

LULACnews

Summer 2019



**90 YEARS of
TRANSFORMING
COMMUNITIES**

LULAC Members
Impacting Communities, P.8

Our First-Ever LGBTQ Summit, P.19

Puerto Rico Delegation, P.29

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ON THE COVER

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#WeAreLULAC

Who are the people on the ground creating the change that our communities need? Read the testimonials that remind us of the power of advocacy at every level of LULAC.

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LGBTQ Summit

With the first of many summits to come, LULAC proudly progressed in our efforts to better serve and meet the needs of our LGBTQ members and community nationwide.

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LULAC Puerto Rico Takes Capitol Hill

On May 22-23, more than 125 LULAC Puerto Rico members, including elected officials and island activists came together to advocate on behalf of Puerto Rico.



LULAC news

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VP for Southeast

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VP For Southwest

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LULAC councils are always working to provide services to their communities. Read what councils have been doing from Puerto Rico to Florida to Wisconsin.

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Legislative Conference

LULAC's 22nd Annual Legislative Conference, Awards Gala & State of Latinx America Summit, encompassed a week-long program of policy spotlights, community service, and engaging conversations on the critical issues facing our community today.

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LULAC's Support for a Central American Marshall Plan

LULAC is proposing that the United States provide economic aid to the Central American Northern Triangle in order to restore economic development and stability to the region.

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In organizing over 250 women from across the country to hold tough conversations on health, education, entrepreneurship and running for office, the Women's National Conference emphasizes what the #LatinaWave is all about..

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LULAC is excited to announce our upcoming partnership to uplift issues impacting both Latinos & African Americans.

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Under the U.S. Constitution, the Census is a basic requirement to ensure that everyone is counted.

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¡Adelante! America will continue to empower students with technological and leadership skills to succeed thanks to a renewed program with AT&T.

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Student success is at the heart of the Ford Driving Dreams Grant Program. Find out what that means for our students.

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The "digital divide" limits the growth and incorporation of our community into the digital framework of our nation. LULAC and AT&T are committed to close this divide and achieve digital equality.

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Have you heard of the debt trap that targets Latino borrowers? Predatory lending is no joke and LULAC is here to stop it through the convenience of a phone with our Oportunidad App.

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in biomedical research. With LULAC and the All of Us Research Program, we can work together to meet the health concerns of our communities.





A Letter from the LULAC National President

Dear LULAC Familia,

This is LULAC's 90th year anniversary and LULAC News is still around and kicking. LULAC News has been telling our history and highlighting our victories and community leaders.

Back in 1929, signs that said "no Mexicans or dogs allowed" were commonly seen throughout the Southwest. Our communities lived with poll taxes, white-only primaries, and many more systemic tools that the Texas Rangers used to prevent Mexican Americans from voting. Schools were segregated. It was a tough time.

But courageous men and women organized, mobilized and took on the racist establishment. Battle after battle, LULAC had won to end school segregation, to end poll taxes, to protect our veterans when they came back home.

When I joined LULAC in 1984, I was fresh out of law school and I wanted to make a difference in the lives of the regular Juans and Marias of America. LULAC has allowed me to sponsor a monthly chorizo and menudo breakfast, since 1992, which is still going strong today. On April 9, 2006, I was honored to help organize and lead with LULAC the largest civil rights march in Texas history, when over 500,000 people marched for immigration rights in downtown Dallas. The scholarships given to the first-generation college students bring me more satisfaction than any material things.

In the decades since our founding, LULAC has improved the lives of tens of millions of Latinos in our nation especially in education, housing, healthcare, employment, public safety and the military. Our victories are many. Among the most recent: guaranteeing accessible polling sites to Latino voters in Dodge City, Kansas, ensuring nearly \$1-billion in disaster relief for Puerto Rico, fighting for the return of deported U.S. Latino veterans, stopping voter suppression in Texas, waging protests on the border, and calling for a Latin America Marshall Plan--plus many, many more.

Yes, we have achieved a great deal, yet there is still much more to do. Now more than ever, we must endeavor to involve our millennials, Dreamers and even younger Latinx youths by creating new ways to inspire, mentor and develop the next generation of LULAC leaders. While they continue to champion justice for our community we must make sure no one is excluded, including our LGBTQ siblings.

*"THE LULAC OF TODAY IS
AND MUST CONTINUE TO BE
GROUNDED IN ACTION, DEEDS
AND SERVICE ON BEHALF OF OUR
FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITIES"*



I am very optimistic about our future because we possess the greatest God-given power of all--ganas, the sheer will and unquenchable desire to realize our dreams even when we are told they are impossible or that we are undeserving, unworthy, or unfit. The LULAC of today is and must continue to be grounded in action, deeds and service on behalf of our families and our communities--which include the more than 58 million Latinos living in the U.S.!

As we celebrate our 90th anniversary, let us remain focused on the U.S. Census and the presidential election ahead. This work is guided by each of us. May LULAC lead the largest campaign in modern history to be counted both in sheer numbers and in votes so that we can advance the promise of our brothers and sisters who served before us in declaring: "Almighty God, help us defend our liberties and brings us together as one united people, all those gathered from every land, culture and language."

Hasta La Victoria!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Domingo Garcia".

Domingo Garcia
LULAC National President



A Message from the *LULAC National CEO*

Dear LULAC Members and Friends,

I am delighted to welcome you to this very special edition of LULAC News. Celebrating our 90th Anniversary is a great time to also share with you what makes LULAC such a vibrant and vital organization for Latinos in the United States. It is truly each and every member who is the face, the voice, the spirit of LULAC. Their energy, compassion and dedication to serve in their community as well as to support the work of LULAC brothers and sisters everywhere is the power of our unity. Local issues and views may at times vary for that is a democracy. Yet, the pledge of every LULAC member to the overarching mission and vision of LULAC is indisputable.

No matter where I travel, there are wonderful stories of LULAC members who have represented us with devotion, dignity and tremendous pride. For example, former National President Belen Robles of El Paso, Texas has served her community as a member of LULAC for more than six decades and before his passing, Ramiro, her husband was a steadfast partner and supporter at her side. Together, they led, mentored and uplifted countless others as they led voter registration drives, scholarship fundraising campaigns and important initiatives with elected leaders.

Belen herself recalls challenging times soon after her election to the office of National President. “The office came with many serious challenges. Funds were low and our credibility had dwindled. It was imperative that we stress accountability for corporate support and re-establish our organization’s credibility.” And indeed she did. Then-President Robles did as many LULAC women before and since have done. She rolled up her sleeves and took the helm to tackle the task at hand. Before completing her tenure, Belen Robles had established the LULAC Corporate Alliance that continues through today helping to guide our organization’s actions working in alignment with major business partners, many of which help fund some of our most critical programs.

Like our LULAC sisters, many men have volunteered to serve and lead since our very founding in 1929. In modern times, members like Fred E. Diaz of Houston, Texas who has devoted 47 years of his life to LULAC, first with Council 60, famous for having been the birthplace of such programs as Project Headstart, SER – Jobs for Progress and the LULAC Housing Commission. Brother Diaz was recognized as LULAC Man of the Year in 1974 before he moved to San Antonio, Texas and joined LULAC Council 2. In 1980, he was again recognized for his exemplary service earning him Man of the Year for a second time.

We must also acknowledge the work of our LULAC ancestors whom no longer walk among us. Through their deeds, they have left us with a model to follow. For example, Ed Peña, Jr. was known for being a calm yet fierce defender of our civil rights. President Peña served tirelessly, especially as the 38th LULAC National President, to transform communities by using his principles of law and knowledge of government and policy. Throughout our history and even today, I see many proud and distinguished members of LULAC serve as dedicated volunteers, much like President Peña had done.

LULAC began and continues strong to this day, 90 years later, because of individual members like President Peña. Each member contributes their own experience and background to create a beautiful tapestry of service. Recent examples include those who traveled from all over the nation to the 2019 LULAC State of Latinx America Summit in Washington, DC to learn about policy issues that affect the Latinx community and then went on to Capitol Hill to advocate for their community during the week's Advocacy Day. Also, there were LULAC youth and young adults who came to our nation's capital for the LULAC Emerge Conference and learned what it takes to campaign to serve in elected office. Then, there were our Puerto Rico members who converged on Capitol Hill and advocated for promised federal disaster relief for their island as they called upon all 535 representatives of the United States Congress and other offices and agencies. In addition, LULAC celebrated wonderful Summits for Latinx Dreamers and our LGBTQ siblings which we embrace as vital voices in our fight for civil rights.

"OUR GOALS ARE TO GROW AND EXPAND OUR MISSION TO ENSURE THAT LULAC REMAINS RELEVANT TO THOSE WE SERVE DAILY."

Of course, none of LULAC's work is possible without our Corporate Partners who underwrite many of the most significant programs that expand from access to healthcare to providing broadband access to developing the future workforce. LULAC will continue to lead by adapting to changing times, empowering our community into the future through accessible quality education and the latest technology while also sharing health awareness, improving the environment, and providing financial literacy classes. With this, we are engaging our community and growing a movement, one within which there is a place for everyone.

