



Dr. Larissa Ruiz Baía, the esteemed Ybor City Campus President at Hillsborough Community College (HCC), brings a wealth of academic prowess and administrative acumen to her role. With a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Florida, Gainesville, Dr. Ruiz Baía's educational journey commenced with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and a minor in Latin American Studies from Brandeis University, followed by a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies from the University of Florida in 1996.

Throughout her illustrious career in higher education administration, Dr. Ruiz Baía has demonstrated exceptional leadership, notably during her tenure at HCC. Over the past two years, her strategic initiatives at the Ybor City Campus have borne fruit, particularly in grant acquisition and program development. Under her guidance, the campus secured substantial grant funding totaling \$17,708,555, with a focus on early childhood programming and student support services. Noteworthy achievements include securing a six-year grant from the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, earmarked for early childhood education.

Dr. Ruiz Baía's commitment to supporting student-parents through initiatives like CCAMPIS underscores her dedication to equitable education access. By securing federal funding, she aims to provide high-quality preschool services to Pell-eligible student-parents, ensuring holistic family support.

Recognizing the evolving needs of HCC programs, Dr. Ruiz Baía spearheaded the EUM project, securing funding to enhance welding technology programs. Beyond her professional endeavors, she remains deeply engaged in community outreach, fostering collaboration and cultural enrichment through the Ybor City Campus.

As a first-generation college student with roots in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, Dr. Ruiz Baía's personal journey informs her advocacy for diversity, equity, and inclusion within higher education. Her unwavering commitment to fostering academic excellence and social justice reflects her profound dedication to shaping the future of higher education in the Tampa Bay area.

In summary, Dr. Ruiz Baía's exemplary leadership at HCC's Ybor City Campus epitomizes a commitment to educational excellence, community engagement, and social equity, leaving an indelible mark on students and community members alike.