

Araceli Reyes De La Cruz

Araceli is a lifelong Albany Park resident in Chicago. Academic scholarships enabled her to attend the University of Illinois at Chicago where she studied English Literature and Political Science. While attending The John Marshall Law School she competed in Mock Trial, was on the Dean's List and earned the Elmer Kissane award for her commitment to public service.

Araceli's parents were born in Puerto Rico and worked as public servants and union workers. They modeled demonstrated service and a deep love for community. It is why she is an executive board member for Casa Central, a large non-profit social service agency she has volunteered for since 2011.

For over eighteen years Araceli developed her legal abilities, professional skills and has worked in a variety of public sectors. After an extensive review process, the Chicago Bar Association found Araceli qualified stating that she is "hardworking and well regarded for" her "knowledge of the law, legal ability, trial and managerial skills, and excellent temperament."

While in law school, Araceli worked as a Victim-Witness Specialist with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. She helped crime victims and witnesses navigate the criminal justice system, making certain they fully understood and had access to court proceedings.

As an Assistant State's Attorney for over eight years Araceli honed her litigation skills. She tried misdemeanor and felony jury trials, over one hundred bench trials and hundreds of evidentiary hearings. Araceli handled matters in the Traffic Division, Child Protection Unit, Narcotics, Felony Review, Felony Preliminary Hearings, and the Special Grand Jury where she indicted homicide and sexual assault cases. While in the Special Prosecution section of the Narcotics Unit she managed vertical prosecution of narcotics cases. She also specialized in child victim sexual assault cases.

While the Chief Safety and Security Officer at the Chicago Transit Authority, Araceli ensured regulatory compliance with state and federal safety and security standards. As the Chief of General Prosecutions at the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations she managed prosecuting attorneys and ensured the interests of everyday Illinois public consumers were protected and that licensed service providers were held accountable when in violation of the state's professional rules and regulations.

Araceli is presently the General Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer for Acero Schools. In this role she safeguards the educational and privacy interests of 7,100 public school children. She also ensures compliance with the collective bargaining agreement between Acero's schools and over 500 members of the Chicago Teacher's Union. Her role includes conducting internal investigations, handling Title IX matters and overseeing outside attorneys that represent Acero Schools' interests. Araceli also supports and promotes fair and restorative practices within Acero Schools.

Araceli is an active member of various bar associations, including the Chicago Bar Association, the Women's Bar Association of Illinois, the Hispanic Lawyer's Association of Illinois and the Puerto Rican Bar Association.

Araceli and her husband, an immigrant from the Philippines and an architect, have two children.

For more information, please go to www.delacruz4judge.com