Peña was born, raised and educated in Newark, New Jersey. Her mother was born in Ecuador and her father in Dominican Republic. She is the Director of the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development in the Department of State.

Ms. Peña is a dedicated bilingual professional with extensive experience in developing and promoting services while addressing the needs of the community with a superior record of successful community service and engagement. Prior to her current position, she worked in the Public Affairs Department at University Hospital in Newark, NJ, where she managed the hospital overall community outreach program ranging from partnerships with local government agencies, educational institutions, faith based, law enforcement and municipal alliances.

She received her Bachelor's Degree in Management from Kean University in 1996 and while at Kean became a sister of Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority, Incorporated. In May 2014, Ms. Peña received her Master's Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University in Newark, and was inducted into the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration, Pi Alpha Alpha.

Ms. Peña was twice named *NJ's INSIDER 100: POLICY-MAKERS POWER LIST* for her work leading the Center. During her tenure, the New Jersey Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development in the New Jersey Department of State has been widely lauded for expanding its statewide footprint and national presence in advocacy for Hispanics and Latinx.

Inspired by her son, Anthony, Ms. Peña founded the Boys to Leaders Foundation in 2013. Its mission is to empower and motivate young men by providing leadership training, educational programs, and positive personal and professional development.

The Boys to Leaders Foundation is the vision of a single mother, raised and still a resident in the City of Newark, who has a growing concern for the lack of programs that reinforce leadership skills and expose her son to resources that will strengthen him in becoming a positive and successful man. In response to her commitment to her community, and most importantly her son, she decided to create an organization that will benefit young men, giving them a strong sense of direction to enhance their achievement and demonstrate her commitment to them and her community.

Ms. Peña serves on the Executive Board of LUPE Fund, Inc., an organization dedicated to the empowerment of all Latinas in New Jersey, has also given her the opportunity to serve on committees engaging our youth. She currently serves on the Executive Committee as the Immediate Past President. Has served in the capacity of President for three (3) years, Treasurer; Co-Chair of the Young Latina Leadership Conference; Chair and Co Founder of the Scholarship Committee; and is actively involved in engaging Latinas in the LUPE mission, to Empower, Educate, and Engage women from all walks of life through leadership, advocacy, and education to benefit all communities and to elevate the status of women.