

Recognized as an innovative business development and operations strategist, Norma Castaneda thrives on leading operational efficiency improvements, project planning, and generating rapid revenue growth for her roster of clients and employers. She leverages a nationwide talent network, resolves mission critical issues, creates value for stakeholders, and develops emergent companies, whisking them to new heights both in scope and earnings.

As COO for the Latino-owned Fidelis Specialty Pharmacy, Castaneda has mirrored the healthcare company's workforce to reflect the diversity of their complex and critical care patients who are often left behind – while simultaneously optimizing patient care and improving patient outcomes. Ninety percent of Fidelis clinicians speak at least two languages, including Spanish, Tagalog and English. Whether conveying important information or navigating a dire medical situation, they fully connect with their patient base.

"Seeing the passion that the Fidelis owners have for patient care and their daily commitment to living their vision and mission is what attracted me to the company," shares Castaneda. The nurturing culture has led to a 96.7% approval patient satisfaction rating.

In three short years, Castaneda's operational "road mapping" has dramatically enhanced patient outcomes through 24/7 access to bilingual clinicians, securing supply chain integration, providing HIPPA compliance training to team members, insurance claims assistance, coordination of home nursing services, and quality-measure assurance by leveraging technology leading to earning URAC accreditation. She concurrently led the company to an unprecedented revenue of \$50 million annually.

Norma is a game-changing expert in business development and operations

Photo credit to
Bruce Fagel

Fidelis Specialty Pharmacy's goal is to provide premier, patient-centered specialty care and services. Fidelis Specialty Pharmacy focuses on the well-being and immediate needs of our patients and caregivers.



Castaneda's national and international biopharma and healthcare experience has always focused on patient care, mental health, nutritional education, and resource assistance so patients can lead normal, healthy lives. "The healthcare industry is competitive and often has many barriers of entry, but when you break through some of the challenges, it equates to patients experiencing amazing progress, and that's when our entire Fidelis family celebrates," she shares.



Norma Castaneda, MBA
COO
Fidelis Health Group

Castaneda ensures that an engaging support system and career opportunities encourage the Fidelis team to stay and grow. Her operations-side leadership transfers to patient retention. "Each Fidelis patient becomes like a member of our Fidelis family with an invested clinician team focused on their individual care," she says.

All too often, insurance claims can be daunting. The navigational process can mean the difference between a rapidly worsening situation or accessing timely care to improve a positive outcome. Castaneda has implemented technology and operations systems to simplify and serve. A full-service prescription management system generates reminders and deliveries while a team of reimbursement specialists challenge insurance appeals to ensure patients receive full benefits, building tremendous brand loyalty. With a collective 60 years of bleeding disorder care experience within the team, Fidelis partners with hemophilia foundations and local chapters to impart additional resources, social services, and public assistance programs.

"The best feeling is seeing immobile patients walk again or gain a better lifestyle because they comply to a healthy regimen, receive regular infusion care, benefit from resources, and respond to our continuous support," Castaneda adds. "Their quality-of-life increases, and their loved ones experience immense relief."

Castaneda's unique and expansive background in building HR synergy within companies has advanced her as a game-changing expert in business development and operations. "Struggling companies often need a strategist to evaluate the big picture and help hone their vision, processes, and procedures to benefit the staff, patient care team, and end consumer," she notes.

As an entrepreneur, Castaneda also founded HR Advantage in 2011 to help companies like Fidelis maximize their potential and their bottom line. The HR outsourcing company offers full-service business management by a talented team of specialists and strategists who develop the HR, operations, marketing, accounting, and revenue-growing backbone on behalf of their clients. Recently, HR Advantage was named a Top 10 HR Consulting Company by Manage HR magazine.

"I have been blessed with mentors who own and operate multiple businesses," she shares. "Growing various companies gives me creativity to innovate while diversifying my education and aspirations." Norma has led C-suite executives to achievements across divergent industries including healthcare, biopharma, hospitality, private aviation, casinos, real estate development, and non-profit organizations. "When a business enlists me, I want to understand what the owners or management teams envision," Castaneda relates. "The key is to align the operational road map with their goals and fine-tune their structure and processes so they can successfully set their wheels in motion and start to see the profits roll in."

Just as Fidelis patients flourish under the pharmacy's specialized services, the company will continue to thrive in our industry, expanding into multiple states across the nation. **IE**

Top 10 Inspiring COOs of 2022
Industry Era