

2017 PRESIDENTIAL CITATION  
MELBA VASQUEZ  
Presented 01.05.17  
National Multicultural Conference and Summit

Melba Vasquez is a wonderful human being, and an indefatigable leader who is dedicated to the profession of psychology and those it serves. Her contributions to the field, especially focusing on those individuals and groups who are marginalized, is a beacon for all of psychology to follow.

One of her most important achievements was the co-founding in 1999 of the National Multicultural Conference and Summit along with Drs. Rosie Phillips Bingham, Lisa Porche-Burke and Derald Wing Sue. The event has convened every two years and brings together our elders, our stars, and our future. The original vision has prospered, and its message is more important today than ever before.

Dr. Vasquez began her service to APA in 1981 with the Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility for Psychology and continued with the Ethics Committee, the Committee for Women in Psychology, the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest, the Board of Professional Affairs, the Policy and Planning Board, the Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice, and the Board of Directors. She has served as president of the Society for Counseling Psychology, and the Society for the Psychology of Women, and co-founded the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues as well as the division of Trauma Psychology.

Dr. Vasquez served as President of the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2011, and is the 13<sup>th</sup> female president, the first woman of color, and the first Latina to hold this position. Our venerable

organization of 115,000 members celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, and we do so with joy and enthusiasm for a better future for APA and psychology because of the vision, collaboration, and patience that our treasured colleague has brought to psychology and to APA.

The task forces she established as APA President were on immigration, discrimination, and educational disparities. The outcomes of those task forces were a shining light during a period of great uncertainty.

Her contributions to scholarship reflect a history of leadership. Working in collaboration with others, Dr. Vasquez has provided well respected and frequently cited work, especially in the areas of ethics, multiculturalism, feminist psychology, and psychotherapy.

As a fellow Hispanic, I am honored to present Dr. Melba J.T. Vasquez the first presidential citation given in APA's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.

ANTONIO E. PUENTE, PHD  
PRESIDENT, AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION