

Hector M. Cardona Sr. was born in 1954 in Aguada, Puerto Rico and came to Meriden at age 7. He attended Maloney High School and the Meriden Police Academy. Officer Cardona joined the Meriden Police Department in 1983 and retired after 31 years of service in 2013. He was one of the first officers assigned to the community police division then known as Neighborhood Foot Patrol in 1986 where he eagerly accepted assignment at the Mills Memorial Housing Project despite it being at the height of gang activity. As a police officer, Hector volunteered to do outreach, informally, to Meriden students, holding assemblies to discuss pertinent issues, such as gangs, drugs and promoting community service, safety and good decision making. Hector has also earned numerous merit awards and was a nominee for the State of CT. Hispanic Police Officer Award. He was chosen as outstanding Hispanic police officer representing the Meriden Police Department at the Puerto Rican Parade in Bridgeport in the late 90's.

He also served as a Field Training Officer and Hostage Negotiator for the department and fulfilled the role of External Affairs Officer and Honor Guard Commander. As the Choir Director at St. Rose, he founded the youth choir and worked with Hispanic church members interested in bringing Spanish worship music to their church services throughout the state. These efforts led to the development of Spanish Choirs in several thriving Hispanic church communities in Wallingford, Middletown, Bristol and as far as Willimantic CT. He was also the Meriden Hispanic Advocate to the Hartford Roman Catholic Archdiocese. He has given his time for the betterment of Meriden through committees and boards such as the Human Rights Advisory Board, YMCA board, MidState Board of Governors and Board of Directors, co founder of the Meriden Hispanic Foundation, Puerto Rican Festival Committee Chairman and many other committees. Through his volunteerism, his help to others without any interest in acknowledgement or praise, and his contagious pride for Meriden he has become an unofficial ambassador to the Hispanic community. He received the Jaycees local award and was selected as a Jaycee State Award Winner. Hector also founded the well known Cardona Family Band, currently in its third generation, which volunteers at convalescent and nursing homes statewide and performs at various venues and benefit functions in CT. He serves as a disc jockey for a Saturday morning radio show where members of the greater CT area call his show regularly. Calls come in from as far away as Massachusetts, Florida and Puerto Rico. He was awarded the 2010 Shining Star Award from the Meriden Chamber of Commerce. Most recently, in 2017 he was the Grand Marshall at the Meriden Daffodil parade. He is also a Justice of the Peace.