

PRESS RELEASE

In a remarkable journey that mirrors the most captivating Silicon Valley success stories, Center for Employment Training (CET) emerged from humble beginnings in a small room behind Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in East San Jose in 1967. Today, CET stands tall as a historical pillar of success under the extraordinary leadership of its President and CEO, Hermelinda Sapien.

Mrs. Sapien's incredible career at CET is nothing short of awe-inspiring. From her early days as Administrative Assistant, she climbed the ranks, breaking ground in various newly created positions. She became an inspiring leader in roles such as Human Resources Director, Chief Administrative Officer, Deputy Director (VP), and ultimately, President and CEO (Executive Director). Nationally recognized, Mrs. Sapien has tirelessly championed advocacy and public policy initiatives for farmworkers and underserved populations.

In 1999, a pivotal moment in CET's history, Mrs. Sapien assumed the role of President and CEO, steering the ship through turbulent times following the retirement of CET's first Executive Director, Russell Tershy. Displaying unwavering leadership and a skillful touch, Mrs. Sapien, alongside a dedicated management team, rescued CET from potential demise and propelled it to thrive. Today, after 25 years under her visionary leadership, CET is a respected, accredited, premier Career Technical Education institution, operating 12 centers from California to Virginia and Texas.

The CET Board of Directors, staff, and students are extremely grateful for the contributions that Mrs. Sapien has made. We have been very fortunate and very blessed to have had Mrs. Sapien as our President and CEO. She dedicated her life to ensuring the financial stability of CET and guaranteeing that the needs of the students of CET were being met. As a result of Mrs. Sapien's efforts, CET continues to be a national leader in serving farmworkers. The CET Board of Directors honors and thanks Mrs. Sapien for her 55 years of service and leadership as we announce that she will be retiring on June 30, 2024. As we bid a heartfelt farewell to our beloved President and CEO, Hermelinda, who dedicated an incredible 55 years to CET, we eagerly anticipate the next chapter in CET's history. After her retirement, The CET Board of Directors has named Mrs. Sapien CEO Emeritus and Lifetime Board Member.

The CET Board has diligently and carefully selected the next President and CEO who will lead CET with the same passion, mission, and care of founders Anthony Soto, Russel Tershy and of course, Hermelinda Sapien. Our Board of Directors are thrilled to announce the appointment of Deacon Rubén Solorio as the next President and CEO. A devoted CET Board Member and the current President and CEO of Father Mateo Sheedy's Sacred Heart Community Schools, Deacon Rubén brings a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of CET's culture and values.

Deacon Rubén's roots in the communities he serves align seamlessly with CET's mission. His transition into the leadership role promises to continue CET's remarkable journey and introduce a new vision that will undoubtedly elevate CET to greater heights in the years to come.

Join us in expressing gratitude to Hermelinda Sapien for her outstanding leadership and welcoming Deacon Rubén Solorio as he leads CET into an exciting new era of innovation, growth, and success.

Message from Mrs. Hermelinda Sapien:

“It is with great humility that I tender my retirement announcement to the CET Board of Directors. CET gave me the opportunity to grow professionally and do what I love.

I honor every student, past, present and future. Students are the heart and soul of CET. Their courage and sacrifices make them the real heroes of CET.

I thank the CET Board who supported me, placed their full trust in me, and guided me through difficult times. I honor all CET Instructors who have dedicated their lives to serving and educating students. I thank our management team and all staff for their unconditional support during my 55 years at CET. I have always believed that our secret to success is the dedicated CET management team, staff and instructors who share their talents and knowledge so that others overcome the struggles of deprivation.

I welcome my successor Deacon Ruben Solorio. Ruben has already established a legacy of his own. He is a servant leader in his own right and will be a great successor in protecting and carrying on CET’s mission.”

Message from Deacon Rubén:

"It is with great hope and enthusiasm that I humbly accepted the position of President and CEO for CET. I am passionate about the mission of CET and align deeply with CET’s vision and values. I resonate deeply with the experiences of the communities that CET serves. I grew up in East San Jose, and I have a strong commitment and love for the Washington Gardner community that dates to my time with Sacred Heart Community Services on the corner of Virginia and First Streets. For the past 25 years, I have been serving this community that has given me so much love, support, and formation. I have great confidence that my skills, vision, and disposition will help me as I step into this role of servant leadership.

I bring with me a wide range of leadership experiences as an administrator, director, and manager. My career as a President & CEO has taught me to follow a collaborative, relational, and empathetic leadership model. My efforts and work ethic are based on fostering a community where collaboration has a paramount place, creating an environment in which all team members feel heard and valued. This has helped me create a community that has a shared understanding of vision and mission, leading to a collective movement toward a common goal.

I find my life’s vocation fulfilled in the service of others and I bring that passion to every leadership opportunity I have been given. Together, I can imagine a future filled with possibility and opportunity. My heart is on fire, with a passion to use my extensive experience to serve and to love the many communities that CET serves in Alexandria, El Paso, and throughout California. I want to be clear that this love is not limited to our 12 communities, and I look forward to the many more communities we will love together throughout the United States.”

“¡Si Se Puede!”

Respectfully,

CET Board of Directors