Our LULAC past provides us a proud legacy upon which to build for the next millennium. Let us celebrate that history and challenge ourselves to now set our sights on the future where we will continue to harness and ensure that our communities understand their power to organize and advocate to create the changes needed for a more equitable future. Our goals are to grow and expand our mission to ensure that LULAC remains relevant to those we serve daily. This is a job neither you nor I can do alone which is why LULAC exists and must endure.

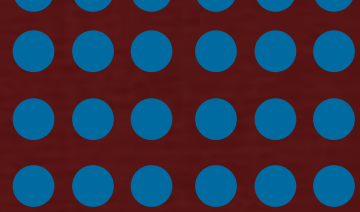
As we consider what is possible, I invite you to join with us, get to know your fellow LULAC members, their lives and their experiences. As importantly, we invite you to continue living out the LULAC spirit of service: "All for One, and One for All."

Together We Rise,



Sindy Benavides
LULAC National CEO





#WE ARE LULAC

***MEMBER
TESTIMONIALS***

MY REFLECTIONS ON VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

Roanna Escamilla-Mayer, *LULAC Member*
Council #4619, San Antonio, Texas

As a proud Navy Veteran, I have always valued service to others. I greatly understand the value of serving others with honor, courage, and commitment, and I know how service positively impacts the lives we touch. In my experience, I find myself happiest when I place someone else's needs ahead of my own. I have no better example of this than my volunteer work on behalf of my community as a new member of the League of United Latin American Citizens.

As a new member of LULAC, I have been inspired by the many Latinos and Latinas associated with this wonderful organization. Since becoming a member, I witnessed many members continuously give through passionate community service and by becoming a voice for the less fortunate. When I volunteered with Catholic Charities during November of 2018, I had the pleasure of assisting in the humanitarian refugee crisis in El Paso, Texas. Alongside other LULAC members like Celia Benitez-Kruger, Vice President of Council 4619 and Elia Mendoza, National Vice President for the Elderly, we worked tirelessly to provide many services to the refugees awaiting asylum that were brought to El Paso, Texas. We treated all refugees with respect, dignity and compassion.

The services we provided ranged anywhere from cooking,



coordinating transportation, serving a hot meal, giving hugs and smiles, assisting them in selecting adequate and efficient clothing, packing their backpacks with enough food for their respective travels, and providing them with sufficient toiletries for their next journey to their final destination.

One thing I learned from this experience is the importance of treating immigrants with dignity, respect and compassion. Focusing on unfortunate events as if it is life-threatening for all of us benefits no one. They are us, they are the future of the United States of America, and their struggle to get here should not be met with exaggerated resistance for what is a general problem of minor magnitude.



Caroline Sanchez Crozier, *LULAC Council #5238*
Founding President, IL Ed Chair, National Ed Chair

Reviewed by Dr. Teresa Ramos, LULAC Member,
Communications Director

GIVING BACK — MY IMMIGRANT LIFE'S MISSION AND PASSION

As a long-standing LULAC member, I have been dedicated to the mission of LULAC. My connection to LULAC stems from my personal life as an immigrant from Mexico. Being the first to attend college, I am grateful to LULAC who helped me navigate college access.

Because of my immigrant life, I grew up with a relentless attitude and energy to pursue the American dream – a college degree and then as an entrepreneur - and to give back. I joined LULAC in the 80's and later founded Council 5238 in 2002, focused on education statewide; I'm currently serving as IL education chair and national education chair.

As LULAC, I have been an advocate on many issues. I am proud of my partnership with Advance Illinois for 5 years to change the state K-12 funding formula. Illinois had the worst, most inequitable funding formula in the country. I was relentless with statewide advocates, and elevated LULAC's brand through canvassing, speaking at legislative hearings, press conferences, writing Op-Eds, and more. The outcome -- a new law passed in 2017 that is more equitable for all students, including Latinos and ELs, for years to come. And we made LULAC of Illinois a known fighter for equity.



Rebecca Grekin

Having just graduated a week ago from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) with a Bachelor's in Chemical Engineering, and minors both in French and in Sustainability & the Environment, I know that I would not have been able to do everything I did during my time at MIT without the incredible support I received from so many. My friends, my family, student groups, and of course the LULAC, LNEESC, and ExxonMobil communities have provided me with endless support and incredible opportunities to learn and grow.

At MIT, I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to gain leadership experience related to several of my passions including as the treasurer of the MIT Society of Women Engineers (SWE) as well as the co-chair of the MIT Undergraduate Association Committee on Sustainability (UA Sustain). With these two opportunities, I was able to gain insight into how MIT functions and implement programs such as a new Outreach subcommittee within UA Sustain and create a scholarship program within SWE to provide funding for conferences to SWE members. This last initiative was particularly important to me because attending conferences throughout my undergraduate career was something that helped me tremendously in terms of educational as well as professional experiences.

All of this wouldn't have been possible without the support of the ExxonMobil/LNEESC Scholarship program. I am very excited to continue my educational journey by pursuing a Master's in Energy Resources Engineering at Stanford, starting the following Fall, and have plans to continue on to a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. At each of these future steps, I am excited to continue cultivating the relationships I have created with the communities that have supported me, and I cannot wait to see.

Astrid Acuna
LULAC Council #3272

I was born and raised in Guatemala City and moved to the United States nearly 20 years ago, where I was able to obtain a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. I have always been passionate about giving back to my community and currently live in Bakersfield, CA where I serve the Kern County LULAC 3272 Foundation as the Public Information Officer.

In less than two years, since the Kern County LULAC Council was born, we have recruited nearly 80 members who have made a positive impact on the Kern County community, making the Council the recipient of the 2019 California State LULAC Council of the Year Award at the 72nd annual LULAC state convention on May 19.

I am proud to be a part of a team that has worked relentlessly to create a better community by aligning to all aspects of KC LULAC's mission statement, which is to establish collaborative partnerships that progress the economic condition, educational achievement, health and civic engagement of communities in Kern County. Together, KC LULAC has:

- Received the 2019 Ford Driving Dreams Grant. The grant totals \$20,000 and will go toward implementing a drop-out prevention program in partnership with the Taft Oil Technology Academy
- Organized a citizenship workshop where pro-bono lawyers helped more than 40 community members submit applications for citizenship
- Engaged members at community events and public hearings that support KC LULAC's mission



- Created a foundation that has:
 - Raised \$2,400 in scholarship funds for disadvantaged students in Kern County
 - Founded the Raising a Reader Library

We have amazing leaders on our council; all their hard work does not go unnoticed. I feel very fortunate to work with others who share the same values as I do and truly believe our efforts will make Kern County a prosperous and beautiful place to live in for many generations to come.



Fred E. Diaz

After encountering problematic levels of discrimination, I decided to help others in these situations by becoming an active member of a community organization like LULAC. I started my LULAC career by joining Council 60 of Houston, Texas. I have dedicated 47 exemplary years of active service to LULAC.

Through LULAC Council 60, I interacted with local government officials and committees on problems in our communities. I worked diligently on political campaigns, Scholarship Golf Tournaments and Dances. I was appointed General Secretary

of the 1973 LULAC State Convention, and many other endeavors promoting the Latino American. In 1974 I received the coveted LULAC National “Man of the Year” Award for my efforts for LULAC Council 60. My LULAC involvement progressed, and so did my burning desire to promote Latino culture, contributions and achievements.

In 1979, I transferred to LULAC Council 2 of San Antonio, Texas, one of the original founding LULAC Councils. I was selected to serve as the Assistant Director of the Paseo Del Rey Feo held yearly for Fiesta San Antonio. I matched sounds with color producing a beautiful parade making sure to display and reflect the culture of Latinos during Fiesta San Antonio. I furthered my involvement by taking on new roles from Council Treasurer to Vice President of Public Relations. I was a key figure of the Rey Feo Scholarship Fund. I am a lifetime Board Member for the LULAC National Housing project in Kingsville, Texas.

In 2008, I received the LULAC National “Man of the Year” Award for my work in Council 2. In April 2014, I was awarded a National LULAC “Lifetime Achievement Award,” in recognition of my continuous years of dynamic leadership and service to LULAC.

Thanks, LULAC, for allowing me the opportunity to be an advocate of your programs.

Belen B. Robles,
Past National President, Member of the National Board

In 1956, as a recent high school graduate, I was looking to join the El Paso workforce. I got an interview for a clerical position with a downtown company, but was told, “We don’t hire Mexicans except for elevator girls or cooks.” Offended, but undeterred, I completed the interview. I was not hired. That same year, my neighbor encouraged me to join LULAC. She and her husband were members, and she belonged to Auxiliary No. 9, a LULAC Women’s Council.

