

Debra Joy Pérez

Vice President for Research,
Evaluation and Learning
The Annie E. Casey Foundation



As the first person in her family to attend and graduate from college, Pérez has devoted her philanthropic career to helping to level the playing field for low-income and minority populations to receive quality education and services. As Vice President for Research, Evaluation and Learning at Casey, she provides leadership and direction for performance measurement, evaluation, policy research, data development, knowledge management, and organizational learning. Before joining Casey in 2013, she specialized in research and evaluation for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Early in her career, Pérez was special assistant to the president of the Government National Mortgage Association as part of the National Urban and Rural Fellows Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Her relationship with RWJF extends to 1997, when she began a three-year stint as deputy director for the Foundation's New Jersey Health Initiatives, where she organized and conducted applicant outreach and support. She was a research fellow at the foundation before being named a research and teaching fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health.

She earned her bachelor's degree in communication at the Rutgers University; a master's degree in social science at University of Kent in Canterbury, England; a master of public administration degree at Baruch College at the City University of New York; and a Ph.D. in health policy at Harvard University.