

**Nomination Form**  
**Rev. James C. Wright Human Rights Award**

Send nomination forms to: Equal Opportunities Division Manager  
City of Madison  
Department of Civil Rights

Address: 210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Rm. 523  
Madison, WI 53703  
Or fax to: (608) 266-6514  
Or email to: [dcrcityofmadison.com](mailto:dcrcityofmadison.com)

**Nominations must be postmarked, faxed, or emailed by 4:30 p.m. on the deadline**

<b>Nominee Information</b>	
Check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> X Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Organization
Name:	Mario Garcia Sierra
Address:	120 S Baldwin St Madison WI 53703
Phone number:	608-575-9811
Email address:	<a href="mailto:Marios.sierra@gmail.com">Marios.sierra@gmail.com</a>

Please summarize the contributions this individual has made in civil and/or human rights and explain in detail how they meet the award criteria:

Please read summary below.

***Attach additional pages if needed (2 page maximum). Remember that only submitting a resume will not be sufficient.***

Nominating Person/Organization Information	
Name:	Karen Menendez Coller

Address:	810 W Badger Road Madison WI 53713
Phone number:	608-442-4010
Email address:	karen@micentro.org

Originally from Guatemala City Mario immigrated to Madison WI 15 years ago. He has indigenous roots in Guatemala and a deep commitment to grass roots movements and honoring the right of all communities of color, both in the US and abroad. After immigrating to the US he studied economics at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. He then worked for 6 years as Director of Programs at Centro Hispano of Dane County, the largest organization with a mission focusing on a thriving vibrant Latino community. During Mario’s tenure at Centro he advanced significantly the mission of youth work in the organization to go beyond others empowering our youth, but rather through work that advocated with and helped to advance young people’s own voices. Programming became and remains deeply grounded in the power of community. Mario has a deep sense of humility in his approach to civil rights and community action, never choosing to be in the foreground rather choosing to honor the voice of community’s of color, and respecting them for the asset they are to this city. It would be rare to find Mario missing from an important community action in this city, either as an organizer or as a participant.

After leaving Centro, Mario transitioned to working at Madison Gas and Electric currently the Customer Engagement and Community Development Manager. In his role he is heavily involved in community engagement strategies around issues of sustainability, dedicated to engaging equitably public opinion into company-wide energy initiatives. As part of his portfolio Mario oversees “Living in Balance”, a marketing strategy to customer engagement showcasing a vision for sustainability that is grounded in the culture and history of communities of color. Living in Balance, speaks of sustainability as part of the history of communities of color, present in the day –to-day lives, and important for the futures of our communities. The vision is innovative in that it does not speak of sustainability as something driven from the outside in, but legitimately speaks of it as a movement for a just way of life that is inherently wanted by all of us. Living in Balance is equitable, acknowledging the humanity in all of us and our connection to the land and in turn our future. Through his marketing efforts he has partnered with colleagues that share in his vision for respect of community, recognizing that for MGE to be sustainable in efforts at sustainability it should involve energy partners but also community partners. His portrayal of and engagement with Latino, Black and Hmong residents of Madison is accurate, beautiful, and above all dignified.

While at MGE, Mario has also continued to be significantly involved in groups that advocate for the rights of communities of color in a number of different ways. He currently serves on the board of directors of Centro Hispano. He is the ex-officio board chair. During his tenure as chair, the organization launched its latest strategic framework to strengthen the internal systems and processes of an organization that has been in existence for over 30 years, crucial to a thriving Latino community. He has also served on the steering committee for Voces De la Fronera – Madison chapter, and has been an important member since he first arrived in Madison, heavily involved in Days without Latinos 2016 and 2019, a statewide day of advocacy for the rights of immigrants and refugees drawing tens of thousands of Latinos to the Capitol from across Wisconsin. He has also served on the board of Freedom Inc and committees for the City of Madison, United Way, and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Mario’s connection to communities of color is real - you would be hard pressed to find anyone who does not respect him or his approach. This is because he is a part of the community. And the Latino, Black, and Hmong community has equally nurtured him since he immigrated to the US. Mario exemplifies all this award stands for – he is committed to ensuring equitable programming, portrayal of communities of color and is always

willing to advocate alongside them. His work has touched multiple levels and through his efforts he has substantially advanced civil rights in this City as well as human rights for Latinos and other in Dane County.