

# ZORAYA SUAREZ

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## SUMMARY

Dynamic executive communications leader with 20+ years driving strategy, reputation management, and brand growth for Fortune 100 corporations. Proven success advising C-suites, leading crisis communications, building multicultural engagement strategies, and spearheading integrated marketing campaigns that elevate brand equity and stakeholder trust. Recognized as a forward-thinking, bilingual (English/Spanish) strategist who delivers measurable results across financial services, hospitality, higher education, and public sector organizations.

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## SUAREZ STRATEGIES, LLC | Charlottesville, VA

### Founder & Chief Strategist | 2025 – Present

- Lead a boutique marketing and communications consultancy specializing in brand strategy, executive communications, and public relations.
- Partner with corporate, nonprofit, and public-sector clients to develop integrated campaigns that elevate visibility, strengthen reputation, and drive engagement across digital, media, and community channels.
- Provide strategic counsel on storytelling, thought leadership, and organizational messaging that align with business goals and brand purpose.

## WELLS FARGO – Charlottesville, VA

### Branch Operations Manager | 2024 – 2025

- Strengthen customer experience, compliance, and operational risk management in a high-volume branch.
- Led and coached diverse team, ensuring operational excellence, client engagement, and adherence to regulatory standards. Served as a trusted leader fostering talent development while maintaining client relationships.

## PNC BANK – Orlando, FL

### Vice President & Senior Manager, Regional Media Relations (Florida & Georgia) | 2011 – 2023

- Led external communications and media strategy for two key growth markets during PNC's \$3.45B RBC acquisition (2012) and \$11.6B BBVA USA acquisition (2021).
- Secured thousands of high-impact media placements across English and Spanish outlets, elevating market presence beyond share ranking.
- Advised regional presidents and business executives, developing bylined articles, thought leadership content, and executive speeches.
- Drove brand positioning in wealth management, retail banking, healthcare, minority business development, and commercial banking.
- Served as spokesperson and regional social media lead; strengthened community reputation through events, partnerships, and sponsorships.
- Championed diversity and inclusion initiatives as local sponsor of PNC's Latino EBRG, Women's Advocate, and Multicultural BRG.

## WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORTS – Orlando, FL

### Senior Manager, Media Relations | 2006 – 2011

- Directed reputation management, crisis response, and brand promotion for one of the world's largest hospitality brands.
- Served as corporate spokesperson in English and Spanish, managed high-profile crises including fatalities, incidents, and operational issues.

- Partnered with departments spanning Government Relations, Diversity, Community Relations, and Minority Business Development.
- Delivered executive media training and supported senior leaders with speeches, talking points, and strategic positioning.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES – Tallahassee, FL**

### **Director of Communications | 2004 – 2006**

- Led statewide communications for a 14,000-employee agency, serving as chief advisor to the Governor-appointed Secretary.
- Directed 22 public information officers: managed high-pressure crises during the historic 2005 hurricane season alongside the Governor and Lt. Governor.
- Elevated the ratio of positive-to-negative media coverage above 50% while navigating intense public scrutiny and investigations.

## **JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY – North Miami, FL**

### **Director of Communications & Adjunct Professor | 1995 – 2004**

- Senior advisor to the President, overseeing integrated marketing, PR, alumni relations, and publications.
- Directed campaigns generating 10,000 minutes of free TV/radio airtime and 50,000+ newspaper placements.
- Developed institutional branding strategies; created lifesized gingerbread house marketing opportunity, national competitions, coordinated Olympic partnership sending 250 students to the Summer Games with Marriott.
- Taught media relations, professional development, and composition as adjunct faculty.

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## **EDUCATION**

### **Florida International University – Miami, FL**

- M.S., Integrated Advertising & Public Relations
- B.S., Communications | Minor: International Relations
- American Banking Association Certificate

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## **HONORS & RECOGNITION**

- One of four Hispanic executives featured in *Orlando Business Journal*, Hispanic Heritage Series (2023)
- Local Sponsor, PNC Bank Multicultural EBRG (2020–2022)
- United Way Public Affairs Advocate (2009)
- Diversity Chair, PRSA Orlando Chapter; Former Board of Directors, Community Services of Orlando
- Finalist, *South Florida Business Journal* “Up and Comers” Award (2002)
- PRSA Silver Anvil Award, IABC Award of Excellence, APEX Award of Excellence
- Featured on cover of *PR Tactics* as one of “13 PR Pros to Watch”

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## **AFFILIATIONS**

- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Orlando
- United States Sommelier Association of Miami

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## **SKILLS/CORE EXPERTISE**

- Executive & Corporate Communications
- Crisis & Issues Management
- Multicultural Communications & Community Engagement
- C-Suite Advising & Executive Positioning
- Integrated Marketing & Brand Strategy
- Thought Leadership & Content Development