Auxiliary No. 9 was a very active group during the time that LULAC was a male-only organization. We provided scholarships to Mexican-American students, visited poor children at the county hospital, and offered classes on English and government to immigrants. LULAC later integrated and we became Council #9.

Through Council #9, I was considerably active in what today would be considered “voter registration.” To get the Hispanic community to vote, we had to convince them to purchase this “poll tax” of \$1.75 to be eligible to vote. Members of LULAC #9 Council walked the streets of South El Paso and talked to everyone we met. We’d say, “Si uds compra su poll tax para poder votar, juntos unidos podemos cambiar las cosas! Vamos!” Our efforts resulted in El Paso electing its first Hispanic Mayor, Raymond L. Telles.

I’ve held numerous leadership positions in LULAC: National Secretary for three presidents and the first woman to serve as National Vice President of the Southwest. I’m privileged to have been the first woman to run for National President and, in 1984, I was honored to have been elected the first female National President.

The office came with many serious challenges. Funds were



low and our credibility had dwindled. It was imperative that we stress accountability for corporate support and re-establish our organization’s credibility. Many women in the public and corporate sectors rallied to our cause, and along with our corporate sponsors, we created the LULAC Corporate Alliance. Comprised of corporate representatives who would come together to guide and support LULAC, the Corporate Alliance helped develop “The Legislative Gala” as a fundraiser to honor politicians working to protect our community. Most importantly, the Alliance worked with us to establish our first national office in Washington D.C., where the halls of political power stand.

I held the office of National President for four exhilarating and productive years. My late husband, Ramiro, and I will always be grateful for over five decades of camaraderie that we have experienced with our LULAC family. I will continue to support and work with LULAC as Past National President and a member of the National Board. And, I remain a proud member of Council #9, the Women’s Council with the longest-running record of continuous service in the Country. **LN**

Differences reveal our spark.

The power of diversity of thought and diversity of talent is vital to our competitive advantage in the marketplace. Walmart honors the contributions of Latinas to the Nation.





STATE & LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

LULAC SARASOTA COUNCIL 7261

Dreamers Academy to Open Fall 2020

Sarasota families will soon be able to send their children to the first Spanish immersion public school in Florida's Suncoast. Dreamers Academy will open its doors in August of 2020, offering elementary school students the opportunity to become bilingual, biliterate and cross-culturally competent by 5th grade.

The school's vision is to prepare students for success on a global scale – with rich academic content served by a bilingual staff who will know each student by name and need. Dreamers Academy's local board of community, business and education leaders hopes to bring equity to Florida's most underserved student populations and fundamentally transform their education. English-speaking students will also participate in this enrichment program as the ideal student balance of 50% English-

dominant and 50% Spanish-dominant is achieved in each classroom.

"One of our highest priorities was to support and advocate the Sarasota School Board to approve Dreamers Academy," said Irene Enriquez-Simpson, LULAC Sarasota council president. "LULAC members attended meetings, lobbied district leaders and wrote letters which we believe helped bring dual language education to this part of the state."

Dreamers Academy aims to inspire school districts to implement similar programs in existing elementary schools. "We wish to share our research, best practices and professional development so that every family who desires a bilingual program has access to it, no matter what their economic situation or address," said founder Geri Chaffee.

For more information, go to www.dreamersacademy.org

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Youth on the Rise

Vivica Lewis is the former LULAC VP of the Midwest for Youth. Vivica joined LULAC four years ago as a freshman at Carmen High School of Science and Technology – South Campus in Milwaukee, WI. Vivica is a servant leader who has made a lasting impression at her school, her community, and LULAC as a whole. She lives to inspire, leads to unite, to create a path for future leaders, and to speak for those who cannot. She believes in treating everyone with dignity. Vivica is passionate about closing the achievement gap, breaking down stereotypes, empowering women, and creating change to defy the odds.

Vivica volunteers, as a tutor for young students, at a local elementary school, and is the president of her school's student council. Vivica has spoken about the unfair treatment of Latinos at Milwaukee's Mexican Independence Day Parade, participated in marches for women's rights, and marched in support of Dreamers.

In addition to her volunteer and activism work, she participated in team sports by playing volleyball, acted in two school musicals, was on the National Honors

Society for two years, and was a founding member of Hermanos Mayores. Hermanos Mayores, is a mentorship program where high school juniors and seniors act as a "big brother or sister" to incoming freshmen. Vivica Lewis gives 100% at all times, to whatever task she undertakes!

Vivica is this year's winner of the Youth Frontiers Character Award and Scholarship (\$2000), the Herb Kohl Scholarship (\$10,000), Milwaukee's Finest Scholar (\$1000), Milwaukee Delta Sigma Theta Dorothy Nell Sanders first place award (\$3000), Executive Women International first place award (\$3000), Kelben Foundation Scholarship (\$1500), Milwaukee Urban League Laptop Scholarship, and the first place winner for the Cardinal Stritch Paula Friedman Excellence in Writing Award (\$500).

In the fall, Vivica will be attending her dream school, Northwestern University, where she will be majoring in physics and legal studies.

Vivica's advice to others is "Dream big, even if your dreams seem impossible."



An Expo to Remember

In May of 2019, LULAC Puerto Rico and the LULAC Councils of the Western Region held their “Expo de Servicios Comunitarios, Salud, y Educación” (which translates to “Expo of Community Services, Health and Education”) in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico. The success of this event was in big part to the collaboration and support of the Municipal Administration of San Sebastián, Walmart, and the LULAC National Education Service Center (LNEC).

This event was preceded by the Federal Training Institute (FTI) which empowered youth and students with information about opportunities within the federal government. Thanks to Ms. Sara Clemente, Director of Federal Relations at LULAC National, these FTI Workshops brought relevant and engaging highlights about universities and colleges to more than a hundred students from the towns of Moca and San Sebastián, Puerto Rico.

The exposition included 75 exhibitors, 31 artisans and health services. Among the exhibitors were varying community services such as health clinics, cosmetology services,

educational programs, recreation and sports groups, as well as, governmental and federal community service agencies. Throughout the day, artisans performed for the public on a wide, interactive stage. We even had Toys Factory with Disney characters present for all kids to enjoy. Most importantly, we had approximately 2400 Puerto Ricans who participated, according to our registry.

The goal of this event was to highlight the “Community Services” available in Puerto Rico and beyond, as well as to motivate students to become the greater leaders of the future. The event, as a whole, impacted a wide demographic of Puerto Ricans: preschool children, high school students, professionals, elderly people and the general public. This Expo has also given us, at LULAC Puerto Rico, a sense of a strong team that is prepared to serve our marginalized community of the mountain. The LULAC Chapter of Puerto Rico will continue to work on these different initiatives to ensure our community is supported. Special thanks to the Director of the Western Region, Mr. Marcelino Cruz, the VP National Southwest Region, Mrs. Ivonne Quinones, and the Coordinator of Mobilization, Prof. Jose A. Lugo Vega for your leadership.



Highlights Innovation and Equity

Leaders, advocates, volunteers and council members from across the state convened in Sarasota for the 40th annual LULAC Florida State Convention, with the theme “Inspiring Innovation & Advancing Equity ¡Con Ganas!”

José Viana of the US Department of Education made the trip from Washington DC to keynote the Education Equity Luncheon. Mr. Viana, whose parents emigrated from Cuba, described his educational experience as a language learner himself, and provided examples of effective interventions to aid families and students achieve academic success. A staunch advocate of ESOL programming and dual language education, Mr. Viana is Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) and key adviser to US Secretary of Education, Ms. DeVos.

Florida Department of Education Chancellor Jacob Oliva joined leaders from school districts for three days of learning, networking, and advocacy. LULAC partner Intercultural Development Research Association facilitated professional development for Florida educators focusing on culturally-responsive teaching and family engagement. Another highlight was the Education Equity roundtable, sponsored by The Leadership Conference, where advocacy organizations from across the country discussed the issues affecting the most vulnerable student populations.

Environmental justice sessions were hosted by LULAC Florida partner Earthjustice, Sierra Club, Coalition of Immokalee Workers and Farmworker Association of Florida. **LN**

#LULAC IN ACTION



First-ever LGBTQ Summit: LULAC Making Strides

by Jose Ignacio Gaona, LULAC National Policy Manager

This year, LULAC LGBTQ Councils from across the country coordinated the first ever LULAC National LGBTQ Summit in Dallas, Texas to discuss important community issues and share resources with LGBTQ members. In what was surely the first of many summit's to come, LULAC proudly progressed forward in our effort to better serve and meet the needs of our LGBTQ membership and community.

Our National LGBTQ Committee and LGBTQ council leadership from across the country gathered during the summit to share narratives of those brave individuals who have been fighting for acknowledgement and voice within our community for decades. In what seemed to come together as a healing circle; members laughed, cried and rejoiced as they reflected on the past difficulties faced and the immense amount of hope that was expressed for the future of the LGBTQ community in the U.S.



