

*Rise Up, Unite, Defend Issue*



# LULACnews

Summer 2017



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**EMERGE LATINO CONFERENCE  
BRINGS 150 STUDENTS TO THE  
CAPITOL HILL**

**“FOLLOW YOUR NORTH STAR”:  
LULAC EMPOWERS WOMEN AT  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN ATLANTA**

**RISE UP, UNITE, DEFEND TOWN  
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### LULAC Members Come to Washington

20th Annual Legislative Conference and Awards Gala honored Dan Rather, President George H. W. Bush, and Football Legend Tom Flores in Washington, D.C.

## LULAC News

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Continuing its tradition of investing in women, LULAC launches entrepreneurship and STEM education programs.

# A Message From the President

Dear LULAC Members,

For 88 years, our organization has been at the forefront of ensuring that the civil rights of our community are protected and that we constantly advocate for the policies that allow Latinos to continue to thrive. The driving force behind all of this comes from you, our exemplary members, whose unparalleled dedication to your community has ensured that more people have access to quality education, healthcare, jobs, and more. As we approach the start of our national convention San Antonio, Texas, it is imperative that we remember the progress that we have made while looking forward to the goals that we must accomplish in the upcoming year.

LULAC kicked off the year with the 20th Annual Legislative Conference and Awards Gala in Washington, D.C. where we honored advocates and champions of our community while reaffirming our commitment to advocacy. For two decades, the LULAC Legislative Conference has brought the Latino voice directly to our leaders in Washington; and this year, LULAC members met with over 75 different Republican and Democratic congressional offices. During these visits, congressional representatives and their staff heard the stories of our community directly from the mouths of the individuals who live there. They told stories of broken families separated by harsh deportation policies, shared fears of the potential health consequences their loved ones would face without the protections of the Affordable Care Act, and relayed messages from students at their colleges and universities worried about skyrocketing higher education costs. Members from Puerto Rico shared their anxiety of the debt crisis, and our military families detailed heart wrenching stories of legal permanent resident veterans deported after serving our country overseas. It's stories like these that make our leaders listen, and LULAC remains committed to ensuring that the doors of Congress are always open to our members.

To address many of these issues, we renewed our efforts to reassure our community that we are continuing to fight for them. In the aftermath of a divisive election, we started the Rise Up, Unite, Defend town hall series to provide a forum of discussion for some of the most pressing issues affecting Latinos. The town halls bring together community leaders, LULAC members, and policy experts of all races, religions, and backgrounds to discuss how our communities can come together, lay aside our differences, and find



common ground. In the face of contentious policies like SB 4 in Texas, attempts to take away health coverage for millions of Americans; and weakening educational standards that ensure the educational success of Latino students; it's critical that we reach out to others and stand together to defend our future.

As we arrive at the 88th Annual LULAC National Convention in San Antonio, Texas; I urge each of you to stand together under the principles that have propelled LULAC forward for so many years. When our founders gathered together 88 years ago to create our organization, they settled on a motto that has remained tried and true for generations of LULAC members. Moving forward let's ensure that the motto, "All for One, and One for All," remains as relevant today as it was almost nine decades ago to the brave individuals who put their lives on the line to begin the fight for equality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger C. Rocha Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive.

ROGER C. ROCHA, JR.  
LULAC National President





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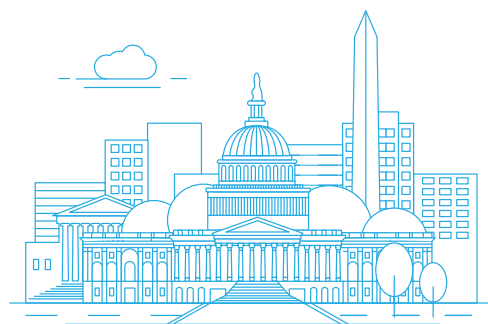




## National Legislative Conference & Awards Gala

Journalist Dan Rather receives the LULAC Lifetime Service Award from LULAC National President Roger C. Rocha, Jr.





# LULAC MEMBERS COME TO WASHINGTON, D.C. FOR LATINO POLICY PRIORITIES National Legislative Conference & Awards Gala

*By: Geoffrey Nolan, LULAC National Communications Associate*

LULAC members from across the country traveled to Washington, D.C. and participated in the 20th Annual LULAC National Legislative Conference and Awards Gala. Held annually in February, the event allows LULAC members to gain insight into major federal policy issues and bring the policy concerns of their community directly to their leaders in Washington. With over 88 years of service to the Latino community, the Legislative Conference and Awards Gala reaffirms LULAC's commitment to amplifying the voices of Latinos in the halls of Congress and honoring those exemplary advocates working on behalf of the Latino community.

This year, hundreds of Collegiate LULAC members, LULAC leaders, partners, and supporters enjoyed policy briefings focusing on a variety of issues important to the future of the Latino community. Experts from Washington, D.C. advocacy organizations like the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF), the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (LCCHR), and the National Education Association (NEA) provided insight into the nuances of various policies while providing tips for combatting some of the more hostile actions that the Trump administration has taken towards vulnerable minority communities. LULAC advocates were energized by the passionate battle cries of the panelists who discussed issues like immigration, health care, education, the environment, and President Trump's cabinet nominees.



Congressman Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) energized advocates at the Capitol Hill Advocacy Day Luncheon.

“You must fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn,” said Becky Pringle, NEA Vice President. “We have a responsibility to educate our students, and when Betsy DeVos and her billionaire friends come for our children’s education, we will not turn back!”

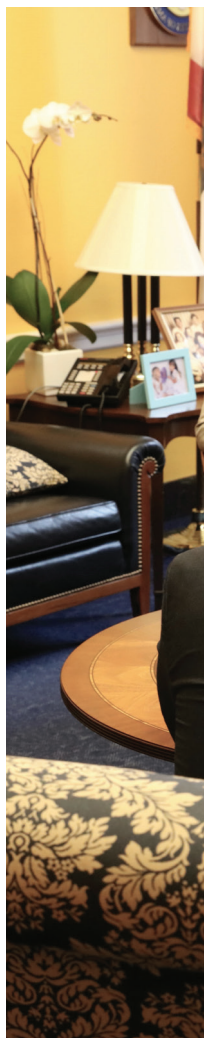
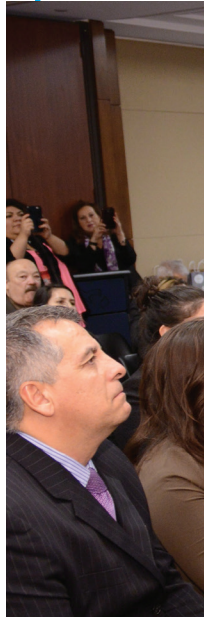
In addition to policy briefings and panels, participants listened to inspiring remarks from Members of Congress, including Congressman Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Congressman Ruben Kihuen (D-NV), and Congressman Darren Soto (D-FL). Each of the members of Congress reasserted their belief in our political system and encouraged those in attendance to remember the individuals whose stories are at the heart of their advocacy efforts.

Newly-elected Congressmen Kihuen, a former undocumented immigrant himself, urged LULAC members to fight for the American Dream and keep pushing for important policies that benefit the most vulnerable Americans. “The American Dream is alive,” he said. “I know it, and I’ve lived it, and we need your help to protect it.”

As the first day ended, LULAC members prepared for the annual LULAC National Awards Gala, a star-studded affair that honors advocates and trailblazers for the Latino community. This year’s gala was hosted by Maria Elena Salinas of *Noticiero Univision* and *Aqui y Ahora* and honored President George H. W. Bush, world-renowned journalist Dan Rather, and legendary sports commentator, player, and coach Tom Flores. Each of the award recipients encouraged LULAC members to continue the work of the generations before them, and reflected on the progress that the Latino community has made during the eighty-eight year history of LULAC.



“WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE TORCH OF  
THE STATUE OF LIBERTY IS NOT EXTINGUISHED, BUT WILL  
BURN BRIGHTLY FOR MANY  
GENERATIONS TO COME.”







## National Legislative Conference & Awards Gala

(Top) Senator Schumer addressed LULAC leaders at the Capitol Hill Advocacy Day Luncheon, encouraging them to remain active in their communities and engaged in political discourse.

(Bottom Left) LULAC members visited over 75 congressional Republican and Democratic offices, including Congresswoman Linda Sanchez (D-CA).

(Bottom Right) LULAC National President Roger C. Rocha, Jr. opened the Legislative Conference with the Presidential Address where he outlined LULAC's policy priorities for the upcoming year.





Congressman Raul Grijalva (D-AZ); Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD); Congressman Ruben Kihuen (D-NV) each addressed LULAC members and advocates at the Legislative Conference.

Journalist Dan Rather reflected on the current political climate, referencing some of the controversial aspects of the Trump administration, and encouraged members to take action to defend the American values of diversity and inclusion while safeguarding our immigrant heritage.

“To progress requires resistance,” said Rather. “Resistance to those things that our wrong and persistence to those that are right.”

The following day, LULAC members took their knowledge to Capitol Hill and visited over 75 different congressional offices to discuss some of the most pressing issues facing their communities. Many collegiate students focused their visits on safeguarding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and advocating for higher education reform to ensure that college is more affordable to more people across the country. Other groups focused on issues that included education, immigration, Puerto Rico Statehood, and efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The advocacy day also featured appearances from numerous members of Congress who discussed the importance of staying in touch with elected officials and making sure that they make their voices heard not only at the federal level, but at the local and state levels as

well. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD), and Congressman Luis Guterrez (D-IL) each addressed the advocates and offered their own pieces of advice for dealing with the current administration.

Senator Schumer addressed the latest controversies stemming from President Trump’s January travel ban and reassured the crowd that he would continue to fight for the rights of immigrants and refugees and while working to ensure that America’s immigrant heritage remains at the core of our national identity.

“Immigrants are not criminals and terrorists, they’re the future of this country,” he said. “We will ensure that the torch of the Statue of Liberty is not extinguished, but will burn brightly for many generations to come.”

After two days of advocacy activities, LULAC members returned to their communities across the United States to continue fighting for the well-being of their family members, friends, and neighbors. In the face of near constant attacks, it is imperative that our members remain committed to upholding the mission of LULAC and advocating for the best opportunities to ensure that ensure a bright, prosperous future for the Latino community. ■





Toyota is proud to return as a presenting sponsor at this year's 88<sup>th</sup> Annual League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Convention & Exposition.

We are proud to support LULAC, the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the US, and its mission to promote the advancement of the Hispanic community. We are honored to be part of your ongoing journey, and look forward to our continued partnership.

See you in San Antonio!

**JUNTOS  
SOMOS  
IMPARABLES**





# LULAC YOUNG ADULT LEADERS BRING POLICY PRIORITIES TO WASHINGTON DC

*By: Edna Degollado, LULAC National Programs Coordinator*

Bringing together bright college students and Latino young professionals from across the country, LULAC's Emerge Latino Conference welcomed attendees to Washington, D.C. for three days of advocacy, professional development, and service. Founded in 2013, the conference strives to develop leaders who will shape the future of the Latino community and the country, and this year did not disappoint.

Students and young professionals from across the country represented their respective states and advocated for important issues affecting their communities. Together, they generated the collegiate policy platform for the conference and determined the priorities that were presented to their elected officials on the LULAC Capitol Hill Advocacy Day. The platform encompassed some of the most important issues affecting the Latino community and Latino millennials.

In order to gain some perspective on various policy issues, participants attended policy-briefing sessions where elected officials, policy experts, and civil rights leaders shared relevant information on various topics like immigration, health, education, and the environment. On the final day of the conference, the LULAC Young Adult Platform was presented and outlined some of the key issues that delegates brought to the attention of their elected officials.

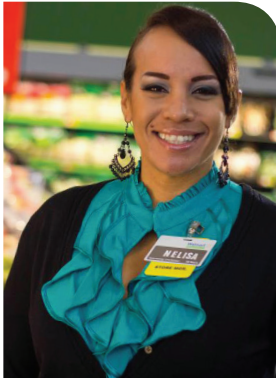
In addition to policy discussions and advocacy, the Emerge Latino Conference stressed the importance of community service and professional development. For the past 2 years, Emerge has collaborated with the Washington, D.C. Capital Area Food Bank and invited participants to assist with various food bank tasks, including stuffing bags of food for families in the area. Fifteen percent of families living in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) area struggle with food security, and the Emerge Latino Conference has helped serve over 1000 local families and collectively donated 200 hours of service over the past two years.

The Emerge Conference participants left Washington, D.C. motivated to continue working on the priorities set forth by the conference with the confidence to make a difference in their community. LULAC remains committed to ensuring that the voices of Latino students are heard in the influential and powerful halls of Congress. To get involved with the Emerge Conference in 2018, visit [www.LULAC.org/emerge](http://www.LULAC.org/emerge). ■



(Top) On the Emerge Advocacy Day, students met with Members of Congress to discuss the issues that mattered most to their communities. Participating Members included Congresswoman Linda Sanchez and Congresswoman Nannette Barragan. (Middle) LULAC National Vice President for Young Adults Abigail Zapote led the Emerge Conference participants in the development of the Collegiate LULAC policy platform. (Bottom) The career expo provided students with valuable information on jobs, internship opportunities, and resume assistance.





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# LULAC WOMEN'S COMMISSION BRINGS ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO ATLANTA, GEORGIA

By: *Geoffrey Nolan*, LULAC National Communications Associate

LULAC remains an organization driven by women's empowerment issues. Although originally counting upon an all-male membership at its founding, women quickly assumed important leadership roles that helped transform the organization into the civil rights powerhouse that it is today. With the help of the LULAC Women's Commission, issues affecting women have been at the forefront of LULAC's advocacy efforts, and LULAC prides itself on being an important advocate in ensuring that all women have access to the necessary resources to live healthy, happy, productive lives.

For the first time ever, the LULAC Women's Commission brought its annual Women's Conference to Atlanta, Georgia. With a rapidly growing Latino population, Georgia was chosen as the host state to give a voice to states and regions with emerging Latino populations. With the theme *Women United-Una Voz Unida*, the conference stressed the importance of a unified message that advances the well-being of Latinas across the country.

LULAC National Vice President for Women Lourdes Galvan summed up the goal of the conference upon taking the stage at the Women Lideres Luncheon where she challenged Latinas to break down the barriers that prevent them from living their best lives.

"Mujeres Sin Barreras (Women without boundaries), nothing will stop us, and we must keep moving forward," she said.

Over the course of the two-day event, hundreds of women converged on Atlanta to discuss breaking down the barriers that prevent Latinas from pursuing opportunities in corporate America, accessing higher education opportunities, and running for public office. Participants from across the country attended interactive

workshops featuring leading policy experts and community advocates discussing the gender pay gap, Latina entrepreneurship, Latinas in political office, immigration issues, and women's health issues.

In addition to the workshops, participants listened to inspiring speeches from local Latino leaders and influential national leaders. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, Georgia State Representative Brenda Lopez, Georgia State Representative Pedro Marin, President & CEO of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Domenika Lynch, Co-Chair of the National Women's March Carmen Perez, and Head of Inclusion Strategy of BRANDthropologie Anna Maria Chavez provided remarks at the conference. The speakers encouraged the women in the audience to take action in their communities now—instead of waiting on others to act on their behalf.

"Superman and Superwoman are not coming to save us," said Co-Chair of the National Women's March Carmen Perez. "We're the ones we've been waiting for, and we must have a seat at the table."

After two action-packed days of women's empowerment activities, LULAC reaffirmed its longstanding commitment to investing in communities across the country by announcing new programs and initiatives aimed at helping women and their communities. Thanks to their longstanding partnership,

LULAC and Tyson Foods donated over 30,000 pounds of protein to the Atlanta Community Food Bank to feed hungry families in the Atlanta metro area. Atlanta-based Cox Enterprises announced the funding of a new tech center through LULAC's *Empower Hispanic America with Technology* initiative that will provide broadband resources to the local







*(Top Left) Conference participants attended panels on Latina entrepreneurship, the power of the Latina vote, effectively engaging the media, and immigration issues. (Top Right) Featured speaker Anna Maria Chavez urged women to “follow their north star” to success and not be discouraged by those who try to inhibit their success. (Bottom Left) National Co-Chair of the Women’s March Carmen Perez joined LULAC National Vice President for Women Lourdes Galvan and urged women to get involved, make their voices heard, and take action on the issues that matter to them. (Bottom Right) Participants took advantage of the women’s expo and learned about women’s empowerment resources in the Atlanta, Georgia area.*

community, allowing individuals to access homework help, employment opportunities, and citizenship resources.

One of the most exciting announcements came from the conference presenting sponsor, The Coca-Cola Company. Thanks to their generous support, LULAC will launch the Latina Entrepreneur Academy under LULAC’s new *Women’s Empowerment Initiative*. The initiative will encourage more Latinas to start their own businesses, while providing an important support system the will facilitate future success.

The LULAC Women’s Commission looks forward to building upon its success in Atlanta and strengthening its advocacy efforts at the local and national level to continue fighting for policies that benefit Latinas. The Women’s Commission will host the Women’s High Tea and Hall of Fame Awards in July at the LULAC National Convention in San Antonio, Texas and will host its annual Women’s Conference in March 2018. ■

*The Coca-Cola Company*

*We are grateful to Presenting Sponsor, The Coca-Cola Company, for investing in Latinas with their generous support of the LULAC National Women’s Conference.*





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# LULAC Initiates Rise Up, Unite, Defend Town Hall Series

By: *Sindy M. Benavides*

LULAC National Director of Civic Engagement  
& Community Mobilization

*The United States is a nation of immigrants. Every American generation has been enriched by the work ethic, culture, vitality, language, loyalty and ingenuity of our immigrant communities.*

*As John F. Kennedy stated in  
A Nation of Immigrants:*

*“The interaction of disparate cultures, the vehemence of the ideals that led the immigrants here, the opportunity offered by a new life, all gave America a flavor and a character that make it as unmistakable and as remarkable to people today as it was to Alexis de Tocqueville in the early part of the nineteenth century.”*

As the 2016 presidential election came to a close, LULAC experienced an increase in calls and emails from LULAC members alarmed at some startling trends they witnessed in their communities. The calls ranged from parents and students—many of them immigrants—calling for assistance with combatting hate speech and racism at their schools, to complaints of abuse and bullying in public spaces. Instead of standing idly by, many inquired about getting involved in LULAC and mobilizing their communities to stop the hateful rhetoric.

As a result, LULAC issued a call to action to our members across the country. We are asking LULAC members to *rise up* against racism, discrimination and intolerance; *unite* our diverse communities into one determined movement; and *defend* the American dream from those who seek to end it for our communities. Together, we can ensure that the United States remains the land of the free, the home of the brave and the nation of immigrants that it has always been.

Our goal is to organize more than fifty town halls across the country by the end of 2017. Working closely with LULAC councils in major cities (Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Antonio, Houston, Chicago, New York, Boston, Portland, and Orlando), emerging states (North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia), swing states (Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada) and the Midwest (Iowa, Wisconsin, Utah, Arkansas), we are confident that we can accomplish this.

The town halls are led by local LULAC councils hoping to engage community members from all backgrounds and encourage them to have a dialogue around key issues like education, immigration, the economy/jobs, the environment, and health. Due to



the rapid increase in reports of hate crimes, bullying, and racial name-calling; the town halls can also incorporate a panel of experts that can address many of these trends. Panelists can serve as resources for the community members and teach students, parents, and adults to be proactive in their actions if confronted with ignorance and hate.

To date, LULAC has held over 15 town halls across the country, with the first one in San Antonio on December 17th, 2016. In the coming weeks, seven more town halls will be held across the country.

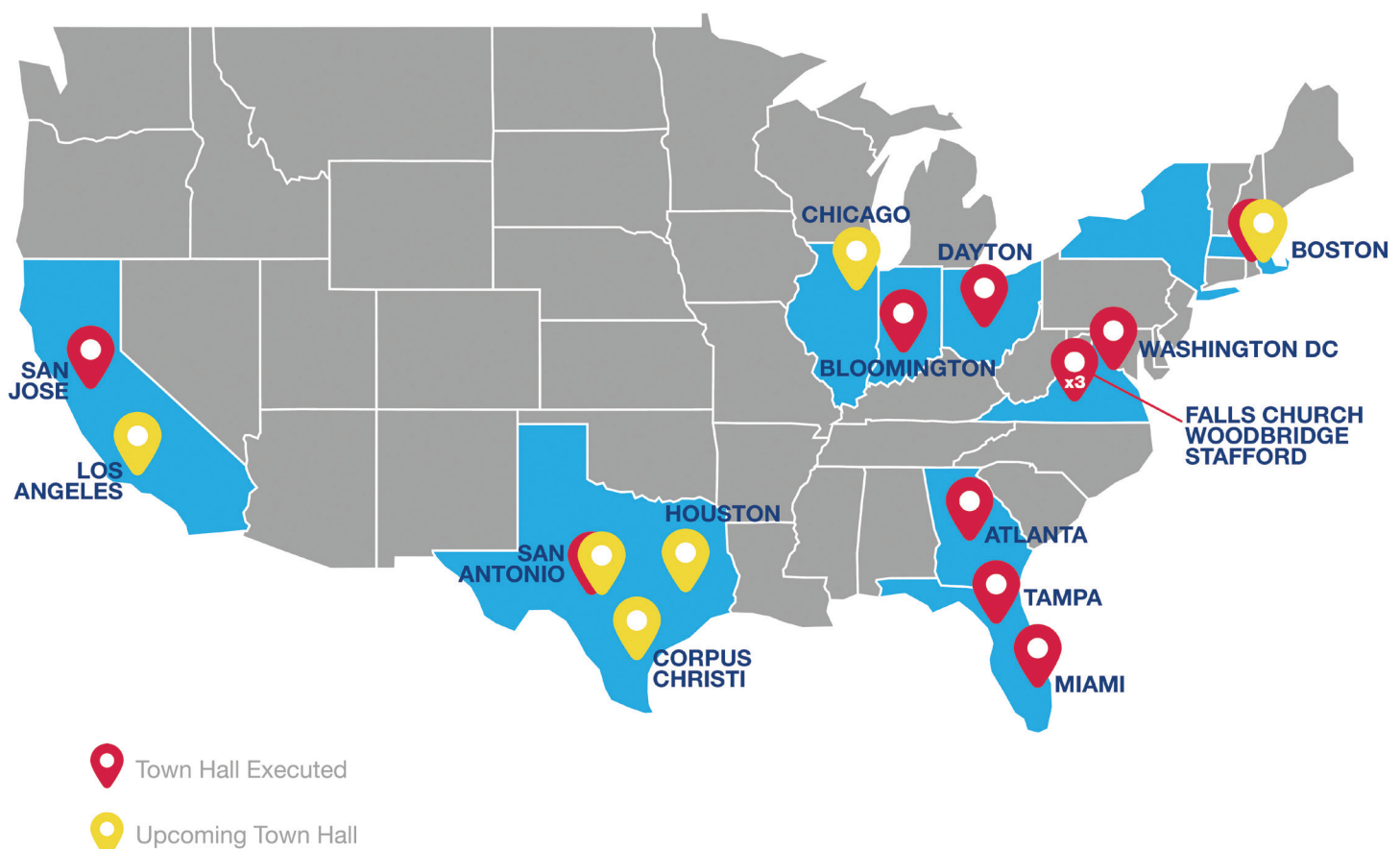
We are at a juncture in our history where we all have the responsibility to take action and engage in our democracy. Through our united efforts and engagement, we will change the narrative that paints our community in an unfair light. We must make sure that people in elected office understand that we are paying attention and will

hold them accountable for their actions. We have a tough battle ahead; but with a united voice, we can make sure that the errors from our past are not committed again.

