



## **Sonia Mayo Hohnadel**

Sonia was born and raised in Lockhart, Texas a small town 45 miles south of Austin. During her teenage years Sonia, the oldest of eight children, migrated to Hillsboro, North Dakota with her parents to work in the beet fields. Sonia attended St. Edward's University at Austin and relocated to the Fargo-Moorhead after divorcing in 1982. Sonia is a grandmother and the mother of two adult daughters

As a single parent, Sonia became interested in the education system that influenced the lives of her daughters. Through her voluntary involvement with youth and youth organizations during her daughters' preteen and teenage years, Sonia served as a mentor to many Hispanic youth. This activism led to her employment with Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative as the After School Enrichment Program Coordinator. For six years Sonia helped implement and promote positive developmental asset building activities for kids living in Moorhead. Recognized as an advocate for youth, Sonia advocated for the value of diversity and multiculturalism in curriculum, the need for teachers of color, and the need for all school staff to recognize the full potential of achievement for all students. Sonia was elected to the Moorhead School Board November 2001, completing her four-year term in December 2005. She has served as the only Hispanic to be elected to public office in Fargo Moorhead. In July 2009 Sonia was appointed to the Moorhead School Board to serve two years, completing a term vacated by a board member who moved from the area.

Sonia has served on a many local and state boards, including two Governor-appointed Boards. Currently she serves on the MN Chicano Latino Affairs Council, which serves to advise the Governor and Legislature about issues that affect MN Chicano Latino people.

In January 2002, Sonia received a Human Rights Award from the Moorhead Human Rights Commission for outstanding service to the community and was also named a Minnesota Women's Press *2001 Newsmaker Award Winner*. Also in 2002, Sonia was a YWCA Woman of the Year Nominee.

Sonia currently works as the Communications Coordinator and Assistant to the Provost for Tri-College University (TCU). She serves on the TCU NEW Leadership Development Institute Steering Committee, a program that serves to train and empower women to run for political office.

Sonia lives in Moorhead, MN with her husband Greg. She enjoys spending time with her five-year old grandson Rafael, who will be entering the Moorhead Spanish Immersion Kindergarten Program, cooking for family, watching sports, reading, and sharing her life experiences with people who value diversity and equality. Sonia is currently pursuing a Political Science Degree, one/two classes a semester, while working full time.

Sonia believes learning is a part of life -"from the cradle to the grave" and that social inclusiveness is a human right necessary for success in a global society.