

ENSURING AMERICA'S FUTURE
BY INCREASING LATINO
COLLEGE COMPLETION

LATINO COLLEGE COMPLETION IN 50 STATES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Excelencia in Education accelerates higher education success for Latino students by providing data-driven analysis of the educational status of Latinos, and by promoting education policies and institutional practices that support their academic achievement. A not-for-profit organization, *Excelencia* is building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy’s need for a highly educated workforce and for civic leadership. In addition, *Excelencia* in Education is recognized as a leading information source on Latinos in higher education. For more information, please visit www.EdExcelencia.org.

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INTRODUCTION

The United States has an ambitious national goal to substantially increase postsecondary degree attainment. Meeting this goal requires increasing Latino degree attainment. While all groups will have to increase degree attainment to meet this goal, increasing Latino educational attainment is essential for the U.S. to meet its future societal and workforce needs. Consider the following:

- In 2011, 21 percent of Hispanics had an associate degree or higher, compared to 57 percent of Asians, 44 percent of Whites, and 30 percent of Blacks.¹
- By 2020, Latinos are projected to represent about 20 percent of the 18-64 year-old and close to 25 percent of the U.S. 18-29 year-old population.²
- Economically competitive jobs in the U.S. will require education beyond a high school degree.

In 2009, *Excelencia* in Education launched the Ensuring America's Future initiative to inform, organize, and engage leaders from seven sectors in a tactical plan to increase Latino college completion. This initiative included the release of a benchmarking guide³ for projections of degree attainment disaggregated by race/ethnicity that offered multiple metrics to track national progress. However, the initiative recognizes the majority of policy and program changes in education take place at state and local levels.

This executive summary of *Latino College Completion in 50 states* synthesizes information on 50 state factsheets and builds on the national benchmarking guide. Each factsheet provides state level snapshots about Latinos in the educational pipeline, the equity gap between Latinos and whites in achievement, and examples of evidence-

based practices increasing Latino degree attainment to inform more intentional efforts to increase degree attainment.

Data-driven snapshots of Latino degree attainment for each state with metrics and promising programs across the country improving Latino degree attainment are all tools to inform policy and practice. However, data are only as good as they are used. *Excelencia* in Education is working with partners across the country to increase degree attainment overall and ensure Latino student success is included in the policy and practice intended to improve degree attainment for all.



¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement*.

² *Ensuring America's Future: Benchmarking Latino College Completion to Meet National Goals: 2010 to 2020* (September 2010). (<http://www.edexcelencia.org/research/EAF/Benchmarking>)

³ *Ibid.*

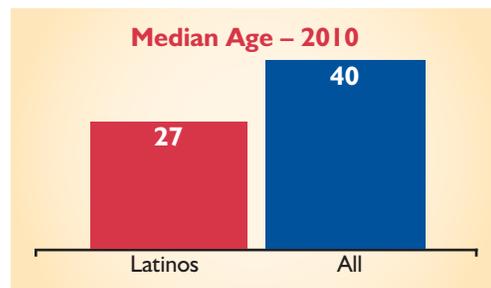
SUMMARY OF 50 STATE FACTSHEETS

Each factsheet includes state level data on the population, representation in K-12, educational attainment of adults, multiple measures of equity gaps in degree attainment, and examples of promising practices across the country with evidence of effectiveness in improving Latino college completion at institutions of higher education. To access the factsheets, visit: <http://www.edexcelencia.org/eaf/50states/>.

The state-level data on Latino college completion show today's investment, or lack thereof, in Latino academic preparation and degree attainment can have a compounding effect on state populations, economies, and communities in the near future. State policymakers as well as institutional and community leaders have opportunities to improve their educational attainment, economic strength, and community engagement by investing now in the academic preparation and achievement of Latinos. Consider the following:

Latinos are much younger than the national and state populations overall.

