



**Executive Office, City of Providence, Rhode Island**

VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.

MAYOR

November 24, 1993

The Honorable Members  
The City Council of the  
City of Providence  
City Hall  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Honorable Members;

Pursuant to Section 302 (b) of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980 and Section 8-17 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Providence, I am this day appointing Mr. Roberto Gonzalez of 21 Obadiah Brown Road, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as an Associate Justice of the Housing Court for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 1995 and respectfully submit the same for your approval.

Mr. Gonzalez will fill the unexpired term of Associated Justice Robyn Y. Davis who has resigned.

Sincerely,

*Vincent A. Cianci*  
VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.  
Mayor of Providence

VAC:cmh

IN CITY COUNCIL  
DEC 16 1993  
READ  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED. AND APPROVED  
*Michael R. Clement* CLERK

IN CITY COUNCIL  
DEC 2 1993  
FIRST READING  
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON  
FINANCE  
*Michael S. Bennett*  
CLERK

FILED  
NOV 24 1 28 PM '93  
DEPT. OF CLERK  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

# RAPPOPORT, AUDETTE, BAZAR & FARLEY, Inc.

20 Catamore Boulevard, East Providence, Rhode Island 02914-1204

(401) 431-2100

### ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Stephen M. Rappoport\*  
Robert P. Audette  
David N. Bazar  
Michael J. Farley\*  
Roberto Gonzalez  
Jack R. DeGiovanni, Jr.  
Andrew S. Caslowitz

Bernice Stone\*  
Lauren DiSimone Wilkins  
Mary Ann Violette\*  
Laura Jean Marocco\*  
Leonard M. Cordeiro\*  
Dean G. Robinson  
Sharon E. Collins

\*Also Member Massachusetts Bar

### TELECOPIER COVER LETTER

TO: Michael Clements DATE: 12-6-93  
TELEX NO: 421-6492 TIME SENT: 2:18  
FROM: Roberto Gonzalez PAGES: 5  
Rappoport, Audette, Bazar & Farley, Inc. Including Cover Sheet

IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE ALL PAGES, PLEASE CALL THE FOLLOWING NUMBER: (401) 431-2100

AND ASK FOR: Roberto

### OTHER INFORMATION:

As per your request

### CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

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## ROBERTO GONZALEZ, ESQ.

21 Obadiah Brown Road Providence RI 02909 861-0576

**OBJECTIVE:** To continue my professional and personal growth, and to use my talents and abilities to help my family and my community.

**EDUCATION:** New England School of Law, Juris Doctor (1986)  
Rhode Island College, Master of Arts in Counseling (1978)  
Rhode Island College, Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (1975)

**EXPERIENCE:** Partner and practicing attorney in the law firm, Rappoport, Audette, Bazar & Farley, Inc., 20 Catamore Blvd., E. Providence, RI 02914 (January 1990 to present). Thirteen attorney law firm concentrating in personal injury, workman's compensation, social security, domestic, criminal, and immigration law.

Attorney in the law firm, Watt, Galvin & Gonzalez, 84 Ship Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903 (1987 to 1990).

Director, Educational Opportunity Center, Rhode Island College (1980 to 1987). The Educational Opportunity Center is federally funded project designed to assist low income persons in: obtaining financial assistance; enrolling in a postsecondary program; and, successfully completing their studies. The director is responsible for the coordination and supervision of a staff of twelve persons located in six offices throughout the state. Duties include: overall planning, proposal and report writing, fiscal management of an annual budget of approximately .3 million dollars, networking with financial aid, admissions and support programs, preparing public relations materials, and making presentations to groups.

Assistant Director, Student Development Programs, Rhode Island College (1978 to 1980). Major responsibilities included: planning, proposal writing, public relations, administration, fiscal management, staff supervision, assisting students with financial aid, admissions, and support services.

Counselor, Upward Bound Project, Rhode Island College (1975 to 1978). Duties included: state-wide recruiting, counseling, working with financial aid and admissions procedures, and developing and maintaining effective networks with schools and community based agencies.

**AFFILIATIONS:** Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, 1991.  
Providence School Committee, 1978 to 1983, and 1987 to present.  
John Hope Settlement House, Board Directors member 1980 to 1991, vice-president of the Board of Directors, 1988 to 1991.  
Commission to Study the Future of the Courts, commission member, 1988 to 1991.  
United Way of Southern New England, board member, 1989 to 1993.  
R.I. College Alumni Association Board of Directors, 1989 to 1993.  
Boyscouts of America, Narragansett Council board member, 1989 to 1991.  
Rhode Island Constitutional Convention, delegate to the convention, member of committee on the Judiciary and chairman of the sub-committee on Judicial Selections, Discipline, and Tenure, 1986 to 1987.  
Volunteer, CASA program of Rhode Island Family Court, 1986 to 1987.  
South Providence Tutorial, Board member 1984 to 1986.  
Roberto Clemente Scholarship Fund, founder and first president 1986.  
Hispanic Pro-education Committee, founder and first president 1986.  
Leadership Rhode Island, class of 1983.  
Puerto Rican Political Action Committee, co-founder and board member, 1982 to 1986.  
Rhode Island Association of School Committee Members, Co-chairperson of the Legislative Committee, 1981 to 1983.  
Coalition of Hispanic Organization, Inc. Vice-president of the board of directors, 1977 to 1980.  
Volunteer, Vista Volunteer Service, 1970 to 1972.  
Latin American Student Organization at Rhode Island College founder and president 1972 to 1975.  
Volunteer, Latin American Community Center, 1969 to 1975.

