



## Session 16 | The Path to Creating Civilian Oversight in Mexico

August 17, 2020

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EDT

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Since 2014, NACOLE has been working with governments, NGOs, academics, and practitioners in a long-term effort to create civilian oversight in Mexico. After years of training, international exchanges, and consultation, in 2019 the Citizen Council for Security and Justice for the State of Puebla (CCSJ) held an international conference with oversight practitioners and human rights advocates from the U.S., Jamaica, and across Latin America. The conference also included the signing of an agreement between the government and the CCSJ, initiating a project to create civilian oversight in Puebla, Mexico's fourth-largest city.

Attendees will learn about the challenges and opportunities for creating and establishing oversight in the face of difficult odds and within a different political, historical and cultural context. In addition, they will discover how the core principles of oversight and community involvement transcend those differences and can inform their thinking with new and innovative strategies.

### Speakers:

- Alejandro Espriú Guerra, Executive Director, Citizen Council for Security and Justice, Puebla, MX
- Miguel Garza Flores, Director of Investigation, INSYDE, Mexico City, Mexico
- Rafael Alejandro Miranda Nava, Program Management Specialist, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau (INL), U.S. Department of State, Mexico City, Mexico
- Liana Perez, Director of Operations, NACOLE, Tucson, AZ
- Nelson Vargas, Law Enforcement Capacity Building Team Leader, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Mexico City, Mexico

### Moderator:

- Brian Corr, Executive Secretary, Police Review and Advisory Board and NACOLE Past-President, Cambridge, MA

## Speaker Biographies

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**Brian Corr** | Brian Corr is the immediate past president of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE), a nonprofit organization that works to enhance fair and professional law enforcement responsive to community needs; increase accountability and transparency in policing; and build community trust through civilian oversight.



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Brian has worked as Executive Secretary of the Police Review & Advisory Board for the City of Cambridge, MA since September 2010, and as Executive Director of the city's Peace Commission since 2008. The Police Review & Advisory Board is the city's civilian oversight agency, while the Peace Commission works with other municipal agencies, communities of faith, nonprofit organizations, and the community as a whole to build connections and strengthen relationships; promote positive dialogue and foster understanding; and coordinate compassionate community responses to support recovery and healing in the wake of traumatic events and violence affecting Cambridge and its residents. Before joining the municipal government, Brian worked as the first statewide field organizer for the ACLU of Massachusetts, where he organized "civil liberties task forces" across the state, including one focused on civilian oversight in response to allegations of police misconduct and racial profiling in the City of Lawrence, MA.

Brian has served on the NACOLE board of directors since 2012, and served as the association's vice-president in 2013-2014, and served as president from 2016 to 2019. He served as chair of the organization's Strategic Planning Committee in 2015 and 2016, and served as co-chair of the Annual Conference Planning Committee from 2012 to 2015.

From 2009 to 2012, Brian served on the board of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, a Boston-area nonprofit that assists and empowers both families who have lost children to homicide and families whose children have taken a life — while conducting education and advocacy work to raise awareness of the causes and consequences of violence on individuals, families, and communities.

Brian has attended the past ten NACOLE annual conferences, where he earned the Certified Practitioner of Oversight credential. He holds certifications in Group Crisis Intervention and Post-Traumatic Stress Management/Psychological First Aid and has completed the Police Chaplain Twelve Core Courses Training through the International Conference of Police Chaplains, and has also completed a 35-hour train-the-trainer session in Trauma-Informed Policing. He graduated with a B.A. in Russian Literature and Language from the University of Michigan in 1986 and has completed the Negotiation and Leadership course at the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School.

**Alejandro Espriú Guerra** | Alejandro Espriú Guerra has attended the NACOLE conference in previous years. His professional experience includes being an advisor to the Mexican Federal Ministry of Public Security and Director of Applied Investigation on Police at the Institute for Security and Democracy (INSYDE), where he coordinated projects aimed at boosting democratic reform of the police forces in Mexico, with a special focus on transparency and accountability mechanisms. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Citizen Council for Security and Justice for the State of Puebla.