The Latinx LGBTQ community has long been present and engaged in LULAC's 90 years of service to the Hispanic community of the United States. Although not always seen and or recognized, the contributions of the Latinx LGBTQ community to our movements and community advances have been great. Sylvia Rivera, a transgender Puerto Rican activist, shared a prime example of these contributions. Sylvia rioted alongside Marcha P. Johnson and other LGBTQ community members as police raided the Stonewall Inn and arrested its patrons in what would become a pivotal moment in the LGBTQ civil rights movement.

In 2006, LULAC's first LGBTQ-issue focused council chartered in Dallas, Texas. Known as the Dallas Rainbow Council, the council would pave the way for LULAC's support of the national marriage equality movement, and foster new membership focus area growth for the league. In 2018, LULAC launched an LGBTQ Committee to help guide the organization's continued commitment to serving the needs of Latinx LGBTQ community members. Additionally, the LULAC National Women's Commission welcomed its first Transgender Latina commissioner, Alexa Rodriguez in 2018.

As we celebrate our recent successes in better serving and uplifting the voices of our Latinx LGBTQ community, LULAC also recognizes the hardships that our LGBTQ members had previously faced in incorporating their issues and civil rights battles into the mainstream Latinx Civil Rights Agenda. No more than twenty years ago our LGBTQ members were verbally harassed at civil rights forums while attempting to discuss LGBTQ issues. While today LULAC National makes a conscious effort to heal those wounds, we encourage more of our members nationwide and the community at large to seek out better and more active forms of allyship and solidarity for a community marginalized within our own demographic.

In conjunction with our National LGBTQ Committee, our LULAC Equality Team worked diligently to bring our community the first annual LGBTQ workshop track during the 90th LULAC National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. **LN**

LULAC'S 22ND ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

by JudeAnne Heath, *Senior Director of Community Affairs & Projects*;
Jose Ignacio Gaona, *LULAC National Policy Manager*



LULAC's 22nd Annual Legislative Conference, Awards Gala & State of Latinx America Summit, encompassed a week-long program of policy spotlights, community service, and engaging conversations on the critical issues facing our community today. These activities were just a few of the highpoints throughout various events including: the State of Latinx America Summit, the Emerge Latino Conference, Advocacy Day on the Hill, WeRun National Campaign Training Institute and a series of special happenings and meetings of the LULAC National Board.



The Emerge Latino conference kicked off the week's events on Tuesday, February 12 with a volunteer event at the Capital Area Food Bank along with a special donation from our long-time partner, Tyson Foods. Among the key speakers at the kick-off were: Domingo Garcia, LULAC President; Sindy Benavides, LULAC CEO; Nora Venegas, Director of Federal Government Relations for Tyson Foods; Andres Rodriguez, LULAC VP of Young Adults; and Hilary Salmon, Director of Communications at Capital Area Food Bank. One of the key points noted was vital relief to deal with increased food insecurity during winter months, particularly in the wake of recent federal budget uncertainty. Tyson Foods generously donated more than 35,000 pounds of food and Emerge students, along with LULAC team members, volunteered their time and energy that day to help package food crucial to the Washington, DC community. A special thank you to Tyson Foods and Capital Area Food Bank for their continued and generous support to serve our community in need.

On Tuesday, the Emerge conference officially opened for our students at which more than 130 students attended, representing over 30 states across the United States. Select students participated in learning more about the *All of Us* Research Program in a small group before being welcomed by Andres Rodriguez, National Vice President for Young Adults and a performance by JD Bailey, spoken word artist. Emerge participants learned about their self-identified top policy priorities from field experts from LULAC, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Urban Institute. The result was an outstanding panel discussion for the students regarding immigration, economics, and healthcare policies.

Wednesday saw the start of the 2019 State of Latinx Summit and day two of the Emerge Conference. One of the highlights were the welcoming words by Domingo Garcia, National LULAC President, and Sindy Benavides, LULAC CEO. The immersive and educating policy day jumped right into a bipartisan town hall conversation on the issue of immigration moderated by Telemundo White House Correspondent, Lori Montenegro. The panel had a robust and layered discussion as the panel explored these complex issues which is at the forefront for our community. President Garcia, representing LULAC; Gaby Pacheco from TheDream.US; a representative from the CATO Institute; and Yali Nunez of the RNC offered their expert analysis developed an important dialogue with each other and our audience members.

LULAC was also extremely honored to have the talented cast of the Netflix hit series, *One Day at a Time*, at the Conference: Gloria Calderón Kellett, Justina Machado, and Isabella Gomez. Their words and encouragement were especially meaningful to the students who learned about the importance of media representation to help influence and lift our community.

"It was an incredibly moving and inspirational experience to see hundreds of young Latinx leaders from all backgrounds and from every corner of our country come together to learn about and lead on issues such as education, health, immigration, and representation."

Other highlights from our panel discussions include: An in-depth look at the state of education for Latinx students, collective policy spotlights from our fellow com-





community organizers and a very relevant dialogue about health and health disparities in the Latinx community. These important discussions were moderated by Leslie Sanchez, CBS News Contributor and Producer; Dr. Yanira Cruz, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA); Dr. Elena Rios, President of the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA); as well as Alana Cuenta, President-Elect of NHNA. Attendees were also honored to listen to a timely spotlight discussion from Dr. Enrique Lamas, CEO of the U.S. Census Bureau, on the 2020 Census and a fireside chat with Vanita Gupta, President and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights.

Our Environment Luncheon was emceed by Ed O'Keefe,

CBS News Political Correspondent and featured David Vela, who made history as the first Latino Director for the U.S. National Park Service. Other distinguished experts and advocates working in the environmental justice field were also included. These speakers helped our young leaders and board members become more informed about the state of our environment and motivated to lead as Latinos and stakeholders in our future by asking themselves, "How can I make a difference?"

To see the full day's agenda with all of our amazing speakers visit us at [LULAC.org/gala19](https://www.lulac.org/gala19).

The annual Legislative Awards Gala was the climax of the 2019 Summit culminated. The exciting evening witnessed

On behalf of LULAC, we wish to thank all of our sponsors, community partners, LULAC Team, and members of the National Board for coming together for such an historic event. This event would not have been possible without the tremendous support of our sponsors and partners:

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LULAC honoring outstanding national leaders in celebration of their distinguished service and commitment to improving the lives of Latinos.

Awards included:

- National Advocate Award: Secretary Rick Perry, Department of Energy
- National Trailblazer Award: Congressman Ben Ray Luján
- Freedom and Justice Award: Alejandro Rangel-Lopez
- National Arriba Con Ganas Award: Rep. Jesus "Chuy" Garcia
- Profile in Courage Award: Jim Acosta

Especially poignant was the surprise video tribute by Rachel Maddow, MSNBC's host of the highest-rated cable news show in the nation. Ms. Maddow gave a heartfelt and personal recognition honoring Alejandro Rangel-Lopez for his work in Dodge City, Kansas. There was also a special introduction from congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham and as impactful were the exceptional remarks from the Honorable María E. Meléndez Altier, Mayor of the city of Ponce, Puerto Rico. The evening was a tremendous success and sure to be a memorable for all the attendees.

On Thursday, our legislative and advocacy efforts continued with both EmERGE students and LULAC Members taking part in sixty-six (66) advocacy meetings with members of Congress. In these meetings, both groups took the opportunity to discuss LULAC's policy platforms and important legislative actions for their communities. Afterwards, EmERGE students, LULAC Board members and esteemed partners and sponsors came together for an insightful luncheon dialogue on the rapidly evolving intersection of technology, innovation, and public policy. This luncheon on the Hill featured special remarks from Senators Chuck Schumer and Tom Udall; Brendan Carr, FCC Commissioner, and Mignon Clyburn, former FCC Commissioner. Also, Cristiano Lima, Politico Report moderated discussions with Aneesh Chopra, First Technology Officer under President Obama and a panel of community partners in the technology field.

EmERGE Students concluded their amazing week with a closing reception hosted by the Microsoft Innovation and Policy Center. The congratulatory farewell to the 2019 LULAC scholars was led by Fred Humphries, Corporate Vice President of U.S. Government Affairs at Microsoft; Dr. Elba Garcia, Commissioner, Dallas County and spouse of Domingo Garcia, National LULAC President. Also, Cindy Benavides, LULAC CEO concluded the week's activities with some final inspiring messages for our students.

To find out more about our events or how you can create your own council, visit us at LULAC.org LN

LULAC'S SUPPORT FOR A CENTRAL AMERICAN MARSHALL PLAN

by Jose Ignacio Gaona, *LULAC National Policy Manager*;
Norma Garza, *LULAC National Democracy Change Agent Intern*



An important mission for the League of United Latin America Citizens, as the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States, is to ensure that we stand up for the well-being of all Hispanics residing within the country. This includes the well-being of the thousands of refugees that enter the United States from the Central American Northern Triangle every day. The Central American Northern Triangle consists of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. This region has been destabilized since the 1980s after several civil wars broke out across the region. Since then, their democratic institutions and societies have been strained with high rates of violence, drug trafficking, and corruption.

