

First Minority to Represent 20th District

City of Elizabeth Latina selected to New Jersey's General Assembly
By: J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor City of Elizabeth

For the first time a minority will represent the 20th Legislative District composed of Elizabeth, Union, Roselle, and Kenilworth. Annette Quijano, Esq. was selected to serve in the General Assembly replacing Assemblyman Neil Cohen. Ms. Quijano, who is of Puerto Rican decent, is also a resident of the City of Elizabeth, where more than 60% of the population is Hispanic. Bringing a personal and unique perspective to issues facing our municipality, this selection will provide a new outlook and increased representation to all residents City-wide.

Ms. Quijano has an extensive background in law and public service. In her professional life, she has worked as a Compliance Manager for Prudential/ Aetna U.S. Healthcare and as a civil practice attorney. Locally, she has served as Chief of Staff to Senator Raymond Lesniak, Assistant Counsel to the County of Union, and as Clerk to the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Most recently, she served as the Assistant Counsel to Governors James McGreevey, Richard Codey, and Jon Corzine.

Her personal and professional efforts have been applied to the fields of Agriculture, Banking and Insurance, Commerce, Education, Health, Labor, Military and Veterans Affairs, Motor Vehicles, Personnel, Transportation, State affairs, and legislative reform. With such a varied and extensive background, Ms. Quijano will utilize her vast knowledge and apply the tools required to address the needs of the 20th District's diverse population.

True to her New Jersey roots, Ms. Quijano graduated from Rutgers University with a B.S. in Management and earned her Juris Doctorate from Rutgers School of Law. She completed clerkships at the New Jersey Superior Court in Newark, Office of the Governor's Counsel in Trenton, and the New Jersey's Department of the Public Advocate in Trenton. She has bar admissions in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

In addition to an impressive academic and professional resume, she has also found time to give back to her community. Her service on the United Way Hispanic Advisory Council of Union County, the Governor's Working Group for Hispanic Affairs, a Legal Services committee in Elizabeth, and PRIMER (Puerto Ricans in Management and Executive Roles) has exemplified her determination to make a difference and improve the quality of life throughout the region.

Furthermore, she was a Commissioner for New Jersey's Congressional Redistricting efforts and was a recipient of the Excellence in State Government Leadership and the Women of Excellence in Government awards. In her spare time, she serves as a mentor to young adults and encourages the exploration of law and graduate school as vehicles to achieving personal and professional goals.

Our City and Legislative District are fortunate to have such a community advocate and established professional in the General Assembly. There is no doubt that Ms. Quijano's background will help her formulate bills and laws that will protect and advance all people throughout the 20th District. On behalf of the City of Elizabeth, I congratulate Assemblywoman-Select Annette Quijano on her historic selection and will work hard to help her succeed in her upcoming election. I look forward to a productive working relationship as we continue to make Elizabeth the best place to live, work and raise a family.