

Vanessa G. Sánchez

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I'm a reporter with experience in investigative, enterprise, and breaking news reporting for web, print and video. In my role, I focus on health, with an emphasis on policies and issues affecting immigrant communities.

REPORTING EXPERIENCE

Senior Health equity reporter, El Tímpano | August 2025 - present

As a senior health equity reporter, I write stories about social and health issues impacting the lives of Latino and Maya Mam immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Health reporter, KFF Health News | Jan. 2024 – July 2025

As a California correspondent, I reported on national issues at the intersection of health and immigration, and covered legislation from the California State Assembly that directly impacted Latinos.

- [HIV disparities](#): I led a national investigation into why immigrant Latinos are falling through the cracks in the fight to end HIV despite billions in federal investment, following a Venezuelan man as he traveled across three states seeking treatment. From pitch to publication, I served as the lead reporter and writer, identified key databases, and co-produced bilingual video. This project received a GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Online Journalism.

Investigative reporter, Searchlight New Mexico | Sept. 2022 – August 2023

Produced investigative and enterprise stories on topics that include maternal health, worker shortages, deadly responses by police to 911 crisis calls, DD waiver programs in New Mexico, the Navajo Nation, and the U.S.-Mexico border. I pitched ideas, analyzed data, filed record requests, built sources in various communities, and wrote stories.

- [Maternal health disparities](#): An investigation into how access to maternal health has shrunk over the last few years, putting countless women and infants at risk. I found that a nonprofit hired to reduce maternal deaths and injuries in hospitals did not fulfill its contract. Following publication, the nonprofit's board resigned.
- [Access to opioid medication during pregnancy](#): New Mexico passed policies to help pregnant people access substance use disorder treatment before separating a caregiver from their child. My investigation found that only 3% of women in need actually accessed this treatment.
- [Mental health and policing](#): New Mexico cities hoped to reduce tragedies by sending trained civilians to answer mental health calls instead of police. Despite the investment, [our investigation](#) found Albuquerque police shot and killed at least four people last year during mental health crises. The department hit a 10-year high for police shootings that year. A [second story](#) reconstructed through 911 calls, police reports, witnesses and family members, the tragic last hours of a man with a mental illness killed at the hands of Albuquerque police.

Bradlee fellow and intern, The Washington Post | Sept. – Dec. 2021; June – Aug. 2022

As a Bradlee fellow and intern, I generated ideas, analyzed data and wrote stories for the education, and local government and politics desks. My stories included breaking news, enterprise stories and coverage of the 2022 primary elections.

- [COVID- 19 disparities](#): I visited two coronavirus hotspots (an immigrant neighborhood and in migrant camps near a poultry-processing in Maryland) to document how health and economic disparities persisted after two years of the pandemic.
- [Food inequity](#): I found that D.C. has the country's highest rate of senior food insecurity. And while the city has several programs providing access to healthy meals, some seniors have fallen through the cracks.
- [Lack of representation in D.C. schools](#): I found that teachers in D.C. are more racially diverse than the national average, but the city's public and charter schools have struggled to solve a deficit of Latino teachers and male teachers of color.
- [Immigration](#): I broke a story about how a network of D.C. nonprofit organizations scrambled to help migrants who were sent in buses from Texas and Arizona.

Reporter, Howard Center for Investigative Journalism | Jan. 2021 – May. 2022

Howard fellow, lead reporter and writer of three national award-winning investigative stories about migrant workers, pervasive lottery marketing campaigns and racial violence.

- [Safety gaps at seafood processing facilities](#): An award-winning investigation about how three states and the federal government failed to protect migrant workers processing seafood in Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. I pitched the story, led a team of reporters, collected data and translated the story into Spanish. After publication, the Mexican embassy visited migrant camps to collect information about potential violations of workers' rights.
- [States lottery advertising](#): I led a team of reporters, traveled to Texas and Virginia to find lottery players, and wrote a story about how lotteries spend more than a half-billion dollars a year on pervasive marketing campaigns.
- **Printing Hate**: A series of stories on how white-owned newspapers incited terror in America. I traveled to three sundown towns in Kentucky to write [a story](#) about how the states' newspapers blamed Black victims for lynchings. A [second story](#) explored how the Black press used photographs of lynchings to shock the world. I was selected to write the introduction of the project along with editor DeNeen Brown.

State House reporter, Capital News Service | Jan. – April 2022

Pitched, wrote and covered [stories](#) at the intersection of health and immigration during the 2022 legislative session at the Maryland State House.

Freelance reporter for various publications | Oct. – May 2021

Wrote and pitched stories on immigration-related issues in publications including The Baltimore Brew, El Tiempo Latino and La Voz Unida.

Founder of La Máquina de Escribir | Feb. 2015 – June. 2018

Produced multiplatform content. Edited and copy-edited books and research papers for colleges and art institutions in Ecuador. Feature writer for a bimonthly magazine where I traveled around the country writing stories about Ecuadorian Indigenous communities.

EDUCATION

Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland, College Park, Md., M.J. May 2022.

Faculty of Philosophy. University of Cuenca. Bachelor's in Literature and Audiovisuals. Ecuador. 2017.

RECOGNITIONS

- Spanish-language Outstanding Online Journalism. Jóvenes latinos gay ven un porcentaje cada vez mayor de nuevos casos de VIH. Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation Awards. March 2025.
- Best of the West, Social Justice Reporting, 2nd place. Calling in Crisis. April 2024.
- Top of the Rockies, multiplatform division, 3rd place. Searching on their own. April 2023.
- Shauler Prize in Journalism (student category), Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Mega Billions: The great lottery wealth transfer. March 2023.
- Roy W. Howard Fellow: Selected among dozens of candidates for a yearlong investigative journalism fellowship. September 2022.
- Bradlee Fellow: Named a Bradlee Fellow, a program created inside The Washington Post in recognition of the courage and integrity that legendary Washington Post Executive Editor Benjamin C. Bradlee instilled in his newsroom. June 2022.
- Punch Sulzberger Innovator of the Year Award, News Leaders Association, Printing Hate. May 2022.
- IRE Medal and Award (large student category), Investigative Reporters and Editors, Printing Hate. April 2022.
- 2021 Mark of Excellence (student team category), Award in Region 2, Society of Professional Journalists, investigative division, 1st place. U.S. deems migrant seafood workers 'essential' but limits their COVID-19 protections. March 2022.