



## MARIANA ATENCIO



Originally from Caracas, Venezuela, Mariana graduated from Merici High School and received a journalism degree from Universidad Católica.

When the government of Hugo Chávez shut down independent media outlets in her home country, she participated in student protests for democracy. After being assaulted in an armed robbery, Mariana left for the United States when she received a full-merit scholarship to Columbia University's Journalism School and received her master's degree in broadcast journalism.

Mariana got her big break anchoring and reporting at Univision, where she also filed stories for the Documentaries and Investigative Unit. She won a Peabody Award and an Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Award for her work uncovering illegal weapons sold across the border in Mexico. She also won a Gracie Award for directing, writing, and reporting *PRESSionados*, a documentary about press freedom in Latin America.

She then went on to host *The Morning Show* on [Fusion](#), the Disney and Univision joint venture, and co-anchored the 2016 Democratic Presidential debate.

Mariana made the crossover from Spanish to English-speaking television as a [national correspondent](#) for [NBC News](#) where she was known for her boots-on-the-ground, engaging, and empathic field work. Her investigative work on Latin America, the Latino community, cartel violence, women's and migrants' rights earned her three Emmy nominations, a Hillman Prize, and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists Presidential Award.

During her broadcast career, Mariana has reported from places like Haiti, the Syrian border, and China, underscoring the common threads in our humanity and that we are all more alike than different. She has interviewed dozens of notable figures, including Pope Francis, President Joe Biden, King Felipe VI of Spain, Nancy Pelosi, chef and humanitarian José Andrés, author Yuval Noah Harari, and director Francis Ford Coppola.

Mariana's journey is featured on the award-winning HBO series [Habla](#), and *People* magazine called her storytelling platform "a media empire." Ten years after she arrived in the United States, Mariana won Columbia's First Decade Award for her impressive career as a journalist.

Mariana is a [2021 Henry Crown Fellow at the Aspen Institute](#) and [spokesperson for the American Latino Museum](#) in D.C. In 2022 she launched the hit true crime podcast series [Lost in Panama](#), an investigation into the disappearance of Kris Kremers and Lianne Froom, shedding light on [the issue of missing women and girls](#) in the region. *Lost in Panama* made Apple Podcasts' top #10 list, and Mariana headlined *Foreign Policy* magazine's HerPower summit on tackling gender inequality in the Americas.

Mariana's [TEDx talk "What Makes YOU Special?"](#) is one of the top ten most-watched videos on YouTube. Doubling down on her message, she wrote her bestselling memoir, [Perfectly You: Embracing the Power of Being Real](#).