We cannot stand on the sidelines and watch our community get pummeled by elected officials who refuse to acknowledge the diversity of America and pass policies that target our communities. We must engage and take action and live up to LULAC's signature motto: *All for One, and One for All*.

To access the town hall toolkit and know your rights materials in English and Spanish, please go to: **[www.lulac.org/riseup](http://www.lulac.org/riseup)**

For more information on how to host a town hall or Know Your Rights workshop in your community, please contact **Sindy Benavides** at **[SBenavides@LULAC.org](mailto:SBenavides@LULAC.org)**. ■







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# With Jobs and Customer Service, Charter Invests in Latino Communities

*By: Geoffrey Nolan, LULAC National Communications Associate*

In order to fulfill its mission of service to the Latino community, LULAC relies upon the support of corporate partners that share our passion to invest in communities across the country and ensure that they have the necessary jobs, tools, and resources to live productive, fulfilling lives. Charter Communications is one of these partners and will be a presenting sponsor at the 2017 LULAC National Convention in San Antonio, Texas. In addition to their sponsorship of LULAC, Charter remains committed to ensuring that it provides the best customer service to all of its customers, including those who identify as Spanish-dominant. Earlier this year, Charter built upon this commitment and opened their first bilingual call center in McAllen, Texas to serve American Spanish-speaking customers.

**Charter**  
COMMUNICATIONS





Vice President of Customer  
Care Anabel Chavez Talks  
Customer Service, Employment, and  
Community Investment  
in McAllen, Texas



“AT CHARTER, WE VIEW CUSTOMER SERVICE AS A ‘PRODUCT UNTO ITSELF. IT IS SOMETIMES MORE IMPORTANT THAN OUR PRODUCTS, AND IT’S GRATIFYING TO ME THAT WE GET TO HELP SO MANY PEOPLE SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS AND SITUATIONS.”

An important part of this call center is the leadership of Vice President of Customer Care Anabel Chavez, a McAllen native who has an unrivaled passion for investing in her community.

Born and raised in McAllen, Texas; Anabel Chavez traces her success back to some of the lessons that she learned as a young child. Chavez began working at the age of ten as a fieldworker, where she learned the value of teamwork at an early age. Chavez recalls that as a young child, she couldn’t work as quickly as some of the more seasoned workers. Instead of holding that against her, some of the other workers would pitch in to ensure that they all finished their work on time and could move on to the next field.

After working in the fields as a young woman, Chavez entered the world of customer service where she worked her way up from call center service representative to various managerial positions. She relished the opportunity to work in an ever-changing environment and felt the gratification of helping others solve their problems.

“Working in a call center is a very exciting experience, and there is never a dull moment,” she says. “The environment is very fast-paced, and is filled with individuals focused on solving problems for others.”

In early 2017, Chavez took a leap of faith and applied for a job as head of the new Charter call center set to open in McAllen. She was thrilled at the opportunity to serve a world-class company like Charter and lead an initiative that would bring hundreds of jobs to the McAllen community. McAllen has experienced a higher unemployment rate when compared to the national average, and Chavez saw an opportunity that would bring good jobs to an underserved community. Chavez is quick to point out that customer service is not an easy career, and

emphasizes the plethora of skills one must utilize to provide excellent customer support.

“These jobs require a real skill and craft, and it is one that needs to be taught and developed over time,” she says. “We’re looking to hire people from the McAllen community, train them, and have them ultimately take pride in that craft.”

Since taking over the call center, Chavez has hit the ground running to ensure that it continues to represent the high standards that Charter has set for customer service. She cites the company’s commitment to customer service as one of her top reasons for working there.

“At Charter, we view customer service as a ‘product unto itself,” she says. “It is sometimes more important than our products, and it’s gratifying to me that we get to help so many people solve complex problems and situations.”

Perhaps most importantly, Chavez sees the long-term positive impacts that this call center can have on the McAllen community that she loves so much.

“Charter is clearly committed to diversity, and our call centers reflect the demographics of the communities we serve,” she says.

As the manager of the center, she gets to lead Charter’s investment in the people of McAllen and is tasked with hiring members from the community to work there. By providing these individuals with jobs, Charter has allowed her to play an important role in strengthening the McAllen economy and empowering individuals with new careers. It is her way of giving back to a community that has given her so much, and through Charter’s dedication to invest in diverse communities; she is able to make that dream a reality. ■





# Regional Spotlight

## Southwest Washington LULAC Empowers Community to Know Their Rights

Southwest Washington LULAC Council #47013 received the 2017 Community Leadership Award, presented by Vancouver Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Stephen Webb. In addition to their work in education with the *Adelante America* program, Southwest Washington LULAC has been leading social justice efforts to empower their community during this difficult political climate. They organized workshops and forums to educate the community about the impact of changes to federal immigration policies on students, families, and the organizations that serve them. During this time, they hosted 12 Know Your Rights workshops for educators, social service professionals, parents and community members at schools and churches across their county, and 2 Family Emergency Preparedness workshops to help families make a plan for temporary parental consent in cases where parents are separated from their children. This was supported by free legal assistance and public notary services from the community. The council enlisted over 100 volunteers to make this possible and reached hundreds of members of their community.

## LULAC Charters Council in Hawaii

Last October, Dr. John Arnold, President of Council #1088, and Tika Arnold of LULAC Council #1122 from Tucson, Arizona traveled to Maui, Hawaii to start a new LULAC council. The intergenerational group of individuals organized to fight for some of the most important issues facing the Latino community in Hawaii. At their first meeting,

Cesar Gaxiola was elected President, and is looking forward to focusing on immigration and other civil rights issues.

## LULAC Council #2 of San Antonio, Texas Community Spotlight: Rey Feo Scholarship

Since 1947, LULAC Council #2 has spearheaded the Rey Feo Scholarship competition and has raised over 7 million dollars in scholarships for local students, including many first generation Latinos. The organization is headlined by the “Rey Feo” or “People’s King” and the LULAC “Reina de las Flores”. Individuals are chosen for the title based on raising money for the scholarship program. This year’s Rey Feo, San Antonio businessman Fred Reyes raised over 250,000 dollars. This year’s La Reina de la Feria de las Flores Sofia Marie Rodriguez raised over 50,000 in scholarship money for San Antonio students. ■







## Ready! Set! Go! Empowers the Voices of Students and Families in Education

By: Xiomara Santos, LULAC National Policy and Legislation Associate

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) of 2015 was the latest reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965, the first federal education law that demonstrated a longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. Although the court case *Brown v. Board of Education* declared the concept of “Separate but Equal” unconstitutional, it was not until the passage of the ESEA that schools truly began to integrate and gave equal opportunity to students of color.

Today, ESSA represents good news for Latinos and other underserved students. It builds on key areas of progress in recent years made possible by the efforts of educators, communities, parents, students and civil right organizations like LULAC. Specifically, states and schools are now held accountable for the progress of Latinos, African Americans, low-income students and even English Learners (ELs). Holding schools accountable for the progress of ELs is critical in states like Illinois where almost 80 percent of English Learners are Spanish-speaking according to the Illinois Board of Education. Currently, one in four students in K-12 public schools is Latino, more than triple the amount since the 1980s. With the percentage of Latino students increasing in U.S. public schools, it is imperative to make sure that they are college and career ready.

Many surveys and polls conducted by the Pew Research Center throughout the years have demonstrated the important role education plays in improving the lives of Latinos. Since 2014, the Latino high school dropout rate has declined to 12 percent, the lowest number in a decade. The number of Latinos enrolling in college increased by 35 percent in 2014. While Latino students have overcome many obstacles and barriers, many more still remain. Latino students still lag behind other groups when it comes to college completion. According to the Pew Research Center, only 15 percent of Latinos obtain a bachelors degree or higher.

