

Ms. Lubby Navarro, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 19-042 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING MS. MARIA C. GARZA**

**COMMITTEE: FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS**

Ms. Maria C. Garza is a civil rights and education advocate and activist. She has championed the rights of farmworkers for almost four decades.

Ms. Garza was born in Burgos, Mexico. She came to the United States in 1972 at the age of twelve. She and her family were migrant farmworkers, moving from place to place in search of work. Ms. Garza was herself a farmworker, picking tomatoes and cotton alongside her family from 1972 until 1981.

After staging and winning a labor strike in 1979, at the age of 18, in protest of unfair and unlivable wages, Ms. Garza made the decision to return to school. She received her associate's degree from Miami-Dade College in 1983. In 1985, Ms. Garza received her bachelor's degree from Barry University. She also completed the Executive Management Program at Florida State University (FSU) in 1987. Ms. Garza received her master's degree in marketing and social media from Florida International University (FIU) in 2018.

In 1984, Ms. Garza founded the Mexican American Council (MAC), a non-profit organization that whose mission is to ensure "that every farmworker child is provided a quality education and access to the arts for a brighter future." At the core of the Mexican American Council lies the College and Career Readiness Program. MAC has partnered with Miami-Dade College to provide dual-enrollment opportunities to high school students. Students earn college credit for these classes and even have the chance to receive their associate's degree at the end of the program. The College and Career Readiness Program also allows students to prepare themselves for the workforce by offering internships and work experience programs. Most notably, MAC awards two-year scholarships to students pursuing higher education.

In 2015, Ms. Garza also founded the Homestead-Miami Mariachi Conservatory, a school for children that aims to preserve the musical traditions of the Mexican people. The Mexican American Council received a \$60,000 grant from the Knight Foundation in 2014 that made the establishment of the conservatory possible.

## **Replacement B-5**

Ms. Garza served as the White House Hispanic Community Liaison from 1994 to 1996. From 1993 to 1995, she served as the National Director of the National Council of La

Raza, now UnidosUS, as part of the AmeriCorps Program. Ms. Garza served as Director of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' South Dade Skill Center from 1997 until 2015.

Ms. Garza has received countless honors throughout the years. She has received the Ohtli Award, an annual award given by the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to a person or group that has "aided, empowered, or positively affected the lives of Mexican nationals in the United States and other countries." She has also received the Athena Award, Miami-Dade County's In the Company of Woman Award, Miami-Dade College's Community Leader Award, the American Cancer Society's Woman of the Year Award, and the Hispanic Coalition's Woman of the Year Award.

For nearly four decades, Ms. Garza has dedicated her time and efforts to advocating for the neediest and most vulnerable among us. She continues to work tirelessly to ensure that farmworker students have access to educational opportunities despite their circumstances. Through her tireless work and advocacy, Ms. Garza has ensured that farmworker students and their families are able to achieve the American dream.

Ms. Maria C. Garza is to be commended for her service and support to the students and families of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MS. LUBBY NAVARRO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 19-042 of The School Board Of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Maria C. Garza.

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-042**  
**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,**  
**RECOGNIZING MARIA C. GARZA**

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Maria C. Garza is a civil rights and education advocate and activist. She has championed the rights of farmworkers for almost four decades; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Garza was born in Burgos, Mexico. She came to the United States in 1972 at the age of twelve. She and her family were migrant farmworkers, moving from place to place in search of work. Ms. Garza was herself a farmworker, picking tomatoes and cotton alongside her family from 1972 until 1981; and

**WHEREAS**, after staging and winning a labor strike in 1979, at the age of 18, in protest of unfair and unlivable wages, Ms. Garza made the decision to return to school. She received her associate's degree from Miami-Dade College in 1983. In 1985, Ms. Garza received her bachelor's degree from Barry University. She also completed the Executive Management Program at Florida State University (FSU) in 1987. Ms. Garza received her master's degree in marketing and social media from Florida International University (FIU) in 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1984, Ms. Garza founded the Mexican American Council (MAC), a non-profit organization that whose mission is to ensure "that every farmworker child is provided a quality education and access to the arts for a brighter future." At the core of the Mexican American Council lies the College and Career Readiness Program. MAC has partnered with Miami-Dade College to provide dual-enrollment opportunities to high school students. Students earn college credit for these classes and even have the chance to receive their associate's degree at the end of the program. The College and Career Readiness Program also allows students to prepare themselves for the workforce by offering internships and work experience programs. Most notably, MAC awards two-year scholarships to students pursuing higher education; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2015, Ms. Garza also founded the Homestead-Miami Mariachi Conservatory, a school for children that aims to preserve the musical traditions of the Mexican people. The Mexican American Council received a \$60,000 grant from the Knight Foundation in 2014 that made the establishment of the conservatory possible; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Garza served as the White House Hispanic Community Liaison from 1994 to 1996. From 1993 to 1995, she served as the National Director of the National Council of La Raza, now UnidosUS, as part of the AmeriCorps Program. Ms. Garza served as Director of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' South Dade Skill Center from 1997 until 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Garza has received countless honors throughout the years. She has received the Ohtli Award, an annual award given by the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to a person or group that has "aided, empowered, or positively affected the lives of Mexican nationals in the United States and other countries." She has also received the Athena Award, Miami-Dade County's In the Company of Woman Award, Miami-Dade College's Community Leader Award, the American Cancer Society's Woman of the Year Award, and the Hispanic Coalition's Woman of the Year Award; and

**WHEREAS**, for nearly four decades, Ms. Garza has dedicated her time and efforts to advocating for the neediest and most vulnerable among us. She continues to work

tirelessly to ensure that farmworker students have access to educational opportunities despite their circumstances. Through her tireless work and advocacy, Ms. Garza has ensured that farmworker students and their families are able to achieve the American dream; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Maria C. Garza is to be commended for her service and support to the students and families of Miami-Dade County Public Schools;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 19-042 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Maria C. Garza.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

**Presented this nineteenth day of June, A.D. 2019**

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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CHAIR

ATTEST:

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Secretary