



Alumni



PEGGY SANCHEZ MILLS
BA, SOCIOLOGY '79

Peggy Sanchez Mills is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails. Throughout her 30-year career, she has been a strong advocate for programs and public policy promoting the interests of girls and women.

Prior to her return to her native New Mexico, Peggy served as the CEO of the YWCA of the United States in Washington, D.C. Additionally, she was the first CEO of the National Healthy Start Association. Prior to that, Peggy served for 20 years as the CEO for the YWCA of Tampa Bay. Her stellar accomplishments in these positions reflect Peggy's steadfast commitment to human services programs. Her astute and compassionate leadership provided guidance in childhood care and education, maternal and child health, affordable housing, family support, youth development, and child abuse prevention, among other areas. Additionally, Peggy has testified before and worked with Congress in the reauthorizations of the Violence Against Women, Healthy Start and Adolescent Pregnancy Acts.

Peggy holds an undergraduate degree from USFSP and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University. Subsequently, she has received Distinguished Alumni accolades from each institution. Peggy has been honored with numerous awards, including being named one of the Top 80 Hispanic Business Women of the Year by Hispanic Business magazine.

"Mrs. Cook – librarian who hired me in 1978 in the original library to work part-time while I finished school and I was paying out of state tuition.

Dr. Danny Jorgenson- my professor in sociology (later he went to Religious Studies) who I

so admired and appreciated. He and I shared a love for Sociology and could solve all of the world's problems.... He also helped me with the transition from University of New Mexico to USFSP.

Bill Heller- I will forever admire his acumen, talent and vision to put my beloved USFSP on the map- He was a joy to partner with and such a critical leader for the growth of USFSP.

And I wish I knew his name- but a critical story- I had been working on my undergraduate for 8 years, through a marriage and two children. With the relocation from NM to Florida, I chose USFSP because it was close to my home and served working and focused only on the junior and senior level. However, when I took a job in the library, I was unable to take the marine biology class in the evening that I had signed up for and had switched over to a new class to accommodate my work schedule. However, unlike UNM where we had 6 weeks to drop a class, USFSP only had, I believe, a two week window. Unfortunately, I did not drop the class in that period of time and was being billed for out of state tuition for that class as well as my upcoming semester- which was to be my last and I would graduate. I worked my way through the process and finally went to Dr. Jorgenson asking for help because I couldn't come up with another \$1000 in a week and would not be allowed to enroll for my final semester. Dr. Jorgenson advised me to meet with, I believe, the Dean of Behavioral Sciences in Tampa. I did this and it did not go smashingly and he denied my request to waive the out of state tuition fee- as my 2 year old son and I were walking down the hall after our meeting, I heard footsteps and when I turned around there stood the Dean. He said to me, I will help you. As far as I can see you are someone who did not get advised properly and please don't share this with anyone but I will waive the fee because I believe in you. I don't remember his name and I am not even sure if he was the Dean; however, what I do remember was that he believed in me. And I imagine he is long retired by now, but I hope he knows who he is."

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