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Gándara “Champions” for Urban Youth

Our Piece of the Pie®, Inc. (OPP®) has greeted Marilda Lara Gándara into its esteemed Champions Council. For more than 35 years, OPP has been serving urban youth through mentoring, education, and employment programs and services in Hartford. In an effort to enhance and expand its services to other communities, the nonprofit enlisted the support of several long-standing local leaders, including recently inducted Mickey Herbert.



Gándara recently retired as President of the Aetna Foundation, Inc., where she represented Aetna to the public, customers and employees on corporate citizenship issues and worked with nonprofit and public service organizations in communities throughout the United States and Latin America. During her tenure, Aetna and the Aetna Foundation contributed over \$200 million in grants and Aetna received numerous recognitions including the Points of Light Corporate Award. Upon joining Aetna, Gándara was a member of its Law Department where she practiced in real estate, bankruptcy, tax and environmental law. Subsequently, Gándara was a business executive in a variety of roles, including Corporate Planning and Financial Reporting and Real Estate Investments.

Recently, Gándara served as co-chair of the Malloy Transition Personnel Committee where she led efforts to make recommendations to the newly elected Governor for Commissioner and other senior State positions. In 2001, Connecticut's governor and legislature appointed her to serve for two years as a member of the Hartford Public Schools Board of Education.

Gándara serves on the Board of Advisors of the SBA-licensed Ironbridge Mezzanine Fund, L.P. She has served on the boards of TLC Beatrice International Foods Company, the McCall's Pattern Company and the Greater Hartford Bank Boston Board of Advisors. Gándara is a member of the University of Connecticut Trustees, the Connecticut Forum, and Covenant Preparatory School. She has served in leadership roles with numerous national, regional and local nonprofit organizations including the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Wadsworth Atheneum and Hispanics in Philanthropy.

“Marilda is a fantastic addition to our Champions Council,” stated Bob Rath, President & CEO of OPP. “Due to her deep knowledge of the Hartford community and compassion for its citizens, we are thrilled to have her engaged in our mission.”

Our Piece of the Pie is pleased to welcome its newest Champions Council member and looks forward to expanding this group within the coming months. To learn more about Our Piece of the Pie, please visit www.OPP.org.

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