#### **EFRAIN AGOSTO**

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#### CURRICULUM VITAE

### **FULL-TIME PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

July 2021 - Present	Croghan Professor of Biblical and Early Christian Studies & Visiting Professor of Latinx Studies and Religion, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts
July 2011 – June 2021	Professor of New Testament Studies, New York Theological Seminary, New York, New York.
July 2018 – Dec. 2019	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean; Professor of New Testament Studies; New York Theological Seminary, New York, New York.
July 2008 – June 2011	Academic Dean and Professor of New Testament, Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut.
August 2007 – June 2008	Interim Dean, Hartford Seminary.
July 1995 – June 2011	Professor of New Testament & Director, Programa de Ministerios Hispanos, Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT.
Aug. 1990 - June 1995	Director, Center for Urban Ministerial Education, Boston, & Adjunct Instructor, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.
July 1987 - July 1990	Associate Director, Center for Urban Ministerial Education.

Sept. 1983 - June 1987	Assistant Director for Administration, Center for Urban Ministerial Education.
July 1982 - Aug. 1983	Instructor, Boricua College, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Aug. 1977 - Aug. 1979	Assistant Director & Staff Counselor, East Harlem College & Career Counseling Program. New York, NY.

### **ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE (Most Recent)**

Fall 2020 & Spring 2021 – "Liderazgo y Cultura en el Contexto Latinx," Spanish-language Yearlong Seminar in the Latinx Doctor of Ministry Cohort, New York Theological Seminary.

Fall 2014; Spring 2018 and S	Spring 2020 – "New Testament Introduction" in the Master of Professional Studies Program, New York Theological Seminary, Sing Sing Correctional Facility.
June 2019 (Two weeks)	Taught "Reading Paul <i>Latinamente</i> " at the Hispanic Summer Program, Oblate Theological Seminary, San Antonio, Texas.
April-June 2018	Online Adjunct Instructor, "Introducción al Nuevo Testamento y Su Exegesis" (New Testament Introduction & Exegesis) for Spanish-language Certificate in Ministries Program, Austin Presbyterian Seminary. Ten Weeks
January – March 2017	Online Adjunct Instructor, "Introducción al Nuevo Testamento y Su Exegesis" (New Testament Introduction & Exegesis) for Spanish-language Certificate in Ministries Program, Austin Presbyterian Seminary. Ten Weeks.
July 2017	Instructor, "El Apóstol Pablo: Su Vida, Cartas y Ministerio," a One-Week Intensive Course for Spanish-language Masters in Ministry Program at McCormick Seminary, Chicago, Illinois.
December 2016	Instructor, Spanish-Language United Methodist Church Course of Study Program in Ahuachapán, El Salvador. Taught "Leadership in the New Testament" in Program Organized by Duke Divinity School and UMC Global Ministries. One-Week Intensive.
June 2016	Taught "Introducción al Nuevo Testamento" in one-week intensive for the Certificate in Ministerial Studies, Disciples Seminary Foundation, Claremont, California.

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January 2015	Instructor, Spanish-Language United Methodist Church Course of Study Program in Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Taught "New Testament Introduction" in Program Organized by Duke Divinity School and UMC Global Ministries. One-Week Intensive.
June 2014 (Two Weeks)	Taught "Studies in 1 and 2 Corinthians" at the Hispanic Summer Program, Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois.

### **EDUCATION**

Sept. 1985 - Jan. 1996	Boston University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Division of Religious & Theological Studies Ph.D. (Work Completed-June 1995; Degree Awarded-Jan. 1996)
	Concentration: New Testament and Christian Origins
	<i>Dissertation</i> : "Paul's Use of Greco-Roman Conventions of Commendation"
Sept. 1979 - May 1982	Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary M.Div., 1982, with a concentration in Urban Ministry.
Sept. 1973 - May 1977	Columbia University (New York City) B.A., 1977
	<i>Major</i> : History, with concentrations in American History and Education

# **PROFESSIONAL & ACADEMIC SERVICE**

Member, Board, Association of Theological Schools, July 2020 - Present.

Chair, Society of Biblical Literature Council (Board), January 2018 – December 2020 (Three-Year Term). Member of Council since January 2015.

Senior Editor, *Perspectivas*, The Journal of the Hispanic Theological Initiative (Princeton, New Jersey), July 2017 to June 2018.

Workshop Leader, "Through Hispanic Eyes." A Training Program on U.S. Latino/a Cultural and Religious Reality for Non-Latino/a Theological Educators Sponsored by the Hispanic Summer Program and held at Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, Texas, June 26-29, 2016.

