



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

www.CaribbeanPac.org

Caribbean-American Political Action Committee (C-PAC) 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Please return the completed form via email to cpac.dmv@gmail.com by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2026. Responses will be shared with C-PAC's membership.

Office Sought: Prince George's County Council - District 1

Candidate's Name: Michelle García

Current Occupation: Chief of Staff to Prince George's County Councilmember Tom Dernoga, District 1

Party: Democrat

Campaign contact information (Address, Phone, Fax, Email, Website):

Post Office Box 504, Beltsville, Maryland 20704

301-642-0410

contact@michellejgarcia.com

michellejgarcia.com

1. If elected, how would you proactively and consistently engage with Caribbean-American constituents, groups, local leaders, and organizations in your constituency?

My goal is to foster a collaborative relationship where Caribbean-American residents feel seen, heard, and empowered to actively shape the future of our county.

2. How would your office address barriers Caribbean immigrants face when accessing public services such as healthcare, safe, affordable housing, education or social programs that disproportionately affect them?

If elected, I will be intentional and consistent in building strong, lasting relationships with Caribbean-American constituents across District 1. This commitment is deeply personal to me. My mother is Puerto Rican, and as a first-generation born in the States, I have seen firsthand both the strength and the challenges immigrant communities face. That perspective shapes how I show up and who I fight for.

Prince George's County is home to a vibrant and diverse Caribbean-American community, and I am committed to ensuring that engagement is not occasional, but ongoing and meaningful.



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

| www.CaribbeanPac.org

I will host regular community listening sessions, creating space for residents to share concerns, ideas, and priorities directly with my office. Beyond attending cultural events, I will ensure my presence is rooted in year-round engagement, not just moments of celebration.

I will also build strong partnerships with Caribbean-American community leaders, faith leaders, small business owners, and organizations to ensure their voices are reflected in county decision-making. My office will maintain consistent communication through the platforms and messaging channels most widely used within the community, meeting people where they are.

Additionally, I will host town halls and roundtables focused specifically on issues impacting immigrant residents, and work to develop a community advisory network to help inform policy and outreach strategies.

My goal is to foster a collaborative relationship where Caribbean-American residents feel seen, heard, and empowered to actively shape the future of our county.

Language access will be a top priority. I will advocate for expanded multilingual outreach, interpretation services, and translated materials that reflect the linguistic diversity within the Caribbean community, ensuring residents can access services with dignity and clarity.

I will also push for more equitable funding and targeted investments in communities that have been historically underserved. This includes supporting affordable housing initiatives, expanding access to healthcare resources, and strengthening educational support systems for immigrant families.

In partnership with community-based organizations and trusted local leaders, my office will conduct outreach and education efforts to ensure Caribbean immigrants are aware of available services and how to access them.

Finally, I will use data to better understand disparities and advocate for policies that directly address the disproportionate impacts Caribbean communities face, aligning with broader state priorities around equity, economic opportunity, and access to care.

My goal is to ensure that every resident, regardless of background, can access the services they need to thrive.



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

www.CaribbeanPac.org

3. How do you ensure culturally responsive services for Caribbean-American residents across agencies (e.g., health, education, law enforcement, etc.)?

Ensuring culturally responsive services requires intentional leadership, accountability, and ongoing partnership with the community. As an elected official, I will advocate for consistent, high-quality cultural competency training across all county agencies, including healthcare, education, and law enforcement.

This training must go beyond a one-time requirement and instead be integrated into how services are delivered every day. It should include language access, cultural awareness, and an understanding of the diverse histories and experiences within Caribbean-American communities.

I will also work to strengthen language access across agencies by expanding interpretation services and ensuring that critical information is available in the languages spoken by Caribbean residents. Residents should be able to access services with clarity, dignity, and respect.

In public safety, I will support enhanced training for law enforcement focused on cultural competency, bias awareness, and effective community engagement. Building trust between agencies and Caribbean-American communities is essential to improving outcomes and ensuring safety for all.

Additionally, my office will partner with community organizations to provide educational resources for residents, including workshops on fraud prevention, navigating public systems, and understanding their rights. Empowering residents with information is a key part of delivering equitable services.

Finally, I will work to establish feedback mechanisms so Caribbean-American residents can regularly share their experiences with county services. This will help ensure agencies remain responsive, accountable, and continuously improving.

My goal is to embed cultural responsiveness into the fabric of county government so that every resident feels respected, understood, and well-served.

4. What initiatives will you lead and/or support that benefit Caribbean-American small business owners and workers, particularly in industries where they are heavily represented?

I am committed to supporting Caribbean-American small business owners and workers by advancing initiatives that promote economic opportunity, stability, and long-term growth.



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

www.CaribbeanPac.org

I will support and help expand startup and growth workshops that provide technical assistance on licensing, permitting, accessing capital, and scaling a business. These resources should be culturally responsive and accessible, ensuring Caribbean-American entrepreneurs have the tools they need to succeed.

Access to capital is critical. I will advocate for increased funding for small business grants and low-interest loan programs, particularly for minority-owned and immigrant-owned businesses that often face barriers in traditional lending systems.

I will also support workforce development initiatives that connect immigrant workers to good-paying jobs, training programs, and career advancement opportunities in industries where they are heavily represented.

