

BOWDOIN COLLEGE
2020 Common Good Award
Juan P. Bonilla '95

Juan P. Bonilla, member of the Class of 1995, you have made it your life's work to lift up your home community of Lawrence, Massachusetts, and its residents. You have devoted your considerable skills and expertise in personal finance, management, housing, and economic policy, as well as your passion for social justice and economic opportunity, to provide a better life for the diverse low- and moderate-income population you serve.

Born in Puerto Rico, at age nine you moved with your family to Lawrence, where you grew up learning about both the need and opportunity for revitalization in your community. At Bowdoin you majored in sociology and Spanish and were active in several cultural organizations, and you began building on your academic foundation to acquire practical skills that would enable you to be an effective community leader and advocate. While still a student at Bowdoin, you worked as a youth employment training counselor; after graduation you took a job as an assistant grocery store manager; and then you worked as a financial planner and financial services advisor for MassMutual, before you arrived at Lawrence CommunityWorks (LCW) in 2004. You began at LCW as a homeownership counselor, later becoming director of homeownership, then director of the asset building department, and later ascending to your current position as deputy director.

Throughout this time, you have served your community in multiple and significant capacities—volunteering as a member of the

Merrimack Valley YMCA board of directors, The Midas Collaborative board of directors, the board of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, and the Federal Reserve Bank Community Advisory Council and as a mentor for the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club. You have received certifications from NeighborWorks, the Massachusetts Citizens Housing and Planning Association, Mass Housing, United Way of Mass Bay, the Institute of Nonprofit Management and Leadership, and UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza), for which you were a national training provider. In 2014, the Lawrence Bar Association honored you with its Liberty Bell Award, recognizing your work “on the forefront of educating families on how to acquire and maintain homeownership successfully,” as well as your advocacy “against the dangers of predatory lending and mortgage fraud.” In 2019, you were named as one of five Neighborhood Fellows of the Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning master of public policy program.

Your colleagues have called you “a ferocious and knowledgeable advocate for economic justice and prosperity in our community.” For all that you have done to improve the lives of members of your community—through homeownership, economic counseling, and increased opportunity—we are proud to present you with the 2020 Common Good Award. We join your family, classmates, friends, colleagues, and the people you serve in honoring you.



CLAYTON S. ROSE
President of the College

MAY 30, 2020

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