Visiting Scholar, Center for the Study of Latino/a Christianity and Religions, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, November 2-12, 2015. Various lectures on Latino/a Biblical and Theological Pedagogy, Pauline Theology & Ministry, and Postcolonial Biblical Studies.

President, La Comunidad of Hispanic Scholars of Religion, 2011-2015 (Two 2-year terms).

Member, Steering Committee, Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Hermeneutics Section, Society for Biblical Literature, 2008-2018. Co-chair, 2016-2018.

Research Director, Latino/a Component, "Ethnologies of Scripture Readings among U.S. Communities of Color," Institute for Signifying Scriptures, Claremont Graduate University, Fall 2006 until August 2010. Final Report, "Seeking Guidance from the Word: U.S. Latino/a Religious Communities and Their Scriptures," submitted by team of four researchers in April 2010 for publication tentatively titled, *Reading Scriptures, Reading America*, edited by Vincent L. Wimbush.

Co-Facilitator, Teaching & Learning Colloquy for Theological School Deans, Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion, June 2011-July 2012.

Participant, Teaching & Learning Colloquy for Theological School Deans, Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion, June 2010-January 2011.

Participant, Colloquy on Teaching & Learning for Latino/a Faculty at Colleges, Universities and Theological Schools, Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion, July 2008-June 2009.

Participant, Colloquy on Fostering Effective Teaching and Learning in Racially and Culturally Diverse Classrooms, Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion, July 2006 – July 2007.

Faculty Instructor, Case Teaching in Theology Workshop, Iliff School of Theology, June 2004.

Participant, Case Teaching in Theology Workshop, Harvard Divinity School, June 2003.

Member, Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession, Society for Biblical Literature, 1998–2003.

Member, Executive Committee, Association of Theological Schools, July 1998–June 2004.

Member, Final Selection Committee & Mentor, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 1997-98, 20002004. Member of Steering Committee, Hispanic Theological Initiative Consortium, October 2012 to September 2016.

Member of the Governing Board, Hispanic Summer Program, Representing New York Theological Seminary, October 2013 to October 2016. Elected Secretary of the Board, October 2013 and Vice Chair, October 2015.

#### PUBLICATIONS

### Books:

Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005).

*1 y 2 Corintios*. Serie "Conosca Su Biblia" ("Know Your Bible" Series ). (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2008).

*Preaching in the Interim: Transitional Leadership in a Latino/a Church* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018).

*Latinxs, the Bible and Migration*, Co-edited with Jacqueline Hidalgo. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

#### In Process:

Paul as Pastor: Ministry Issues Then and Now (Cascade Books).

*Commentary on 1 Corinthians* (Working Title). Contextual Critical Commentary on the Bible Series (Cascade Books).

#### **Book Chapters:**

"Islands, Borders and Migration: Reading Paul in Light of the Crisis in Puerto Rico," in Efrain Agosto and Jacqueline Hidalgo, Co-Editors, *Latinxs, the Bible and Migration* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

"Lifting the Veil: A Look Inside Theological Educational Institutions," with Adair Lummis in *Spanning the Divide: Latinos/as in Theological Education*, eds. Edwin I. Hernandez, et. al. (Orlando, Fla: Associacion Para La Educacion Teologica Hispana, 2016).

"Paul and Commendation" in J. Paul Sampley, ed., *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, Revised Edition (London: T& T Clark, 2016).

"Revelation" in *Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theologies*, edited by Orlando O. Espin (Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2015).

"What Does It Mean to Be a Latino/a Biblical Critic? A Latino Pentecostal Perspective, with Reflections on the Future" in Francisco Lozada, Jr. and Fernando F. Segovia, eds., *Latino/a Biblical Hermeneutics: Problematics, Objectives, Strategies* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). "Reading the Word in America: U.S. Latino/a Religious Communities and Their Scriptures" in *Mis-Reading America: Mimicry, Interruptions, Reorientations, and Peoples of Color in the United States*, edited by Vincent L. Wimbush (Oxford University Press, 2013).

"An Intercultural Latino Reading of Paul: The Example of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23" in *1 and 2 Corinthians: Texts@Contexts*, edited by Yung Suk Kim (Fortress Press, 2013).

Forward to *The Colonized Apostle: Paul through Postcolonial Eyes*, edited by Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

"The Way of Justice: A Latino Protestant Reading of Luke 24:13-35" in Jean-Pierre Ruiz and Mario J. Paredes, eds., *The Word of God & Latino Catholics: The Teachings of the Road to Emmaus* (New York: American Bible Society, 2011).

