

Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15th to October 15th, 2017



Photo: National Geographic

Hispanic Professionals Make a Difference in Hospice Care

Rudy Consuegra, Licensed Massage Therapist, [Avow](#)

Rudy Consuegra started working for Avow as a Certified Nursing Assistant 15 years ago. While working as a Certified Nursing Assistant, Rudy also enrolled and completed a massage therapy education program. As soon as he graduated as a License Massage Therapist (LMT), Rudy transitioned to Avow's Therapy Department where he provides patients with comfort care, pain relief, and relaxation to patients. Rudy is one of seven team members in this department and usually

discusses the Hispanic community's healthcare needs at meetings. He feels like an ambassador of the Hispanic culture in the office, and absolutely enjoys it. Over the years, Rudy has learned that Spanish-speaking patients and families want to speak in their native language, and it is important to Rudy to meet that need. Rudy is passionate about massage therapy services because he wants all his patients to enjoy a quality of life without medication. He was born in Cuba and moved to Florida in 2001. He currently lives in Bonita Springs with his wife and two daughters.

Betty Morales, Volunteer Coordinator, [Big Bend Hospice](#)

As a Volunteer Coordinator at Big Bend Hospice, Betty Morales is often asked to bring her language skills and knowledge of the Hispanic community to support the Spanish-speaking patients and families. To provide the best possible service to her patients, Betty has intentionally developed relationships with people, congregations, legal services, and social service agencies that are sensitive to the needs of the Hispanic community. Betty has gained credibility thanks to her relationship-building efforts. Even when she has complicated conversations about end-of-life care, Hispanic families are comforted in knowing Big Bend's team and Betty are there to listen and guide them.

Patricia Stockton, Director of Bereavement Services, [OpusCare of South Florida](#)

Patricia has held positions as a Clinical Social Worker, Chaplain and Bereavement Counselor at OpusCare of South Florida. These roles have helped Patricia learn about the psychosocial, emotional and spiritual assessment of patients as they come in the program, and seek methods to support families emotionally and spiritually. Currently, Patricia works as Director of Bereavement Services for OpusCare and assesses patients and families' bereavement needs. She was born to an international family (U.S., Peru, Germany and Holland) and uses her background to establish relationships with the diverse community in South Florida. Patricia founded the National Catholic Farm Worker Network and has written manuals for farm worker religious education.

Ninsy Baldor, Director of Palliative Care, [OpusCare of South Florida](#)

Ninsy Baldor was born in Cuba and her family moved to Miami when she was two years old. She has been working in healthcare for over 12 years. As Director for the OpusCare Palliative Care program, Ninsy educates the community about palliative & hospice care. She strongly believes education and communication are key to encouraging the Hispanic community to use hospice care services. Ninsy can

relate to the cultural stigmas associated with end-of-life care because she has seen first-hand how guilt, anger, shame, and helplessness can affect a families' decision-making. Through education and open dialogue, Ninsy hopes to continue to empower Hispanic families to make the best medical decisions. Ninsy finds it immensely rewarding to know she is part of a team that works hard to make a difference in the lives of all families.

Felix Montanez, Chaplain, [VITAS Healthcare Hospice](#)

It's been more than a year since a lone gunman opened fire on an unsuspecting crowd in the packed confines of Pulse nightclub in Orlando, and killed 49 people while injuring 53 others. VITAS Healthcare Hospice Chaplain Felix Montanez remembers that day, June 12, 2016, with chilling clarity. The chaplain had been doing what he usually did on a Sunday: serving as a deacon, preaching the 8 o'clock sermon at St. Augustine Church in Castleberry, just outside of Orlando, FL, when he got a phone message: Please call we need you. Urgent. Besides working for VITAS, Chaplain Felix is also a volunteer chaplain with the Orange County Sheriff's Office, and he gets calls for help regularly. But this was different. As he remembers hearing the details of the massacre that had targeted the club where around 300 members of Orlando's large LGBTQ and Puerto Rican communities had come together to celebrate "Hispanic Night," Chaplain Felix says, "The horror I felt then, it's still present a year later." Read the complete story [HERE](#).