

In Memoriam



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was **Delia P. Sanchez**, a beloved, respected, lover of all people, and revered public servant who passed away on Saturday, August 18, 2018 at age 93; and

WHEREAS, born on December 4, 1924 in Tampa, Florida a native of her beloved Ybor City to Spanish immigrants, her Father the late Federico Perez who was a restaurant worker and coffee shop owner, and her Mother the late Elvira Perez a cigar factory worker and housekeeper. She married her late husband, Francisco R. Sanchez, Sr., in 1957 and their only child Francisco J. "Frank" Sanchez went on to serve the Presidential Administrations of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sanchez attended the Catholic school, H.B. Plant High School, and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work, Education and Spanish from Florida State University, and her Master's Degree in Social Work from Columbia University; and thereafter began her illustrious career starting in New York as a consultant for Time, Inc.'s Life en Espanol Magazine, she then returned home to Tampa as a State Child Welfare Worker, and thereafter with the Hillsborough County School District Head Start Program; and after retiring from the School District, she operated private practices as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Social Services Consultant; and

WHEREAS, she greatly contributed to educational success and made many quality of life improvements for the Tampa community and she led a team of social workers, but was still involved in every child's case; and among her many leadership and trailblazing endeavors, her wisdom, selfless dedication and desire for optimum quality of life for all she advocated and worked alongside the late Congressman Sam Gibbons to bring Head Start, a Lyndon B. Johnson Program, to assist low-income preschool-aged children to Hillsborough County, as the first in the nation; and the way she ran this still-existing program in 1965 became the blueprint for the nation, and in 1965 she wrote the publication "School Social Work in Hillsborough County" for the National Institute of Mental Research Project; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to the community she loved, Delia Sanchez was known as "*Tampa's Mother Teresa*" and was considered an influential civic icon, championing for equality and on behalf of others, she brought her passion for head start and early education to the community, making a difference and impacting lives, and she utilized her tenacity with her service including founding The Hillsborough County Association For Cooperative Services For Children, Inc.; and she served as a member of or on the board of numerous federal and state social work, head start, and education advisory organizations, including the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, Governor's Commission of the Aged, Delegate to The White House Conference on Families, The Children's Board of Hillsborough County, and The Hillsborough County Delia P. Sanchez Full Service Center where basic needs and literacy support is provided is named in her honor; and

WHEREAS, the highly valued Mrs. Sanchez was admired and respected by many, she received numerous honors over her lifetime for her many contributions and dedication to the Tampa community including receiving the Tampa-Hillsborough County Human Rights Council *Open Doors Building Bridges Award*, Hillsborough County Head Start Pioneer, Hillsborough County League of Women Voters *Sydney & Thalia Potter Civic Leadership Award*, Florida State Fair Wall of Fame Inductee, Tampa Hispanic Heritage Inc.'s *Hispanic Women of the Year*, University of South Florida School of Social Work Honorary Doctorate Degree, and the Ybor City Museum Society established an endowed scholarship in her honor for her twenty years of volunteer service.

Her memories of the Spanish Civil War and the Great Depression and their impact on a multicultural of immigrants from Spain, Italy, and Cuba who sought refuge in Tampa are chronicled as part of the University of South Florida's Florida Studies Center Oral History Program where she summarizes the lack of employment and scarce resources for Tampa immigrants, and yet a resilience of a community to show care, concern, and support for one another, and she cleaned a music studio to pay for her piano lessons. Mrs. Sanchez was deservingly recognized for her lifelong commitment and exemplary service in improving the lives of children and others by U.S. Representative Kathy Castor in a Congressional speech on the floor of the Florida House of Representatives during Women's History Month; and

WHEREAS, known as an inspiration for all who knew her, she will be forever remembered for her deep love of family and friends, her integrity, strength, generosity, patience, and devotion to faith and although we are grieved at the loss of this extraordinary citizen, her legacy will continue to live on through the impact she had on our community and our nation, and in all those who lives she has touched and encouraged, especially our youth whose lives she greatly influenced.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to the Delia P. Sanchez Family, her son Frank Sanchez, daughter-in-law Jackie Roberts, grandchildren Nolan and Landen, and other family members, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the impact of her life on our city.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 22nd day of August, 2018.



Bob Buckhorn

Mayor