"Latino/a Hermeneutics" in Joel B. Green, *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010).

*"Sola Scriptura* and Latino/a Protestant Hermeneutics: An Exploration" in Orlando O. Espin, ed., *Building Bridges, Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

"The Letter to the Philippians" in *A Postcolonial Commentary on the New Testament Writings*, edited by Fernando Segovia & R.S. Sugirtharajah (Sheffield Academic Press, 2007).

"Patronage and Commendation in Paul: Imperial and Anti-imperial" in Richard Horsley, ed., *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2004).

"Paul and Commendation" in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, edited by J. Paul Sampley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003).

"Religious Leadership in the Aftermath of September 11: Some Lessons from Jesus and Paul" in *September 11, 2001: A Historical, Theological and Social Critque*, edited by Ibrahim Abu-Rabi and Ian Markham (One World Press, 2002).

"Paul, Leadership and the Hispanic Church" in Eldin Villafañe, *Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmanns, 1995).

#### Journal & Encyclopedia Articles:

"Scripture and Liberating Ethics: Honoring Eldin Villafañe," in *Lexington Theological Quarterly* Vol. XLVIII, Spring, Summer, Fall 2018, No. 1-2: 57-67.

"Teaching New Testament Introduction *Latinamente*: A Beginning Exploration," in *Apuntes: Theological Reflections from the Hispanic-Latino Context*, v.35 no. 4, (Winter 2015): 102-117. "Confronting Empire: The Apostle Paul & Pedro Albizu Campos, The Apostle of Puerto Rican Independence," in *Apuntes: Theological Reflections from the Hispanic Latino Context*, v.35 no.4, (Winter 2015): 118-133.

Guest Editor, The Living Pulpit, Fall 2015, for an issue on the topic, "The Bible in the City."

"Engaging the Apostle Paul: Reading for Ministry and Leadership," *The Living Pulpit*, February 9, 2012.

"Hermeneutics," *Hispanic American Religious Cultures* [2 volumes], edited by Miguel A. De La Torre (Santa Barbara/Denver/Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 647-656.

"The Apostle Paul," *The Blackwell Companion to the Theologians*, Volume One, edited by Ian Markham (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 187-197.

"Who Is It For? The Publics of Theological Research," *Theological Education*, Volume 43, Number 2 (2008), 11-20.

With Christopher Tirres, "Religion in Hispanic Culture," in *The Encyclopedia of New England Culture*, edited by Burt Feintuch & David Watters (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2005), 1321-1322.

"Donald Mac Baillie," "John Baillie," "Juan Bunyan," "Cerdo," "Johannes Amos Comenio," "Oscar Cullman," "Gordon David Fee," "Harry Emerson Fosdick," "Anne Marbury Hutchinson," "Abraham Kuyper," "Hugo Latimer," "Increase Mather," "Arthur C. McGiffert," "John Stuart Mill," "Bernard Ramm," "Herman Samuel Reimaro," "Francis A. Schaeffer," "Philip Schaff," "Ronald J. Sider," "John R.W. Stott," "Valentin," "Cornelius Van Til," in *Dicionario Ilustrado de Interpretes de La Fe*, Justo Gonzalez, General Editor (Terrassa [Barcelona], Spain: Editorial CLIE, 2004).

"Jesus: A Latino Christian Perspective" in *Jesus in History, Thought & Culture: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Leslie Houlden (Santa Barbara, CA, Denver, CO, Oxford, England: ABC-CLIO Publishers, 2003).

"Paul vs. Empire: A Postcolonial & Latino Reading of Philippians," *Perspectivas* (Fall 2002), 37-56.

"Social Analysis of the New Testament & Hispanic Theology: A Case Study," *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* (May 1998).

"The Apostle Paul & Mentoring: Formal and Informal Approaches," *Apuntes* (Winter/Spring 1998).

"The Gifts of Urban Theological Education: A Personal & Professional Reflection," *Theological Education* 33 (1, Autumn 1996), 93-105.

# PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS (SELECTIVE)

"Commendation in Paul & the Criteria for Church Leadership." Paper presented at SBL/CBA New England Regional Meeting, Boston University, April 23, 1993.

"Paul, Leadership and the Corinthians: How Three Social Scientific Theories Help Us Understand 1 Corinthians." Paper presented to Biblical Studies Group, Biennial Meeting, Association for Hispanic Theological Education, San Antonio, August 1996.

