



Heather Carias

Heather Carias started her career in education as a Biology teacher and Science Department Chairperson in the District of Columbia Public Schools. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Western Ontario and a Master of Education from George Washington University. She is a Nationally Board-Certified teacher. For the last ten years, Ms. Carias has been an administrator with Montgomery County Public Schools. She holds a Master of Educational Leadership degree from Hood College and served as an Assistant Principal at Wheaton High School. Ms. Carias is currently the Supervisor of Thomas Edison High School of Technology, a wonderfully unique school comprising 16 Career and Technology Education programs, each geared towards equipping students with passion, skills, and certifications that connect to further education in college and career opportunities.



Maria Jimenez

Originally from Peru, Maria is a seasoned, bilingual finance and accounting professional with an MBA. She has experience in the private and nonprofit sectors, holding senior management positions and leading teams in Latin America and the U.S. For the last five years, she has worked at Your Part-Time Controller (YPTC), where she serves as a trusted financial advisor and controller for nonprofits in WDC.

Her curiosity brought her to join the YPTC sales department and collaborate with other areas like Strategic Partnerships and Talent Acquisition. In 2023, she led the company's efforts as sponsor of the ALPFA (Latino Association of Latino Professionals for America) convention. For her, the most satisfying aspect of working with nonprofits is helping with finance and accounting so the clients may focus on their mission to improve lives in the US and abroad.

Maria is very committed to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. She has been working with the YPTC Equity Committee since 2021 as the Equity co-chair and as a member of various subcommittees. She started the employee resource group 'Latinas at YPTC' in July 2020 so that the Latino women in the company could meet each other and connect on a personal and professional level while supporting a sense of belonging in the workplace. She started an initiative to create employee resource groups (ERGs) at YPTC. Her efforts inspired the creation of two other ERGs: Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and LGBTQIA+. She is currently a Co-Chair of the Latinas at YPTC group, which has a vision to create a safe space for Latinas, to be supportive of each other and be a voice for Latinas at YPTC. Maria was awarded the 2022 YPTC Equity Award for her work on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Maria is passionate about women's empowerment. She volunteers to support various Latino women's organizations. She is a member of the Women of ALPFA (Association of Latino Professionals for America) National Committee, where she seeks to advance Latino professional women in the workplace. She is a co-founder of Women in Business, a Latina entrepreneurs' network in WDC, where she co-developed a Latina entrepreneurs' virtual program. She is a member of United Latina network and an enthusiastic author contributor to the Extraordinary Latinas Volume III book, which will be launched on March 6th, 2024. For her work in the community, she was awarded the 2023 Peruvian Expat Award for Excellency.

Over the last few years, Maria has been a speaker at different events and conferences. She loves sharing her knowledge and experiences as a way to give back to the community.

Maria studied Accounting at the Catholic University of Peru and then received an MBA from EGADE Business School in Mexico. Her interests in the intersections of nonprofits and finance led her to obtain a Microfinance Certificate from the Boulder Institute of Microfinance and a Social Enterprise and Social Impact Investment Certificate from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California.

She enjoys walking with her husband, dancing to Latin music, and practicing biodanza.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

WLB
Women's Legislative Briefing

2024



Katie Young

Katie Young is a native of Montgomery County and believes that our students are the future of Montgomery County's success. She has worked for 12+ years with first-generation college students, helping them navigate their education and career goals. Katie believes that the more experience each student has, the better prepared they are for the workforce. Katie also finds incredible reward in guiding extraordinary students through the process of college, certification, or straight into the job market.



Kaniya Harris

Kaniya Harris is a senior at American University, pursuing a double major in Justice, Law, & Criminology (JLC) and Sociology, with a minor in Business & Entertainment. Kaniya is actively engaged in leadership through the School of Public Affairs (SPA) and Collaborative Leadership Certificate Program. She has served as the Director of Students for Change (SFC), an intersectional organization, for three years. In addition to her role at SFC, she holds leadership positions in the Black Student Union, Girl Up DMV, Advocates for Youth, Pro-Choice Maryland, and Montgomery County NOW Chapter, showcasing her commitment to various causes. Beyond campus, Kaniya works as the Events Associate for the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.