

# ***Jorge Alexander Sánchez***

## **Biography**

Jorge Alexander Sánchez was born in the city of Medellín Columbia on October 13, 1977. He is the son of Maria Sirlena Duran and Abel Antonio Sánchez.

In 1998, full of dreams and hopes, Jorge immigrated to the United States settling down in New York, eager to learn English and become a brilliant professional. His main aspiration was to finish his university course of study, and upon getting a student visa was accepted to the Kean University. He graduated with honors in the field of Computer Science with a minor in Technology. He continued studying to earn a Master's in Information Technology Management, also graduating with honors.

In 2000, while studying, he met the woman he now calls wife, Paola, who has become a pillar of strength for his achievements. From their union Samuel was born, which is his greatest satisfaction.

His first entrepreneurial undertaking was Interblueweb, a company formed with two friends and a single computer in his living room. He was so successful that readily he needed to relocate to a site in the city of Union New Jersey. Besides his business, Jorge is an IT Specialist and Professor of Computer Science at Kean. From his work at the university, Jorge has been able to help many Hispanic students who like him struggle to overcome limits and reach their dreams. His own experience has served him to understand their difficulties and setbacks, making him very popular with them, seeing in him not just a guide, but also a friend that understands them. His labor and generosity as an active member of his community has led him to the presidency of the Association of Hispanic Workers at Kean University and to form part of their Hispanic/Latino Alumni Council (HLAC).

## **Biografía**

Jorge Alexander Sánchez nació en la ciudad de Medellín, Colombia el 13 de Octubre de 1977. Hijo de Maria Sirlena Duran y Abel Antonio Sánchez.

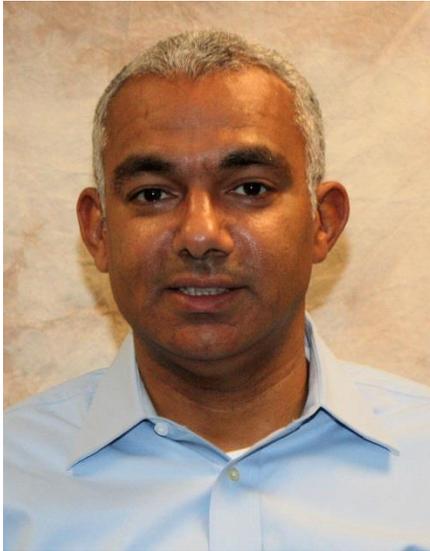
En el año 1998, lleno de sueños e ilusiones, Jorge emigró a los Estados Unidos radicándose en la ciudad de Nueva York con el anhelo de aprender inglés y convertirse en un brillante profesional. Su mayor aspiración era terminar su carrera universitaria y tras conseguir una visa de estudiante fue aceptado en la universidad de Kean. Se graduó con honores de la carrera de Ciencias de la Computación con mención en Tecnología. Continuó estudiando para obtener la maestría en Ciencias del Manejo de la Información, graduándose también con honores.

En el año 2000, mientras estudiaba, conoció a la que hoy es su esposa, Paola, quien se ha convertido en un gran pilar para sus logros. De su unión nació Samuel, quien es su mayor satisfacción.

Su primer emprendimiento fue Interblueweb, una compañía que formó con dos amigos y una sola computadora en la sala de su casa. Fue tal su éxito, que pronto tuvieron que mudarse a un local en la ciudad de Union, Nueva Jersey. Además de su negocio, Jorge es especialista en IT y profesor de Ciencias de la Computación en la universidad de Kean. Desde su trabajo en la universidad, Jorge ha podido ayudar a muchos estudiantes hispanos quienes como él se esfuerzan por superarse y alcanzar sus sueños. Su propia experiencia le ha servido para entender sus dificultades y tropiezos y se ha hecho muy popular entre los estudiantes, quienes ven en él no sólo a un guía sino también a un amigo que los comprende. Su labor y generosidad como miembro activo en su comunidad lo han llevado hasta la presidencia de la Asociación de Trabajadores Hispanos en la universidad de Kean y a formar parte de la Comunidad de Alumnos Hispanos/Latinos (HLAC).

## *Brief Bio*

My name is Steve Cox.



I work for United Parcel Service (UPS). I have been with UPS for 22 years; I started with UPS on September 12, 1994.

I graduated from Long Island University (L.I.U.), C.W. Post with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Marketing. I am an Alumnus of Inroads, Inc. NYC - an internship program whose mission is to develop and place talented underserved youth in business and industry, and prepare them for corporate and community leadership. I also am a HISPA Mentor.

