

Javier O. Castano

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Gatorjavi@gmail.com

[REDACTED]

Subject: Administrator - Palm Beach County

Dear Palm Beach County Leaders and Neighbors,

My name is Javier Castano and I am a long-time Palm Beach County resident. I witnessed the opening of Havana Restaurant on Forest Hill & Dixie and my likeness is featured on the label of a top selling beer at a local brewery. On paper, I have lived in West Palm Beach and Palm Beach Gardens since the late 80s but I have spent the last 15 years serving as a U.S. Diplomat in five different U.S. Embassies across three continents and a war zone. I am writing to express my interest in serving as our next Palm Beach County Administrator.

About me: I am a seasoned leader with a profound commitment to public service and community engagement. My extensive experience in managing large-scale government operations and budgets aligns perfectly with Palm Beach County's vision of organizational excellence. I am eager to leverage my skills to lead the County into a future of innovation and collaboration.

Let me highlight the most relevant aspects of my experience for this role:

- **Executive level management experience in a government setting:** In my role as a United States Foreign Service Officer (U.S. Diplomat), I operated at an executive level, overseeing significant foreign aid programs and humanitarian assistance initiatives across the globe. My responsibilities included on-the-ground strategic decision-making and leadership in complex, high-stakes environments, which directly aligns with the requirement for executive management experience in a government setting. I have successfully negotiated with foreign dignitaries and written government policy – all while focusing on the development of my staff and colleagues to ensure we maintained a mission-driven approach to achieving results.
- **Experience managing daily operations of multi-agency government entities:** I currently serve in a diplomatic advisory role at U.S. Southern Command in Miami/Doral, FL where I provide foreign assistance and humanitarian emergency response guidance to the Department of Defense and a broad array of federal interagency entities working across 31 countries and 12 dependencies in Latin America and the Caribbean. I report to command leadership, including a 4-star Navy Admiral and a career U.S. Ambassador, and understand how to clearly communicate high level and sensitive/classified information in a way that drives high-level policy and strategic decision

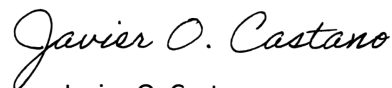
making. In addition, I serve as a U.S. Navy Reserve Officer, which clearly demonstrates my commitment to service and leadership.

- **Experience preparing and overseeing substantial budgets:** As a U.S. Government Supervisory Contracts/Grants Officer, I've managed global vendor portfolios in excess of \$3 billion at the acquisition, management, and termination stages of the award life cycle. I am an expert in vendor selection and compliance risk management under Federal Acquisition Regulation, Code of Federal Regulations, and commercial practices utilizing a broad array of contract and grant mechanisms. This role involved preparing budgets, overseeing expenditures, and ensuring that financial resources were allocated efficiently, thus demonstrating my experience with substantial budgets. I bring strong business advisory skills and a keen ability to navigate bureaucratic processes and personnel concerns in cross-cultural environments.

The Board is seeking a visionary leader that can be held accountable for results. My career in diplomacy, international development, and contract compliance clearly demonstrates my ability to excel in this role. Allow me to continue dedicating myself to public service at home in Palm Beach County.

Thank you for considering my application. I am grateful for the opportunity to potentially join Palm Beach County and contribute to its mission of serving my community. I look forward to the possibility of discussing my qualifications in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Javier O. Castano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.

Javier O. Castano

Javier O. Castano

Global Grants and Contracts Expert | U.S. Diplomat | U.S. Navy Reserve Officer

As a multilingual diplomat, strategic sourcing expert, and military advisor with strong interpersonal skills, I have a proven track record of achieving clear results with cross-functional teams. As a U.S. Government Supervisory Contracts/Grants Officer, I've managed global vendor portfolios in excess of \$3 billion at the acquisition, management, and termination stages of the award life cycle. I am an expert in vendor selection and compliance risk management under Federal Acquisition Regulation, Code of Federal Regulations, and commercial practices utilizing RFPs, IFBs, RFQs, and IDIQs, including cost-reimbursement, fixed price, commercial items, and time & materials awards. I bring strong business advisory skills mixed with a penchant for navigating bureaucratic processes and personnel concerns in cross-cultural environments.

EXPERIENCE

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Foreign Service Officer (Rank: FS-01 / DoD Protocol Equivalent GS-15/O-6)

MARCH 2010 - APRIL 2025 (WORLDWIDE ASSIGNMENTS)

USAID is the U.S. Government's lead Agency responsible for civilian foreign aid programs and humanitarian assistance with programs valued at roughly \$40 billion per year to address global public health, education, human rights, and democratic governance, for example, with missions in over 100 countries.

