



## ORLANDO M. MATEUS

is the eldest son of Manuel Jose Mateus and Maria Antonieta Martins Mateus. He is married to Olga Fino and is the proud father of two children, Daniel José Mateus and Raquel S. Mateus. Orlando was born in Montinho da Corte Serrano near Cachopo, Tavira, Portugal.

At the age of eight, he immigrated to the United States with his parents, settling in Providence's Fox Point—a deeply rooted Portuguese neighborhood—which shaped his strong cultural identity from his earliest memories at Fox Point Elementary School, Holy Name School, and the Portuguese school at the Pawtucket Social Club.

Orlando's commitment to his heritage is matched by his dedication to the arts. A Hope High School graduate, he participated in the Arts Magnet Program, which played a crucial role in his personal development. Despite being accepted to the Rhode Island School of Design, Orlando attended Rhode Island College for financial reasons, particularly after his parents permanently returned to Portugal. While working full-time at St. Joseph Hospital, he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Graphic Design with honors.

Orlando's professional design journey began at PrintSource, continued at Precision Etchings, and progressed to a leadership role in the Graphics department at FGX International for 13 years. He currently leads the international labeling and packaging design team at Hologic, a medical technology company specializing in women's health.

In 2015, as his children reached adulthood, he turned his attention to community service, inspired by the late Governor Bruce Sundlun's words: "First you learn, then you earn, and then you serve." His volunteer work with the Rhode Island Day of Portugal included a significant rebranding initiative for its 40th Anniversary. Orlando designed a contemporary logo that revitalized the RI Day of Portugal brand and prepared the organization for a new era. He also created the "Taste the Passion" Portuguese Wine Dinner at The Capital Grille, organized a public movie night at Rhode Island College, and planted the seed with Mayor Elorza where the PVD Fest would join the RI Day of Portugal weekend.

During his 2018 and 2019 presidency of the Rhode Island Day of Portugal, Orlando worked with vice presidents Antonio Rodrigues and Pedro Pereira to modernize the organization, strengthen community ties, and bring together clubs and organizations. He ambitiously aimed to blend the Rhode Island Day of Portugal with the dynamic PVD Fest, fostering a cultural renaissance that celebrated diversity and attracted visitors from across New England. This cultural union not only drew in large crowds and provided an immersive experience that deepened attendees' appreciation for Portuguese heritage, but also highlighted the economic and social benefits of embracing cultural diversity, leaving an enduring mark on RI Day of Portugal and setting the stage for future celebrations.

During his presidency, Orlando sought and secured the attendance of the Portuguese President, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and the Prime Minister, Antonio Costa, at the Rhode Island Day of Portugal celebration. This high-profile visit culminated in a WaterFire event in Providence, made possible by fundraising efforts led by Olga Fino, Marcia Da Ponte, and community sponsorship. The event, embodying "Portugalidade," resonated deeply with President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and left an unforgettable impression on attendees, elevating the Rhode Island Day of Portugal. Additionally, Orlando initiated the recognition of a commemorative charity license plate for the Day of Portugal, with legislative support from Senator Daniel Da Ponte, Representative Helder Cunha, and endorsement from then-Governor Gina Raimondo. He also authored a resolution to rename the street along India Point Park to "Portugal Parkway," ratified by Councilman John Goncalves and the Providence City Council. The name change, celebrated on June 10, 2023, with U.S. Senator Jack Reed, U.S. Representative Seth Magaziner, and Portuguese Ambassador Francisco Duarte Lopes, cemented "Portugal Parkway" as a lasting tribute to the influence of the Portuguese in Rhode Island and the nation as a whole.

Continuing his service, Orlando remains an active board member and advisor, supporting events like the "Taste The Passion" Portuguese Wine Dinner and advocating for the Rhode Island Day of Portugal license plate. His latest endeavor is the declaration of June as Portuguese American Heritage Month at the state and national levels. Orlando's passion for promoting "Portugalidade" is unwavering. He encourages community engagement, volunteerism, and honoring the legacy of predecessors. Committed to preserving Portuguese culture for future generations, Orlando's life and work are a testament to the enduring spirit of his heritage.

"A nossa 'Portugalidade' levou séculos a criar e defender; agora é a nossa hora de a agarrar e promover!" — Orlando M. Mateus