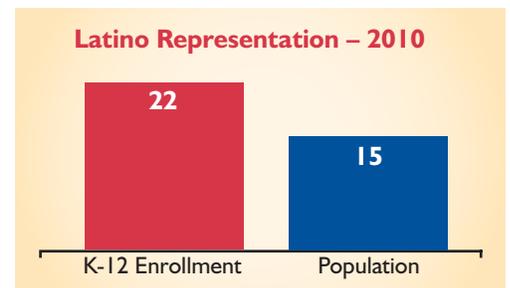
- Nationally, the median age for Latinos was 27 compared to a median age of 40 for White, non-Hispanics in 2010. An age gap between Latinos and White-non-Hispanics is consistent within all states.
- The states with the lowest median age for Latinos (22 years) are Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. Closely following these states with a median age for Latinos of 23 years are Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Montana, Nebraska and Oklahoma.



- Only five states had a median age for Latinos higher than 27 years—Florida (33 years), New Jersey (30 years), New York (30 years), Louisiana (29 years), and Maryland (28 years).
- Florida has the highest median age overall—for Hispanics (33 years) as well as White, non-Hispanics (44 years).

Latinos are a larger share of the K-12 public school population than they are of national and state populations overall.

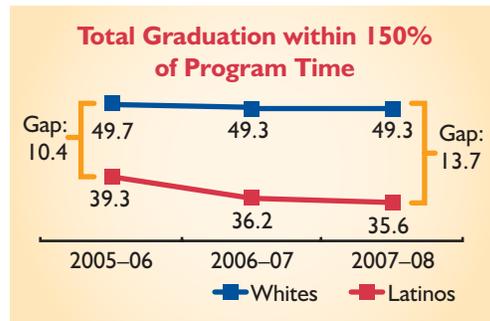
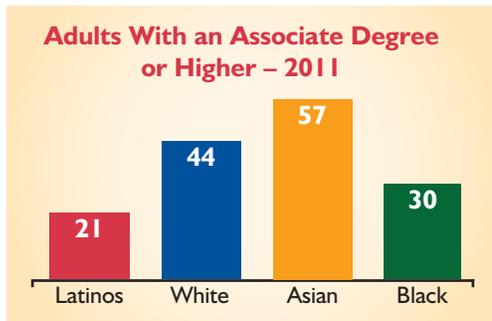
- Nationally, Latino youth represented 22 percent of the K-12 public school population and 15 percent of the U.S. population overall in 2010.
- In two states—California and Texas—Latino youth represented 50 percent of the K-12 public school population in 2010. In New Mexico, Latinos represented 60 percent of the K-12 population.
- Nine states have a K-12 public school population that was greater than 20 percent Latino in 2010; in addition to New Mexico, California, and Texas, this includes Arizona (41 percent), Nevada (38 percent), Colorado (28 percent), Florida (26 percent), Illinois (21 percent), and New York (21 percent).



Latino adults have lower degree attainment levels than other groups.

- Nationally, about 20 percent of Latino adults had a postsecondary degree compared to over 35 percent of all adults in the U.S. in 2010.
- Nine states had more than 25 percent of Latino adults with postsecondary attainment in 2010—Alaska (26 percent), Florida (31 percent), Hawaii (30 percent), Maine (36 percent), New Hampshire (33 percent), South Dakota (26 percent), Vermont (41 percent), Virginia (28 percent), and West Virginia (28 percent).
- West Virginia is the only state where a higher percentage of Latino adults (28 percent) have earned credentials than others in the state overall (26 percent).

- Nationally, the gap in degree attainment between Latino and White, non-Hispanic cohorts of first-time, full-time students was about 14 percent.
- More than half of states have lower equity gaps in graduation rates between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics than the national gap.
- The widest gaps in graduation rates between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics was in Connecticut (19 percent), Delaware (15 percent), Illinois (15 percent), Iowa (18 percent), and Washington (16 percent).
- In Louisiana, there is a minimal equity gap in graduation rates between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics. In Maine, the graduation rates of Latinos are higher than that of White, non-Hispanics.



The graduation rates for Latinos are lower than that of White, non-Hispanics.