**Miguel Garza Flores** | Miguel Garza Flores has attended the NACOLE conference in previous years. He has presented at a wide range of events across Latin America, including at the 2018 Citizen Security Forum, where he gave his presentation "Police Reform and Citizen Participation" before an audience of 600, including community members, students, academics, representatives of civil society, business people, and public security officials. He is a former police officer and Director in police reform at INSYDE.

**Rafael Alejandro Miranda Nava** | Rafael Alejandro Miranda Nava has over 25 years of professional experience in law enforcement and public safety in Mexico and as a National Center of Credibility Assessment certified polygraph examiner through the Department of Defense. Mr. Miranda is currently



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in charge of anticorruption projects within the Police Professionalization Program in the International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau at the Merida Initiative, an initiative that has bolstered Mexico's efforts to improve security, enhance criminal prosecutions and rule of law, build public confidence in the justice sector, improve border security and reduce irregular migration, and promote greater respect for human rights.

**Liana Perez** | Liana Perez has held the position of Director of Operations for NACOLE since 2014. She assists the President, Board of Directors and Director of Training & Education with the day-to-day operations of the organization. Ms. Perez was formerly the Independent Police Auditor for the City of Tucson & the Director of the City of Tucson's Office of Equal Opportunity Programs for over 17 years. She was the City of Tucson's first Independent Police Auditor, entrusted with establishing the office and creating effective oversight for the community. Upon her retirement in 2014, she chose to continue her work in the field of civilian oversight as a contractor for NACOLE.

During her tenure as the Independent Police Auditor, Ms. Perez served two separate terms on the NACOLE Board of Directors, assisting with the conference planning, membership and finance committees.

She is a fifth generation Tucsonan and has worked in the field of civil rights for over twenty years with the City of Tucson and with the Arizona Attorney General's Civil Rights Division. She has a degree in Business Administration from Pima Community College, a certificate as a Certified Public Manager from Arizona State University and attended the University of Arizona.

**Nelson Varga** | Nelson Vargas, Jr. entered into the Law Enforcement community in July 1984 beginning with the New York City Police Department as a NYC Police Officer, promoting to NYC Detective in 1988 and then promoting to the rank of Sergeant in 1996. During his tenure at the NYPD, Mr. Vargas served and managed in many units within Organized Crime Control Bureau of the NYPD and has received numerous awards from the NYPD, to include the Combat Cross, the second highest award given by the NYPD. In 1999, Mr. Vargas retired from the NYPD and pursued a position within the Drug Enforcement Administration as a Special Agent. Mr. Vargas served in the DEA Philadelphia Division from June 2000- November 2004, and from November 2004 to August 2008 served as a Special Agent and Acting Group supervisor at the DEA Bogotá Country Office specializing in heroin investigations and poppy eradication missions in the rural mountains of Colombia. Mr. Vargas was then promoted and assigned to the DEA Guadalajara Resident Office as the DEA Resident Agent in Charge from August 2008 to June 2011. Mr. Vargas's area of responsibility covered the Mexican states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, Colima and Guanajuato. Mr. Vargas was then transferred back to the DEA Philadelphia Division as the Group Supervisor for the Suburban Task Force, a Task Force comprised of DEA Agents and Police Officers assigned to five surrounding suburbs of Philadelphia and tasked with targeting high level drug cartels. In November of 2012, Mr. Vargas was selected to be the Country Attaché of Uruguay and reported on April 19, 2013. In August 2017, Mr. Vargas was reassigned to DEA HQ where he served as an Inspector at the Office of Inspections, Staff Coordinator at Office of Foreign Operations and Transnational Organized Crime- Strategic Division. Mr. Vargas retired from the DEA in July 2019.

Mr. Vargas presently works as the Law Enforcement Capacity Building Team Leader for the DoS/INL bureau in Mexico City, running and coordinating Police Professionalization programs for Federal, State and Municipal Police departments in Mexico.



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A native New Yorker, and born to parents of Puerto Rican descent, Mr. Vargas was also raised in Puerto Rico and is a native Spanish speaker. Mr. Vargas holds a B.S. in Organizational Management from St. Josephs College in Brooklyn, NY. Mr. Vargas is married to his wife Sandra, a native of Medellin, Colombia. They have three children, one boy, Juan Camilo and twin girls, Salome and Violeta.



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