

Employee Of The Month: Martina Nuñez



Martina Nuñez serves a critical role at the Adult Learning Center.
Photo courtesy of Martina Nuñez.

Martina Nuñez has many responsibilities as the program coordinator at the New Community Adult Learning Center, but her favorite part of her job is helping people.

She assists in ways you might expect, like helping students register for classes, ordering supplies and supervising teachers and volunteers, but there are other ways as well. For example, raising money to provide toys for children or winter clothes for immigrants not used to the cold weather of the Northeast.

Nuñez came to the U.S. in 1999 from the Dominican Republic and got married. She went to the Hispanic Development Center, the previous name of the Adult Learning Center, to take English classes. That's where she met Geri Mulligan, the director at the time. Mulligan offered her a job and she began providing clerical support to the center in 2002. A few years later she became the program coordinator and has been in that role ever since.

"I thank Geri Mulligan for giving me this opportunity," Nuñez said.

Although Mulligan is retired and living in Tennessee, Nuñez said they still keep in touch, sending each other Christmas cards each year.

Her good working relationship hasn't been limited to her first boss, however.

"Through all of the directors, Martina has always been the right hand. She has adapted to each way of working," said current Adult Learning Center Director Cristhian Barcelos.

In the Dominican Republic, Nuñez worked as a paralegal at Pellerano and Herrera, a leading law firm in that country. She served as the company president's assistant.

When she arrived in the U.S. she didn't have a good grasp of English, but she has come a long way since her first class and now helps others get the education they need.

"It's great to have her here. No matter what, she will always put the agency and the needs of the students first," Barcelos said. Nuñez also makes family a priority. She lives in Colonia with her husband and 6-year-old daughter who is growing up bilingual, speaking English and Spanish.

In her spare time, Nuñez enjoys spending time with her daughter and reading, particularly books by Joel Osteen.

Nuñez finds her position fulfilling. "The most important thing for me is the opportunity to help people," she said.