



## Virginia Garcia Center's chief financial officer nominated for magazine's CFO of Year Award

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When Araceli Gaytan joined the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in 1987 as an administrative assistant, the annual budget was about \$800,000. Today as the Chief Financial Officer, Gaytan oversees an annual budget of \$26 million and is the financial steward for six medical clinics, three dental clinics and four pharmacies. No wonder she has been nominated for nonprofit CFO of the year by The Portland Business Journal.

"For more than 20 years Araceli has overseen the finances of an organization that has grown increasingly complex as we've added programs, sites and services," said Gil Muñoz CEO of Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center.

These are challenging times for safety net clinics like Virginia Garcia with more and more people out of work and without health insurance. Gaytan is optimistic that the new health care reform legislation will help ease the burden on clinics that provide for the uninsured.

"We've seen a big increase in uninsured, non-paying patients in this economy," Gaytan said. "I have to pay close attention to our cash flow because we have little in reserve." This has been particularly challenging lately as Virginia Garcia completes its conversion to electronic medical records, requiring clinics to temporarily reduce their patient intake and income. Gaytan has become an expert in doing more with less.

Virginia Garcia relies on both state and federal grant monies and reimbursements that require unique systems for accounting. Gaytan has developed policies and procedures to keep pace with all the changes.

"She manages an impressive demand for financial reporting and analysis from both internal and external stakeholders. We're fortunate to have such a skillful and dedicated CFO," Muñoz said.

Gaytan immigrated to the United States from Mexico City. She spoke no English. After several years working for Virginia Garcia, she began taking classes to learn English, continuing on to take classes in finance and administration and eventually earning her MBA. There's a story she likes to tell about a Hispanic man who once sold her a Christmas tree. He saw on her check that she too is Hispanic and called her to see if she knew of anywhere his wife could turn to for prenatal care. She told him about Virginia Garcia. Gaytan is now the godmother of that man's child.

"Virginia Garcia is a wonderful place to work," said Gaytan who still relishes the challenges after 23 years. "We have a beautiful mission."