Since its establishment over 88 years ago, LULAC has been a tireless advocate and leader in advancing the educational attainment

of Latino students. LULAC’s *#EstamosListos* campaign through our *Ready! Set! Go!* Initiative not only provides students and families with the tools necessary to succeed in school, but also reminds them of how important their voices are—especially given the current political environment. As an organization, we want to make sure that we go beyond students being college and career ready. We need to empower them with a voice to fight for the educational needs of their communities. Recognizing that public education is the bedrock of democracy, LULAC’s relaunch of the *Ready! Set! Go!* Initiative this year aims to educate, engage, and empower students, parents, and advocates in key states with information, resources and opportunities to become active participants during the implementation of ESSA through our *Cafecito* information sessions.

*Cafecitos* are a LULAC organizing tool to mobilize trusted voices like community members, leaders, and other local public figures to provide information on ESSA and its impact on Latino students. LULAC held its first *Cafecito* in Cicero, Illinois on April 2017 with nearly 70 participants in attendance.

Participants were eager to know the details of the new ESSA law, and some were not even aware of the changes coming to the educational system. Parents and students in the audience had several questions ranging from “Why is my child taking the SAT and not the ACT?” to “How can I make sure my child is on track to graduate?” The audience was engaged and did not hesitate to ask questions. The *cafecito* exposed parents to different perspectives from LULAC advocates, local teachers, a previous Parent Teacher Association coordinator, and parent leaders in their community. Parents, students and other family members walked out of the *cafecito* more informed on how a new federal education law will affect them at a local level. LULAC will continue to host *cafecitos* on ESSA throughout the year. For more information on ESSA and other *cafecitos* near you, visit: [www.lulac.org/essa](http://www.lulac.org/essa). ■





# With Environmental Protection under Attack, LULAC Fights to Ensure that Latino Community Remains Protected

By: **Juan Perez**, LULAC National Environmental Policy Fellow

With the election of President Trump and Administrator Scott Pruitt heading the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the environmental movement faces one of its toughest battles toward ensuring the protection of climate change initiatives and clean energy programs. In 2014, the Obama Administration introduced the *Clean Power Plan* to set clear federal standards on emission and pollution levels in an effort to combat climate change. In recent months, President Trump has continually attacked environmental regulations and has put forth several executive orders that will gradually repeal the *Clean Power Plan* regulations as well as rescind standards laid out under the *Clean Air Act* and *Clean Water Rule*. These regulations are critical to ensuring that our community has access to clean air and water and is protected from harmful pollution that negatively impacts the environmental health of our community.

Despite overwhelming scientific evidence, President Trump and newly appointed EPA Administrator Pruitt refuse to acknowledge the reality of climate change and continually ignore its impact on the health and well-being of millions of Americans. Latinos in particular are disproportionately affected by pollutants in the environment when compared to their non-Latino counterparts. According to a report published by LULAC, the Clean Air Task Force, and the National Hispanic Medical Association, approximately half of the Latino population in the United States live in the nation's most polluted cities. In addition, more than 28 million Latinos reside in California, Texas, and Florida; states experiencing the most dramatic impacts of climate change through heat waves, droughts, and flooding due to rising sea levels.

Latinos also face disproportionately high rates of pollution related illnesses because of their proximity to environmental hazards. Approximately 40 percent of Latinos live within 30 miles of fossil fuel power plants that often negatively impact the air quality and land of the communities that surround them. Due to this proximity, Latinos are more

likely to develop asthma and other respiratory illnesses. 10 percent of Latino children under the age of 18 suffer from asthma and 40 percent of those children diagnosed are more likely to die from asthma compared to their non-Latino counterparts. By relaxing emission and gas regulations, Latino communities will only continue to suffer these negative health consequences.

Environmental protections are not just about protecting our land and air, but are critical to ensuring the availability of clean water for all Americans. Because of an aging water infrastructure, millions of Americans are exposed to high levels of lead contamination and toxins in their water sources. As seen in Flint, Michigan; the inability to enforce these regulations leads to negative health impacts for those communities affected. In the case of Flint, thousands of residents were poisoned, with the negative consequences of lead poisoning ranging from minor illness to brain damage. Among children, lead exposure can lead to slow mental development and learning disabilities. In order to prevent disasters like Flint from occurring, the EPA must enact strong regulations and have the ability to enforce those regulations across the country. LULAC opposes any legislation that would undermine the ability of the EPA to do so, and supports regulations and protections, like the *Clean Water Rule*, that safeguard our access to clean water.

LULAC is committed to working alongside the environmental community to ensure that all Americans have access to the clean land, water, and air that they need to live productive lives. LULAC recently joined partners in the environmental advocacy community and launched efforts at the state and national level to mobilize our members around the importance of addressing environmental health concerns and their impacts among the Latino community. Through these measures, LULAC is striving to ensure that the environmental health of Latinos is a longstanding priority of our elected officials and cannot be undone by the whims of an anti-regulatory administration. ■

# HOW PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ERRONEOUS CHARACTERIZATIONS OF IMMIGRANTS ARE TRANSLATING TO DANGEROUS POLICIES

By: *Luis Torres*, LULAC National Director of Policy and Legislation

Promising walls and deportation forces on the campaign trail, President Trump was able to garner enough support to propel his long-shot candidacy into the White House. His arrival catalyzed a tidal wave of change with an explosion of executive orders earlier this year. These actions united civil rights advocates, including LULAC members across the country, in an opposition movement that has only grown following the months after Trump's inauguration.

## The Department of Homeland Security: Trump's Blunt Instrument against Latino Immigrants

One of Trump's first actions upon assuming the presidency was signing an executive order calling for the hiring of 10,000 additional "immigration officers" and directing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to begin the construction of a concrete wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. In addition, he instructed DHS to limit its use of prosecutorial discretion, eliminating previous Obama administration guidance that seemingly focused Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities on the deportation of migrants with serious criminal records. While the bulk of these actions require significant expenditures and money from Congress, Trump inherited a deportation machine from the Obama years that quickly became a force of terror sweeping through Latino communities across the nation.

Acting with impunity and the support of the Trump administration, ICE began deporting long-time immigrant business owners, family members checking-in at courthouses, and even those receiving treatment

in hospitals. They raided homes in the middle of the night; swept up bystanders as 'collateral'; and arrested, detained, and deported DACA beneficiaries (young immigrants with work authorization granted protection from deportation as part of President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program).

Rhetoric from the White House emphasized that immigration enforcement authorities were now unchained to perform their jobs free from the government "restrictions" put in place by the Obama administration. White House officials reiterated that the raids were targeting violent criminals. However, sources show that this is simply not the case. According to a report from the DHS, arrests of noncriminal undocumented immigrants have increased 150 percent when compared to the same period as last year, demonstrating that the President's quest for 'law and order' is coming at the expense of Latino families and immigrant communities.

## Trump's Divisive Border Wall

During the 2016 campaign, President Trump reiterated the need for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, drawing on imagery of immigrants pouring over the border and entering the United States and taking American jobs.

For decades, the narrative of a violent and insecure border region was used to justify and advance anti-immigrant, anti-border, pro-criminalization, and anti-environment legislation that has resulted in extremely negative economic and civil rights impacts on border



communities. Upon assuming office, President Trump has continued to act like candidate Trump, exploiting false information to justify the need for a wall along the border.

Again, President Trump's assumptions could not be further from the truth. Data suggests that border communities on the U.S. side of the border tend to be some of the safest in the country. According to the FBI's Uniformed Crime Reports, cities on the border are safer than cities away from the border. Places like El Paso, Texas have long topped the list of safe cities for its low-levels of crime and violence. Additionally, studies from the American Immigration Council suggest that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes and communities with more immigrants are likely to be safer than places with fewer immigrants.

