



**April 30, 2021**

**Margie Emmermann (Armendariz), Class of 1969**

This month's alumni spotlight features Mrs. Margie Armendariz Emmermann from the Class of 1969. Margie's path through Our Lady of Perpetual Help Glendale and Bourgade was a product of her parents' value for Catholic education. Immigrating from Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, Margie's parents both attended Catholic schools and knew it was important for Margie and her four siblings to follow in their footsteps.

Reminiscing on her time at Bourgade, the lifelong friendships are what Margie cherishes most. To this day, she and some of her classmates get together a few times throughout the year. In planning their 50th reunion back in 2019, she and several classmates were getting together even more frequently. In addition to the friendships, Margie fondly remembers her relationship with the teachers at Bourgade. Their kindness and care helped Margie see her potential and eventually led to her joining the National Honor Society. Her involvement in NHS sprouted an interest in helping create better business policies within the government.

After Bourgade, Margie attended Glendale Community College and Arizona State University before getting married and becoming a mother. Throughout her professional journey, Margie was blessed to receive a lot of opportunities and promotions, despite not always having a lot of experience. The trust from managers and leadership to elevate her led to opportunities to educate herself in a variety of areas including telecommunications, banking, commerce, tourism, international policy and more.

The first 20 years of Margie's career were spent in the private sector in telecommunications and banking. Her bilingual skills and drive to help others shined a light on Margie's value. As she noticed Spanish-speaking customers continuously being referred to her, she realized there were very few bilingual employees even though Spanish-speaking customers were responsible for much of the company's success. To help improve accommodations for Spanish-speaking customers, Margie established the first Spanish language call center and was pivotal in helping corporations include service accommodations for minorities.

The success of the call center led to Margie's breakthrough in local government. Serving four governors during her time, Margie held roles as Mexico Policy Advisor, Director of Commerce and Director of Tourism. As Mexico Policy Advisor, Margie accompanied governors at meetings with the Mexican President, in addition to cabinet-level secretaries and US-Mexico Border governors. One month before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Margie was appointed Arizona's Director of Commerce. Despite the challenges the country was facing, Margie and her team were able to establish a home for Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen) in Phoenix. To this day, TGen, as an affiliate of City of Hope, is one of the most prestigious nonprofit medical research institutes in the country. In her work as Director of Tourism, Margie helped Arizona and other western states use their natural resources to drive tourism rather than man-made attractions. This work earned her the National States Tourism Council's Director of the Year award.

In March, the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame (AZWHF) announced Margie as a 2021 inductee. She and her fellow inductees will be recognized and honored during a virtual ceremony on May 6th at 3:00 PM. The AZWHF was established in 1980 to pay tribute to the remarkable women who have played a significant role in the history of the state. Margie's Hall of Fame recognition will be based on her work in community service and government. When asked about the importance of the AZWHF, Margie referenced how the recognition helps showcase the accomplishments and obstacles that women have faced, and she believes that the profiles of AZWHF inductees serve as role models for women. Among the many awards that Margie has earned, this induction is a truly distinctive honor.

We are so proud of Margie and her successes. She is a beacon of inspiration, especially for the women of Arizona, and we are grateful for her support of Bourgade. If you would like to read more about the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame or enjoy the May 6th virtual induction ceremony, check out <https://www.azwhf.org/>.

*Image is courtesy of <https://www.ma-firm.com>*