

## 60 National Partners Release Roadmap for Latinos to Make America World Leader in College Degrees

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Washington, DC – Rep. Charles Gonzalez, Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, former Secretary of Education Richard Riley, and Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón, chairman of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, today joined *Excelencia* in Education and its 60 national partner organizations for a Capitol Hill event to release the Roadmap for Ensuring America's Future.

"America cannot become the world leader in college degrees, nor will it have a globally competitive workforce in the future, if it does not focus on improving Latino college completion," said Gonzalez. "The Roadmap for Ensuring America's Future is a critical tool that provides us with a clear path forward to achieve that future."

"America's continued global leadership depends on producing an educated workforce prepared to compete in the jobs and economy of tomorrow," said Riley. "The data is compelling that national, state, local, and community leaders in education, public policy, and workforce development must put particular focus on Latino college completion. This Roadmap is an important step in that direction."

Sarita Brown and Deborah Santiago, co-founders of *Excelencia* in Education, presented findings and recommendations from the Roadmap. The Roadmap is the result of a collaborative effort led by *Excelencia* in Education and supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lumina Foundation for Education, and the Kresge Foundation.

The Roadmap includes a rigorous statistical analysis of completion to create benchmarks to measure America's progress toward becoming the world leader in college degrees. Based on this research, Latinos will have to earn 5.5 million college degrees by 2020 for America to reach 51 percent degree attainment and become the world leader.

Research presented at the event also revealed that Latino students are more likely to be non-traditional students – enrolled part-time, later in life, and at two-year institutions – and they tend to enroll where they live, so state and institutional initiatives that focus on those students can make a big difference.

The Roadmap recommends that colleges and universities focus on policies that increase retention for working students in good standing, increase early college high schools and dual enrollment programs, and guarantee need-based aid for qualified students. For example, to increase student retention, the *Universidad de Sagrado Corazón* offers main courses online as a backup system for students in good academic standing with unexpected work schedule changes during a semester. The University of Texas-El Paso Promise Plan covers all tuition and mandatory fees for students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less who are Texas residents, complete 30 credits a year, and earn a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

At the state level, the Roadmap suggests that leaders simplify the transfer pathway between two-year and four-year colleges, make college accessible and affordable for students of all economic backgrounds, and ensure state higher education leaders specifically address strategies to expand college completion among underrepresented groups. For example, In California, students who successfully complete 60 units of transferrable coursework at a community college will receive an associate degree and guaranteed admission with upper division junior standing to a California State

University system institution.

While institutional and government policy play critical roles, the Roadmap recommends that community leaders do more to inform parents and family members about the pathway to college and to engage their community in supporting college access and degree attainment. For example, Univision developed a multi-platform education campaign, *Es el momento* (This is the moment) targeting Spanish-speaking parents and families about the U.S. educational pipeline.

The federal government has focused historically on college access and opportunity through financial aid (Pell grants and Stafford Loans) and support programs (e.g., GEAR Up and TRIO). However, for America to lead the world in college degrees, the Roadmap encourages the federal government also to focus on college retention and degree attainment by aligning efforts on work-study program offerings in partnerships with states. Latino undergraduates had the highest average work-study aid award of any racial or ethnic group during the 2007 to 2008 academic year. Campus-based work-study programs allow students to work and earn income while enrolled and provide financial support beyond tuition and fees, resulting in improved retention to graduation.

For the complete Roadmap for Ensuring America's Future, visit [www.EdExcelencia.org](http://www.EdExcelencia.org).

*Excelencia in Education is a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization whose mission is to accelerate Latino student success in higher education.*

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## **Ensuring America's Future by Increasing Latino College Completion**

### **60 National Partners**

ACT

Alliance for Excellent Education

American Council on Education

Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund

ASPIRA

Association of American Colleges and Universities

Business Champions

California Community Colleges

California State University System

Campaign for College Opportunity

CEOs for Cities

City Colleges of Chicago

College Board

Complete College America

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

Council for Opportunity in Education

Educational Testing Services

Edwin Gould Foundation

Florida ENLACE

Helios Foundation

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

Hispanic College Fund

Hispanic Heritage Foundation

Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Institute for Higher Education Policy

Intercultural Development Research Association

Jobs for the Future

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Kresge Foundation

Latin American Youth Center

League of United Latin American Citizens

Manufacturing Institute

Maricopa Community Colleges

Miami Dade College

Midwestern Higher Education Compact

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

National Center for Family Literacy

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education

National Conference of State Legislators

National College Access Network

National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

National Council of La Raza

National Hispana Leadership Institute

Nexus Research and Policy Center

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

Project Grad USA

Southern Regional Education Board

State Higher Education Executive Officers

Texas House of Representatives, Rep. Joaquin Castro

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Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

University of California System

University of Texas, Brownsville/Texas Southmost College

University of Texas, El Paso

University of Texas System

Univision

USA Funds

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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