The United States has historically given economic aid to countries that have been devastated by war or have previously been under other unfortunate circumstances. One such example of this is the implementation of the Marshall Plan in Western Europe after World War II. After millions of people died in the war, devastation followed the rest of the people who had survived. Many places in England, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Belgium, and other neighboring countries were in distress and on the verge of famine and total collapse. In

1947, Secretary of State George Marshall enacted what was officially called the European Recovery Program (ERP), which was intended to rebuild communities and spirits in Europe. Sixteen nations were part of the program to receive aid, including Germany, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, West Germany, and Norway. The Marshall Plan was successful in rebuilding the economic communities in Europe, mainly through coal and steel industries, from 1948 to 1952. The United States Congress appropriated approximately 14 billion dollars for European recovery efforts.

Similarly, LULAC is proposing that the United States provide economic aid to the Central American Northern Triangle in order to restore economic development and stability to the region. Support for a Central American Marshall Plan is shared by Presidential Candidate Julian Castro, and other national immigration focused organizations in the United States who recognize and advocate for a long term solution to the existing refugee crisis at our southern border.

LULAC believes that alongside economic aid, there must be strong diplomacy practices between the United States and the countries in the Northern Triangle in order for long term stabilization and prosperity to be achieved. LULAC recommends a Regional Advisory Council, composed of regional state leaders, to help the United States facilitate aid distribution. LULAC believes the United States should provide approximately 40 billion dollars in additional aid over a period of five years to the region. **LN**



From left to right: Alejandra Campoverdi, Maria Cuba, Claudia Arevalo, Candice Morales

LULAC WOMENS COMMISSION CONTINUES THE #LATINAWAVE IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

by Tanya Mendez, Program Coordinator

As the largest and oldest Latino civil rights organization, LULAC has started to pave the way for mujeres all over the nation by empowering them in finding their voice in the continued battle for equal rights. With the theme “Latinas Breaking Barriers, Paving the Way to the National Stage”, Lourdes Galvan, National Vice President of Women welcomed over 250 women from across the United States at the 2019 women’s conference in the entertainment capital of the world.

The LULAC Women’s Commission kicked off the conference weekend by making a positive impact in the local community, with the help of the generous food donation of 37,000 pounds of protein from Tyson Foods at the Three Square Food Bank. With this donation, 685,000 families were helped with food insecurity in Nevada. Here, the women’s commission volunteered receiving and organizing food donations and meal kits.

The conference continued into a reception at the MGM Grand where special guest speakers Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and former HUD Secretary and 2020 Presidential candidate Julian Castro delivered inspirational speeches on unity and equality for women. In addition, the gathering offered inspirational words from National Vice President for Women, Lourdes Galvan, Dallas County Commissioner from District 4, Dr. Elba Garcia and LULAC National President, Domingo Garcia stressing the importance of power in numbers and the voting power that Hispanics, specifically Hispanic women hold as we gear up for the 2020 election season.

During an eventful full day conference, there was a variety of strong, trailblazing Hispanic women who were able to share their expertise and experience on key issues that affect Hispanic women. Beginning with a candid conversation about Latinas and Health, Mi Cuerpo, Mi Salud included



Top: 2020 presidential candidate Julian Castro @ the women's conference reception with Presidents Rosales, Robles, Moran, VP of Women Lourdes Galvan, & Dr. Elba Garcia; Bottom: Presidents Belen Robles, Rosa Rosales, & Angie Garcia

the stigmatized issues of domestic violence, healthcare accessibility, and physical/mental well-being that have continued to affect women in the Hispanic community. This honest conversation provided resources, opportunities, panelists sharing personal stories and steps in which individuals can become advocates for women's health in their own communities, that began with admitting that these issues are real and present in our communities.

Moderated by Noemi Cue MA, ED, our educational policy spotlight provided attendees with a robust panel discussion with leading education experts from Nevada. The panelists helped elaborate on the implications of current affairs that continue to impact the education within the Latino community. They touched on topics from reentry into the field of academia to disparities within the education system that offered an in-depth look into various educational challenges that continue to negatively impact our community.

The Women's Lideres Luncheon on Entrepreneurship and Technology kicked off with guest speaker Nevada Lieutenant Governor Kate Marshall and a warm video welcome by Nevada Representative Susie Lee. The luncheon panel then engaged in a conversation that inspired Latinas to learn more about how technology can assist in building their own businesses or enhance their existing ones. The panelists shared their career lessons, including resources, challenges, and successes that have helped them navigate as latinas in the areas of technology, entrepreneurship, and business development.

The excitement continued after a delicious meal when resilient Mujeres (Women) started the conversation on the #LatinaWave that flowed into the next session. Focusing on how to run for elected positions, the conversation amplified beneficial techniques for women who are interested in running for elected positions, bringing into account the lack of representation of the Latina community when referring to positions of power. These mujeres provided insight on their own journeys and advice on how to continue the trend of Latinas assuming public service leadership positions.

With all the conversation on making a difference as a Latina in an elected position, the conference continued with a dive into policy issues that affect Latinas today. Taking into account the ongoing struggle for immigration reform, the women were reminded that our policy makers are human and that everyone has a voice. With the current political climate that has continued to negatively impact the Latino communities, it is essential to remain determined to resist and demand change for the betterment for our families.

To wrap up, the day of empowering sessions ended with a panel on how to organize and harness power in the local community. This provided a space for speakers to express how "every moment is an organizing opportunity", and the idea that "every person [is] a potential activist" in how they are empowered to speak up and speak out. These women were able to share their resources and tips on how individuals can support women locally as well as nationally. Just as Dolores Huerta, an American labor leader and activist, has said, in this political climate "every minute [is] a chance to change the world." With the focus on the #MeToo movement, 2020 census, civil rights and grassroots movements, the day ended with an inspirational and heartfelt adios from LULAC National Vice president of Women, Lourdes Galvan. **LN**



THE BLACK AND BROWN AGENDA

by Theodore Walker,

LULAC National Equality Champion Intern

More and more recently, the United States feels like a “Nation Divided”. Though many of us are fighting for the same goals, it can seem as if we are all working as individuals, without much support. As members of the Latinx and black communities, we are constantly being affected by institutional and societal oppression. Though there have been instances of black and brown groups supporting each other in various fights since early moments in American history, for example, Latinos working to safeguard escaped slaves in their homes, a majority of the cooperation began and ended in the middle and late portions of the twentieth century.

During the 1960’s and the entire Civil Rights movement, Black and Brown solidarity reemerged in order to fight for equal protection under the law for all people of color in the United States. Francisco “Pancho” Medrano was one of the key Latino members of both the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the march to Selma alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In the summer of 1968, in the wake of Dr. King’s assassination, the Poor People’s Campaign brought thousands of protestors from primarily Black and Brown communities to come together to persuade the Federal Government to take serious and direct action to help improve the lives of low-income Americans. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) spearheaded this event; however, they received support from Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales

and Reies Tijerina, and other Latinx leaders. Also in the late 1960’s, leaders such as Fred Hampton and Jose “Cha Cha” Jimenez, from the Black Panthers, the Young Lords Organization, and other groups came together to help create the Original Rainbow Coalition. This group worked together to combat injustice in the Chicago Area.

Later on, in 1991, the National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit brought together 300 Black, Latino, Indigenous, and Asian delegates from all over the United States and other countries in the Western Hemisphere to talk about how climate change directly affected their communities and the consequences of the environmental racism they were exposed too.

In our current era, cooperation and communication between these groups has been on the decline. While minority communities face many of the same institutional sufferings, current efforts to work together are few and far between. As members of the black and brown communities face many of the same battles, it is imperative that we come together to fight for our rights and equality in the United States. For this reason LULAC is excited to announce our upcoming partnership with the National Urban League. This historic partnership will bring the oldest and largest Latino organization in the United States together with the oldest African-American civil rights group to work on key issues that pertain to our two communities and to the growing demographic intersection of our two rising groups in the United States. **LN**

LULAC PUERTO RICO TAKES CAPITOL HILL



"...THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO [ARE] AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UNITED STATES WITH PROFOUND CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR NATION'S RICH CULTURE AND HISTORY."



by Jose Ignacio Gaona,
LULAC National Policy Manager

On May 22-23, more than 125 LULAC Puerto Rico members, including elected officials and island activists came together to advocate on behalf of Puerto Rico. By visiting all 535 congressional offices, various federal agencies and the White House, this action has been a historic first in issue advocacy for the Puerto Rican community.

With a population of 3.19 million people, the island of Puerto Rico touts an occupancy larger than that of 20 U.S. states. Although, unlike the residents of those twenty states, the U.S. citizens that live on the island of Puerto Rico do not share the same constitutionally granted democratic rights that are enjoyed by U.S. citizens in the continental U.S. and those in Hawaii and Alaska. This is because while those born on the island are indeed citizens of the United States, they do not reside on land that is recognized as a state of the union. Instead, the island of Puerto Rico hovers untethered somewhere between full democratic freedoms and colonial occupancy.

