



UNITED STATES HISPANIC
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

HONORARY CHAIRS



HONORARY CO-CHAIRS



2025 USHLI NATIONAL CONFERENCE

THURSDAY | FEBRUARY 13

03:00 PM - 08:00 PM

General Conference & VIP Registration

06:00 PM - 08:00 PM

CELEBRATION OF LATINO CULTURE

Musical Entertainment: Rene Avila's Afro-Cuban Salsa Band

Performance: Gwen La Roka - Comedian

Performance: Carlo Perez Allen - Educator, Author and Film Producer

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 14

07:00 AM - 07:00 PM

VIP Registration

07:00 AM - 08:00 PM

General Conference Registration

07:30 AM - 09:00 AM

LATINA EMPOWERMENT PLENARY BREAKFAST

Co-Sponsors: Constellation, FedEx, Wells Fargo

Contributor: Feeding America

Welcome Speaker: Hon. Alma E. Anaya - Commissioner, 7th District, Cook County, IL

Featured Speaker: Gaby Natale - President and Co-Founder, Aganar Media

Award Presentation: *Cesar E. Chavez Community Service Medallion*

Honoree: Sindy M. Benavides - President & Founder, Aquí: The Accountability Movement

Award Presentation: *Dolores C. Huerta Woman of Courage Medallion*

Honoree: Cheryl Green, Ph.D. - President, Governors State University

09:15 AM - 11:00 AM

CAREER & GRADUATE SCHOOL RECRUITMENT FAIR

Graduate School Recruiters: [49 Graduate Schools](#) | [Representing 19 States](#)

Career Fair Recruiters: [AbbVie](#)

[ComEd](#)

[Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute](#)

[Constellation](#)

[FedEx](#)

[Goya Foods](#)

[Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.](#)

[Merchants Bank](#)

[National Education Association](#)

[National Louis University](#)

[Nicor Gas](#)

[NiSource](#)

[Old National Bank](#)

[Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal](#)

[State Farm](#)

09:15 AM - 10:30 AM

FORUM I: Latinas the Power of Culture

Co-Sponsors: AT&T, ComEd, PepsiCo

Moderator: Tsi-tsi-ki Felix - Journalist, Author, Speaker

Panelists: Ana Valdez - President & CEO, Latino Donors Collaborative

Alejandra Ybelisse Castillo - Chancellor Senior Fellow for Economic Development,
Purdue University Northwest

Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, Ph.D - Professor, Journalism & Media, University of Texas

09:15 AM - 11:00 AM

High School Student Empowerment Workshop (Required for HS students)

Presenter: Ovi Vasquez - Motivational Speaker, OVinspires

09:15 AM - 03:30 PM

EMPOWERING HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS (By invitation only)

Co-Sponsor: T-Mobile

11:00 AM - 05:00 PM

Professional Headshots by: Zuno Photographic Studio

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

WORKSHOPS: CYCLE I [The Once and Future Country: Reaffirming Mexican-American Identity in Nationalist America](#)

[Developing a Culture of Education: Four Easy Steps to Applying for Scholarships](#)

[Increase Your Bag: 5 Practical Ways to Co-Build Your Generational Wealth](#)

[Elevate YOUR Brand!](#)

[Strong Leaders Start Within](#)

[From Potential to Power: Mastering the Essentials of Extraordinary Leadership](#)

[Engaging Communities: Elevating the Importance of Off-Year Elections](#)

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

FORUM II: The Mental Health Crisis in America

Co-Sponsor: The Chicago School, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Moderator: Michele Nealon - Psy.D., President of The Chicago School

Panelists: Caitrina Fragoso - Alum, The Chicago School

Rosemary Magaña - Alum, The Chicago School

Nikki Mendivelso - Student, The Chicago School

11:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Press Conference

12:30 PM - 02:30 PM

CELEBRATING LATINO EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION LUNCHEON

Co-Sponsors: The Coca-Cola Company, Denny's, Ford Philanthropy, Goya Foods, National Education Association, Wells Fargo

Welcome Speaker: Hon. Cristina Pacione-Zayas - Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Brandon Johnson, City of Chicago

Featured Speaker: Laura Castillo - Senior Program/Policy Analyst/Specialist – Hispanic Outreach and Engagement, National Education Association

Featured Speaker: Miss USA Alma Cooper - 1st Lt., United States Army

Award Presentation: *Honorable Dr. Antonia C. Novello Humanitarian Medallion*

Honoree: Mitzy Pérez Morales - Founder & Executive Director, Kids 4 Green Culebra

Recognition: 2025 Graduating Class

02:45 PM - 04:00 PM

WORKSHOPS: CYCLE II **The Once and Future Country: Reaffirming Mexican-American Identity in Nationalist America**

Ace the Interview: Strategies for Career Success

Know Your Rights: Free Speech on Campus and Immigration Resources

How to Leverage Your Latinidad as a Superpower

Strong Leaders Start Within

From Potential to Power: Mastering the Essentials of Extraordinary Leadership

Navigating Graduate School Admissions

02:45 PM - 04:00 PM

FORUM III: The Latino Vote

Co-Sponsor: American Federation of Teachers

Moderator: Sindy M. Benavides - President & Founder of Aquí: The Accountability Movement

Panelists: Mark Hugo Lopez - Director, Race and Ethnicity Research, Pew Research Institute