"New Testament Social Analysis & Hispanic Theology: A Case Study with 1 Corinthians." Paper presented in Hispanic American Religion, Culture & Society Group, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, New Orleans, November 1996.

"Barriers to Solidarity: Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans." Paper presented at "Salsa Christianity': Urban Ministry in the Latino Context," An Urban Ministry Symposium at Harvard Divinity School, October 16, 1998.

"The Commendation of Paul's Co-workers." Paper presented to Pauline Epistles Section, Society for Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Orlando, November 1998.

"Liderasgo para el ministerio del jubileo: Los ejemplos de Jesus y Pablo." Morning Bible Study, National Jubilee Hispanic Ministries, Episcopal Church, San Antonio, October 2000.

"The Politics of Commendation in Paul." Paper presented to Paul & Politics Group, Society for Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Nashville, November 2000.

"Leadership for Social Justice Ministry: A Biblical Study." Keynote Address and Bible Study, National Jubilee Ministries Annual Conference, Episcopal Church, Houston, January 2001. "Paul vs. Empire: A Postcolonial and Latino Reading of Paul's Letter to the Philippians." Paper presented at the Hispanic Theological Initiative West Regional Meeting, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, February 2002.

"Mapping Theological Research: A Personal Journey." Panel Presentation at Gathering of 200203 Lilly Theological Fellows, Pittsburgh, February 2003.

Bible Study Leader, Tuesday Morning Plenary, General Synod, United Church of Christ, Minneapolis, June 2003.

"Prophetic Preaching." Workshop at the Annual Meeting of the General Association of Ministers, United Church of Christ, Connecticut Conference, September 2003.

"The Joys and Trials of Leadership: A Latino Reads Paul's Letter to the Philippians." Lecture, Andover Newton Theological School, October 13, 2004.

"A Postcolonial Commentary on Philippians: Reflections on Using a Theory for the First Time." Panel Discussion – Recent Uses of Theory in Latino/a Hermeneutics and Teaching of the Bible. AAR/SBL Annual Meeting, San Antonio, November 20, 2004.

"Who is it for? The Publics of Theological Research." Plenary Address, 2006 Lilly Conference on Theological Research, The Association of Theological Schools, Pittsburg, PA, February 26, 2006.

"Theodicy in Nursi and the Apostle Paul." Paper presented at the Nursi Conference, Istanbul, Turkey, November 2006.

"What Does it Mean to Be a Latino Biblical Critic?" Panel Discussion, Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Criticism Consultation, Society of Biblical Literature, Boston, November 2008.

"Leadership in Paul: A Latino Reading." Fourth Annual Lecture in Hispanic/Latino Theology and Missions, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, March 31, 2009.

"Seeking Guidance from the Word: U.S. Latino/a Religious Communities and Their Scriptures," Presentation with Team of Researchers for National Conference, "Reading Scriptures, Reading America: Interruptions, Orientation, and Mimicry among U.S. Communities of Color" at Institute for Signifying Scriptures, Claremont Graduate University, October 16, 2009.

"Urban Theological Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Retrospective & Futuring." Annual George W. Webber Urban Ministry Lecture, New York Theological Seminary, October 7, 2010.

"Embracing Change." Graduation Speech, Hartford Seminary, June 3, 2011.

"Engaging Paul on Ministry." Chatlos Bible Conference, New York Theological Seminary, October 17, 2011.

"Reading Elsa Tamez Read Paul," Paper Presented to the Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Interpretation Section, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, November 20, 2011.

"Response to *Las Evangelicas: Latina Theology from the Margins*" Orlando Costas Annual Lecture, Palmer Theological Seminary, Esperanza Center, Philadelphia, PA, October 1, 2012.

"Spirituality in Leadership: Lessons from the Apostle Paul." Urban Leadership Development Conference: Equipping and Empowering Leaders, Primitive Christian Church, New York, New York, October 12, 2012.

"Lenten Epistles: Studies in Paul's Letters." Adult Bible Study Series, First Church of Christ Congregational, Hartford, February 17 to March 24, 2013.

"Transforming the City: Lessons from the Apostle Paul and Beyond," Orlando E. Costas Annual Lecture, Palmer Theological Seminary, October 3, 2013.

"Mission & Outreach in Paul: The Example of 1 Thessalonians." Evangelism Conference, Hispanic American Baptists Metro-New York, September 13, 2014.

"Colonized Apostles: Paul of Tarsus and Pedro Albizu Campos," Paper presented at the joint session of the Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Interpretation Group and the Postcolonial Biblical Studies Group at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, November 22, 2015.