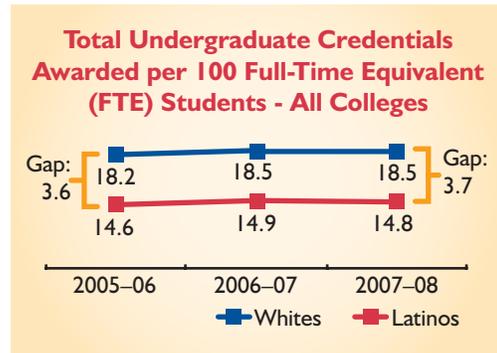
Graduation rates are computed as the number of first-time, full-time freshman who complete a degree, either an associate’s or bachelor’s, within 150 percent of program time (six years for a bachelor’s degree and three years for an associate’s degree). This metric is commonly used in public policy but only presents the picture of a limited number of students in college today. Graduation rates provide a useful snapshot of traditional students enrolling in traditional pathways. However, the metric does not include part-time, transfer, or returning students and thus shows a limited snapshot of Latino students’ degree completion.



The gap in undergraduate credentials per 100 FTE between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics is smaller than other completion metrics.

The number of certificates, degrees and diplomas awarded per 100 full-time equivalent students (FTEs) gauges the degrees awarded relative to the number of students enrolled. The amount of degrees awarded is divided by 100 FTEs—part-time students are aggregated to the full-time count of students to determine the combined metric.

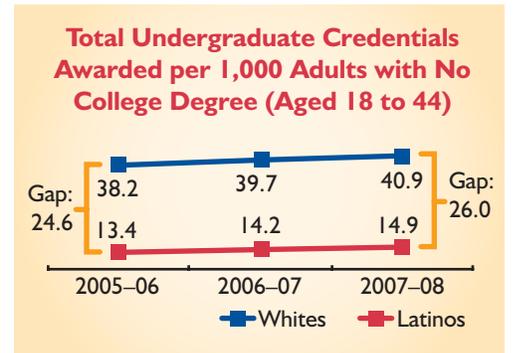
- The gap in degree attainment between the Latino and White, non-Hispanic cohorts per 100 FTEs was about four percent nationally.
- Five states had negligible gaps in degree attainment as measured by credentials per 100 FTE—Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Maine, and Wyoming.
- Oregon was the only state showing Latino adults had a higher level of undergraduate credentials per 100 FTE than White, non-Hispanics.
- The states with the highest equity gaps in degree attainment between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics using this metric were Arkansas (15 percent) and Iowa (11 percent).



The equity gap in degree attainment between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics was highest for undergraduate credentials per 1,000 adults with no college degree.

The number of degrees produced per 1,000 residents with no degree measures the credentials earned relative to the population in need.

- The gap in degree attainment between the Latino and White, non-Hispanic cohorts per 1,000 adults with no college degree was about 25 percent.
- There were 11 states with equity gaps between Latinos and White, non-Hispanics for this metric higher than the national gap—California (27 percent), Arizona (31 percent), Colorado (35 percent), Delaware (29 percent), Georgia (31 percent), Illinois (36 percent), Iowa (38 percent), Kansas (36 percent), Kentucky (30 percent), Utah (36 percent), and Wisconsin (34 percent).
- Latino adults in two states—Vermont (11 percent) and West Virginia (3 percent)—had higher rates of degree attainment than White, non-Hispanic adults using this metric.



Data sources: For the population data, the main source was the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) and ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) File. For enrollment and degree attainment data, the main source of data was the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Data Survey (IPEDS), Completions Files, Month Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment File.

USING DATA TO INFORM ACTION

In the varied analysis to set, track and attain national goals of increased degree attainment, one conclusion is clear—increasing Latino degree attainment in states is critical to meeting the national goal. This requires a tactical plan of awareness, analyses, and action that does not exclude other groups, but intentionally includes Latinos in the policies and practices put forward.

Excelencia in Education created the Ensuring America's Future by Increasing Latino College Completion (EAF) initiative in 2009 to respond to this national challenge. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, Ford Foundation, Kresge Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the EAF initiative brings together national and regional partners across a variety of sectors to bring the issue of Latino college degree completion to the forefront of public attention, and equip higher education stakeholders with strategies to accelerate Latino college degree completion.

This initiative advances three strategies in concert with other college completion efforts: 1) informing the broader public on efforts to increase Latino degree attainment; 2) increasing engagement and collaboration focused on Latino degree attainment; and 3) increasing knowledge of tactics to increase degree attainment for Latinos and others.

INFORM THE BROADER PUBLIC ON EFFORTS

Building on a national benchmarking guide and this compendium of state factsheets on Latino college completion, the Roadmap for Ensuring America's Future (March 2011) is a tool developed in collaboration with 60 national and regional partners to activate and facilitate dialogue in communities across the country about the actions needed to increase degree attainment generally, and Latino degree attainment specifically. For more information, visit <http://www.edexcelencia.org/initiatives/EAF/Roadmap>.