Workplace safety and worker protections are equally important. I will partner with county agencies and community organizations to provide safety workshops, know-your-rights trainings, and resources that help workers understand and assert their rights on the job.

Additionally, I will work to strengthen partnerships with local chambers of commerce and business associations to ensure immigrant businesses are included in county contracting opportunities and procurement pipelines.

My goal is to build an inclusive local economy where Caribbean-American entrepreneurs and workers are supported, protected, and positioned to thrive.

5. What support would you provide for Caribbean-American students and parents, including language assistance and help navigating the school system?

If elected, I will be intentional and consistent in building strong, lasting relationships with Caribbean-American constituents across District 1. Prince George's County is home to a vibrant and diverse immigrant community, and I am committed to ensuring that engagement is not occasional, but ongoing and meaningful.

Beyond attending cultural events, I will ensure my presence is rooted in year-round engagement, not just moments of celebration.

I will also build strong partnerships with Caribbean-American community leaders, faith leaders, small business owners, and organizations to ensure their voices are reflected in county decision-making. My office will maintain consistent communication through the platforms and messaging channels most widely used within the community, meeting people where they are.



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

www.CaribbeanPac.org

Additionally, I will host town halls and roundtables focused specifically on issues impacting immigrant residents, and work to develop a community advisory network to help inform policy and outreach strategies.

My goal is to foster a collaborative relationship where immigrant residents feel seen, heard, and empowered to actively shape the future of our county.

6. How would you advance partnerships with Caribbean-American community organizations to promote mental health, chronic disease prevention, or other wellness initiatives?

Advancing partnerships with immigrant community organizations is essential to improving health outcomes and ensuring that wellness initiatives are culturally responsive and accessible.

I will work closely with the County Health Department and local organizations to bring resources directly into the community, including presentations and outreach at civic association meetings, community events, and trusted neighborhood spaces. Too often, residents are unaware of available services, so meeting people where they are is critical.

Faith-based institutions, including churches, play a central role in many Caribbean-American communities. I will prioritize partnerships with these institutions to host health workshops, screenings, and wellness programs focused on mental health, chronic disease prevention, and overall well-being.

I will also support initiatives that reduce stigma around mental health by working with culturally competent providers and community leaders to foster open, informed conversations and expand access to care.

Additionally, I will advocate for increased funding and support for community-based organizations that are already doing this work, ensuring they have the resources needed to expand their reach and impact.

My goal is to build strong, sustained partnerships that bring healthcare resources out of government buildings and into the community, improving access, trust, and long-term health outcomes.

7. How will you build trust and conduct robust oversight on local, law enforcement to protect the rights, security, and safety of Caribbean-American residents?



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

www.CaribbeanPac.org

Building trust while ensuring strong oversight of law enforcement is essential to protecting the rights, safety, and dignity of Caribbean American residents.

I will support community policing strategies that prioritize relationship building, consistent presence, and meaningful engagement between officers and the communities they serve. Trust is built through familiarity, respect, and ongoing dialogue, not just enforcement.

At the same time, trust must be paired with accountability. I will advocate for strong oversight measures, including transparency in policing practices, clear accountability standards, and regular reporting to the community. Residents deserve to know how public safety decisions are made and to have confidence that misconduct is addressed appropriately.

I will also work to increase Caribbean American representation and participation in the local division Citizens Advisory Councils and other public safety forums, ensuring that community voices are actively shaping policies and practices.

Cultural competency and bias training for law enforcement will be a priority, along with efforts to improve communication and language access when interacting with diverse communities.

Finally, I will create regular opportunities for dialogue between law enforcement and Caribbean American residents through town halls, listening sessions, and community meetings. These spaces are critical for addressing concerns, building understanding, and strengthening partnerships.

My goal is to foster a public safety system that is rooted in trust, transparency, and accountability, where every resident feels protected and respected.

8. What programs, funding opportunities, or policy efforts will you champion that are aimed at improving outcomes for Caribbean-American communities?

I will champion a range of programs, funding opportunities, and policy efforts focused on advancing equity, economic opportunity, and overall quality of life for Caribbean American communities in Prince George's County.

I will advocate for increased investment in small business support, including grants, technical assistance, and access to capital for immigrant entrepreneurs. Strengthening pathways to county contracting and procurement opportunities will also be a priority to ensure local businesses can grow and compete.



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498

| www.CaribbeanPac.org

Affordable housing remains a critical issue. I will support policies that expand access to safe, stable, and affordable housing, while protecting tenants and preventing displacement in communities where immigrant families are deeply rooted.

In healthcare, I will work to expand access to culturally competent services, including mental health resources and chronic disease prevention programs. Partnering with community based organizations and faith institutions will be key to delivering these services effectively.

Education and workforce development are also central. I will support investments in job training programs, youth development initiatives, and career pathways that connect residents to good paying, stable jobs.

I will also prioritize funding for community based organizations that are already doing critical work in immigrant communities, ensuring they have the resources to expand their impact.

Finally, I will advocate for data driven policymaking to better understand disparities and ensure resources are directed where they are needed most.

My goal is to advance policies that not only address immediate needs, but also create long term opportunity and stability for Caribbean American families across our county.