

M A R I A D. V I L L A

Maria D. Villa is a principal of Lathrop & Villa, a law firm she co-founded in 1992. She was the first Hispanic attorney elected to the State Bar Board of Governors, serving as vice president and treasurer. She is a founding fellow of the State Bar Foundation. Ms. Villa and several of her colleagues formed the Latina Lawyers Bar Association at her offices in Los Angeles County. She is a proud founder and member of the Latina Lawyers Bar Association. She is a past president of the Mexican American Bar Association, where she maintains current membership. Ms. Villa is a past deputy regional president of the Hispanic National Bar Association, where she holds lifetime membership.

Ms. Villa received her B.S. in Business Administration from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and her J.D. from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. She has an active state and federal appellate practice, and has practiced in the areas of employment, business, and plaintiff's class action litigation. Ms. Villa was featured by the *Daily Journal* for her work in the *Pinney v. Great Western Bank* class action.

Ms. Villa is a founding board member of the nationally recognized Loyola Law School Immigrant Justice Clinic. She holds lifetime membership in the Loyola Law School Dean's Forum. She served on the law school's Latino Scholarship Committee and on the Women's Roundtable steering committee. In 1998, she and her husband endowed the Loyola Law School Maria D. Villa Scholarship, which provides annual financial support to deserving Latina law students in perpetuity.

Ms. Villa was a member of the editorial board of the *Los Angeles Lawyer* magazine. She is a former board member of California Women Lawyers, Women Lawyers of Los Angeles, and the Hispanic Professional Roundtable. She has participated in numerous panels on continuing legal education. Ms. Villa served by appointment on the Court and Community-Focused Strategic Planning Team for Los Angeles County. Appointed by the California Supreme Court, she served on the State Bar Court Judicial Evaluation Committee.

Ms. Villa is the recipient of the Latina Lawyers Bar Association Mary V. Orozco Abriendo Caminos Award. She received the Mexican American Bar Association Benito Juarez Attorney of the Year Award. She received the Dolores Huerta Foundation Adelita Community Service Award. Ms. Villa also is the recipient of the American Bar Association Difference Maker Award, the Loyola Law School La Raza Alumna of the Year Award, and the Loyola Law School Board of Governors Alumni Recognition Award for outstanding service to the law school and to the community.

During college, Ms. Villa served as Vice President of M.E.Ch.A. and was the campus coordinator of the M.E.Ch.A. student outreach program. During law school, she was an active member of La Raza Law Students Association and was co-chair of La Raza's Fundraising Committee. Ms. Villa volunteered at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles and appeared as a law student before the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board.

Ms. Villa immigrated to the United States from Tijuana at the age of two, and obtained United States citizenship in 1979. She is the eldest of seven daughters. She speaks and writes Spanish fluently. She lives in Palos Verdes Estates with her husband and teenage son.

Ms. Villa is proud to have mentored many of the leaders of the Latina Lawyers Bar Association and the Mexican American Bar Association. She continues her work to keep the doors of opportunity open for our students through mentorship and scholarships.