

**Maria S. Gomez, R.N., M.P.H.**  
**President and CEO**

Maria S. Gomez, President and CEO of Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care founded the organization to build better futures through health care, education, and social services that embrace our culturally diverse community. Established in 1988 as a clinic to provide prenatal and postpartum care for the primarily Latino women of Ward One, has grown from an initial budget of \$250,000 to an annual budget of \$14 million.

Mary's Center now serves more than 15,000 individuals and families from across the D.C. metropolitan area, establishing a full complement of programs to focus on holistic family needs.

Originally from Colombia, Maria immigrated with her mother at age 13 and attended the DC Public Schools. Maria and her mother were sponsored to come to the US and came specifically to insure that Maria had better educational opportunity. During Maria's nursing program and hands on clinical experience, she was inspired to seek innovative ways to deliver culturally appropriate primary care services and to give back to her community.

Mrs. Gomez is the recipient of many awards including the **Jessie Bernard Wise Woman Award** from the *Center for Women Policy Studies*; the **Hispanic Community Leadership Award** from the *Hispanic Employees Association*; and **Washingtonian of the Year** as named by *Washingtonian Magazine*. In recognition for her outstanding leadership and team management in 1999, Mary's Center received the **Washington Post Award for Excellence in Nonprofit Management**. In 2001 Maria received the **DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Conversation Changers Award** and was recognized by the *Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)* for her leadership in providing access to care for Latina women and their children. In 2002, Maria received the **Champions of Choice Award** from *Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington*.

In 2005 she received the **Champion of Safe Motherhood Award** from the *White Ribbon Alliance National Workgroup on Safe Motherhood* for her dedication and valuable contributions to ensuring safe motherhood for all women. In 2005, Maria was awarded the **Individual Impact Award** for her exceptional leadership, management skills and accomplishments in the improvement of oral health outcomes by the *DC Department of Health* and received the **Honoris Causa Monseñor Romero Award** at the *Annual National Salvadoran Community Awards* for her support and hard work for the Salvadoran community living in the Washington Metropolitan area.

For her dedication to helping save babies, *March of Dimes* granted Maria the **You're Our Start recognition award** in January 2006 and the **Lifetime Achievement Award** in October 2006 for her lifetime commitment and service to the Latino community.

In February 2007, Maria wins **The Washington Examiner's Amazing Change** contest for making an amazing change in the community she serves at Mary's Center.

Ms. Gomez obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of California at Berkeley. She currently serves as a board member to the National Council of La Raza, the Meyer Foundation, the Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington, the Board of the Community Council of WAMU and was recently appointed to the D.C. Access to Justice Commission that assures high quality access for low and moderate income residents who suffer disparate access barriers to the civil justice system. She and Miachel Rexrode have been married for 18 years and have an 11 year old daughter, Amalia.