Other reports continue to chip away at President Trump's egregious

narrative by dispelling the myth of a porous border. According to Customs and Border Protection (CBP), apprehension rates continue to be at an all-time low. In March of 2017, there were roughly 12,000 total apprehensions at the southwest border representing a 63 percent drop from March of the previous year. Apprehension data is commonly used as an indicator for helping measure the flow of migrants entering the U.S. without inspection. Reports from the Pew Research Center corroborate the data from CBP and additionally show that net migration to the U.S. from Mexico has declined in the years following the great recession. Of particular note in their 2015 report *More Mexicans Leaving Than Coming To the U.S.*, net-migration between 2009 to 2014 fell below zero. During that time, more Mexicans were leaving the United States than entering.

Despite these facts, President Trump continues to push for a wall,





increased militarization of the border region, the criminalization of immigrants, and the destruction of wildlife habitats as he seeks to implement an extreme, profit-driven agenda at the expense of immigrant communities.

## Sanctuary Cities and Community Trust Policies Under Attack

Throughout the presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly used the examples of so-called sanctuary cities to reinforce his campaign narrative of lawless cities and criminal immigrants. As a result, states have now become battlegrounds for the national immigration fight. For months, LULAC members in Texas fought against harmful legislation like SB 4, which aims to criminalize immigrants and punish sanctuary cities and organizations with strong community-trust building policies. LULAC members participated in Texas legislative hearings as well as several advocacy days and direct action campaigns aimed at stopping the legislation. Despite these efforts, Governor Greg Abbott signed the bill into law in early May, making the State of Texas one of the most anti-immigrant states in the nation. In response, LULAC joined the municipality of El Cenizo and filed a lawsuit, stating that the legislation sanctions discrimination against others based on the color of their skin.

Although the rhetoric from the Trump administration and the actions of legislators in Texas would have us believe otherwise, studies show that sanctuary cities make us safer. A 2013 study from the University of Illinois-Chicago found that the more involved law enforcement officers were in immigration enforcement, the greater the erosion in trust between officers and the documented and undocumented immigrant community. Building trust between police officers and the communities that they serve is critical to effective law enforcement. Law enforcement officers understand this, and many—including police chiefs of the major cities in Texas—oppose legislation like SB 4 that places the burden of immigration enforcement on local police departments instead of federal immigration agents. Without comprehensive immigration reform, anti-sanctuary cities legislation only will result in more deportations and more broken families for our community.

President Trump rode into office on a campaign based on hateful rhetoric that demonized our immigrant brothers and sisters. It is up to us to continue to stand up for our immigrant populations and vehemently oppose policies that attack our community. It is up to us to change the narrative, lift up the voices of immigrants across the country and continue fighting for comprehensive immigration reform. By doing this, we can ensure that the words of President Trump remain only words, and that America continues to be a welcoming land for all immigrants. ■





# WHEN OUR GOVERNMENT DOES LESS, WE ALL NEED TO DO MORE

By: *Mariana Panuncio-Feldman*,  
Senior Director of International Climate Cooperation

We have reached a turning point in the history of humankind. Left unchecked, planetary warming could cause irreversible damage to our fragile ecosystems, severely disrupting water and food supplies, displacing millions of people, and fomenting instability around the world. Make no mistake: climate change presents an existential threat to us and to our planet. As responsible global citizens, it is incumbent upon us to be good stewards of our planet—for our own sake, and for generations to come.

Climate change knows no borders, and makes no distinction between nationalities, skin color, political ideology or cultural identity. Its catastrophic effects are already wreaking havoc on the United States and other countries across the world.

In the United States, effects of climate change include droughts in California, increasingly intense and more frequent hurricanes along our Eastern seaboard, and prolonged wildfires roaring across the West. Climate change is not an issue that only affects polar bears in the Arctic or distant island nations in the South Pacific. Climate change affects us here in the United States, in our cities, in our communities.

As is so often the case, the communities most immediately affected are also the most politically and economically vulnerable. Take the U.S. Latino population: 30 million<sup>1</sup> Latinos live in California, Florida and Texas, some of the states hit the hardest by climate change. Furthermore, 50 percent of U.S. Latinos live in the 25 most ozone-polluted cities in the country<sup>2</sup>. Addressing climate change means protecting the people and cities on the frontlines and building safer communities for us all.

Latinos are not sitting around waiting for help to arrive. Latinos have been organizing and becoming increasingly vocal. Polls show that 82 percent of Hispanic voters would prefer the U.S. to invest in clean, renewable energy sources rather than fossil fuels, and 77 percent favor setting a goal for all U.S. energy to be produced from renewable sources by 2050<sup>3</sup>.

The Hispanic community has a crucial role to play in meeting America's carbon reduction goals. That is why WWF is excited to have partnered with LULAC to strengthen this groundswell of support for climate action by the Hispanic community. We can achieve more together than any single organization could do alone.

And there has never been a better time to take bold action on climate change. We now have a ratified Paris Agreement that provides a path towards a carbon-neutral and climate-resilient world. This is a big deal: in a powerful sign of international cooperation, virtually every country in the world has agreed to tackle one of our greatest common challenges. The Paris Agreement is a testament to what we can accomplish when we recognize our shared stakes. As John F. Kennedy famously once said: "Our most common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."

While national governments, the actual signatories of the Paris Agreement, have the mandate and responsibility to follow through on the commitments that have been made, the goals of Paris will not be achieved by national governments – and in our case, the federal government – alone. Businesses, universities, cities, states, individuals, and all sectors in society can help accelerate our transition to a low carbon economy. We are all protagonists in this story. And to do so, we have the opportunity to adopt the

1 Pew Research Center "Hispanic population reaches record 55 million, but growth has cooled" 06/25/2015

2 NRDC "U.S. Latinos and Air Pollution: A Call to Action" (2011)

3 GreenLatinos and Sierra Club "Nationwide Study of Latino Voters & the Environment" November 2016





technologies of the 21st Century, while phasing out the technologies of the past.

And the next four years are critical. We know that we need to ramp up our collective efforts to decarbonize the global economy and increase our climate preparedness by 2020 if we are to contain the impacts of climate change.

In this grand endeavor, the United States – and all of us as members of the American society - have an indispensable role to play. As the world's second greatest emitter of greenhouse gases, we must not only reduce our carbon pollution, but also help communities -in the US and around the world – adapt to the drastic changes already underway.

And when it comes to protecting the environment, doing good is also good business. Today, over 3.3 million Americans already work in the clean energy economy

– more than all the jobs in the fossil fuel industry combined. Meanwhile, half of America's largest companies have a goal to cut climate pollution, the equivalent of eliminating pollution from 45 coal fired power plants every year. And over 400 cities have pledged to cut carbon pollution and build climate-smart communities, 60 US cities even have climate targets that are stronger than the US target under the Paris Agreement. The transition to the low carbon economy has begun and is spreading rapidly. The companies, cities, and nations that lead the way will be the first to reap the rewards.

The science on climate change is settled. We know what it will take to build the economy of the future – one that is not only cleaner but also more prosperous and inclusive. And we have what it takes to build it today. At a time when our individual and collective leadership is being put to the test, Latinos are at the center of this groundswell of leadership in action. Let's use our collective power to do more. ■





# Stopping the Debt Trap & Protecting Vulnerable Communities: LULAC Advocates for Consumer Protections

*By: Wendy Salas, LULAC National Community  
Programs Coordinator*

Many Latino families across the country are dealing with the financial stress of payday loans and other harmful financial practices that trap consumers in debt. Since 2014, LULAC has worked alongside numerous national partners to highlight the need for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to create a rule to regulate the predatory payday lending industry and protect consumers. The CFPB announced it would work on a proposed rule in 2015 and followed with a proposed rule regulating payday, vehicle title, and certain high-cost installment loans in June 2016. Following the announcement, LULAC tirelessly worked to ensure that our members and consumers participated in an open comment period to showcase the need for a strong rule.

