

Sergia Cardenas was the first Hispanic American councilwoman of Pierson, Florida. Cardenas was born October of 1983 and is now 40 years old. She was born in Selma, California to undocumented Mexican parents who later became U.S. residents. As a young girl, Sergia moved to Pierson where she attended local public schools and worked with her parents in Volusia County's fern fields during the summer. In 2002 she graduated from Pierson's Dewitt Taylor High School.

As well as serving as a member of Pierson's town council, Cardenas currently works for the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida. As found on the Florida Education Association website, a supervisor in the Court Interpreter Department, Candra Erickson, writes: "Most recently, I had the honor of assisting Sergia in her campaign to become the first Hispanic female elected to the Pierson Town Council. She has a tremendous drive and commitment to improving the quality of life for the residents of Pierson and providing a voice for the often-marginalized immigrant community, which make up a large percentage of the town's residents. Sergia is not afraid to confront the status quo that has been in leadership positions in Pierson since the town's inception. She may seem quiet and unimposing on the surface, yet she is always listening, analyzing and planning the next step in making Pierson a more inclusive place for all. She consistently stands up for what is right even if it is an unpopular opinion or when her progressive ideals are met with resistance. I do not think of a more suitable candidate to receive this award." Explaining why she believes Sergia Cardenas is the right person to be elected for Pierson's town council.

Before Cardenas was elected as a member on Pierson's town council, she worked with the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) which is a local non-profit organization. RCMA gave her the opportunity to work with low-income migrant children and their families which inspired her to take basic immigration law training to better help the families and start her career in the legal field.

Cardenas was honored at the FEA Human and Civil Rights Awards Gala on October 1<sup>st</sup> at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando during the FEA delegate assembly. The Chavez Action and Commitment Award was presented to Sergia Cardenas and Karen Hernandez. This award was one of the five statewide awards presented at that event.

Throughout Sergia Cardenas's life she faced an abundance of challenges and accomplished many things which is why Sergia Cardenas, the first Hispanic American councilwoman, is such an important woman and sets a great example for young girls.