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Outstanding Women in Business 2013

For Timi Aguilar, one door closed, another opened

Communications, Media and Public Relations - winner



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Kathleen Lavine | Denver Business Journal

Communications, Media and Public Relations Winner: Timi Aguilar, Aguilar Public Relations. Aguilar's "aha" moment: For me, the moment that transitioned things, where that lightbulb went off was in the past four years when I started running. I run recreationally, but in the last four years I've started increasing that. I started with a 10k to half marathons and then to marathons. I noticed such a change in my own life and I noticed a change in my business. And that's something that really turned a lightbulb on for me. Running has taught me a lot of things — endurance, being competitive, working as a team. When I look at how running shaped my life by making me take chances, I never would have dreamed of doing a marathon. But I also never would have dreamed that my company would have quadrupled in growth. I was aligning things in my own life by running and my business followed. I think that's a pretty neat turning point for me as a person and in my business.

Caitlin Rockett

On May 2, [Timi Aguilar](#) listened to Supreme Court Justice Sonya Sotomayor speak at the dedication of the Ralph L. Carr Colorado Judicial Center in Denver.

Sotomayor's words resonated with Aguilar.

“She said, ‘Failure is painful; you get embarrassed and walk away. You can’t let fear get in your way,’” Aguilar said. “Her advice was to just take chances.”

It reminded Aguilar of the chance she took eight years ago when she created Aguilar Public Relations.

She spent the previous 12 years handling public relations for AT&T, producing video and film projects in the United States and abroad. After 10 years at the company's New Jersey office, Aguilar moved to Denver.

But the company closed its Denver office soon after in 2004. That's when Aguilar started her own firm, which now has five employees.

“I had contemplated a few times whether I wanted to start my own business even when I was a video producer in New Jersey. I thought, ‘I could do this and run this type of business.’ But I never did it,” Aguilar said. “When they closed the Denver office I thought, ‘This is an opportunity to take another job, or take a chance and do what I always said I could do.’”

In January 2005, Aguilar opened Aguilar Public Relations. McDonald's USA became her first client. Aguilar was in charge of creating media strategies and branding in a 20-state zone for the fast-food chain.

Her business started to grow, both in clients and staff. The firm serves a variety of clients, including the Colorado Contractors Association and [University of Colorado Hospital Foundation](#). And Aguilar still has ties to AT&T – her firm handles the company's public relations in six Western states.

[Tracy King](#), vice president of public affairs for AT&T's Western region, met Aguilar some 10 years ago during King's first few days with the company. King said Aguilar has what she refers to as “innovator's DNA.”

“She realizes the value of networking,” King said. “She constantly learns new ways of doing things and brings that knowledge back to her clients. That ability to absorb and assimilate information and bring it back to clients is something we should all hone.”

As a Latina, Aguilar is passionate about using her professional talents to support the Latino population through local and national projects.

Aguilar sits on the organizing committee for Las Madrinas for El Centro Jaun Diego, which serves Latino immigrants and families in need in the Denver area. She belongs to the National Association of Latino Elected Officials and the [Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce](#).

Aguilar said the lack of Latinos in leadership positions at state and national levels disturbs her. She said the best way she can improve Latino leadership is through her work.

“I’m not the person out there who’s an elected official or in the newspaper all the time; that’s not my job,” Aguilar said. “My job is to position other people, to promote the talents of Latinos in a way that promotes positive images of Latinos, and to make sure we have positive leadership representation.”

Aguilar isn’t just a business leader and a champion for the Latino community; she’s also a wife and mother. But she keeps it all balanced, King said, saying no part of Aguilar’s life suffers.

“One of the things I’ve got to applaud her on is something we all need to work on; she’s got a work/life balance I would love to emulate,” King said. “She takes time to invest in herself, in her children, in her marriage, in her clients. And she does it all with a smile on her face.”

Aguilar is proud of her employees’ growth on the job. Their well-being is a top priority for her.

“It’s a great accomplishment to me not that I’ve grown as a business leader, but that they’ve grown in their leadership capabilities,” Aguilar said. “It’s important to me that our growth continues to contribute to the greater good of the team. That, to me, is important as a business leader. It’s critical to my own success.”

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