

Honoring Hispanic-Latinx Contributions at PDX

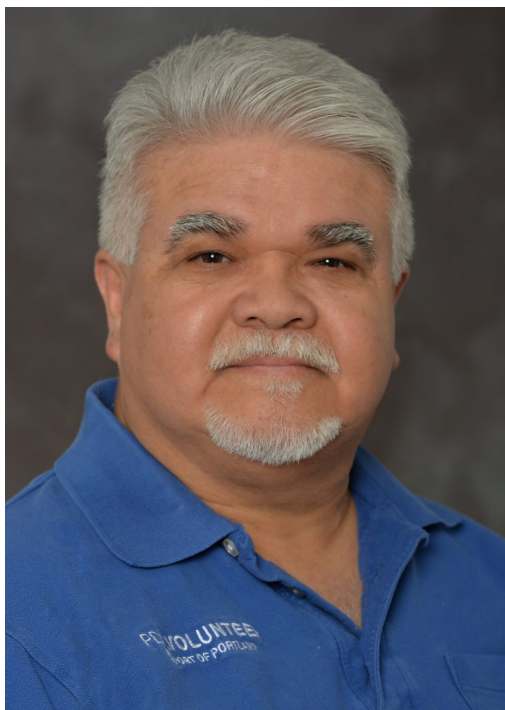
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October 9, 2019



Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated in the United States from September 15 to October 15. As a gateway to the world, we wanted to take the time to honor the people who work or volunteer at the airport and help demonstrate the richness of Hispanic-Latinx history, heritage and culture.

Name: Carlos Arteaga



Role: Member of the PDX Volunteer Information Program

Tell us more about your cultural background?

I am a native of Mexico. My family emigrated to the USA in the mid 1960's. The official name of the country is the United Mexican States. It is a republic of about 129 million inhabitants divided into 31 different states plus the capital at Mexico City. It has a federal representative government much like that of our own. It is divided into three branches of government as well. The Executive Branch: The president of Mexico is democratically elected to one single six year term. By constitutional law, no reelection is allowed. The Judicial Branch: The supreme court functions much as our own supreme court. The Legislative Branch: The legislature is, like our own also comprised of two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. If you look at a map of Mexico, you will notice that it is shaped much like a cornucopia rich in natural resources.”

What do you find most rewarding about the work you do at PDX and why?

After working for American Airlines for 33 years, I retired in 2012. I took a couple of years off and then decided that I missed the airport vibe too much and so I decided to return as a volunteer. I really enjoy the camaraderie of this group and the friendships that we build. I enjoy contributing to the image of PDX as a leader in customer service in the airport industry by providing information about the airport and city sights to our traveling public and making them feel welcome to our little part of paradise.

What does Hispanic Heritage Month mean to you?

This month of recognition of our Hispanic heritage gives me the opportunity to share information about the Latino diaspora in the USA. We come from various countries and parts of the American continent: From Mexico in North America...from the Caribbean islands came folks from Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic. From Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, etc. in Central America. From South America, countries like Peru, Chile, Colombia, Argentina and yes, even from Brazil which is not a Hispanic country, but it is still considered a part of Ibero-America as the Portuguese colonizers also came from the Iberian Peninsula just like the Spanish Conquistadores.

I once asked a Quebecois friend from French Canada if he considered himself a Latino if Latino is defined as having culturally descended from the Romance languages of Spanish, French, Portuguese and Italian which all came from the original Latin. His response was, 'well, we don't really think of ourselves as Latino, that's more for the Spanish people. We do however call ourselves and are called by other Canadians as Latins which is really the same thing.' Latinos, like other immigrants from different parts of the world, came here to better their living standard and to participate in the freedoms granted by our constitution and to add our own brand of family and community, foods and traditions to this great melting pot that is the United States of America.

Name: Gerardo Calderon

Role: Volunteer Musician



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/aJhBNCB85Ss>

With an average of about 51,000 passengers that pass through Portland International Airport every day, we are proud to help weave many cultural threads into a fabric of belonging across the airport. On Hispanic Heritage Month and always, we honor and thank individuals like Carlos for being a part of our community.