

# Together We're Stronger

## Keynote Address

Monday, April 18, 2022

Noon-1 p.m.

Pence Union Building  
Nysether Community (PUB NCR)

Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Presents  
Keynote Address- Together We're Stronger

**Charlie Duranona**

EWU Alumnus and Outreach Coordinator for the  
Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center



Born in Miami, Florida to Cuban parents, Charlie is a first generation Cuban American. He and his younger sister, Meliza, were fortunate enough to be raised by both parents, and are part of a big family. They both graduated from St. Brendan High School in Miami, FL.

After many dead-end jobs, Charlie joined the U.S. Navy in 2002 (six months after the towers fell). He served as a Navy Corpsman alongside the U.S. Marine Corps for five years. While serving, he met his wife, Joselynn, who is also a U.S. Navy Corpsman. They met while they both were stationed in Parris Island Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD). While stationed in Naples, Italy, Joselynn and Charlie had their only child, a daughter named Yasmine. After a few moves that took them from Alaska to Florida, they ultimately settled down in Spokane, WA. They have lived here for about nine years.

Charlie graduated from Eastern Washington University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and is currently working on his MBA. At present, Charlie works as an Outreach Coordinator for the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center in Spokane. Charlie is a 92nd Ops Group Honorary Commander at Fairchild Air Force Base, and he is a voting board member of the Spokane Regional Health District and the Spokane County Veterans Advisory Board. He, along with two other Honorary Commanders, recently established the Favored Few Support Crew Fund with Innovia. This fund will help with the quality of life, resilience, and mental health for active-duty members and their families. Charlie is also the co-chair for the Military Spouse Economic Empowerment Zone, a program from the Hiring Our Heroes organization, that concentrates on helping military spouses gain employment.

When he is not busy, Charlie loves to dance, and he has been known to teach a few classes of salsa and merengue. He also loves to spend time with his family and his friends who have become his Spokane family.