- **U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) - Doral, Florida**
Deputy Development Advisor / USAID Liaison Officer (LNO) (2024 - 2025)
 - Advised the USSOUTHCOM four-star commander and component commands on humanitarian assistance engagements across 31 countries & 12 dependencies.
 - Coached/mentored approximately 25 USAID civilian-military coordinators on how to coordinate with the military on humanitarian assistance engagements.
 - Leveraged \$100k of foreign assistance funding for the purchase of medical equipment to augment an Air Force medical mission in the Caribbean.
- **USAID Country Office - Dominican Republic / U.S. Embassy, Santo Domingo**
Director, Regional Contracts and Grants Office (2020 - 2024)
Supervisory Contracting & Agreement/Grants Officer
 - Managed regional procurement staff and portfolio of 60 complex contract and grant mechanisms across 13 Caribbean countries valued at roughly \$350 million.
 - Introduced a streamlined source selection methodology for major service contracts procurement to reduce cost analysis burden by 80%.
 - Served as interim country director in Dominican Republic and Jamaica, reporting directly to the U.S. Ambassadors and overseeing roughly 200 staff.
 - Negotiated a \$1.1 million contract/grant tax refund from the Dominican Government and developed a process to streamline future tax exemption requests.
 - Developed a procurement team charter to identify shared goals and vision.
- **USAID Country Office - Cambodia / U.S. Embassy, Phnom Penh**
Director, Regional Contracts and Grants Office (2016 - 2020)
Supervisory Contracting & Agreement/Grants Officer
 - Oversaw 35 complex contracts and grants valued at roughly \$270 million.
 - Increased the procurement team staffing pattern from 5 to 8 positions to account for a 58% increase in number of active contracts and grants.
 - Increased contract commitments to U.S. Small Businesses from 1.8% (2018) to 48.79% (2019); awarded FY 20 Small Business Contracting Officer of the Year.
 - Successfully defended third-party bid challenge/protest through Government Accountability Office for a major services contract acquisition.

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<http://www.linkedin.com/in/jcastano>

EDUCATION

M.A. International Business -
University of Florida
- Certificate, Global Management

B.S. Building Construction -
University of Florida
- Graduated Cum Laude
- Minor, Business
Administration

SECURITY CLEARANCES

USAID
- Top Secret / Sensitive
Compartmented Information
(TS/SCI) (U.S. Government)

U.S. Navy
- Secret (U.S. Government)

CREDENTIALS/CERTIFICATIONS

- U.S. Government Contracting Officer and Grants/Agreements Officer Warrants - \$150 million obligation authority
- Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) - Professional (Legacy Level III)
- Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR) - Level II
- Certified Fraud Examiner - Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
- Certified Professional Contract Manager (CPCM) - National Contract Management Association (NCMA)

INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

National Contract Management Association

- Top 40 Under 40 (2013)

- **USAID Country Office - Democratic Republic of the Congo / U.S. Embassy, Kinshasa**
Deputy Director, Regional Contracts and Grants Office (2015 - 2016)
Contracting & Agreement/Grants Officer
 - Mentored, trained, and coached six new contracts and grants specialists to manage a regional contract and grant portfolio valued over \$700 million.
 - Increased contract dollar spending to U.S. small businesses by 45%.
- **USAID Country Office - Vietnam / U.S. Embassy, Hanoi**
Director, Contracts and Grants Office (2012 - 2014)
Contracting & Agreement/Grants Officer
 - Opened USAID/Vietnam's first procurement office with a \$275 million portfolio, established office standard operating procedures, and hired new staff.
 - Engaged local vendors through market research & pre-bid conferences, which increased the portfolio of grants to local Vietnamese organizations by 400%.
 - Achieved 100% compliance with past performance assessments (CPARS) while the USAID average remained around 30%.
- **USAID Country Office - Afghanistan / U.S. Embassy, Kabul**
Contracts and Grants Officer (2011 - 2012)
 - Managed a \$1.5 billion portfolio of complex infrastructure and architecture/engineering contracting and grant instruments at the peak of the U.S. war effort.
 - Negotiated a complex \$150 million construction contract with a local Afghan firm to complete a road project in a volatile, strategic military location.
- **USAID Headquarters - Washington, D.C.**
Contract and Grants Specialist (2010 - 2011)
 - Conducted internal regulatory compliance audits of contract and grant procurement portfolios at USAID/Ukraine and USAID/Russia.

U.S. Navy Reserve **Supply Officer (2024 - Present)**

The Navy Supply Corps is the United States Navy staff corps concerned with supply, logistics, combat support, readiness, contracting, and fiscal matters.

- Serving as Deputy Director of the N4 (Supply and Logistics) directorate for the U.S. Southern Command Navy Reserve unit, Navy Reserve Center - Miami.
- Designated as a unit certifying official and mustering official.
- Commanded 30 U.S. Navy officers during Officer Development School training.

KPMG, LLP, New York, New York **Associate, Real Estate and Construction Advisory (2008 - 2010)**

- Conducted forensic audits focused on infrastructure-related fraud cases, including investigations focused on kickback schemes.
- Designed project audits to improve capital construction projects for a large municipal agency with a \$13 billion construction budget.
- Performed, mapped, and tested internal controls and risk assessments for major infrastructure projects, including a major nuclear power plant.

Holder Construction Company, Atlanta, Georgia **Pre-Construction Engineer (2007 - 2008)**

- Negotiated construction trade contracts for commercial office buildings and data centers to secure best value for project owners.
- Coordinated trade scope reviews and evaluated proposals for construction of Concourse F at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

LANGUAGES

- English (native)
- Spanish (native) (3+/3)*
- French (proficient) (2+/3)*
- Vietnamese (basic)

* Tested at the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center (FSI)

U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Authored the following U.S. Government operational policy:

- USAID ADS 303mbb_121720 - Process for Transition Awards

VOLUNTEER

Volunteer Adjunct Professor - Zaman University (Cambodia)

- CM 312 - Construction Contracting and Project Delivery Systems

AWARDS

- 2023 Joint Civilian Service Achievement Award and Medal
- 2019 Mary A. Reynolds Award for Innovation in Acquisition or Assistance
- Superior Honor Award (Multiple)
- Meritorious Honor Award (Multiple)

WHITE PAPERS

Authored the following:

- Change Management in USAID Construction Projects
- Quality Assurance / Quality Control in USAID Construction and A/E Contracts
- Design / Procurement of USAID Construction & A/E Contracts