



Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. pictured with Mrs. Carmen Ortiz-Larsen, CEO of Aquas, Inc., the recipient of the Outstanding Business Group Award

**Outstanding Business Group Award  
Ms. Carmen Ortiz-Larsen  
CEO of Aquas, Inc.**

Nominated by Mr. Gary Reguerin

Mr. Gary Reguerin wrote:

**AQUAS, Inc., is a technology firm. As CEO, Carmen Ortiz-Larsen has been an advocate for minority owned small businesses for the last 6 year, serving as the Vice Chair for the Latin American Management Association. She is a member of the Gang Prevention Subcommittee for Montgomery County, she works with the YMCA and the Hispanic Employees Association of the Montgomery County Public School system to develop strategies for after school programs to support at risk youth. Last March she led a fundraising effort resulting in a scholarship for a top achieving Hispanic high school graduate from the Montgomery County Public School system. Ms. Larsen serves on the Business Advisory Committee for Wheaton High School in Montgomery County, Maryland, and is the Vice President of Passion for Learning, a non profit organization seeking to improve opportunities for public school system students in lower income areas of the County. Ms. Larsen serves on the business advisory council of the small business committee in Congress, and is a recent graduate of Leadership Montgomery. She helped organize and successfully managed the Hispanic Business Conference of Maryland in 2003 and 2004, bringing together small and large businesses to promote Hispanic small business growth.**

**In 1990 and 1991 Ms. Larsen provided free research support services to Goodwill Industries of America, working with Jeff Foley of their research department, to develop a model for job training for the disadvantaged and disabled living in rural areas.**

**Ms. Larsen provided job placement assistance to numerous individuals, and gave of her own time to provide guidance to small business owners, such as myself, conduct research on legislation, and advocate on behalf of small business to State and National legislators.**

**As the current President and Chair of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County, she provides guidance and advice to small business owners. Ms. Larsen has assisted them in gaining access to information, training, financing and procurement opportunities. She devotes her time, energy, and funding, to ensure that Hispanic owned small business owners have access to resources to help them succeed. She freely offers her own staff resources to organize events for the Chamber.**