LULAC is proud to recognize the people of Puerto Rico as an integral part of the United States with profound contributions to our nation's rich culture and history. In their continued fight for the same freedoms had by citizens across the U.S., LULAC renews our stance to fight with and for the Puerto Rican community.

When the Puerto Rican delegation of the LULAC membership called upon the League to organize this mass advocacy effort with a month's notice, LULAC answered with enthusiasm and determination confirming over 100 meetings with

Members of Congress in the House and Senate. As waves of the delegation began to descend on Washington the night of May 21st, advocacy trainings and meeting assignments began to unfold. The commitment and effort that can only be attributed to the LULAC fighting spirit was felt as members reflected on the history that was about to be made.

Two days worth of walk-in and scheduled meetings later, the LULAC delegation had done it. Without a moment to spare as a \$19 billion dollar disaster relief package with \$900 million dollars in relief funding for Puerto Rico was making its way to the House after

"WITH A POPULATION OF 3.19 MILLION PEOPLE, THE ISLAND OF PUERTO RICO TOUTS AN OCCUPANCY LARGER THAN THAT OF 20 U.S. STATES."

receiving overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate. LULAC, the delegation, and our community were all able to rejoice in a grand win not a week later when the bill passed the House with a 354 - 58 vote. [LN](#)

Below: Lupe Torres, past Texas LULAC State Director, guiding members of the Puerto Rico Delegation through visit with office of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez during the LULAC Puerto Rico Take D.C. Advocacy Trip



FIRST-EVER NATIONAL DREAMER SUMMIT HOSTED BY LULAC

by Jose Ignacio Gaona, LULAC National Policy Manager

DREAMers make up a community in our country 800,000+ strong. These individuals were brought to the United States as children and have grown up as functioning and contributing members to society. As a defender of civil rights and community, the League of United Latin American Citizens recognizes the importance of fighting for and standing with our DREAMers. On April 12th and 13th, LULAC gathered DREAMers from all walks of life from across the country in hopes of having fruitful discussions and crafting a national strategy to fight for a DREAM Act.

The Dreamer Summit was held in Dallas Texas. At the summit DREAMers ratified the nation's first Dreamer Declaration setting out their blueprint for a bipartisan solution to the stalled immigration reform movement in the United States.

"The declaration passed unanimously by this assembly is a working document that reflects the vision of young men and women whose lives are being directly impacted by partisan politics and they're tired of it," said Domingo Garcia, National President. "They're not waiting any longer for others to solve their situation of daily fear and uncertainty that they might be deported. Instead, their brave and courageous action today begins to change the narrative away from intransigent demands on both sides to a set of principles that can lead to a compromise we can get passed in 2019," he added.

The Freedom and Liberty Declaration first sets out seven points which delegates agreed are the most important to find common ground including ensuring security at all borders and ports of entry, immigration is the lifeblood for future economic growth, individuals who arrived in the United States as children should not have to live in constant fear of deportation and a bipartisan solution to immigration respects America's values of having a fair process for welcoming men and women who wish to become part of this country.

"It's not going to be easy and there will be critics who are holding fast to an all-or-nothing position but LULAC joins with these Dreamers in framing the conversation differently by looking for ways to work together so that we can reach an agreement," says Garcia. "The Freedom and Liberty Declaration is a major step towards achieving the best possible outcome now by addressing the most critical roadblocks and allows us to make progress. Dreamers deserve to have their voice heard and LULAC salutes them for their leadership and willingness to come together in drafting this historic document," he concluded.

A national campaign is proposed for distribution of the measure to members of Congress, other elected officials and by sharing its content widely through social media and in print. **LN**



LULAC FIGHT FOR A FAIR AND ACCURATE 2020 CENSUS

by Jose Ignacio Gaona, *LULAC National Policy Manager*

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a count of all people living in the country. Under the U.S. Constitution, the Census is a basic requirement to ensure that everyone is counted. The census count determines how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives and affects how and where federal, state and local government's funds are allocated.

LULAC understands the significance of being present and counted in the United States Census for the Hispanic community. In 2019, as word began to spread on the Trump Administration's plan to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census, LULAC mobilized to educate communities and stood behind undocumented immigrants and mixed status households who felt the clear and present danger of such a question that would expose their legal status to the federal government.

Adding the citizenship question to the Census would have posed the

risk of undercounting the population, especially those already hard to count, such as Latinos. For example, the 2010 Census missed more than 400,000 young Latino children, and the 2010 net undercount rate for them was 7.1%, compared to 4.3% for non-Latinos. Undercounting the population creates inaccurate information, which can have devastating consequences in the use of the Census to help monitor discrimination and enforcement of civil right laws.

Upon hearing word of the Trump Administration's plan to push for such a question, LULAC and its membership took swift action in organizing rallies and press conferences across the country to make a clear statement of disapproval. The week of July 1st, the Trump Administration announced their decision to withdraw pursuit of the question as an addition to the 2020 Census, and subsequently earning LULAC and our community a victory in our fight for justice. **LN**





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ONE PARTNERSHIP AT A TIME.

Herbalife Nutrition is committed to helping people live healthy, active lives, and we recognize and honor success. That's why we're proud to support the 90th LULAC National Convention and Expo. We're continuously inspired by LULAC's hard work and dedication on behalf of the Latino community.

Learn how Herbalife Nutrition is supporting Latino communities at lamHerbalifeNutrition.com





¡ADELANTE! AMERICA WITH AT&T AND LULAC



LULAC is excited to announce the continuance of the ¡Adelante! America program with AT&T that include new Empower Hispanic America with Technology (EHAT) - Tech Centers. Beginning in 2004, LULAC and AT&T partnered to provide the Latinx community with the technological skills they need in order to reduce economic and educational disparities which are all too prevalent in our communities.

The program funded Latino leadership programs designed to provide at-risk Latino youth with a positive alternative to gangs, violence, and dropping out of school. The ¡Adelante! America with AT&T initiative creates a nurturing peer supported environment for Latinos of middle school and high school age and encourages them to stay in school and develop their leadership skills. Students participating in the ¡Adelante! America program know they are part of a group of overachieving, specially selected individuals whose diverse talents and leadership skills are being developed and nurtured, thereby avoiding the stigma associated with “remedial” programs.

The focus of this initiative is to help moderately at-risk students complete high school successfully. The program will continue to target at-risk youth in grades 8–11 to cultivate optimism, build resilience, and improve their academic skills. The program will develop a set of services and activities that link classroom learning with the challenges students face in post-secondary education and the workplace of the future. In 2017 and 2018, the ¡Adelante! America program recorded 329 Events/Meetings/Workshops provided to participants and 100% of students participating received on time grade promotion. Collectively in these two years, there were 3,276 hours of community services performed by students with Parents/Volunteers dedicating a total of 1,218 hours of service to students.

LULAC and AT&T are also thrilled to announce the expansion of the ¡Adelante! America Program to Puerto Rico that will include a new Empower Hispanic America with Technology (EHAT) - Tech Center. The Empower Hispanic America with Technology center project focused on creating positive change from within Hispanic communities by providing access to, and utilization of, state-of-the-art computer technologies enabling Hispanic Americans to fully empower themselves in a digital age and reduce the digital divide in communities of color.

“I am inspired by the experiences and determination each of the speakers shared with the group. I am extremely thankful for this opportunity, and especially for the presenters taking the time to motivate and educate us and for helping me understand I can achieve anything I set my mind to. It’s been an unforgettable experience because of the strength, hope and courage you have instilled in me to move forward with my dreams.” – Program Participant





LNESC
LULAC National Educational
Service Centers, Inc.

The mission of the LULAC National Educational Service Centers is to provide educational and leadership opportunities to create lifelong learners and leaders within the Hispanic community. We seek to develop America's future workforce by effectively preparing young people for the jobs of the new economy.

LULAC National Educational Service Centers (LNESC) announces the following scholarship opportunities and events. Visit www.LNESC.org for more detailed information.

PepsiCo STEM Explorers Program

LNESC proudly announces an innovative new initiative to increase the number of Latina and Latino students pursuing STEM careers with an emphasis on environmental science and sustainability. In collaboration with the PepsiCo Foundation, LNESC will provide hands-on STEM educational experiences with the implementation of the PepsiCo STEM Explorers program in Portland, Oregon. STEM Explorers introduces students to Latina and Latino role models and mentors in the STEM fields and will engage students in a competition to design real-world sustainability strategies. Program is scheduled to begin in Fall 2019.

