

BIO: Veronica Maldonado-Torres

Verónica Maldonado-Torres is President and CEO of the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GHCC), for 39 years the GHCC has been beacon for economic development in the Hispanic business community and one of the nation's largest and most formidable chambers across the country serving over 1000+ members comprised of Hispanic Businesses Enterprises (HBEs), government entities, corporations, non-profits, and professionals.

In June 2021, Veronica joined the GHCC ushering in a new era of leadership and helping to “Reimagining the Next” for the fastest growing demographic across the country ensuring to “Lay the foundation for tomorrow, today” and helping the Hispanic business community “Own its Future” be working with all communities and ensuring a prominent participation in the narrative of Georgia's success as well as the nations through legislative advocacy, access, opportunity, and connection.

During her tenure the GHCC has expanded and elevated its geographic footprint state-wide and elevated the Hispanic business voice from the City of Atlanta to rural and under Georgia's Gold Dome, making its way to halls of Washington, DC, and earned a historical earmark under Senator Raphael Warnock, as the first Hispanic organization in state history to earn a grant for recovery efforts and development of Hispanic business enterprises through the GHCC's Hispanic Business Center, the business educational arm for the GHCC.

As a highly versatile and visionary first-generation Latina of Colombian descent. As a business owner herself, and community leader, Verónica brings her entrepreneurial spirit and tenacity, born from over 60 years of generational entrepreneurship on both sides of her family, to the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GHCC), multicultural community and Georgia's economic development space. With over a decade + of experience as a small business champion and supplier diversity advocate, Verónica is a catalyst of growth for both small businesses, minority leadership and large corporations desire to invest in the minority business community for both market growth, development, and community impact. Veronica brings, her Driven to Thrive mindset, out of the box thought leadership, roll up the sleeves, diplomacy and innovation to the small, business. A leader in supplier diversity, DEI and community impact, Veronica believes in “Winning Together” through coalition building among diverse stakeholders. She has also been an avid champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout her career and is focused on building resilient communities through the lens of entrepreneurship, economic development, leadership and workforce development.

Known as the people and business accelerator, Verónica excels at building strategic alliances and fostering win-win relationships between small businesses, and corporate America. Prior to joining the GHCC, Verónica successfully guided the development and growth of more than 150 firms across multiple industries ranging from \$1M-\$100M in annual revenue in her role as Program Director for the Georgia Mentor Protégé Connection (MPC). There, she fostered over 131 Fortune 500 corporate relationships, supported the supplier development efforts of more than 41 corporations, as well as created and produced over 85 small- to large-scale business conferences and events including the Georgia Innovation Summit. Before MPC, Verónica served as the Director of Strategic Alliances and Partnerships for the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council (GMSDC) where she fostered partnerships among GMSDC, Minority Business Associations, chambers, and organizations focused on minority small business development in Georgia.

Verónica is also Founder & CEO of VMT Consulting and creator of the DRIVEN TO THRIVE™ mindset, model, and way of living where she empowers professionals and businesses to grow, transform and thrive. Through VMT Consulting, Verónica enables small businesses to increase sales, secure long-term contracts, and maximize their growth potential by unleashing the value proposition they bring to corporate America. VMT Consulting also supports large corporations with the creation and implementation of supplier development programs, diversity and inclusion initiatives, cultural mastery trainings, and leadership development programs, with a special emphasis on women and multicultural professionals.

A passionate community leader with a desire to serve, Verónica serves on several boards including the **Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives** (GACCE) , **Emory University Center for Ethics**, **American Heart Association**, Community Foundation of North Georgia, “The Assembly” Community Improvement District (CID) appointed by DeKalb County, Technology Association of Georgia (BPM) and the Hispanic Corporate Council of Atlanta (HCCA). She is a **2023 Leadership Georgia** participant, and 2016 Graduate of Leadership DeKalb’s Class of 2016.

- Verónica has earned several accolades for her leadership in championing small business growth and creating community impact. In 2023, she was recognized a **“Notable Georgian”** by Georgia Trend Magazine, and 2023 500 Most Influential Atlantans, and 500 Most Influential Georgians.
- In 2022, Veronica was recognized as an **Outstanding Georgia Citizen** by both the LT. Governor Geoff Duncan & Secretary of State Brad Raffensberger, and awarded by Senator Lester Jackson and the Georgia State Senate as **2022 Goodwill Ambassador Medal** promoting

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statewide for all Georgians on her concept of “Together We Thrive”. She was named **500 Most Influential Georgian’s** by Georgia Trend Magazine and **500 Most Influential Atlantans by Atlanta Magazine (2022 and 2021)**. In 2021, the Atlanta Business Chronicle recognized her along Dr. Bernice King and Jimmy Etheredge Accenture CEO as a **Corporate Diversity Champion Awardee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Community Leadership Award** from the US Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce – Southeast,. In 2018, prior to her role at the GHCC, Veronica earned the **“Top 50 Most Influential Latinos in Georgia” by the GHCC** in 2018, **“Diversity Star of Atlanta’ by the Diversity Professional Magazine** among Fortune 500 diversity leaders, **“40Under40 Atl Mover and Shaker” by the Atlanta Business Chronicle in 2017**, “Keep it Moving Forward-Raising Generations” awardee by the Mary Parker Foundation in 2016, “Top 15 Georgia Latina of Excellence-Rising Star Award” recipient by LISTA in 2016, and, Community Builder Awardee - Business Sector” by GHCA in 2015, among other recognitions.

Verónica is also a highly sought-after public speaker, moderator, and frequent radio/TV guest on the subjects of diversity equity and inclusion and wining together across communities, small business, supplier diversity, servant leadership, purpose-DRIVEN living, career advancement, work/life/balance, and women empowerment. She has appeared on international and local media ,and presented and spoken with government entities, non-profit organization and Fortune 500s such as The Coca-Cola Company, Cox Enterprises, SunTrust, Kellogg, Unilever, SC Johnson, Verizon, Fifth Third Bank, Atlanta Regional Commission, VDART’s Global Women Leadership Initiative in India, Cornell University, Kennesaw State University, US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Chamber Future Summit, Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA), DeKalb Chamber, USPAACC, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Mujeres de HACE (Hispanic Alliance for Career Advancement), GMSDC, University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center’s (SBDC) Women Expo, Enricher, The She League, 100 Female Entrepreneurs, the Women’s Multicultural Conference, and countless others

Veronica is married to her husband of 15 years and a mother of two children, Katalina (6) and Sebastian (13).