Though the rule will help many families looking for financial stability, recent efforts by the Trump administration and Congress are attempting to diminish the CFPB's reach and rulemaking capabilities. On June 8, 2017, the Choice Act was passed in the House of Representatives, a bill that looks to limit the power and effectiveness of the CFPB by requiring the institution to seek congressional approval before taking action against financial institutions. The legislation would also remove the ability of the CFPB to regulate small-dollar loans - essentially reversing the progress made by the CFPB in protecting consumers against predatory loans. Many believe that there must be many changes made to the proposed bill in order to be passed by the Senate.

According to a report by the PEW Charitable Trusts, roughly 12 million Americans use payday loans and 70 percent of payday borrowers believe that payday loans

should be subject to more regulation. This particularly resonates with the victims of payday lending that LULAC encountered in California. Many of these victims joined a campaign to support the CFPB in its payday rule and traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in advocacy days on Capitol Hill, made calls to their Members of Congress urging them to support the rule, and shared their stories with their community.

LULAC Norwalk Council President Rosa Barragan in California was one of the biggest advocates in support of the payday rule. She joined some of the earliest efforts to demand CFPB regulation to stop the debt trap that is a consequence of payday loan victims. Through her advocacy efforts, she met with Congresswoman Linda Sanchez (D-CA), participated in a press conference with LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis, and shared her story in various media interviews. "It is important now more than ever to make our voices heard and make sure our representatives support the CFPB and this payday rule. We cannot let the work done be reversed and leave the Latino community unprotected against these predatory lenders," says Barragan.

Though a final rule is yet to come from the CFPB, local lawmakers across the country are taking action now at the state level to ensure that their communities are protected. These local efforts are now more important than ever as the CFPB's ability to regulate payday loans is being threatened by the Trump administration and their allies. It is also imperative for the Latino community to continue to ask their local representatives to support the CFPB in order to ensure consumers across the country are protected. ■



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“Our partnership with the Empower Hispanic America with Technology is invaluable as it provides the local community with simple tools they need to search for jobs, prepare resumes, and send emails. Things most of us take for granted.”

Our partnership with Comcast began in 2006 when they first sponsored Digital Connector. We expanded the partnership which allowed us to create our own digital literacy program, To Empowerment; helping close the digital divide to low income, potential first generation students.

On behalf of the LNESC-Albuquerque staff and students, we'd like to thank Comcast for their commitment to the community.”

John Moya, Director, LNESC Albuquerque



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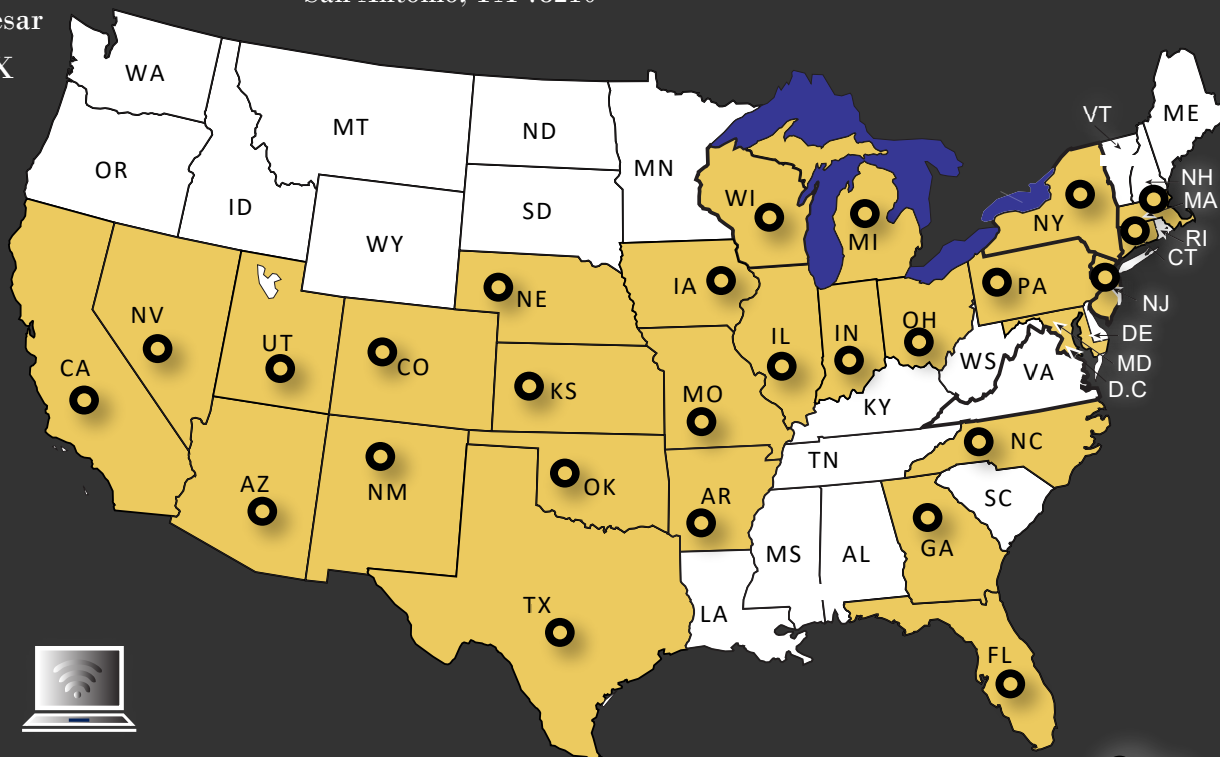
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# Ford Driving Dreams Grants Open the Doors of Opportunity for Students in Waukegan

By: *Sandra Caraveo*, LULAC National Education Programs Manager

Since its founding in 1929, LULAC has emphasized the role of education in transforming the lives of Latinos. Although Latino graduation rates are steadily rising and more students are pursuing higher education opportunities, much needs to be done to ensure the best opportunities for millions of Latino children in classrooms across the country.

For years, LULAC has collaborated with the Ford Motor Company Fund to invest in the educational success of Latino students with Ford Driving Dreams Grants. Each year, LULAC councils with creative ideas for improving Latino student achievement and graduation rates in their communities are selected to receive a 20,000 dollar grant to make their ideas a reality.

“Education is a top priority at Ford. Over a century ago, when Henry Ford started our company, he had more than profits in mind, he had a greater purpose. He wanted to make people’s lives better and education is part of that. Investing in education is investing in our future,” said Joe Avila, manager, Ford Motor Company Fund.

One of these outstanding councils is LULAC council #5273 in Waukegan, Illinois. The council partnered with a local initiative called *Waukegan to College* to address the high dropout rate in their community. This program exposes student to a variety of STEM career opportunities in hopes that students will become the next generation of engineers, nurses, teachers, and business leaders.

*Waukegan to College* serves 25 students and strives

to ensure parents and guardians are included in the educational success of their children from the very beginning of the program. Parents attend information sessions and conferences that provide them with regular updates on their progress and parents collaborate on how they can continue the learning process at home. Family members and school administrators work together to ensure that students are academically empowered in their high school careers and ultimately graduate from high school and attend college. Students participate in individualized tutoring sessions every Saturday to help with homework, resulting in more than 50 hours of additional homework help for each student every semester.

The effect on student participants is undeniable. Guadalupe Bueno, an 11th grade student at Waukegan High School said, “Without *Waukegan to College*, I would never have been able to have the new experiences and confidence I have today. *Waukegan to College* is helping me change my life by their hard work and dedication for each student to assist them in reaching their academic goals. I am passionate about the environment and I hope to graduate college with a degree in environmental science or law someday.”

In addition to homework help, participants attend educational boot camps that focus on life skill topics such as financial literacy and emotional health. Active citizenship is also an important component, and participants frequently participate in volunteer days. Waukegan LULAC members also provide mentorship, encouraging students to attend college.

