

The National Latino Children's Institute Elects New Leadership and Affirms Its Course

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Washington, DC – The National Latino Children's Institute (NLCI), whose mission is to focus the nation's attention on the contributions and challenges of young Latinos, recently met to elect its new leadership and develop their strategic priorities for the new term.

María Rita Jaramillo, a national Latina leader and advocate for women and children was elected Chair of the Board of Directors. Jaramillo has a distinguished and diverse career in the public sector as well as an inspiring community service record. She is currently with the National Education Association and has held senior management positions in four federal agencies. Jaramillo formerly served in the Clinton White House and as Chief of Staff to U.S. Congressman Rubén Hinojosa. She has also held leadership positions in a number of community organizations including: Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Founding Class of the National Hispana Leadership Institute, Co-Chair of the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy, National President of MANA and others.

"We will continue to advocate for Latino children and those children who are most vulnerable. Today 25 percent of kindergarten children and 20 percent of all public school students in America are Latino. It is clear that the success of America is inextricably linked to the success of Latino children. We will celebrate every success, and continue to move forward on behalf of our children and our country's future," said Jaramillo.

Others individuals elected to the board include:

Raquel "Rocky" Egusquiza, VP, Multicultural Markets, AARP (First-Vice Chair) Dr. Mary Lou de Leon Siantz, Assistant Dean, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (Second-Vice Chair) Olivia V. Meza, Chief, U.S. Pretrial Services, District of Arizona (Retired) and Board Member, Arizona Board of Executive Clemency (Retired) (Secretary-Treasurer) Iliana Alanis, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of Texas at San Antonio Olga Aros, President/CEO, ORA Worldwide Consultants Judge Dolores Briones, VP for Advocacy and Government Relations, TX Health Institute Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Executive Director, Bay Area Hispanic Institute for Advancement Diana Cristina Diaz, Director, Corporate & Community Relations, Univision Luis Hernandez, TTAS-Western Kentucky University Windy Allegra Lopez, Senior Manager, Community Affairs, Scholastic Alfred Ramirez, President, Greater Quad Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Alex Sanchez, Director, Multicultural Outreach Office, Denver Public Schools

"We are pleased to have such a diverse and distinguished Board of Directors," said NLCI Executive Director Josephine F. Garza. "They are leaders who are on the front lines of their professions and life-long Latino advocates. With their assistance, we hope to connect NLCI Promesa Network programs to public policy. Our recommendations and best practices will be broadly disseminated to policy makers, educators, the business community, and others. NLCI and its broad network have been working with young Latino for many years and we know what works!"

The organization will focus on the following priorities:

Continue to be the lead advocacy organization in support of establishing April 30th as "El Día de los Niños...Celebrating Young Americans." Since 1997, NLCI has worked with the U.S. Senate to annually pass the resolution. The day is celebrated in hundreds of schools and cities across the country. This year Latino children and youth are being encouraged to communicate to President Obama their hopes and dreams for their families and communities. Expand and strengthen the NLCI's national network of organizations implementing innovative, in-culture, in-language programs that successfully support Latino students. Enhance and promote NLCI's signature programs including Salsa, Sabor y Salud (a healthy living curriculum), Corazon de Mi Vida (a car seat education campaign), Words for the Future (an intergenerational literacy program) and others.

"The latest state-by-state 2010 Census data reveals that the Latino population is growing more quickly than demographers had estimated and makes up approximately 58 percent of the U.S. growth. Now more than ever, we must work together to institutionalize programs that are making a measurable difference in the lives of Latino children. That's what NLCI is all about," said Jaramillo.

For more information about the NLCI and El Día de Los Niños, visit www.nlci.org. The NLCI's Institute is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to focus the nation's attention on the contributions and challenges of young Latinos and to assist communities in finding solutions. NLCI collaborates with a broad range of partners to implement strategies to ensure that the voices of Latino children are heard.

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