**PROFESSIONAL  
ASSOCIATIONS:**

R.I. Bar Association, 1987 to present.

American Bar Association, 1987 to present.

American Immigration Lawyer Association, 1991- present.

**SPECIAL  
RECOGNITION:**

Listed in Successful Rhode Islanders, Profiles of Prominent Rhode Islanders (1990 edition).

Grand Marshall 1987 Puerto Rican Day Parade.

Dean's List New England School of Law (1985 to 1986) and Rhode Island College (1974 to 1975).

1987 National Trio Achiever Award. One of six nationwide. National Association of Educational Opportunity Programs.

1980 Charles Willard Achievement Award, by Rhode Island College.

**LANGUAGE  
SKILLS:**

Completely fluent in Spanish.

**INTERESTS:**

Law, politics, and community development.

**PERSONAL:**

Born in New York City on July 22, 1951. Married to the former Aida Linda Matos. Two children, Robert Jr. and Richard.

**REFERENCES:**

Supplied upon request.

## ROBERTO GONZALEZ, ESQUIRE

### A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Roberto Gonzalez was born on July 22, 1951, in New York City. His parents emigrated from Puerto Rico looking for a better life. After spending his childhood in N.Y.C. his family moved to Providence where Roberto has lived since 1968. Although raised in poverty and without a father, Roberto and his two brothers each managed to obtain a college education. Roberto is married to the former Aida Linda Matos. Together they have two children, Roberto Jr., and Ricardo, 18 and 11 years old respectively.

While working a full time job and raising a family Roberto obtained his Juris Doctor degree in 1986 from New England School of Law, in Boston, Massachusetts. Prior educational studies included a Master of Arts degree in Counseling (1978) and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work (1975), both conferred at Rhode Island College.

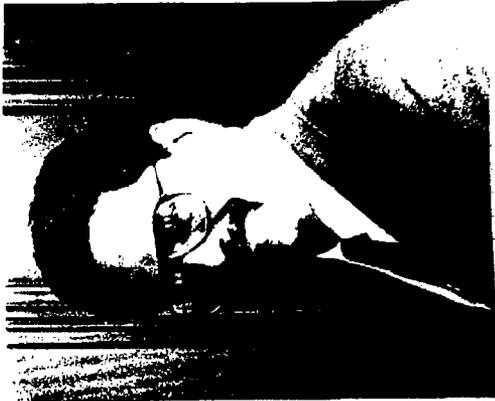
Since 1987 Roberto has been engaged in his full-time law practice. Although a general practitioner, his primary areas of practice are: personal injury, worker's compensation, immigration, family, social security, and criminal law. Since 1990 he has been a partner in the law firm of Rappoport, Audette, Bazar and Farley, Inc. As part of his law practice, Roberto devotes about 25% of his time to providing free legal services to people who cannot afford lawyers. In addition to practicing law Roberto has been active in various committees working to improve the courts and to provide legal services to people in need. Roberto also frequently is called upon to speak at community meetings about the courts and the law. Roberto also serves as free legal counsel to several community agencies. In 1991 and again in 1992 Roberto received the Golden Eagle award for being the best attorney in the Hispanic community.

Prior to becoming an attorney Roberto had a total of 12 years of work experience with the educational programs at Rhode Island College where he served as Director of Educational Opportunity Center (1980 to 1987), Assistant Director of Student Development Programs (1978 to 1980), and Counselor with the Upward Bound Program (1975 to 1978). In 1987 Roberto received a national award for his achievements from the National Association of Educational Opportunity Programs.

In addition to work and school Roberto has kept busy doing volunteer community work. He has served numerous community organizations and agencies. In 1985 he became the first Hispanic elected to office when he ran for a seat as delegate to the Constitutional Convention. In 1978 he was appointed by the mayor to the Providence School Board where he has served for a total of 12 years. In 1990, the Governor appointed Roberto to the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs. In 1991 he appointed him to the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, and, in 1992, he appointed him to the Ethics Commission. Due to an overwhelmingly busy schedule Roberto declined the seat on the Ethics Commission.

# Profile:

## Meet Roberto Gonzalez



"It was a dream I had when I finished my undergraduate work," asserts Gonzalez. "But at that time I was not in a position to pursue it, so I had to put it off." He was concentrating on raising a young family, having married (Ida Linda) while still attending RIC. He needed some financial stability for his growing family before attending law school, but when he got the chance he went for it.