Over the last two years, *Excelencia* and the Ensuring America's Future partners

have brought Latino college completion to prominence in the broader public discourse about America's human capital and civic leadership. Coupled with *Excelencia's* hallmark strategy of identifying tactics and programs for increasing Latino college completion there is now a solid foundation for the next phase of work.

Further, *Excelencia* is supporting the Lumina Foundation for Education's focus on Latino Student Success and their investment in selected established and emerging communities across the country. While this new and important effort by the Lumina Foundation is in an early state, it is exemplary of the intentional actions to support, establish and deploy the collective impact of community partnerships to increase Latino and other students' degree attainment. For more information visit: www.luminafoundation.org/newsroom/news_releases/2011-11-07.html.

INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Today, the Ensuring America's Future initiative represents a coalition of 65 national and regional organizations in seven sectors committed to increasing college completion and working together to make a collective difference. Through meetings, conferences, and events convened by *Excelencia* and partner organizations, we have put the Latino community and Latino college completion front and center. Grounded by data, EAF has examined barriers and opportunities for engaging the Latino community, and, most importantly, examples of effective practices to better serve the Latino community.



The Compendium of Practices to Increase Latino College Completion 2012 profiles the current 65 partners and their organizational efforts to increase Latino college completion. For more information, visit <http://www.edexcelencia.org/EAF>. The following are three examples of the many partner efforts to improve Latino degree attainment.

Univision: Univision Communications Inc. is the premier Spanish-language media company in the United States with an unprecedented reach among Hispanics. In February 2010, Univision launched a multi-year, comprehensive, corporate education initiative called *Es El Momento* (EEM - The Moment is Now) in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, educators and civic and community leaders from around the country. The EEM campaign is aimed at improving academic achievement among K-12 Hispanic students-- focusing on college readiness, high school and college completion (<http://vidayfamilia.univision.com/es-el-momento/>).



National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund: The NALEO Educational Fund provides policymakers with the tools and information necessary to champion a multi-faceted policy approach to raise the number of students who enter and complete postsecondary degrees with inherent marketplace value. Their governance and leadership trainings focus on best practices and effective policies for accelerating Latino student access and success in higher education, such as need-based student aid targeted for first generation college students, dual/concurrent enrollment, early college schools, alignment of K-12 and

higher education systems, and institutional funding incentives for increased retention and graduation of historically underserved students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (<http://www.naleo.org/naleoeducationalfund.html>)

The Edwin Gould Foundation: The Foundation invests in programs that inspire young people to achieve their personal best while contributing to a stronger, more compassionate society. The Foundation's mission is to reduce the achievement gap by empowering motivated yet underserved students through support of programs that provide academic remediation, enrichment, and leadership life skills resulting in their entrance to and graduation from college. For example, the Foundation supports The Bronx Institute, which is a program created by the ENGaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE) as a multi-year, out-of-school program working to improve the educational outcomes of promising Latino students from low-income families in the Bronx. ENLACE's goals are improving college readiness, access, retention, and graduation rates. ENLACE is part of The Bronx Institute located on the campus of Lehman College (<http://www.thebronxinstitute.org/>).

INCREASE KNOWLEDGE OF EFFECTIVE TACTICS

Identifying what works for Latino students in higher education is an important step to reach our national goals of degree completion, a highly competitive workforce, and civic leadership. *Excelencia* in Education created *Examples of Excelencia* in 2005 as an annual campaign to recognize programs or departments at institutions of higher education across the country with evidence-based practices improving Latino student college preparation, access, retention, transfer and degree completion. In 2011 alone, more than 190 programs were nominated representing more than 20 states, DC and Puerto Rico. To share this information with the public, the Growing What Works database was created to provide practical information on promising practices at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels. For more information, visit <http://www.edexcelencia.org/examples>. The following are three examples of the programs included in the Growing What Works database.

