

SPOTLIGHT

Marilka Velez

Associated Bank

(Member since January 2018)



*Marilka Velez and her husband, David Muehlbauer
enjoying Milwaukee Brewers Spring Training in Arizona*

We believe, subject to challenge, that Barbara and Marilka Velez are the first mother/daughter combo membership in our Club's history. In addition, Marilka is just the second Latina to join the Rotary Club of Milwaukee.

Imagine that!

Marilka is a Milwaukee native, and also very proud and connected to her Puerto Rican roots. She is fluent in Spanish and studied in Spain during her college experience.

A summa cum laude graduate of Mount Mary University, Marilka earned a BA in Graphic Design & Spanish. She was also invited to attend the highly competitive Business Perspectives for Creative Leaders workshop at Yale, her father's alma mater.

Marilka has more than 15 years of creative, technical and business experience. A branding and digital marketing expert, Marilka is a rare combination of creativity and organization. She is the Senior Vice President Marketing Creative Services for Associated Bank. She joined Associated Bank just two and a half years ago and has helped shepherd the marketing integration of five Associated acquisitions, including Bank Mutual, Diversified Employee Benefits, Whitnell Wealth Management, Anderson Insurance and the Wisconsin branch network of Huntington.

Marilka leads the 10-person in-house creative team for Associated Bank with responsibility to develop all branch merchandizing, social media, consumer based and business to business communications and media. In addition, the creative staff manages the relationships with affinity-based partners including the Milwaukee Brewers, Green Bay Packers, Minnesota Wild Hockey,

Wisconsin Badgers and Milwaukee Film. Since joining Associated Bank, Marilka has been instrumental in the evolution of the creative team from a production-based staff to a strategic business partner with a seat at the table during strategic business decisions. This makes the projects she oversees more rewarding and integral to Associated's success.

Marilka is a member of the Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee and serves on the Board of Directors of The Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee. She has volunteered for Sojourner Family Peace Center, Urban Ecology Center and the Starving Artists Art Fair among others.

Rotary has helped Marilka feel more informed and connected to the people and projects of Milwaukee. "It's empowering to observe how leaders tackle Milwaukee's unique challenges with energy and passion. It's informative to learn the time, collaboration, planning and resources it takes to shape our skyline and improve our communities. I am excited about joining the World Service Committee. I know Rotary is good resource to help shape my global view, and I am excited to go with fellow members on the upcoming Guatemala trip."

Marilka doesn't do anything halfway. "I strive to be an engaged Milwaukeean. I think Milwaukee is a richly diverse city and has so much potential, creativity and talent yet to be tapped. I want to surround myself with, and be a contributor to, the people who will make this city thrive and elevate its diversity".

Rotarians have impacted Marilka's view. "I meet the BEST, most open and interesting people from all walks of life." She also sees areas RCM can broaden. Marilka suggests expanding the membership base to include more women, minorities and emerging leaders. She also hopes for more flexibility in arranging meeting times to reflect the shifting demands of today's workplace.

In her limited free time Marilka is an avid runner, enjoys knitting, cooking and decorating her beautiful post-modern home. She and her husband are also experienced international travelers. She's a great friend and daughter, to boot.

Marilka and her husband, David Muehlbauer, live in Wauwatosa with their much-loved French Bulldog Guava.



Editor's Note:

This year we will feature the popular Spotlight series bi-weekly. The week of March 1 we will profile Richie Burke of GoGeddit Marketing Media. Rotary Spotlight is written by RCM Board Member (and its Sergeant at Arms) Barbara Velez.

