



HISPANICS

THRIVING IN ST. LOUIS



Newspapers in Education is celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month in partnership with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis. This series highlights local Hispanic Americans who are giving back to others in the St. Louis community.



GEORGINA RANDAZZO

To Succeed, Ask for Help

By: Carlos Restrepo
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis

Georgina Randazzo arrived in the United States from Mexico with her family in 1980. As she was starting college, Randazzo and her family saw the many opportunities their new country had to offer, but it wasn't always easy.

"When I came to the U.S. I had no idea about the opportunities I would be blessed with," Randazzo explains. "I spoke very little English when I arrived and the 'hill to climb' seemed enormous."

Randazzo, however, successfully finished a degree in Fine Arts and Small Business Administration from Maryville University. Randazzo said she had no idea her education would lead her to become founder and CEO of one of the top corporate furnishing companies in the region.

"After graduating from Maryville University, I accepted a position with a construction company in St. Louis with a working visa," Randazzo recalls. "While with the construction company, I learned a great deal about how the construction industry works alongside with other industries. In 1987, a furniture dealership acquired a portion of the construction company and I worked for them as a designer/project manager and developed many business relationships. Then in 1993, I founded Facilitec Corporate Furnishings."

Becoming a business owner has been more than a profession for Randazzo. She aims to inspire other Hispanic women and entrepreneurs achieve their dreams. This year, Randazzo served as a mentor to young Hispanic women during the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's annual Hispanic Working Woman events.

Randazzo's mentorship is more relevant than ever, as females make up just under 5% of CEOs in the Fortune 500 according to fortune.com.

"I'm excited that there are organizations that are educating Hispanics and guiding us to be successful," Randazzo said. "The encouragement that I have experienced by the Chamber is invaluable. Members of the organization have learned to "pay it forward", so I hope other Hispanics lean on all of us for assistance in their own growth and success."

Ultimately, Randazzo said the best way to achieve your dreams is to ask for help when you need it.

"Sometimes people feel they can't achieve big dreams for whatever reason. They should realize there are people that are eager to help them if they show a real desire for success,"
Randazzo said. "You don't need to own your own business to be a success. Success comes in many forms, but don't sit back and wait for things happen to you. Do the things you must do to create your own path to success."





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QUESTIONS:

Georgina mentioned that she spoke very little English when she moved to America had an enormous “hill to climb”. Think about a time when you faced an obstacle when working towards something. How did you achieve that goal?

How did Georgina’s studies at Maryville University pave the way for her to start her own business?

In what ways does Georgina give back to the St. Louis community?

Georgina’s advice to anyone working to achieve their dreams is to ask for help when needed. What advice would you give to someone looking to achieve their goals?

Think about the mentors that you have in your life. It could be a parent, a teacher, a friend or neighbor. Who do you consider a mentor to you and why?
