

# Patricia Elizondo



My seventh-grade science project was on a controversial subject – birth-control pill side effects. So the principal, superintendent, and school board all objected to my entering the science fair. But with support from the head of our science department, I entered and won the coveted Science Air Force Award. No project from my school system had ever received that level of recognition. Everyone who had protested then tried to take credit for encouraging me.

**P**atricia Elizondo learned a great deal about the science of human nature and psychology from experiencing how people reacted by first trying to ban her grade school science project and then jumping on the bandwagon to take credit for her success. She now refers to the phenomenon as “the conga line of success.”

Elizondo, who has risen to the position of senior vice president for Global Sales Integration at Xerox Corporation, coined that term to describe how everyone wants to get behind the person who emerges as a winner. “Whenever I take on a controversial position at work or in the community and no one wants to address the 800-pound gorilla in the room,” she says, “I always think back to the conga line that formed behind my science project.”

Elizondo is also a model of determination who never gives up on her dreams. While in high school, for example, her dream

was to attend the University of Notre Dame. Unfortunately, Notre Dame was financially out of reach, because she did not have even the \$75 needed for the application fee. So Elizondo instead settled on Indiana University, where she earned a degree in finance from their highly respected School of Business. But she kept her goal in mind, and, within a decade, she had graduated from Notre Dame with an M.B.A. Not only that, but today Elizondo sits on the Notre Dame Executive M.B.A. Advisory Board.

Lora J. Villarreal, executive vice president and Chief People Officer at Xerox, nominated Elizondo for the Eagle Award, saying “Patricia exceeds the qualities of an executive leader. She constantly demonstrates perseverance, commitment, and willingness to go beyond the call of duty in all undertakings.”

Elizondo is currently leading global sales integration of the \$6.5 billion Xerox acquisition of Affiliated Computer Ser-

vices, which represents a worldwide initiative with revenue-growth responsibilities in North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, and other significant markets. But she says that, as a leader, it is the small details that often matter the most.

“When I think of my professional accomplishments, I think of snapshots – the small moments when I know that I have helped improve the life of one employee. I am proud when I receive a note from an employee who has been promoted telling me I had an impact on their career and success. You make a difference one employee at a time.”

To Elizondo, it is “family first,” and she believes that, if you do right by the people who are around you and support you, then everything else will fall into place as it should.

“Every village has a culture,” Elizondo believes. “At Xerox, our culture is fueled by working as a team to do the impossible. We always do what it takes to get the job done. We make a difference in our communities. We have a strong heritage of corporate citizenship, supporting our communities through corporate-sponsored programs and local activities. I encourage all of our people to contribute and improve the cities and towns where we work and live.”

*CareerFOCUS Magazine*<sup>™</sup> and the National Eagle Leadership Institute<sup>®</sup> salute 2010 Eagle Award winner Patricia Elizondo.

## The Leadership Promise at Xerox

Learning and development are key components in maintaining our competitiveness and developing our talent base. Our recruiting and development strategies help to bring some of the best and brightest culturally diverse employees into challenging roles and experiences at Xerox.

We designed the company’s talent-management strategy to differentiate and foster rewarding careers for Xerox employees and to develop the next generation of leaders. Managers identify “emerging leaders” on their team and work with them to create development plans that address training, education, and future job opportunities. Unique development programs are targeted on improving employees’ preparedness for management.

At least once a year, Xerox CEO Ursula Burns and her senior team conduct detailed reviews of a diverse group of leaders who are poised to assume key management roles. The sessions assess individual performance and attributes of leadership and identify appropriate career moves to prepare these leaders for much broader responsibilities.

### Patricia Elizondo At-a-Glance

**Nominating Company**  
Xerox Corporation

**Current Position**  
Senior Vice President,  
Global Sales Integration

**Professional Milestones**

- *Hispanic Business Magazine's* "Top 25 Elite"
- *Hispanic Engineer & Information Technology Magazine's* "50 Most Important Hispanics in Technology and Business"
- *Hispanic Business Magazine's* "Top 80 Hispanic Women in Business"

**Community Leadership**

- Board of Trustees, Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
- Baltimore Lyric Opera
- Board of Directors, University of Maryland Center for Women in Technology

**Leadership Principle**  
Constant learning, sharing, and reaching out to help others succeed.

**Education/Training**

- B.S., Indiana University
- M.S., University of Notre Dame

**Birthplace**  
Gary, IN

**Current Home**  
Ellicott City, MD