

## Larry D. Leal Biography

Larry Leal spent the first 27 years of his life growing up in the San Francisco East Bay. His early years were in the little town of San Lorenzo. It was here that his life education and values were formed. He graduated from Arroyo High School and attended Chabot College. He worked at various jobs ranging from foundry worker to retail sales. His employment ranged from east San Jose to San Francisco.

An avid photographer, he was head photographer and sports editor of his high school yearbook. Never afraid to take on challenges, while in high school Larry was able to use his photographic expertise to free lance and held press passes with the Oakland Athletics and the California Golden Seals of the NHL where he had several photographs published in each teams various game programs.

Married and with a daughter, 1981 was a major change for Larry. He took a job with Carnation Company and was moved to Sacramento. First with Carnation, then Nestle, when Carnation was bought out in 1985, Larry performed many different job duties for the next 22 years. These ranged from sales calls, both at store level to chain headquarters throughout Northern California and Northern Nevada to regional office duties from office manager through Category Sales Development Manager that saw him training various corporate software in regional offices all over the US as well as major headquarter calls as needed in cities throughout the US.

While in Sacramento, Larry was introduced to the casino party industry at a fundraiser at his daughter's school in 1983. He was enthralled at how much fun this fundraiser was for the participants and the possibilities that existed for raising funds for many charitable organizations. He started as a blackjack dealer on Friday and Saturday nights for the local party provider. Larry spent the next 12 years dealing Blackjack, Craps and Roulette, DJ'ing, Pit Bossing and delivering and setting up/taking down parties and even cold calling and booking several charitable organizations fundraisers.

Back to his "real job" Larry was promoted into the regional office in 1994, which forced him to relocate to Salida. Unfortunately he had to leave the casino party industry with the move. After several years of working in the regional office, Larry got the bug again. His hometown memories included the movie theater in San Lorenzo, which had closed in 1981 and was being ignored. In 1998, Larry took the idea to create a Non-Profit organization dedicated to the restoration of the Lorenzo Theater back to a viable public facility. After meeting with the local town and County leaders, and being told again and again no one would support such an idea, the Lorenzo Theater Foundation was in fact formed. In order to learn the non-profit industry, Larry earned his Certificate in Fund Raising Management from Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy. Utilizing his CFRM certificate, Larry spent the next four years working with many volunteers and was able to get the Theater listed as a State of California Historic Resource in 2001, and in 2002 Alameda County re-zoned the Lorenzo Theater from a C-1 Retail to an HP District, making the Lorenzo Theater the first Historic Preservation District in Alameda County.

After surviving several corporate downsizing re-organizations at Nestle, 2002 was the year Larry was downsized out. Unfortunately, due to this, Larry had to walk away from the non-profit foundation he had founded. This wasn't a problem because the Foundation had a very strong support base to continue without their Founder and has so to this day.

While working for a local grocery supplier as a Category Manager, in 2003 Larry and his wife made the decision to create a startup company utilizing his sales and analysis experience, fundraising experience and casino party industry experience. Thus, Casino Las Vegas Productions was born.

For the next two years, Larry spent 2 – 3 hours each evening after work building his equipment as well as weekends. In October 2005, his job at the local grocery supplier was ended. Everything was a go to start booking with the new startup business, that is until the California Attorney General's office decided to re-interpret current law and claim this industry was illegal.

October 2005 throughout 2006 Larry again was faced with an impossible task, how to get the party providers to recognize and fight the California Attorney General office's new interpretation of current California law. He succeeded in organizing quite a few party providers throughout the State of California to testify in Sacramento with him at the Senate Governmental Organization Committee hearings in June 2006. Their goal was to get amendments added to a specific bill related to this industry. Unfortunately, the bills author was against adding these amendments and the bill was passed anyway.

One would think that was it, but not for Larry. He was able to motivate and get involved over 30 party providers throughout the state where there was no involvement before. They hired a Lobbyist and the leading legal expert on gambling law to address the misconceptions of this industry by attempting to pass a new bill through the State Legislature. Only time will tell.

Casino Las Vegas Productions launched in 2007, and there still are plenty of challenges ahead. As proven by his past history of taking on challenges, Larry is working hard to make Casino Las Vegas Productions a success, partnering with his clients, from pre event planning and goal setting, through the event and post event debriefing to find ways to improve a successful completed event for his clients the next year, truly living up to Casino Las Vegas's motto "Putting the FUN back into fundraising." Like he says, "Whether an organization is looking to raise \$3,500, \$12,000 or more, Casino Las Vegas Productions has a program specifically structured to meet and exceed those fundraising goals."

Larry, an avid networker, belongs to the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Yosemite branch, Gold Star Networking Clubs and the Modesto Chamber of Commerce. He currently is presenting, what he calls, "Introduction to Fundraising Events 101" to charitable organizations, service clubs and/or school PTA's, supporter clubs and any other organizations that strive to raise funds for their good works. "I believe that there are just too many good organizations out there that need either to be reminded how to hold a successful event or really are in the dark...and groping, looking for advice and support in their personal trek's to put on a successful fundraiser blindfolded" he says. "I'm available any time to help and educate fellow fund-raisers, especially when they don't know that a friend is actually out there" he also says.