*Waukegan to College* makes an effort to expose students



to several STEM-related careers in the manufacturing and engineering industries in their communities. As part of this program, students visited Fermilab in Batavia, IL where they participated in an interactive workshop exploring high-energy physics. With diversity lacking in many STEM careers, it is critical that Latinos students have access to the educational opportunities that facilitate their entry into these careers to ensure bright futures.

“STEAM education is critical to advancing our community, but recruiting minority students to study these subjects has been difficult because they lag behind their peers in math and science competency,” said Laura Rios, local coordinator of the FDD program. “*Waukegan to College* gives students the tools and exposure to kick start their interest in STEM fields. A well-educated workforce is critical in Waukegan if we are to break the cycle of poverty.”

In 2016, more than 50% of student participants will be the first to attend college in their family. Thanks to the work of LULAC and the Ford Motor Company Fund, students from Waukegan and hundreds more across the country are empowered to pursue the best opportunities available for their long-term academic and professional goals.

#### **Ford Driving Dreams Through Education 2016-2018 Grant Awardees**

**Council #4609 of Arlington, VA** and the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network will work to increase Latino graduation rates and bring attention to educational equity issues in Northern Virginia. Students participate in SAT coaching and a series of monthly STEAM workshops in partnership with Virginia Tech.

**Council #7 of Laredo, TX** aims to ensure that former students participate in a challenging curriculum to meet or exceed standards set





by the school district to help students recover credits needed to graduate on-time and help students pursue a higher education.

**Council #333 of Milwaukee, WI** and El Puente High School have teamed up to form FDD High School Early College Program. This program takes students from El Puente High School and helps them receive college credits for courses taken at Milwaukee Area Technical College while in high school. MATC students will also participate in five STEAM related career workshops that will instill confidence in their abilities to pursue STEAM careers.

**Council #40002 of Portland, OR** and Century High School participants are engaging with computer science and emphasizing online learning, internet safety, and coding.

**Council #754 of Rogers, AR** is developing Pílares del Exito, an early intervention program that empowers low-income and potential first generation college students with the tools necessary to improve their academic performance, complete high school, and prepare for higher education opportunities.

**Council #15164 of Toa Alta, PR** and LNEsc are utilizing STEAM education to change the futures of local minority students. Through a series of robotics workshops, students are given the opportunity to enhance their science and math skills.

**Council #2848 of Anaheim, CA** will provide students with a program that will enhance their knowledge about STEM and engage in hands-on activities giving them the opportunity to apply their knowledge in a practical way.

**Council #44040 of Provo, UT** will engage Latino youth in leadership sessions linking students with community mentors who will assist students to graduate from high school and pursue higher education opportunities.

Eight new sites will be announced during the 2017 LULAC National Convention. To date, 60 LULAC Councils in 53 cities across 23 states have developed effective high school drop-out prevention programs in their respective communities. The Ford Driving Dreams Grants program has funded 52 programs, supported the educational enrichment of more than 1,500 students and served as a convener and facilitator of the growth of LULAC councils. In 2016, more than 4,100 activity hours were logged, and current sites are well on track to exceeding those numbers in our next cycle. LULAC firmly believes that education is the great equalizer and through this initiative, LULAC and the Ford Motor Company Fund will continue to remain committed to the future success of Latino youth nationwide. For more information, please visit [www.lulac.org/ford](http://www.lulac.org/ford) and view our highlight video at <https://youtu.be/ED6Y8QI36AY>. ■





# INVESTING IN A BETTER FUTURE FOR LATINAS: LULAC LAUNCHES NEW WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

*By: Cristina Sandoval*, LULAC National Programs Manager and *Wendy Salas*, LULAC National Community Programs Coordinator

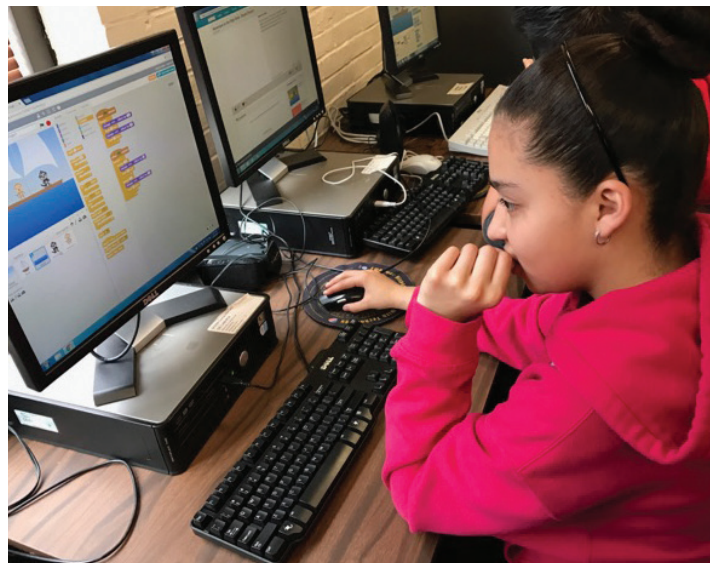
LULAC is proud to announce the launch of the Women's Empowerment Initiative, a brand new initiative that seeks to train, motivate, and empower women to become leaders in business and technology. Thanks to the generous support from our sponsors, LULAC has launched the Latina Entrepreneur Academy (LEA) and TECHNOLOchicas LiFT to motivate young girls and women to aspire to careers in business and technology.

The Latina Entrepreneur Academy will launch this summer with events in 6 cities that will be hosted by LULAC councils and partner organizations. The academy will equip participants with important skills that are critical to launching their careers as entrepreneurs or expanding their existing businesses. At the academy, women will have access to trainings that will prepare them to enter the business world by focusing on

the importance of building a business plan, pitching their business to investors, and more. The academy will feature experienced speakers and trainers that will guide participants through multiple sessions that will ensure their future success in the business world.

The Latina Entrepreneur Academy looks to build upon the Latino community's entrepreneurial spirit and allow them to take their careers to the next level. According to the National Women's Business Council, only 34.9 percent of Hispanic-owned businesses are owned by women. This shows that we must empower and train more women to effectively pursue their entrepreneurial inclinations to ensure greater representation in the business sector.

Although the number of Hispanic-owned businesses is still disproportionate to that of men, that figure is changing. According to the National Women's Business Council, Latina women-owned businesses have increased by 86.6 percent since 2007. LULAC looks forward to continuing our history of empowering women and investing in their future business success with the Latina entrepreneurship academy.





LULAC has also pledged to bridge the diversity and inclusion gaps within the technology sector to ensure that more women and minorities have access to these careers. To aid this effort, LULAC has partnered with the Televisa Foundation to provide free computer science classes to middle school girls across the nation. The tech sector is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the U.S. economy, and it is projected that the industry will have nearly 1.4 million job openings by 2020. In order to compete for these jobs, it is vital that more Latinas have access to computer science education so that they have the technological skill set necessary for them to compete in the technology sector.

LULAC and Televisa Foundation will



provide a total of 15 grants to programs across the United States to empower young Latinas to learn coding. The curriculum will teach young girls various coding languages such as Python, Scratch and Html. Upon the program's completion, the girls will have learned how computer science is used in various tech careers in order to create websites, animations, games, applications and more. Through programs like TECHNOLOchicas, LULAC is renewing its commitment to investing in our youth, and ensuring access to more opportunities for a better future.

For more information on LULAC's WE Initiative please visit [www.LULAC.org/WE](http://www.LULAC.org/WE). ■





// I'm doing it because  
I want to take control  
of my life and build  
the future that I want. //

— Leonardo

"Yo lo estoy haciendo  
porque quiero tomar  
control de mi vida y  
crear el futuro  
que yo quiero."

— Leonardo

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**We are proud to continue our collaboration with LULAC on the Ford Driving Dreams Grants program which helps students achieve their dreams of high school graduation and pursue higher education**

**To learn more, please visit:  
[www.forddrivingdreams.com](http://www.forddrivingdreams.com)**



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