

Small business owner and civic leader Rene Gonzalez is running for Portland City Commissioner, Seat 3 as an alternative to Jo Ann Hardesty and needs your help to qualify for the Portland Public Finance Program, which requires 250 Portland donors.

Background. Gonzalez, 47, has worked his entire professional career in Portland after attending Willamette University (Salem, OR) for undergrad and law school. Of mixed heritage, Gonzalez is the son of a Mexican migrant worker who worked his way up to be a federal prosecutor and then trial judge. Gonzalez's mother's family has deep Oregon roots going back to the 19th Century: his great-grandfather was eminent Portland architect Ellis Lawrence, co-founder and first dean of the University of Oregon School of Architecture.

Professional. After receiving a Trustee's Scholarship at Willamette Law School, where he was voted Top Male Student, Rene began his career as a business lawyer at Stoel Rives. In 2005 Rene went in-house at Knowledge Universe and rose through the ranks at what was then Portland's largest private employer, eventually managing its Business Law Group, before leading the Corporate Strategy Team. In 2012, Gonzalez opened a legal and consulting practice, which services business clients throughout the country. He successfully navigated the pandemic without laying off an employee.

Civic Engagement. A lifelong advocate for education, he unified school advocates statewide to champion successfully for the reopening of Oregon schools and youth sports in his leadership of ED300, a 40,000-member organization. Additionally, as president, he grew a small youth soccer club in northeast Portland to become the largest in the state (UPDX) and successfully navigate disruptions brought on by COVID protocols. He also served on the Boards of the Portland Library Foundation and Portland Children's Museum.



Statement on Candidacy. *“Our once beautiful city is struggling in ways that were unfathomable a short time ago. We could be at an inflection point in the story of Portland and I cannot sit back idly and watch the city I love, the city my family has lived in for generations, struggle without working to help solve its problems.*

The city's crime, declining livability, and ideologically driven policy are catalysts for this exploration. We are facing a historic rise in crime, that will require well-supported and staffed law enforcement. Portions of our right-of-ways and parks are unusable, which will require accelerated drug treatment and mental health referrals, prioritizing emergency shelter and ending the 'anything goes attitude' for the unhoused. Finally, we need problem solvers not ideologues to guide the city at this juncture.” -Rene