



Pete Ricketts  
Governor

## STATE OF NEBRASKA

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### MARIA VALENTIN IS NEW COMMISSIONER FROM OMAHA

OMAHA - Maria Valentin was appointed by Governor Dave Heineman in December 2014 as Commissioner for the Latino American Commission.

Valentin will fill in the vacant seat left by Ralph Hauke, M.D. who resigned as Commissioner in September. She will represent the Omaha metro area for the Commission, and will also be the last Commissioner to be appointed by Governor Heineman whose term ends in January 2015.

“As a Commissioner, I would like to continue to create opportunities to engage Latinos and non-Latinos to come together to work on issues such as education, health, immigration and housing that are currently impacting the Latino community in Nebraska,” she said.

Originally from Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Valentin earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology at the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico in 1990. Since then, she has had more than 20 years experience in community relations, management and volunteerism.

In 1992, she began her career in Nebraska as an Employment & Training Specialist/Case Manager at the NAF Multicultural Human Development Corp. in North Platte before becoming the Regional Manager in 1996, a position she held for two years.

She joined ConAgra Foods, Inc. in Omaha in 1999 as a Corporate Community Relations Coordinator where she was promoted to Manager in 2002. She would be with ConAgra for more than 10 years. During this time, she developed initiatives and programs to address strategic social issues and organized state and national alliances with non-profit organizations, government agencies and companies, among many other duties.

In December 2013, Valentin joined the South Omaha Surgical Center where she is currently responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and coordinating administrative operations. In addition, she develops, coordinates and implements all marketing and public relation initiatives.



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Valentin's community service includes serving as a Board Member of several local and state organizations including: Latina Resources Center, the Juan Diego Center, Girls, Inc. of Omaha, One World Community Health Center, Campfire USA, the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) Board of Counselors, the Heartland Latino Leadership Conference, the Nebraska Commission of the Status of Women, the Nebraska Urban League and Heartland Workforce Solutions.

Her national involvement includes serving as a Board Member of the National Hispanic Corporate Council, serving as a Corporate Advisory Member of the National Council of La Raza and Corporate Board of Advisors and Class 2008 Representative of the National Hispana Leadership Institute.

Valentin also received training in Diversity Management, Domestic Violence, Immigration Specialist, Case Management, Employment and Training Specialist, Leadership and Executive Training by the National Hispana Leadership Institute in 2008.

Her awards and accomplishments include being named an Admiral of the Navy of Nebraska in 2001 by then-Governor Mike Johanns, serving as a 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics Torchbearer in Omaha, receiving the 2004 Nebraska Hispanic Woman of the Year award from the then-named Mexican American Commission, being the University of Nebraska-Omaha's 2007 Women of Color Community Award recipient and receiving the Community Relations Star Award in 2010 by the National Hispanic Corporate Council.

Valentin said her goal is to serve as catalyst and support the Latino American Commission in advocating for the Latino community of Nebraska.

"The Latino experience in America is a unique story. It is a story of immigration and redemption, of anguish and celebration, of the gradual construction of a new American identity that connects and empowers millions of people today. Latinos from all walks of life are bringing their careers, talents, culture and traditions to help this nation continue to be the most powerful nation in the world. Latinos will take this nation to the next level," she said.

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