I was born in El Barrio, Spanish Harlem, in New York City. I moved to the Bronx, NY when I was 12. I am the youngest of four boys. I was the first in my family to earn a Bachelor's degree. I graduated, with a Bachelor's Degree, in May of 1989.

My mother was the youngest of 7 children (2 boys and 5 girls). She was the only child in her family born in the U.S. All of her siblings were born in Santiago, Cuba. She was born in Tampa, Fl. My father was the second oldest of 10 children. He and his siblings (7 boys and 3 girls) were all born in St. Lucia.

I am a Lead Business Systems Analyst for UPS. I primarily help develop software that our business needs – for our customers or for internal users. I also help the Information Technology organization to understand and improve our Business Processes.

I am a member of the Latino Business Resource Group (Crecer) at UPS. This group volunteers its time to help out in the community, helps with career development at UPS, and helps UPS continue to grow.

## **Martha Gonzalez**

My story may be similar to yours or someone you may know. I was born in Pereira, Colombia, and was raised in a humble environment. My mother, Leticia, was a seamstress, and my father, Gustavo, was a stay-at-home Dad. I am the oldest of three sisters. One sister, Patricia, is four years younger, and my other sister, Angela, is eight years younger. As is customary in Colombia, our immediate family had the opportunity to enjoy an extended family that included many aunts and uncles and a couple of generations of cousins. Regardless of what country we call “home” our family connections will always remain in place.

My parents worked very hard to provide for our family, but we always faced financial struggles. These struggles forced us to move often, resulting in constantly changing schools beginning at a young age. Often, I did not attend the same school for a complete year, making it very difficult for me to make lasting friendships and develop a sense of belonging. This was one challenge, among others, that I believe over the years made me a strong, independent and courageous individual.

I graduated from an all-girls Catholic high school in Pereira, Colombia, in 1977 at the age of 17. As is common among 17-year olds, I did not know who I wanted to be or what I wanted to study. I only knew that I wanted to earn money and help my family. Knowing the struggles my family constantly experienced, I began researching what options were available that would enable me to alleviate my family’s financial burdens. As I strived to determine the path for my future, so too was the future of computers coming to life. I remember listening to the radio, reading newspapers, and watching television, all agreeing on one common belief -- “Computers are the future.” It was then that I determined what my goal would be, and I decided to go to school to learn about computers. It was not clear to me at the time, but later on I learned that every accomplishment begins with a decision to try. I began to constantly check myself to be sure that what I was doing each day was going to get me closer to where I wanted to be the next day and the day after that.

Next, I took a giant leap that was difficult and sad because it involved leaving my home, my family, and everything I knew to pursue my dream. I decided to leave Colombia, still at the age of 17, and travel to New York with \$100 in my pocket. I was scared of the unknown and the uncertainty, of course, but I was also determined to work hard, make sacrifices and move forward in reaching my goals. One year after I arrived in New York, I enrolled in a two-year Systems/Programming Certificate program at New York University. I never lost sight of my goal, and I learned as much as I could in the Information Technology classes. After completing the program, it was time to find a job, but finding a job in the 1980s was not easy. Additionally, being Hispanic and a young woman trying to enter the workforce added an extra layer of complexity. I applied and interviewed for numerous Information Technology positions unsuccessfully, and, while this was very discouraging, it did not stop me from continuing my search.

My job search eventually led me to a company with an IT department. I believed that getting my foot in the door, even if it was in an unrelated field, might facilitate an IT position in the future. I began working as an accounts payable clerk, but I never gave up on my goal to work in IT. Giving up on my goal was not an option. While at this company, I worked hard to learn new skills and to know the company and its personnel, including management. Then, the day I had been waiting for became a reality. A position in IT became available, and I applied for it as an insider. Finally, I was able to work as a main frame developer (a person what writes computer codes to program the systems), practicing everything I had learned to date, and, more importantly, continuing to learn. I have now worked in IT for over 40 years, and there are times when it still gets difficult. However, the one thing I have learned throughout these years is that one should never stop learning. There is always something new to learn, whether it keeps you on the same path or leads you to a new one.

In spite of obstacles, mistakes and disappointments, I never set aside my goals. I was able to help my parents and sisters financially, and I have been a major contributor to the support of my own family. I continue to learn every day, and I remain persistent in my beliefs and endeavors. Success and prosperity do not come easily for most of us. America truly is the land of opportunity. Reach out and seize the opportunities in front of you. Do not give up on your dreams and on yourself, and, if you really want something, make it happen. There are no limits or boundaries. Only you define who you become.