

Emerging Leaders Council Mentor Highlight

Edmund Marquez – Allstate Insurance

It was perhaps fitting to spend time with Edmund Marquez discussing his personal ethos and the values that drive him while sitting in a bustling downtown Tucson restaurant. The gem show was in town. Traffic was hectic. Parking spaces were limited. All signs of a thriving environment, and an ecosystem that Edmund has directly contributed to. The local guy among a lot of other influencers, Edmund knows who he is and the value and voice he brings to the table.

Our discussion was relaxed and straight forward with a focus on why he has invested so much effort into developing Tucson and what drives him. He has clearly been successful, as just a few days ago I heard him introduced as “Mr. Tucson.” But what were the goals he was aspiring to reach and how did he get there? It’s simple - Edmund wants Tucson to be the best version of itself. Not necessarily better than other cities, but certainly competitive enough to be in the running when people and companies are consideration communities to engage.

Edmund’s hopes for Tucson stem from his personal goals. He wants to create comfort for his family and leave a business legacy that has meaning, enduring, and that is monumental in the community. Like Greek sages of old, Edmund returned to the maxim “Know thyself” as the primary step to achieving these goals. To be clear, Edmund didn’t use archaic language, but said, “invest in yourself first”:

“What are your goals? What does your portfolio look like? Do you own your house? Is your retirement plan stuffed with money? Can you pay for your kids to go to college? Do you have three months of income in a savings account? Don’t invest in someone else until you are taken care of. Set your plan. Don’t extend past your ability to invest in yourself by investing in other things. My dad says “pay yourself first.” Beyond paying your regular bills, take money every paycheck and put it away for yourself. Invest in yourself every month. Don’t worry about keeping up with other people’s lifestyles. Stay on your path and trajectory.”

Even more personal:

“Turn the magnifying glass that people use on others and turn it on yourself. Analyze yourself. Don’t let others critique you better than you. Fix yourself. Don’t avoid it and pretend everything is ok. Fix the pieces you don’t like. It’s about what you think about you. Not what others think about you. Beyond business and the community, it all starts with you. If you are happy with yourself, then you can have great relationships with others and can have the impact that you want to have. Be a great individual for who you are, then they can invest elsewhere with high efficacy.”

To invest in yourself, you have to know what your goals and trajectory are. Not knowing what you want or need is like being on a ship without a rudder. The winds of life will blow you around and run you up on the rocks. How do you identify them? Edmund's advice:

1) Get involved, join a board, get in ELC, go to chamber events, get into Greater Tucson Leadership. Don't join junior boards. Challenge yourself and get on bigger boards. Explore and learn. As you find your voice, streamline and focus your energies and resources to maximize your impact in the direction of your interest.

2) Find mentors that will challenge you in different areas: family, work, community, personal advancement.

This same ethos applies to Tucson as well. Tucson has to know its values and balance its community's constituents to find the path forward. It can't strive to be like other cities, but rather must understand its distinctive character and the value it brings to the region. Once it understands that, Tucson has to start saying YES to opportunities so that its residents don't suffer. Tucson is too big an entity not to participate. It will either drag the state down or play a significant role in raising it up. Now is the time to choose.



Edmund Marquez's Allstate agency is the largest captive insurance agency in Southern Arizona, and one of the largest Hispanic-owned Allstate agency groups in the U.S. He currently serves on several Boards of Directors, including the Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District, Southern Arizona Leadership Council, Sun Corridor Inc, Reid Park Zoo, The Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce, is the Chairman of the Board of United Way, and Past-Chairman of the Pima Community College Foundation and the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He is also a proud member of National Leadership Council of the University of Arizona Foundation. Edmund was named the Businessman of the Year in 2004 by the Tucson Hispanic Chamber, awarded the Breath of Life Award in 2012 by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and the Father of the Year by the Father's Day Council in 2016. Edmund has been inducted into the Sabino High School Hall of Fame, the Pi Kappa Alpha Hall of Honor, and the Southern Arizona YMCA Hall of Fame.