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From Russia, to Girls Inc. with love



Since the age of 20, Victoria Juarez has been working in the nonprofit sector, even going as far as Russia to help those who need it the most.

Juarez is currently the executive director of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, where she serves as a leader and advocate for young women and girls in the community.

What makes her work so impactful is Juarez's ability to relate to those she's serving. As a Mexican-American from a small Californian farming community, Juarez was the first generation in her family to attend and graduate from college. She holds a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in public administration from Cal State Long Beach. From there, Juarez joined the Peace Corps that eventually landed her in Russia.

Juarez said that experience was rewarding, but wanted to make more of a difference closer to home.

"Originally I had a vision to do foreign relations work while in Russia,"

she said. "But realized I wanted to do what I was doing in Russia at home. I wanted to serve my own community."

Juarez previously served as associate director of Storyteller Children's Center in Santa Barbara, a preschool for homeless children.

Today, under Juarez's direction, her organization serves a number of girls through educational, STEM-based college-preparedness programs, while also actively advocating the removal of gender stereotypes and barriers that exist and to encourage young women to reach their full potential.

Juarez said her focus is on helping other girls break the glass ceiling and to bridge the disparity that can plague education.

"We're trying to support local school districts and help girls perform at their age level," she said. "It's very critical for us to close that achievement gap."

- **Last song listened to on your playlist?** "Good Ol' Boys Club" Kacey Musgraves
- **First Job?** In-N-Out Burger
- **Favorite movie/TV show?** "Gladiator" Quote/Motto you live by? No matter who you are, it's up to you how you use your platform.