

## Lisette J. Garza Bio

Lisette J. Garza is the inaugural director of Penn First Plus Alumni and Penn Career Resources Initiatives. For Penn First Plus Alumni, she manages programs supporting and engaging alumni who had the first-generation and/or low-income (FGLI) experience while at Penn. In her Career Resources Initiatives role she creates professional development and intentional networking programs. She was previously the assistant director of Multicultural Outreach, working with BIPOC and LGBTQIA Penn alumni communities.

Lisette was born and raised in a South Texan border town to a long line of migrant farm workers. She became first in her family to attend college thanks to her mother's tireless efforts to ensure her children could break away from the difficult conditions of manual labor. Lisette received a Bachelor of Science in Radio, Television, and Film at the University of Texas at Austin. During her time in college, terms describing the FGLI experience were not in the public consciousness. In 2016, Lisette became more self-aware when the Penn First student group started a public dialogue addressing the lack of financial, academic, and social support for FGLI students. Lisette draws on these experiences to inform her work in creating opportunities for students and alumni to build social capital through the alumni network and to celebrate the FGLI identity.

Lisette has earned a Master of Science degree in Organizational Dynamics specializing in change management and organization coaching. She is currently completing a Master in Philosophy degree in executive coaching and organizational consulting. Lisette enjoys dedicating her knowledge and skills to help uplift underrepresented populations.