

Graciela Fonseca Bio and Photo



Graciela Fonseca began working with youth by coordinating and helping to develop the “**Stay in School**” **Quinceañera Program** since its inception over 12 years ago. This program began her strong affiliation and affection with community and its youth. She has coordinated **Fiesta Idaho**, a folk-life festival held in Nampa during 2002 - 2004, attended by over 3,000 people in the Treasure Valley with the **Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho**.

Inspired by Latino arts and the cultural work she did with the Cultural center, Graciela began a small organization called **Dame Alas Latino Arts & Culture** (Give Me Wings). The organization truly endows a philosophy of reaching out and giving young people the courage to spread their wings and fly. Graciela has been involved in the “*Art for the Heart*” Project in connection with the **Federation of Families**; a project that produced a published book on poetry, along with several Poetry Jams dealing with youth combating depression, mental illness and other diagnosis.

For over 16 years, Ms. Fonseca has been active in many areas of advocacy for youth and Latino families. While working at **Terry Reilly Health Services**, she was a member of the **CHIP** Task Force working to help uninsured children in the valley. She has worked as community liaison for the **Latino Health Coalition**, building a coalition which deals with vulnerable populations. While working as a Family Advocate with **Nampa School District**, she initiated the first **Día de los Niños Teddy Bear Parade** in Nampa - connecting cross-cultural families, the Nampa schools and Nampa city government in 2001 while serving on **Nampa Boys & Girls Club** Board at the same time. During her years at Snake River Elementary School in North Nampa, she became a **Girl Scout Visions** Leader for over three years. Graciela is former President of **Mujeres Unidas de Idaho** (Idaho’s only Hispanic Women’s Organization which recently became a 501C-3).

Currently she is also the bilingual, bicultural Navigator in Region 3 for the Dept of Health and Welfare, continuing her work as a community resource. She is a facilitator for perpetrators of Domestic Violence for **Cook Tafoya-Fisher**; and a small magazine owner **Palacio de Treasure Valley**.