

ISMAEL ORTIZ, JR.
Acting Assistant Secretary
Veterans' Employment & Training Services
(VETS)



Mr. Junior Ortiz is a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the United States Marines and his professional career spans over 30 years of working in government, corporate and the nonprofit sector.

Before coming to VETS, Mr. Ortiz was the Director of Brand Relations for AARP, where he was responsible for designing and implementing marketing and advertising programs, particularly aimed at the Latino and African American markets. He developed and executed national advertising campaigns on print, broadcast and online media, including national bilingual, bi-partisan campaigns to advance healthcare and financial reform. He has been the spokesperson for Spanish language media on such policy issues as Social Security, health care reform, and Medicare, all critical issues impacting seniors and multicultural communities.

Mr. Ortiz served as an enlisted man before being accepted to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland where he received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Marines. His twenty-seven year career in the Marines included Air Defense, Administration, Communication, Counter-drug Operations, Recruiting, Marketing and Advertising for the Marine Corps and for the Department of Defense, as well as professor and coach at the Naval Academy.

Upon retiring from the Marines, Mr. Ortiz worked as Senior Vice President and Director of Government Relations for MBNA America where he was responsible for marketing, new business development and community relations within emerging markets.

Prior to AARP, he was the Principal at Junior Ortiz & Associates, a Washington, D.C.-based public affairs firm equally committed to developing the next generation of young leaders and to analyzing and impacting legislation from a Latino and multicultural perspective.

His responsibilities have ranged from leading thousands of Marines to managing fiscal budgets of hundreds of millions of dollars and helping to pass critical legislation.

Mr. Ortiz has a passion for young people. Through his motivational presentations and leadership development workshops, he has reached thousands of children, teens, and young adults with the message of staying in school, staying off drugs and reaching for their dreams. His story growing up in "Hell's Kitchen" in South Bronx, New York is one that resonates with youth, particularly disenfranchised, gang-involved or traditionally underserved.

He has a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Central Michigan University and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science with a concentration in Latin American studies from the U.S. Naval Academy.

He has served on the corporate board of advisors of several national Hispanic organizations, on the Board of Directors of the National Hispanic Corporate Council and on the Board of Trustees of the Association of Naval Service Officers. He is a Life Member of the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation and the American GI Forum of the United States.