"I've gone through a number of career changes," he said. "I started out as a social worker, getting a bachelor's degree, and from there I went into education." However, he worked as a community organizer first. Then, with a master's degree in counseling, he found work in that category at RIC and began an ascent up through the ranks to the director's position. But in the back of his mind was that ever-present desire to become a practicing attorney.

Gonzalez explains his motivation all along was to help people. It had not always been so, for he was a normal kid and somewhat irresponsible. But his mother instilled in him, as the oldest of 3 boys, a desire to achieve. Later, he was influenced by a priest at St. Edwards Church in Brooklyn where he was an altar boy.

"Father Wicks always gave me the toughest assignments," said Gonzalez. "He said I had leadership qualities and showed me responsibility."

He was also impressed with Sister Solina Ferre whose brother was Governor of Puerto Rico. She was a nun who came from a wealthy Puerto Rican family but chose a lifestyle in service to the people of her parish. Still much later, as a teenager living in Providence, he was influenced by the late Charles Fortes, who headed the Providence Corporation, a social agency.

"Charlie would insist, if you had a talent, use it," he said. So it was a priest, a nun and

When attorney Roberto Gonzalez spoke to the graduates of Rhode Island College's Upward Bound program last month, he had come full circle. He himself was a graduate of the college and later became director of that institution's Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) where disadvantaged minorities are involved in programs leading to upward mobility, in the heart of South Providence. He had been as disadvantaged as those students who are persuaded to enter both programs.

With a bachelor's degree in sociology, a master's degree in education and becoming an administrator of an educational institution, one might imagine that is something to hold on to. It was quite a long haul from being a youth from the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. But no, that was not really what he had in mind. During those years at EOC, Gonzalez would hop on a bus at the end of the day to attend the New England School of Law. He wanted to be a lawyer.

an African American community organizer who served as mentors to Gonzalez, molding him into the caring individual he became.

Following the break-up of her marriage, his mother moved from New York City to Providence where her sister lived. Mom found factory work and had difficulty making ends meet, but her 3 boys were urged to go as far as they could go in school. Of his mother, he states: "She didn't have a lot to give us in terms of material things but she gave us a lot of love and a lot of ambition and made sure that we did well in school." The boys attended Central High School before going to college. Jose also became into education and is now a recruiter at Bryant College while Louis became an engineer with the General Motors Corporation.

Born in Brooklyn, Gonzalez states if his parents had delayed coming to New York by one year he would have begun life in Puerto Rico which he has visited at least a dozen times. He feels an affinity to Puerto Rico and its people who are U.S. citizens and enjoy much of the benefits of other Americans, without paying taxes. He sympathizes with those who want independence for their U.S. island possession, saying the people would "suffer extremely" as an independent Caribbean nation. For those who want commonwealth status, he states this "is like being in limbo, statehood is the only other viable alternative." He admits, however, that his position is based upon not being a resident of Puerto Rico, removed from the politics of the island.

As a practicing lawyer, Gonzalez is in an advantageous position to observe how justice works for Hispanics and Blacks. "They are blind to Hispanic culture and statistics show justice is biased," he asserts. "The justice system has failed minorities." He believes that minorities are prone to commit crime by their low economic status and that they are exposed to violence on a daily basis because of this. That is why he aspires to become a judge someday, so that minorities will receive fair treatment and elevate their perceptions of the judiciary and the criminal justice system.

But he may have to gain a great deal of political support to achieve his goals and this may come by running for an elective office. He had a taste of that when he ran successfully for the State's Constitutional Convention, representing the Washington Park section of Providence. Appointed to the Providence School Committee by former Mayor Vincent Cianci, he has served almost continuously. The exception was when Cianci, before leaving office, re-placed him due to his admitted independent attitude.

Mayor Joseph Paolino, upon taking office, reappointed Gonzalez despite the fact that he would not accede to becoming a "puppet" of the Administration.

That takes a lot of fortitude in the face of political pressure. But his morality and integrity is unyielding, a fact which sets him aside from conventional politicians.

Roberto Gonzalez is an uncommon and proud man, mindful that many minorities look upon him with hope and admiration. He apparently will become a vital individual in the coming years as the minority population continues to grow in Providence.

If not a role model for the community, he certainly is for his two boys, Robert Jr. and Richard. They are 14 and 7 years old, respectively.

State of Rhode Island  
and  
Providence Plantations

THE CITY OF



PROVIDENCE

I, Roberto Gonzalez, do solemnly swear that  
I will support the Constitution of the United States and of the State  
of Rhode Island and the Providence Home Rule Charter and that  
I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of

Associate Justice of the Housing Court

Term to expire on the first Monday in January, 1995  
to the best of my ability.

Roberto Gonzalez  
Roberto Gonzalez

I, Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. Mayor of Providence

do hereby certify that on the 10th day of January, A.D. 19 94,  
I did administer unto Roberto Gonzalez

*duly appointed to the office of*

Associate Justice of the Housing Court

*the above subscribed oath.*

Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.  
VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.