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Edward Fitzpatrick
Roger Williams University

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Latino Policy Institute at RWU Selects Marcela Betancur as New Director

Betancur brings experience in housing, education, civil liberties and workforce development to a role that “has never been more needed”



December 12, 2018 | Edward Fitzpatrick

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Latino Policy Institute at Roger Williams University on Wednesday announced that Marcela Betancur will become its new director on Jan. 14.

Betancur brings to the position a wide range of experience in key areas of LPI research and advocacy – including housing, education, civil liberties and workforce development. She has been working as executive adviser for strategy and development for the Providence Housing Authority, as a policy and program consultant for the Central Falls School District and as a research and report consultant for the Economic Progress Institute.

Betancur, who lives in North Providence, serves as vice president of the Rhode Island Latino Political Action Committee & Civic Fund, and she is national program committee alumni chair for the New Leaders Council. Previously, she has worked as a policy associate for the American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island, and as director of homeownership and asset building for NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley.

“Roger Williams University is very pleased to have someone of Marcela Betancur’s experience and passion to lead the Latino Policy Institute,” RWU Interim President Andy Workman said. “We are confident that she will expand its scope and effectiveness in developing policy proposals that meet the needs of Rhode Island’s Latinx population and the state as a whole.”

“Marcela has demonstrated a clear understanding of the Latino Policy Institute’s mission and an undeniable commitment to the Latino community that it serves,” LPI Board of Directors Chair Diony Garcia said. “We are confident that under her leadership LPI will get back to being the community’s resource for information vital toward the policy changes to come.”

“I could not be more thrilled that Marcela is the next director of LPI,” said Jamie E. Scurry, RWU’s Vice President of University College and a member of the LPI Board of Directors. “Marcela brings with her a plethora of experience, thoughtfulness and a lived commitment to the goals and values of LPI and RWU. LPI serves a critical role in Rhode Island, and that role has never been more needed. Under Marcela’s direction, the organization will thrive, advancing the issues that matter most.”

“As the only Latinx-led research institution in the state, LPI plays an integral role in demonstrating how Rhode Island's economic growth, educational achievements and development are defined by our community,” Betancur said. “Having the opportunity to lead LPI during this new chapter is an honor and a privilege. I look forward to forging new relationships and nurturing existing ones – not only with other organizations and institutions but, most importantly, with the Latinx community.”

The Latino Policy Institute at RWU is committed to generating and communicating data to stimulate public policy discourse and enhance the public's understanding of the Rhode Island Latino experience. With this information, Latinos' social, economic and civic contributions to the state can be better documented, understood and engaged.

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