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Your Update from AgeOptions

December 2016

Community Involvement Is a Passion For New Board of Directors Member



Enrique Salgado Jr.

Enrique Salgado Jr., who was elected to a three-year term on the AgeOptions Board of Directors in October, lives a life of community involvement. "It's been one of my passions since I was 18," he said.

"I was born and raised in Humboldt Park, which traditionally has been disenfranchised and underdeveloped," he explained. His awareness of residents wondering what could be done for their community "led to asking hard questions and the responsibility for finding answers and solutions."

Over the years his volunteer commitments have ranged from president of the board of Salem Christian School to vice president of Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (The 606). His career in nonprofit organizations has also focused on communities.

For the past three years Enrique has been advocacy manager, Advocacy and Community-Based Programs, at WellCare Health Plans, Inc., a managed care organization providing Medicare managed care health plans in 40 states and Medicaid in 15.

"I'm lucky to be able to have a job where I'm able to do things in and for the community that I would otherwise be a volunteer for, and that also allows me to volunteer at other places," he said.

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It was his position at WellCare that led him to AgeOptions. "My vice president of advocacy had established a relationship with n4a (National Association of Area Agencies on Aging) prior to my joining WellCare," he said. "That led them to identify AgeOptions as an organization to partner with in Illinois."

Responsible for building WellCare's relationship with 16 area agencies on aging and organizations serving older adults, Enrique connected to AgeOptions through the company's Medicare Division. "I learned what AgeOptions is and does, and how innovative it is as an organization," he said. WellCare supports AgeOptions as a sponsor of the annual Celebrating Aging event.

"The population AgeOptions serves has always been dear to me, growing up with my grandmother," he said. "She's 75 and still taking care of older people. I've always been surrounded by older people in the community and mentored by them. I believe there's a lot we can learn about ourselves in the way we interact with and treat elders and youth in the community. It's who we value and what we are."

"We're really happy to have someone with Enrique's expertise and passion on our board," said Rob Mapes, AgeOptions director of program and community support. "He has already made a positive contribution in his first board meeting and has provided feedback on program approaches."

Enrique began his career as a youth organizer and worked with an HIV prevention project and gang populations. Since then, he has assisted local businesses as executive director of the Division Street Business Development Association for more than eight years, coordinated Chicago's Fiesta Boricua for nine years and used his expertise in bringing ideas and community together as an independent consultant providing project management services since 2009.



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He and his wife, Jacqueline, have a blended family of four children ranging in age from 20 to 8. He enjoys playing sports with his son, coaching teams, camping and other family activities, as well as volunteering in the Royal Rangers boys' mentorship program.

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