

Ernesto Velazquez

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Innovative Leader in Humanitarian Aid, Mental Health, & Sustainability

With expertise in humanitarian aid, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPSS), crisis intervention, sustainability advocacy, and food security, I have dedicated my career to fostering resilient communities through clean energy solutions, comprehensive mental health support, and urban farming initiatives. As the Executive Director and co-founder of Emergency Energy, I lead strategic, community-driven initiatives integrating renewable energy into humanitarian response efforts, ensuring long-term sustainability for vulnerable populations. Commitment to social justice, policy innovation, mental health advocacy, food security, and inclusive development defines my leadership.

Core Competencies

- Sustainable Energy Solutions in Crisis Settings
- Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)
- Trauma-Informed Counseling & Crisis Response
- Policy Development & Humanitarian Advocacy
- Refugee & Migrant Support Services
- Urban Farming & Food Security Initiatives
- Organizational Leadership & Strategic Growth
- Multicultural Communication & Accessibility
- Community-Based Program Development
- Behavioral Health & Clinical Case Management

Professional Expertise

Emergency Energy | Executive Director & Co-Founder

2022 - Present

- Drive global initiatives supporting humanitarian community-led organizations in transitioning to renewable energy.
- Build strategic partnerships to integrate sustainability into humanitarian aid programs.
- Advocate for energy resilience policies and community-driven sustainable solutions.
- Incorporated mental health and psychosocial support within energy resilience programs to strengthen community well-being.
- Develop small-scale sustainable farming and food security initiatives that integrate sustainable energy solutions.
- Structure methodologies for data collection and impact assessments on humanitarian initiatives.

Office of Refugee Resettlement Federal Contractor | Mental Health & Psychosocial Support Professional

2020 - 2022

- Conducted risk assessments and provide trauma-informed counseling for unaccompanied minors in post-release services.
- Offered crisis intervention, psychosocial support, and family reintegration assistance for migrant communities.
- Coordinated critical service referrals while ensuring compliance with US Office of Refugee Resettlement regulations.

Behavioral Health & Psychosocial Support

2015 - 2020

- Developed and implemented behavioral health intervention plans for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and mental health conditions.
- Provided training on behavioral modification techniques, trauma-informed care, and psychosocial support strategies.
- Lead community-based mental health initiatives to support diverse populations in crisis situations.

Community Development & Food Security

2010 – 2015

- Transformed underutilized properties into affordable spaces for small businesses, urban farming initiatives, and cultural programs.
- Advocated for food sovereignty and nutritional equity through urban farming infrastructure development.
- Implemented sustainability programs to promote food security in underserved communities.

Education & Credentials

2020-Present: PhD Candidate, Climate Change & Sustainable Development Policies – University of Lisbon, Portugal

1992-1995: Master's Degree, Clinical Counseling – La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA

1989-1992: Bachelor's Degree, Business Administration (Finance) – University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

- **Advanced Certificate**, Multicultural Education – Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
- **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Certification**
- **Certified Medical Interpreter – Behavioral Health Specialization**

Advocacy & Policy Engagement

- **Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) | Mayoral Appointed Member**

Led initiatives addressing food insecurity, urban farming, policy reform, and waste reduction.

Advocated for sustainable food systems and infrastructure development in underserved communities.

- **National Language Service Corps (NLSC) | Member**

Provide linguistic expertise to support U.S. government agencies in outreach and accessibility.

Global Humanitarian & Volunteer Contributions

Divino Nino Special Needs School (Nicaragua) | Founding Member

Conduct clinical evaluations and provide behavioral health and psychosocial support for children with intellectual disabilities.

Community-Based Initiatives in Sustainability & Social Impact

Developed and led projects in urban farming, food security, and community revitalization efforts.

Established programs promoting social cohesion and economic empowerment through food justice initiatives.

Languages & Cross-Cultural Expertise

Fluent in Spanish & English

Experienced in Multicultural & Medical Interpretation