Find us at: (202) 835-9646 - www.LNESC.org - @LNESC - www.facebook.com/LNESC





FORD DRIVING DREAMS GRANTS: PAVING THE WAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

by Melissa Cossio, Program Coordinator



LULAC has placed advancing the educational attainment of Hispanics at the forefront of their program initiatives and advocacy work. Through their network of over 1,000 councils across the United States and Puerto Rico, LULAC works with partners to activate educational initiatives across the nation. While the overall high school dropout rate in the United States has fallen in recent decades--primarily attributed to a substantial decline in dropout rates amongst Latinx students--Latinx remain the ethnic-racial group with the highest dropout rate in the nation. Meanwhile, the rates of Latinx high school graduates who enroll in post-secondary institutions is on the rise and has increased at a more rapid rate than for any other ethnic-racial group.

LULAC and Ford Motor Company Fund's efforts to reduce high school dropout rates, increase college enrollment, and create valuable opportunities for Latinx communities are reflected through their continued partnership. Together,

they have implemented the Ford Driving Dreams Grants Program, a chance for LULAC Councils and partner organizations across the nation to develop high school dropout prevention programs tailored to the specific needs of their respective communities. Each year, eight sites are awarded a \$20,000 grant over a two-year period, and two existing sites are granted a third-year extension with an additional \$10,000 grant. These grants fund initiatives such as academic tutoring, test-prep courses, STEM workshops, art expression activities, and college course enrollment. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to attend life skills and career development seminars, participate in community service projects, and meet with local leaders, role models, and influencers. Every activity is developed with the purpose of helping students succeed academically and professionally while building their self-esteem by empowering them to follow their dreams.

After completing the Ford Driving Dreams Program, 95% of students who regularly participated will achieve an on-time promotion rate to the next grade and 90% who graduate from high school will continue their academic career by enrolling in a post-secondary institution.

Ford Driving Dreams has been a part for Latino communities across the nation since 2010. It has supported education for more than 1,750 students and this past June over 266 students graduated as part of the Ford Driving Dreams 2017-2019 cohort. Among them are students from California, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, DC.

MEET ERICK

Waukegan to College, Waukegan, IL

On June 2019, Erick Castrejon graduated from the Ford Driving Dreams Program, Waukegan to College, which is designed to help high school students graduate on time and motivate them to pursue higher education aspirations. Waukegan to College provided him with the opportunity to attend scholarship workshops, improve his writing skills, create a resume, and complete college applications. In addition, he volunteered and became more involved in school activities. "Ford Driving Dreams opened my eyes to how important it really is to get outstanding grades and the fact that it is important to be a part of your school," explains Erick.

Erick also graduated from high school this past semester. He plans to attend a university and begin his studies in either Material Sciences and Engineering



or Mechanical Engineering. So far, Erick has been accepted to five colleges and universities and is a recipient of the Greenhouse Scholarship Award. After earning his bachelor's degree, he hopes to open makerspaces in several locations within Illinois, including Waukegan. "A makerspace is an engineering building where children and adults can work together to fabricate new inventions or embrace the STEM fields to youth. I never had a place such as this when I was growing up, but I really wish I did. If there are any young engineers with the same passion such as mine, I would like to help them," says Erick, "this could be a great way for children to explore and interact with others, in return helping them become leaders."

As a self-taught blacksmith, Erik has used his talents and creativity to teach others his age and adults how to forge with tools he's made. "I always like to embrace creativity among others and inspire them to become resourceful with the items they are presented with," shares Erick, "I just love to show that without money, it is possible to achieve what your mind desires."

"I appreciate the way Ford Driving Dreams works with organizations to help students like me. My parents are Latino immigrants, and it's difficult for them to help me navigate the college process. I am a first-generation, Latino student from Waukegan, IL on the way to Colorado this summer [Greenhouse Scholarship Award] and on my way to studying for a career that I only used to dream about. Now I get to start turning this dream into a reality, and my parent's dream of their children going to college is coming true," Erick

shares as he joins a growing community of Ford Driving Dreams Scholars.

MEET XIMENA

Más Adelante, Holland, MI

Ximena Figueroa-Enriquez is also a part of the Ford Driving Dreams 2017-2019 Cohort and recent high school graduate. By participating in Más Adelante, she had the opportunity to explore her cultural identity, work on community projects, volunteer, and build skills for her educational and professional career.

As a first-generation student, Más Adelante helped her navigate the FAFSA, scholarship, and college application process. "The impact of Más Adelante on my life has been crucial to my success during my last year of high school, and I am eternally grateful for their support," shares Ximena.

"My fellow Más Adelante peers are a supportive group of minority students who can relate to my experiences as a Latina student"

XIMENA FIGUEROA-ENRIQUEZ

In addition, the program provided Ximena with a support system of peers and leaders. "My fellow Más Adelante peers are a supportive group of minority students who can relate to my experiences as a Latina student. The Más Adelante leaders and volunteers are always there to help us grow and thrive in our school and community," explains Ximena.

She is currently an intern at a local immigration law office and actively proposes bills through her participation in Youth In Government. After graduation, she will be attending Kalamazoo College and pursuing a bachelor's degree in International Relations, followed by a degree in International Law. "My interest in International Relations grew out of my love for cultural and political



studies," states Ximena, "my ultimate goal after completing my education is to serve and empower the underrepresented."

"If I could give one piece of advice to future FDD students, it would be to never fear failure. Always take advantage of the opportunities presented to you. If opportunities are not coming to you, go out and seek them because they're there. Never let your fear of rejection or failure interrupt your dreams, goals, and most importantly, your determination. Be confident in your abilities and never doubt your potential," Ximena shares as LULAC and Ford Motor Company Fund welcomed the incoming cohort of Ford Driving Dreams Grants recipients during the 90th LULAC National Convention in Milwaukee, WI. **LN**

LULAC AND AT&T PARTNER TO ACHIEVE DIGITAL EQUITY

by Melissa Cossio, *Program Coordinator*

As the digital age continues to unfold, low-income families and communities are at a greater risk for further social and economic inequality resulting from the unequal access to the internet and technology, also known as the digital divide. It is now more common than ever before for new knowledge to be published online, news to spread digitally, and for employers to require digital and computer literacy skills. Thus, those who are “disconnected,” have a limited ability to access the internet, and due to lack of digital and computer literacy skills are finding themselves at a great disadvantage.

To address the digital divide, LULAC has teamed up with AT&T to offer its network of partners and over 1,000 LULAC Councils around the United States and Puerto Rico the opportunity to raise awareness of the AT&T Access initiative. AT&T Access offers low-cost wireline home internet service to low-income households across the nation. Through the partnership, selected sites receive grants of up to \$500 per event to feature AT&T Access information at local community events and meetings. By raising awareness, LULAC has helped to increase internet access for Latino families across the nation.

While internet usage has increased and become more common among Latinos, a Pew Research Center survey found that most of the usage results from accessing the internet through mobile devices. Broadband subscription rates remained steady among Latinos from 2010 to 2015 while they increased among non-Hispanic whites. Although internet access through smartphones has played a large role in reducing the digital divide, lack of broadband access makes certain tasks more difficult, including applying for jobs and researching information for homework as-

signments. Thus, broadband access serves as a vital tool to ensure equal access to education, employment, and other opportunities.

The growing concern regarding the digital divide has also led to proposed legislation aimed to tackle the problem. The Digital Equity Act of 2019, introduced by Senator Patty Murray, would give federal definitions to the terms digital equity and digital inclusion.

Digital equity would be defined as “the conditions in which individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.”

Digital inclusion would be defined as “the activities that are necessary to ensure that all individuals in the United States have access to, and the use of, affordable information and communication technologies.”

The act would also create two federal grant programs, managed by the Commerce Department’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), to support digital equity efforts. One program would call for states to develop a State Digital Equity Plan. If selected, a grant would be awarded for the implementation of the proposed plan. The other program would be an annual competitive grant awarded to support digital equity projects.

Continued efforts from the public and private sectors to reduce the digital divide and increase digital inclusion are expanding economic, educational, and social opportunities for families across the nation. As part of these efforts, LULAC and AT&T remain committed to work together to achieve digital equity for all Latinos. **LN**



PAYDAY LOANS

by Melissa Cossio, Program Coordinator

Carolina Herrera found herself facing eviction from her California home when she resorted to visiting her local car title loan lender. While at first the option of a \$2,600 loan seemed like a viable solution to her problems, Carolina soon realized she'd have to pay interest upfront and saw the initial amount skyrocket to \$9,000. This amount does not account for the plethora of late fees, penalty charges, and interest rates from additional loans she would end up being accountable for in the future. Carolina soon fell behind on her bill payments and was forced to leave her home and move in with her parents to be able to pay the initial loan to avoid also losing her car. In the past five years, Carolina has had to turn to payday lending on 10 occasions to repay previous loans or cover her basic needs, such as rent and bill payments.

Eddie Martinez found himself in a cycle of debt similar to the one Carolina struggled to emerge from. When Eddie needed extra cash to cover his personal expenses, he decided to drop by a payday loan storefront in his hometown of Los Angeles, California. Although he originally intended to borrow a \$255 loan, he became entrapped in a cycle of debt lasting approximately five years and with a debt to the lender racking up to \$4,775. This amount did not include other penalties he faced, including \$1,225 in bank overdraft fees.