The Puente Project – University of California, CA

GOAL/MISSION: The mission of the Puente Project is to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn college degrees, and return to the community as mentors and leaders of future generations. This program is an inter-segmental academic preparation program founded in 1981 as a grassroots initiative to address the low rate of academic achievement among Mexican American and Latino students. Open to all students, there are presently 56 Puente community college sites. The Puente Project serves over 9,500 community college students directly each year, and Latinos comprise the majority (over 75 percent) of program participants.

OUTCOME: Participating Latino students persist at greater rates than other Latinos, transfer to four-year institutions at higher rates than other underrepresented students and graduate at rates similar to students of ethnic groups with well-established patterns of academic achievement. For example, in one student cohort, 52% had transferred to 4-year colleges and universities, compared to 39% for community college students and 29% for educationally-disadvantaged students statewide. Further, 86% of a student cohort who transferred to the University of California (UC) graduated within 4 years. The graduation rates for all CCC Asian and all CCC white students who transferred to UC in 2002 are 85% and 84% respectively. For more information, visit, <http://www.puente.net/>.

Achieving a College Education (ACE) Program – Maricopa Community Colleges, AZ

GOAL/MISSION: The Achieving a College Education Program (ACE) targets students who may not consider going to college and attaining a baccalaureate degree to be an achievable goal. Upon graduation from high school an ACE student may earn up to 24 transferable college credits. ACE's three goals are 1) to increase the number of students graduating from high school, 2) to increase the number of students continuing on to college, and 3) to increase the number of students earning a degree or certificate.

OUTCOME: From 1988-2009 ACE has served over 11,000 students and has been scaled up to serve 89 high schools. Over 85 percent of participants have graduated from high school, and over 80 percent of ACE graduates enrolled in college. ACE graduates also outperform the general college student population. The average ACE college grade point average (GPA) is 3.1 while the general student population average GPA is 2.81. In addition, many ACE students have earned one or more certificates or degrees to date. For more information, visit: <http://www.maricopa.edu/studentaffairs/ACE.php>.

Dual Enrollment Program – Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), CT

GOAL/MISSION: With assistance from the educators from Hartford Public High School, ECSU and its community college partner, Quinebaug Valley Community College, developed the Dual Enrollment transfer initiative to recruit, retain, and graduate underrepresented students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Hartford's inner-city, especially Latinos/Hispanics.

OUTCOME: Implementation of the dual enrollment initiative showed effectiveness in the transition for students who had not thought of going to college. Of the students selected to enroll in the Dual Enrollment Initiative in fall 2009, 90 percent returned to ECSU as second year students. This 90 percent first to second year retention rate is higher than the 78 percent for other incoming full time freshmen. Moreover, more than half of students successfully matriculated full-time to ECSU in the spring after just one semester of developmental work; the others in the cohort spent one full year enrolled at the community college. The key to helping these students succeed is "to take them out of the environment," thus having them live in university housing is an essential component of the dual enrollment program. ECSU encouraged students to stay during the summer and take courses to increase amount of credits earned. For more information, visit: <http://www.easternct.edu/interculturalcenter/>.



ADDITIONAL ANALYSES ON COLLEGE COMPLETION

This state compilation guide is intended to complement more detailed metrics developed by other leading national organizations, such as the Lumina Foundation, Complete College America, and the College Board. The metrics these organizations have shared are important in guiding both statewide and national efforts to increase college completion.

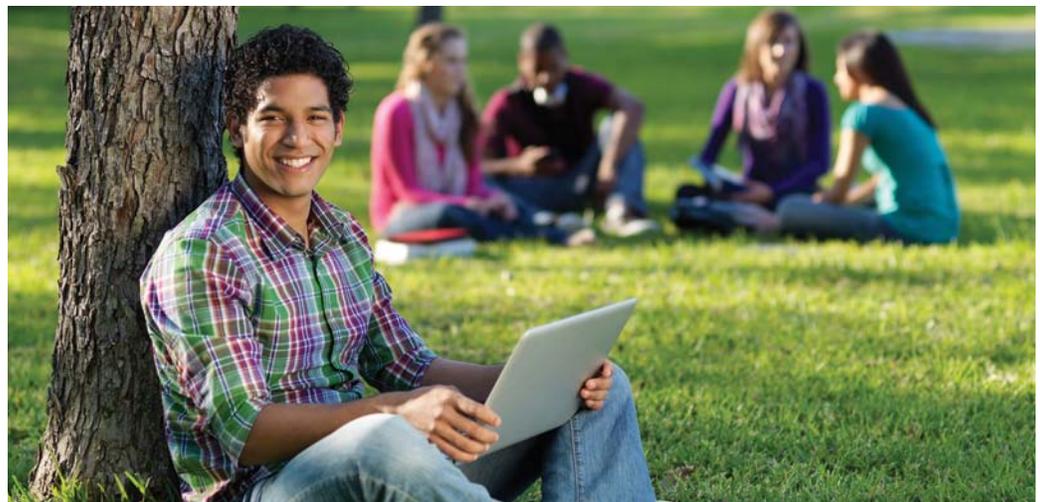
Lumina Foundation for Education:

