

Eduardo Bhatia '86  
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- Eduardo Bhatia was born on May 16, 1964. Bhatia's father, Dr. Mohinder Bhatia, was working as an economist at the US Embassy in El Salvador as part of President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, a program to eradicate poverty. Bhatia's father moved to Puerto Rico from India in 1957.
- Bhatia's mother, Dr. Carmen Gautier, was a political science professor at the University of Puerto Rico, one of the first Puerto Rican women to attend Wellesley College and the London School of Economics.
- Eduardo Bhatia is the youngest of three siblings. His brother, Andrés Bhatia, is a practicing oncologist in Gainesville, Florida, and his sister, Lisa Bhatia, is an assistant U.S. attorney at the San Juan District office of the U.S. Attorney.
- Bhatia attended Princeton University, obtaining his Bachelor's degree in Government and Public Policy from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in 1986. During Bhatia's university years, he was a member of the Princeton University Democrats and the Princeton University Council. He

was an activist in the student movement for divesting the University's endowment from companies doing business in the Apartheid regime in South Africa where Nelson Mandela was jailed.

- In May 1986, Bhatia was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study law, economics and politics in Santiago, Chile for one year. The focus of his research was the need for Chile to transition to a democratic regime where human rights were protected. At that time and during Pinochet's dictatorship, he secretly helped collect and transport pamphlets, flyers and underground documents from human rights groups to Princeton's Library, to help with the efforts to document the struggles in Latin America. Bhatia also volunteered with the Catholic Church at the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, a church lead human rights program for victims of the dictatorship.
- Bhatia graduated from Stanford Law School in June 1990 where he co-founded and edited the "Stanford Journal of Law and Policy", an academic publication with an emphasis on the interaction of public policy and law in a democratic society. As part of his community work as a law student at Stanford, Bhatia also successfully directed a campaign to prevent the removal of a rent control law that benefitted low-income tenants in the East Palo Alto community. He is admitted to practice law in Florida, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico.
- After graduating, Bhatia worked for a year as a Judicial Clerk for Federal Judge Levin H. Campbell, at the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in Boston, Massachusetts. From 1991 to 1992, he was the Chief of Staff for Puerto Rico's sole Member of Congress, Jaime Fuster in Washington, DC. From 1993 to 1995, Bhatia worked as a lawyer for the San Juan-based law firm McConnell Valdés.
- In 1996, at the age of 32, Bhatia was elected Senator by the Popular Democratic Party, becoming the youngest Puerto Rican senator in that four-year term and one of the youngest in the history of the Senate of Puerto Rico. As member of numerous Senatorial committees and spokesperson for his party, his efforts were focused toward increasing employment and educational opportunities for Puerto Rico's youth. He also sought consensus, introducing bi-partisan legislation. An example was the

introduction of a bill to improve financial education in public schools.

- In 2000, Bhatia ran for mayor of San Juan. However, he was narrowly defeated. Bhatia then worked as a lawyer in private practice and as a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, School of Law in Río Piedras. During this time Bhatia was also involved in community work and co-hosted a radio program.
- In January 2005, the Governor of Puerto Rico appointed Bhatia as Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration in Washington, DC. As such, Bhatia represented the Governor on matters before state and federal agencies as well as before Congress and the Executive branch. He managed PRFAA's staff in the areas of Government Affairs, Federal Grants, Communications, Outreach and Public Affairs and Community Affairs, to carry out the agency's mission of advancing the wellbeing of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and of Puerto Ricans in the United States.
- Bhatia returned to the Senate in 2009 where he was the Minority Whip, and after his party obtained a majority of seats in the Senate in the 2012 elections he was elected among his peers as the 15th President of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- During his term as President, Senator Bhatia fought to strengthen the island's democratic institutions by injecting values, principles and ethics in the government process. A staunch critic of the island's massive debt accumulation, he has been a driving force in the ongoing overhaul of the broken fiscal system of Puerto Rico. He periodically interacts with US Treasury Department officials and Members of the United States Senate and US Congress.
- Bhatia is also the author of the most comprehensive energy reform law in Puerto Rico's history (Law 57 of 2014). He believes that the Island's outdated and fragile energy system - a state owned bankrupt monopoly- must be forced to migrate from burning fossil fuels to clean, renewable, modern solar energy through community micro-grids.
- With so many public schools on the island that serve poor communities having abysmal academic standards, Bhatia also authored an historic legislation approved by the island's Senate

- to revamp the broken public education system of Puerto Rico. He has been a leader in the movement to question government officials, disrupt and change schools on the Island.
- Also during his tenure as Senate President, Bhatia occupied several national leadership positions. In 2013, he was selected as Chair of the Eastern Regional Conference (CSG-ERC) of the United States Council of State Governments and later elected as President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators. His main focus of attention in both organizations was education reform to eradicate the digital divide in Hispanic based schools throughout the United States. He was also a member of the board of the Council of State Government (CSG), the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) and the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA).
  - Bhatia was reelected once more for a four year term in the 2016 General Election. He now serves as the Minority Leader.
  - After Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands in September 2017, supplies of potable water and energy were limited on the island. Bhatia has spent most of his time away from San Juan and the Capitol Building leading a team and personally installing water cisterns with filters to develop potable water in rural communities, often connecting the cisterns to water springs. The threat is always that unfiltered water may have life threatening bacteria. During the first 60 days after the hurricane, over 50 cisterns were installed allowing for over 160,000 water bottles a day of purified potable water. He has also been an advocate for the installation of solar energy panels in schools that have remained closed after the hurricane for lack of energy.
  - Bhatia was elected as President of Parliamentary Confederation of America. COPA fosters dialogue on issues related to inter-American cooperation and hemispheric integration, respecting the projects and mechanisms stemming from the Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the Americas. COPA contributes to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and to the building of a community of the Americas founded on the respect for dignity and human rights, peace, democracy, solidarity between peoples, social justice and gender equity.

- Eduardo Bhatia-Gautier '86 has been chosen as the Baccalaureate speaker for the Class of 2018. At Princeton's Baccalaureate service, former president of the Senate of Puerto Rico, delivers an address denouncing the "culture of lies" and calling upon the graduating class to confront it with honor and integrity.
- He lives in San Juan and is married to Isabel Fernández, a lawyer and entrepreneur originally from Panama.