Arturo Vargas - CEO, NALEO Educational Fund

04:15 PM - 06:30 PM

#SomosUSHLI Talent Show Auditions

05:00 PM - 07:00 PM

Wristband Distribution for Mixer & Dance

07:00 PM - 09:30 PM

Documentary

Wristband Distribution for Mixer & Dance | Inside Sheraton 1-2

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

09:30 PM - 10:30 PM

Wristband Distribution for Mixer & Dance

10:00 PM - 12:00 AM

Karaoke con amigos

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

10:00 PM - 01:00 AM

Mixer & Dance

Musical Entertainment: DJ Ricomash

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

SATURDAY | FEBRUARY 15

08:00 AM - 08:45 AM

Breakfast Snack on the Ballroom Promenade

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

08:30 AM - 01:00 PM

General Conference Registration

08:30 AM - 07:00 PM

VIP Registration

09:00 AM - 10:15 AM

Forum IV: The Status and Future of Rights in America

Moderator: Daniel Aranda - Former Deputy Director, White House Office of Management and Administration

Panelists: Thomas A. Saenz - President & General Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Demetria McCain - Director of Policy, NAACP Legal Defense Fund

09:00 AM - 10:15 AM

WORKSHOPS: CYCLE III **It Takes G.U.T.S. to Make Menudo: Success Strategies for Today's Latinx Students**

Empowering Leadership Through Community Engagement: A Storytelling Session Led by USHLI Volunteers!

Navigating Graduate School Admissions

Science of a LinkedIn Profile

Belonging to Belong: Why Emotional Courage is Required to Support People and Change Systems

Raices and Resilience: Recognizing Our Cultura for the Advancement and Collective Well-Being of Our Comunidad

Unlock the Leader Within ~ Conquering 3 Saboteurs to Dramatically Advance Your Career

Defendiendo Valores con Valor

Enterprise Design Thinking

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM

FORUM V: The Future of DE&I

Moderator: Ramona Houston, PhD, PMP - Chief Strategist, Kaliráh Strategies

Panelists: Adela Cepeda - Co-Founder, Angeles Investors

Thomas A. Saenz - President & General Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Cid Wilson - President & CEO, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR)

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM

WORKSHOPS: CYCLE IV **It Takes G.U.T.S. to Make Menudo: Success Strategies for Today's Latinx Students**

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Cultivando la excelencia y la democracia en la educación de los latinos en los Estados Unidos

Supporting Success: Enhancing Mental Wellness for Latino Students Through Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Practices

Protecting Immigrant Youth: Power Rooted in Policy & Advocacy
 Belonging to Belong: Why Emotional Courage is Required to Support People and Change Systems
 Raices and Resilience: Recognizing Our Cultura for the Advancement and Collective Well-Being of Our Comunidad
 Find Your Voice
 Polished Presence: Mastering Table Etiquette for Personal and Professional Success

11:00 AM - 05:00 PM

Professional Headshots by: Zuno Photographic Studio

12:00 PM - 02:00 PM

LATINO/A LEADERS RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

Co-Sponsor: Nicor Gas

Featured Speaker: Sol Trujillo - Chairman, Trujillo Group Investments

Award Presentation: *William C. "Willie" Velasquez Trailblazer Award Presentation*

Honoree: Hon. Susana A. Mendoza - Comptroller, State of Illinois

Acknowledgement: Latino/a Leaders & USHLI Leadership Development Program Graduates

02:15 PM - 03:30 PM

WORKSHOPS: CYCLE V *Mi viaje por la escuela de la vida* - TALLER EN ESPAÑOL

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Cultivando la excelencia y la democracia en la educación de los latinos en los Estados Unidos

Supporting Success: Enhancing Mental Wellness for Latino Students Through Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Practices

Protecting Immigrant Youth: Power Rooted in Policy & Advocacy

NeuroSpicy Leadership: Embracing Diverse Minds for Long-Term Success

Leadership Essentials: The Power, Principles and Practices of Impactful Leaders

Find Your Voice

Unlock the Leader Within ~ Conquering 3 Saboteurs to Dramatically Advance Your Career

Defendiendo Valores con Valor

Polished Presence: Mastering Table Etiquette for Personal and Professional Success

Enterprise Design Thinking

03:45 PM - 05:30 PM

#SomosUSHLI Talent Showcase

05:30 PM - 06:45 PM

Wristband Distribution for Mixer & Dance

06:00 PM - 06:45 PM

Chairman's Reception (*By invitation only*)

06:00 PM - 06:45 PM

General Networking Reception

Musical Entertainment: Mariachi Los Pumas

07:00 PM - 09:00 PM

HISPANIC LEGENDS AWARDS DINNER

Co-Sponsor: Constellation

Featured Speaker: Cid Wilson - President & CEO, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR)

Award Presentation: *Dr. Henry L. (Hank) Lacayo Lifetime Achievement Medallion*

Honoree: Luis C. Caban

Award Presentation: *National Hispanic Hero Award*

Honoree: Hon. John M. Haroldson Suárez - Former District Attorney, Benton County District Attorney's Office, OR

Entertainment: Sophia Angelica - Singer & Songwriter

Closing Remarks: Dr. Juan Andrade, Jr. - President & Co-Founder, USHLI

10:00 PM - 12:00 AM

Karaoke con amigos

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

10:00 PM - 02:00 AM

USHLI Mixer & Dance

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

Musical Entertainment: DJ Ricomash

Show Entertainment: Zbot - LED Robot

SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 16

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Closing Feedback Session & Breakfast Snack

Product Donated by: PepsiCo

SAVE THE DATE

2026 USHLI National Conference
February 12-15, 2026