

Biography

Vilma Ortiz was born in Aibonito, Puerto Rico in 1958. She completed her elementary school at Colegio Padre Martínez and her Middle and High school in Luis Muñoz Rivera High School of Barranquitas, P.R. Vilma continued her Bachelor in Secondary Education with a concentration in Spanish at University of Puerto Rico, where she was part of the Honors College and was selected to receive an honorary award to be part of The National Dean List (1982-1983). She completed the requirements for her degree in 1983 and graduated Magna Cum Laude.

The same year Vilma started working as a Spanish teacher in a private school and continued studying at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico in order to obtain her Masters in Literature and Linguistics. The next year she was working with the Department of Education of Puerto Rico, teaching Spanish for middle and high school. When she finished her master in Hispanic Studies in 1988 she received her degree with the highest honor possible. She managed to graduate with a 4.00 (Summa Cum Laude). Following this, Mrs. Ortiz, continued to work at a private school in the Advances Placement Program (College Board of Puerto Rico). As part of this she taught AP Spanish Literature and AP Spanish Language. In 1992 Vilma started to teach in the American University of Puerto Rico Latinoamerican Literature and Language Arts and Language skills for the Laboratories of Interamerican University of Puerto Rico.

The year 1995 was one of many accomplishments for Mrs. Ortiz. Vilma was honored with the Long Life Educator Certificate given by the Secretary of Education of Puerto Rico, Mr. Victor Fajardo. Later on, that same year, she was elected Teacher of the Year by the Private Schools Convention of Puerto Rico.

This year, 1995, was also a year which brought many new experiences for Vilma Ortiz. This year her husband, Edgar Fuentes, was transferred to Dominican Republic. During two years she was at home, spending time with her family and enjoying the new country, but as a genuine teacher, she felt the desire of going back to a classroom. The Pre-University College "Lux-Mundi" gave her the opportunity to work part-time teaching Spanish for High School. The next year the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) requested her services and hired her to teach Spanish in the Language Department. Two years later she decided to work only at the University. However, the Pre-University College of Dominican Republic honored her with the Academic Excellency Award in academic year 2000-2001.

As Mrs. Ortiz continued to work at Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra as Spanish and Literature professor for the Language and Literature Department, another door was opened for her. The International Program offered her the opportunity to work with American students, who were coming from US to PUCMM to earn credits in the Language and Literature area as part of their specialization. Mrs. Ortiz was recommended as instructor of Spanish Language, Caribbean, Hispanic and Latin-American Literature. She felt very proud to be part of this program, which gave her the opportunity to teach her language to non Spanish speakers.

In 2004 one of her daughters, Aura Sofia Fuentes, was accepted at Florida International University one year before she would graduate. The family understood it was a great opportunity and they decided to relocate to Florida on June 2005. Her other, younger daughter, Alba Rocio Fuentes, was accepted in Somerset Academy Charter School. Eventually, Mrs. Ortiz ended up working at this same academy. At the moment, Mrs. Ortiz is extremely proud to be part of Somerset Academy, where she works as a Spanish teacher. One of her goals is to prepare her student with the skills necessary to work with the Advanced Placement Program in the near future.