To support its goal for increasing college completion to 60 percent by 2025, the Lumina Foundation for Education has released an annual update on college completion. The analysis includes completion nationally, and by state, race/ethnicity, and metropolitan area. Access Lumina Foundation's A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education. Educational Attainment Levels for the States at: www.luminafoundation.org/states_landing/a_stronger_nation_through_education/

Complete College America: Complete College America is a partner in Ensuring America's Future and has disseminated college completion data for 2011 by 33 participating states with a focus on the following metrics: Total degrees and certificates, graduation rates, time to degree, credits to degree, remediation enrollment and graduation, and transfers (these metrics are part of the Complete College America/National Governors Association Common Completion

Metrics). To view Complete College America's 2011 College Completion Data, visit http://www.completecollege.org/state_data/

College Board: The College Board is a partner in Ensuring America's Future and has a College Completion Agenda with 10 recommendations to improve college completion by addressing critical issues along the educational pipeline. Among the College Board's recommendations is #9: "Dramatically increase college completion rates." To measure this recommendation, the College Board provides graduation rates by state for Latino students by institutional type (two- or four-year) and control (public, private non-profit, private for-profit). *Excelencia* in Education collaborated with the College Board to develop a Latino edition of the College Completion Agenda and State Policy Guide. The College Board's College Completion Agenda: Latino Edition is available at: <http://completionagenda.collegeboard.org/latino/state-performance>.



ENSURING AMERICA'S FUTURE BY INCREASING LATINO COLLEGE COMPLETION

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

An emphasis on college degree attainment by the Obama Administration, and major foundations including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation for Education, reflects the growing recognition that increasing college completion is key to future prosperity. Given current educational attainment levels for Latinos, demands for economic competitiveness, and projected Latino demographic growth in the United States, increasing American college degree attainment is vital.

According to the U.S. Census, only 20 percent of Hispanics in the United States had earned an associate degree or higher in 2010. In comparison, 39 percent of whites, 28 percent of blacks, and 59 percent of Asians had earned an associate or higher in 2010. Further, demographic predictions show Latinos will represent 22 percent of the U.S. population by 2025. In combination, these facts create a compelling call to action.

To meet this challenge, *Excelencia* in Education is shaping a policy strategy with measures, tactics, and strategies focused on young adults generally, and Latino students specifically. The initiative, Ensuring America's Future by Increasing Latino College Completion (EAF) brings to the forefront of public attention the role Latinos play in meeting the country's college degree completion goal. With 65 national and community based partner organizations representing seven sectors—business and workforce, educational associations and policy groups, government and elected officials, institutions and systems of higher education, Latino advocacy, media and philanthropy—the coalition is actively collaborating for collective impact to increase Latino college completion.

Excelencia in Education is uniquely positioned nationally to tackle this challenge in several ways. By using its voice and convening power, *Excelencia* makes the case for the importance of getting Latino students to and through college. It is prepared to expand its



information role to track progress towards Latino college degree completion, as well as engage stakeholders at national, state, and institutional levels in purposeful deliberations to develop and deploy a policy roadmap to accelerate Latino college degree completion.

Accelerating Latino college degree completion requires: (1) intentionality in serving this group of students; (2) delineation of degree completion goals and measures of progress; (3) commitment to practices and policies that produce positive results; and, (4) clarity about the federal, state and institutional policy environments that affect Latino student success. There is a role for all stakeholders committed to increasing U.S. college degree completion.

For more information please visit: www.edexcelencia.org/initiatives/EAF/full



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