

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Mónica Ramírez

JD, MPA (BA '99) • FOUNDER/PRESIDENT JUSTICE FOR MIGRANT WOMEN;
CO-FOUNDER, THE LATINX HOUSE, PODERISTAS & ALIANZA NACIONAL DE CAMPESINAS



Mónica Ramírez, JD, MPA (BA '99) is an attorney, author, and activist fighting for the rights of farmworkers, migrant women workers, and the Latinx community. She is the founder of Justice for Migrant Women, and co-founder of Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, The Latinx House, and Poderistas. She is recognized as a thought leader and prominent voice in the Latinx community for her long history as an organizer and her innovative approach to advocacy.

Ramírez attended Loyola University Chicago, where she was awarded her bachelor's degree in communication. She earned a master's degree in public administration at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and a juris doctor degree at The Ohio State University Mortitz College of Law.

The daughter and granddaughter of migrant farmworkers, Ramírez was born, raised, and lives in a rural community in Ohio where her family settled out of the migrant stream. In 2003, Ramírez created the first legal project in the United States dedicated to addressing gender discrimination against farmworker women, which she expanded to create Esperanza: The Immigrant Women's Legal Initiative of the Southern Poverty Law Center. In 2006, she launched a national working group to prevent workplace sexual violence against farmworker women which was the first of its kind, and led to a national conference on the issue, and the publication of an influential best practices manual. In addition, Ramírez consulted on the documentary "Rape In the Fields," and she has written several groundbreaking reports on gender discrimination in the U.S. food industry, including "Injustice On Our Plates." She also wrote and organized the Querida Familia letter to the Latinx community with Eva Longoria, America Ferrera, Diane Guerrero, Olga Segura and Alex Martinez Kondracke, which garnered the support of over 200 Latinx leaders, and was published in the New York Times in the wake of the El Paso massacre in August 2019.

Ramírez has received numerous awards, including Harvard Kennedy School's first Gender Equity Changemaker Award, the Feminist Majority's Global Women's Rights Award, the 2018 Smithsonian Ingenuity Award, and the Hispanic Heritage Award. She was named to Forbes Mexico's 100 Most Powerful Women's 2018 list, and TIME magazine included her in its TIME100 Next 2021 list, and she is also an inaugural member of the Ford Global Fellowship. Ramírez serves on the board of directors of the National Women's Law Center and the Friends of the Latino Museum, and is also a member of the Little Market's Activists Committee.