



## STROUD VE SPOTLIGHT!

### CEO CORNER – MARILYN STROUD, MBA

*Vocational Expert and Training Consultant*

Our mission at Stroud Vocational Expert Services, LLC (Stroud) is to “better serve our customers by bringing together a broad base of talent with specialized knowledge and experience representing the field of forensic science.” Over the last few years, we have reached out to rehabilitation professionals throughout the United states and Puerto Rico to fulfill our company’s mission to build a strong company that can only happen through embracing diversity. We are proud that Stroud represents that same diversity with our team being located from “sea to shining sea” and now in Puerto Rico.



The strength of diversity will in turn further the remaining values Stroud supports - respect, integrity, honesty, and loyalty. I have long believed in the strength of diversity to ensure a company’s success...diversity in cultural and demographic backgrounds and in educational and professional backgrounds. Diversity drives innovation by bringing together new ideas and understanding of values. Finally, while Stroud is built on the practice of customer service and helping others, customer service is both internal and external and involves ensuring that our customers can depend on us and be supported by the values that our company believes in.

Let us now take time to get to know Nahira Flores, JD, MRC, CRC...and VE!!!

Stroud Academy / VELAUNCHPAD though 1 October 2020...

#### POTENTIAL SAVINGS



429

less commute hours



\$49.78K

training savings



29

better skilled people



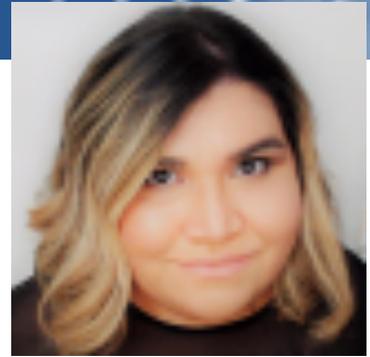
-6.93Mgco<sup>2</sup>

environmental impact



**Nahira J. Flores Vázquez, JD, MRC, CRC – Vocational Expert**

Nahira J. Flores Vázquez is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She has a bachelor’s degree in Communications (Public Relations and Advertising) and master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Puerto Rico, as well as a Juris Doctor from the University of Puerto Law School. She has served as a disability advocate for local organizations and has provided vocational and counseling services for individuals with disabilities.



***What made you want to become an SSA VE?***

What made me want to become a Vocational Expert for the Social Security Administration (SSA) was the opportunity to be able to merge my law studies and my experiences as a rehabilitation counselor. It is the perfect match! It is a great opportunity to be able to serve individuals with disabilities and at the same time, be able to be part of a process that involves laws and procedures regarding SSA.

***What is your Area of Specialization?***

My area of specialization consists of reasonable accommodations assessments, accessibility and ergonomic evaluations, disability policy development and advocacy, vocational evaluations, job counseling and job placement. I also have previous experience in mental health case management and have assisted individuals with a wide range of development, cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities.

***Did your sense of fulfillment transfer across from direct assistance to people with disabilities to the courtroom?***

One of the most important lessons I have learned as a counselor is to assist individuals with disabilities, in achieving their maximum level of independence through multiple services. It is a duty that never ends. Although, as a vocational expert my services focus on providing the most accurate information through my impartial vocational testimony. In that sense, my fulfillment has definitely transferred across.

***How did the Stroud training program prepare you for your first testimony experience?***

Stroud’s training program truly helped me prepare for my first testimony and provided me all the information that was needed for the process. One of the areas that I appreciated and valued most of the training process was having the opportunity to do live sessions with Stroud’s staff. They motivated me and made me feel confident using my previous experiences and combining them with all the new material. Certainly, I believe that without Stroud’s training I would not have been able to feel prepared for my first experience.

***How do you find the varied experiences as an impartial witness for the SSA?***

It is a unique and enriching diverse experience! As an impartial witness for the SSA, my duty focuses on being able to provide neutral information. I believe that vocational experts play a necessary and significant role in supporting people with disabilities.

***What is the one thing you would want anyone entering this career field to know?***

I would like everyone to know that is a very exciting and rewarding opportunity. It challenges you, but at the same time, it gives you a profound sense of accomplishment and it is a never-ending learning process. Therefore, it is O.K. to feel scared at the beginning or to make mistakes while in training. The most amazing aspect of it is that you are truly never alone, and you have a group of amazing professionals supporting you every step of the way.

**Stay tuned for November...where we’ll showcase another amazing SSA VE from the Stroud team!!!**