Payday and car title loans operate as mechanisms through which financially vulnerable individuals and families become entangled in long-term cycles of debt. While these loans may provide temporary financial relief, the terms imposed

on borrowers include outrageous interest rates and repayment terms that oftentimes cannot be met. Such was the case for Maria Montoya, who was faced with a 146% interest fee and 24-month period to pay back an initial \$3,000 loan that ballooned to \$9,000 after interest.

Communities of color have been heavily targeted by payday lenders and are therefore at a higher risk for the dangerous effects of payday loans if protections are not implemented. After accounting for income, multiple studies have found that payday lending stores are disproportionately located in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African American and Latino populations. Payday lenders have long preyed on the most vulnerable communities and Latinos across the nation find themselves in situations similar to those of Carolina, Eddie, and Maria on a daily basis.

"These debt traps are unconscionable. The predatory lending industry has used deceptive marketing tactics in Spanish to trap Latino borrowers in loans that they cannot afford," explains Yvonne Gonzalez Duncan, State Director of California LULAC. "They often lure distressed Latinos into taking out abusive high-cost loans. The Californian's for Economic justice coalition has been vital in fighting for better protections for our families."

According to a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) report, over 80% of payday loans are re-borrowed within 30 days and more than half of all loans result in sequences of 10 or more subsequent loans. These findings indicate many borrowers were not able to afford the repayment terms agreed upon in the first place, leading to increasing debt and few options other than continuing to accept loan terms against their best interests.

To combat predatory lending practices from payday and car title loan lenders, the CFPB passed the Payday Lending Rule in 2017. The rule was built on more than 5 years of research, data collection, field hearings, and nearly a million public comments. At its core, the rule calls for lenders to assess a borrower's ability-to-repay before issuing certain loans. However, a new proposal - which was generated without any additional evidence

- would gut tools that consumers, the CFPB, and state Attorneys General need to combat predatory lending.

"Payday lenders are using the rule repeal they've pushed for to keep their old, poisonous business model -locking borrowers in the debt trap by turning struggling families into repeat customers drowning in debt. Payday borrowers are more likely to experience delinquencies on other bills, involuntarily closed bank accounts, delayed medical care, and bankruptcy. The Consumer Bureau's protections are a necessary first step toward saving families from this financial free fall and must be protected and enacted," said Sindy Benavides, LULAC CEO.

LULAC has been a strong advocate for policies to better the economic conditions of Latinos. As part of our continued effort and in partnership with the Center for Responsible Lending, we are opposing the CFPB's proposal to rescind ability-to-repay requirements governing payday, vehicle title, and certain high-cost installment loans.

Furthermore, we continued to work tirelessly with our partners to economically empower Latino communities across the nation. Through our Oportunidad App, LULAC offers resources and knowledge to achieve financial literacy, develop strong financial management skills, and avoid scams and frauds often targeting Latinos. The Oportunidad App enables users to create a budget and take a Financial Fitness Quiz to better understand how to improve their economic conditions and future. Furthermore, the app provides resources to understand the basics of what a credit score is and how to protect it. By increasing the availability of such resources, LULAC aims to help individuals and families develop economically responsible habits and avoid falling into debt traps.

Join us to help protect over 12 million borrowers each year from predatory lending practices by submitting your comments in opposition to the CFPB's proposal to repeal Payday Lending Rule protections by going to stop paydaypredators.org.

There you can [share your story](#) of how payday and car title loans have affected you. Act to help us stop payday predators! **LN**

INVISIBLE NO LONGER:

How the Latino Community Can Be Involved and Benefit from Medical Breakthroughs

While medicine in our country continues to be further developed and improved for future generations, minority groups such as the Hispanic community continues to take a back seat. Hispanics make up more than 17% of the U.S. population, however less than 1% of them participate in medical research nationwide.¹ This is problematic, as there are real differences in how people of diverse backgrounds respond to different diseases, treatments and medications.

Disparities like these lead to the creation of new medical treatments that are developed without consideration for these underrepresented communities that are not involved in medical research. When you consider statistics such as the fact that Latinos are 70% more likely than non-Latino Caucasians to be diagnosed with diabetes, it is imperative that we find better treatments to help address the inequalities.

With the help of the *All of Us* Research Program, we have an opportunity to come closer to narrowing these existing gaps in medicine.

ABOUT THE *ALL OF US* RESEARCH PROGRAM

The *All of Us* Research Program is a historic, longitudinal effort to gather data from one million or more people living in the United States to accelerate research and improve health. This groundbreaking medical research effort is led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). By taking into account individual differences in lifestyle, socioeconomic, environment, and biology, researchers will uncover paths toward delivering precision medicine – or individualized prevention, treatment, and care – for all of us.

Their goal is to ensure that 75% of the one million participants are those who have been historically underrepresented in biomedical research and that 50% come from different racial and ethnic minorities. To do this, *All of Us* is asking people to share their health information so researchers can then use the data to conduct thousands of health studies. The program is also partnering with many community organizations across the

1 <http://www.diabetes.org/advocacy/advocacy-priorities/health-disparities.html>

country to ensure the active engagement and participation of diverse communities, as well as to learn from their insights and address their concerns.

LULAC'S ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

Since before the program launch over a year ago, LULAC has been a part of the Community and Provider Gateway Initiative (CPGI), a network of provider and community-based organizations across the U.S. that support the *All of Us* Research Program to ensure the inclusion of the entirety of our nation's diverse population in this research effort. Members of the Hispanic community are key representatives of the U.S. healthcare system and deserve to benefit from the growing state-of-the-art medical breakthroughs that continue to crop up thanks to landmark programs such as *All of Us*.

All of Us celebrated its one-year birthday in early May, providing an opportunity to see just how much progress the program has already made. More than 200,000 participants have already enrolled. Of those, more than 150,000 have completed all steps of the enrollment process. The program is currently exceeding its target of 75% of participants coming from historically underrepresented communities in biomedical research.

Of course, this initial success in the first year means nothing if we can't sustain it and build on it further. That's why the program has partnered with more than 100 organizations, like LULAC, in order to build the program's infrastructure, raise awareness about the program, and help to continue to enroll participants.

In addition, this year, the program announced a partnership with Fitbit, allowing users to link their device to their *All of Us* accounts so that data collected from the wearable device can also be used to inform important medical research. In the future, the goal is to expand this option to other wearable technologies.

The program has also recently released the beta of its interactive Data Browser to provide a first look at the data that participants are sharing for health research. This will help researchers determine if their study might be made possible with

the data from *All of Us* and will paint a clearer picture of the breadth and depth of the information the program can provide.

LULAC has been heavily involved with *All of Us*, working hard to spread the word about the benefits of the program and get as many people as involved as possible. Cafecitos with a Purpose have been an integral part of our strategy to spread awareness about *All of Us* across the U.S., in both English and Spanish. During these sessions, we are able to open up, discuss personal stories, and further the conversation around our community's health and the importance of becoming active participants in medical research.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2019 and beyond, LULAC aims to continue the work we've done with *All of Us* in order to benefit the Hispanic community so that we are all on a level playing field when it comes to how medicine benefits all of us in our country, not just some of us. By continuing to interact at the local level with communities through our networks and councils, we hope to continue to educate our communities about the far-reaching benefits of this program and raise awareness to alleviate any concerns that anyone may have about *All of Us*.

As Cindy Benavides, LULAC CEO, wrote in [her op-ed](#) published in *El Tiempo Latino* on June 1, 2019, "It falls on all of us to ensure precision medicine is

"It falls on all of us to ensure precision medicine is available for our children and future generations."

available for our children and future generations."²

This serves as a call to action for our community. We need participation in order to ensure representation down the road. With more diverse participation, we can equip medical professionals with the necessary means to develop treatments better tailored to our community, and we can begin to close the gap in treatments of health conditions that the Hispanic population faces.

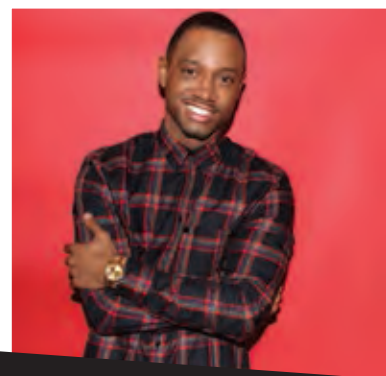
We need your help! LULAC is asking you to join this effort by participating in the *All of Us* Research Program and encouraging your friends and family to do the same. To learn more about *All of Us* and sign up, please visit www.JoinAllofUs.org/together or in Spanish at www.JoinAllofUs.org/Todos-Juntos. **LN**

² <http://eltiempolatino.com/news/2018/jun/01/los-latinos-deben-ser-parte-de-la-solucion-en-trat/?page=2>



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