"Islands and Borders: Reading Paul in Light of the Crisis in Puerto Rico," Paper presented at the Paul and Politics Section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 20, 2016.

"Thirty Years after 'The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation:' Decentering Biblical Scholarship in Biblical Education, Pauline Studies and the Rhetorics of Biblical Interpretation in 2018 and Beyond." Panel Presentation, "Decentering Biblical Scholarship Thirty Years Later: Critical Reflections on the Call of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza." Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado, November 18, 2018.

# **GRANTS & AWARDS**

"Student-Faculty Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity." Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion Small Grant Project, 2019-20 Colloquy on Race Critical Consciousness in Theological Pedagogy (\$5000). Awarded August 1, 2019 for Academic Year 2019-20 Project at New York Theological Seminary.

Orlando E. Costas Preaching Award, for Exemplary Christian Service in the Area of Preaching Ministry, Presented by Palmer Theological Seminary, October 3, 2013.

Research Grant, Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion: "Teaching New Testament Introduction *Latinamente*: An Exploration." Explored the question of teaching Testament Introduction as a Latino/a New Testament scholar and theologian, and what we can learn from that experience for teaching New Testament Studies in general. Visited and interviewed various New Testament Latino/a professors around the country and studied syllabi, bibliographies, teaching methods, and approaches to teaching New Testament Introduction from Latino/a perspectives during 2010-11 academic year. Final report submitted December 16, 2015.

Director, "Latinos in Hartford: A Seminar for Hartford Seminary Faculty." Grant to explore better integration of Latino/a issues into the theological curriculum of Hartford Seminary. Workshops, seminars and immersion in Latino/a Hartford conducted with select group of faculty in theology, bible and ministry during academic year 2009-10. Awarded by Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion. Final report submitted January 2010.

Francisco Garcia-Treto Award for Excellence in Biblical Scholarship, awarded by the Hispanic Summer Program, June, 2007, including an opportunity to teach in the 2007 Hispanic Summer Program, held at Duke Divinity School, June 18 to 29. Course taught: "Una Lectura Pastoral de las Cartas Paulinas" (A Pastoral Reading of Paul's Letters).

Research Grant, Pew Charitable Trusts, "Hispanic Seminary Programs in the Association of Theological Schools," with David Roozen, Carl Dudley and Adair Lummis, Hartford Institute for Religion Research, Hartford Seminary, Fall 1998. (Update of study for Latino Studies Center, University of Notre Dame: Spring 2005).

Lilly Theological Fellows Research Grant, Association of Theological Schools for Research on "Leadership and Commendation in Paul: A Postcolonial and Latino Perspective," Spring/Summer 2003.

Hispanic Theological Initiative, Post-Doctoral Grant for Research on "Leadership in the New Testament," Summer 1999.

# **CHURCH & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Served on Pastoral Staffs of Latino/a Pentecostal, Baptist and Congregational Churches in New York, Boston and Hartford, including:

• Assistant Pastor (part-time), Eden Pentecostal Church (Assemblies of God), Brooklyn, New York, June 1982 – July 1983.

- Assistant Pastor (part-time), Iglesia Bautista Central, Cambridge, Mass., September 1987 through June 1990.
- Interim Minister (part-time), Hispanic Community Church of Boston (United Church of Christ) August 1994 December 1994.
- Part of Interim Pastoral Team, Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Esperanza, United Church of Christ, Hartford, CT. (September 1999 June 2000). Served as Moderator of same church (September 2000 December 2004).
- Interim Pastor (part-time), Segunda Iglesia Bautista de Nueva York, East Harlem, New York City, April December 2013.

Founding Member, Interfaith Ministerial Fellowship for Universal Healthcare, Hartford, CT, September 2006 to June 2008.

Member of the Board of Directors, Universal Healthcare Foundation of Connecticut, January 2007 to 2011.

Board Member, Spanish Eastern School of Theology, Assemblies of God, New York, New York, September 2015 to 2019.

Current Church Membership: First Church of Christ Congregational, United Church of Christ, Hartford, 2015 to Present.

# **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Sept. 1989 - Present	Member, Society for Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion.
Nov. 1989 - Present	Charter Member, La Comunidad of Hispanic Scholars of Religion (A Related Scholarly Organization of the AAR and SBL).
April 1993 – Present	Charter Member, Association for Hispanic Theological Education.

#### **PERSONAL**

Family: Married to Olga Gisela Rodriguez (8/6/83), two adult children - Joel and Jasmin.

Hobbies: Reading, Sports (baseball)

#### **<u>REFERENCES</u>**: Available upon request