

Beatriz Robles Kieser

Country of origin: Mexico

Circumstances of arrival: Beatriz first moved to the United States thirty years ago when she married an American whom she had met while working on her Bachelor's Degree in Linguistics. Being from northern Mexico, where there was a lot of U.S. influence in terms of music and food, and being the granddaughter of an American engineer, Beatriz had a sense of familiarity with and enjoyed U.S. culture.

Work/avocation: Beatriz's career began in linguistics. While raising a young daughter on her own following a divorce, Beatriz started working for Berlitz School of Languages, first in Texas, and then in St. Louis, Missouri. She always wanted to start a business and do the work she loves, which is teaching. So she started writing programs, merging traditional and new styles of teaching to best help students, taking into consideration their learning processes and needs. Beatriz and a woman from Chile whom she met through Berlitz partnered to start Custom Language Services, where Beatriz worked for eleven years. The company offered translations and trainings for nearly all the business headquarters in the St. Louis area. A resident of Oregon for the past fourteen years, Beatriz continues to offer language courses, translations, and programs that address the needs of various organizations, including school districts, local businesses, and the Oregon Research Institute through her company Crosscultural Now. In addition to professional work, she is a committed activist and community organizer. Among other things she has founded a community group called Women for Crosscultural Action, and has participated on boards and committees for United Way, The Trauma Healing Project, Planned Parenthood, Huerto de la Familia, and Centro Latino Americano, among others.

I was very lucky that I did not have to go through all the pain of immigration that mark people for life. I did have different problems but not that.

I love my students. I work with people that are open minded, accepting of other differences.... We need to help, we need to learn.... We are of the same mind: community first.

Basically, you can call me for action. I like that. I like to participate.

Photographer: Melissa "Mimi" Nolloedo