



# NHI Media Kit

## National Hispanic Institute

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Founded in 1979, the National Hispanic Institute (NHI) was created to meet the leadership needs of the growing U.S. Latino population. NHI engages talented youth in community ventures that require skill, knowledge and competency development for success, and can be advanced further by a rigorous college education. NHI has expanded its reach to high school students throughout the Americas through a three-part summer leadership academy aimed at 9th, 10th, and 11th graders. Advanced training occurs with members who return to serve as organizers and mentors. NHI works with over 65 colleges and also builds local alliance organizations. NHI is a thought-leading organization championing concepts of community equity building and community social entrepreneurship, providing an asset-based model of civic engagement to promote local Latino communities to become more self-sustaining and self-directed.



## How NHI Models Leadership

NHI's co-founders, Ernesto Nieto and Gloria de Leon, realized early in NHI's development that it needed to focus on Latino high school students with the potential to become civically-engaged leaders, if it was to meet the demands of a rapidly-growing global Latino community. NHI's programs, while helping students with the potential to succeed in college on their higher education journeys, go far beyond that, seeing college as an opportunity to enrich their capacities to serve the greater good, particularly in their own communities.

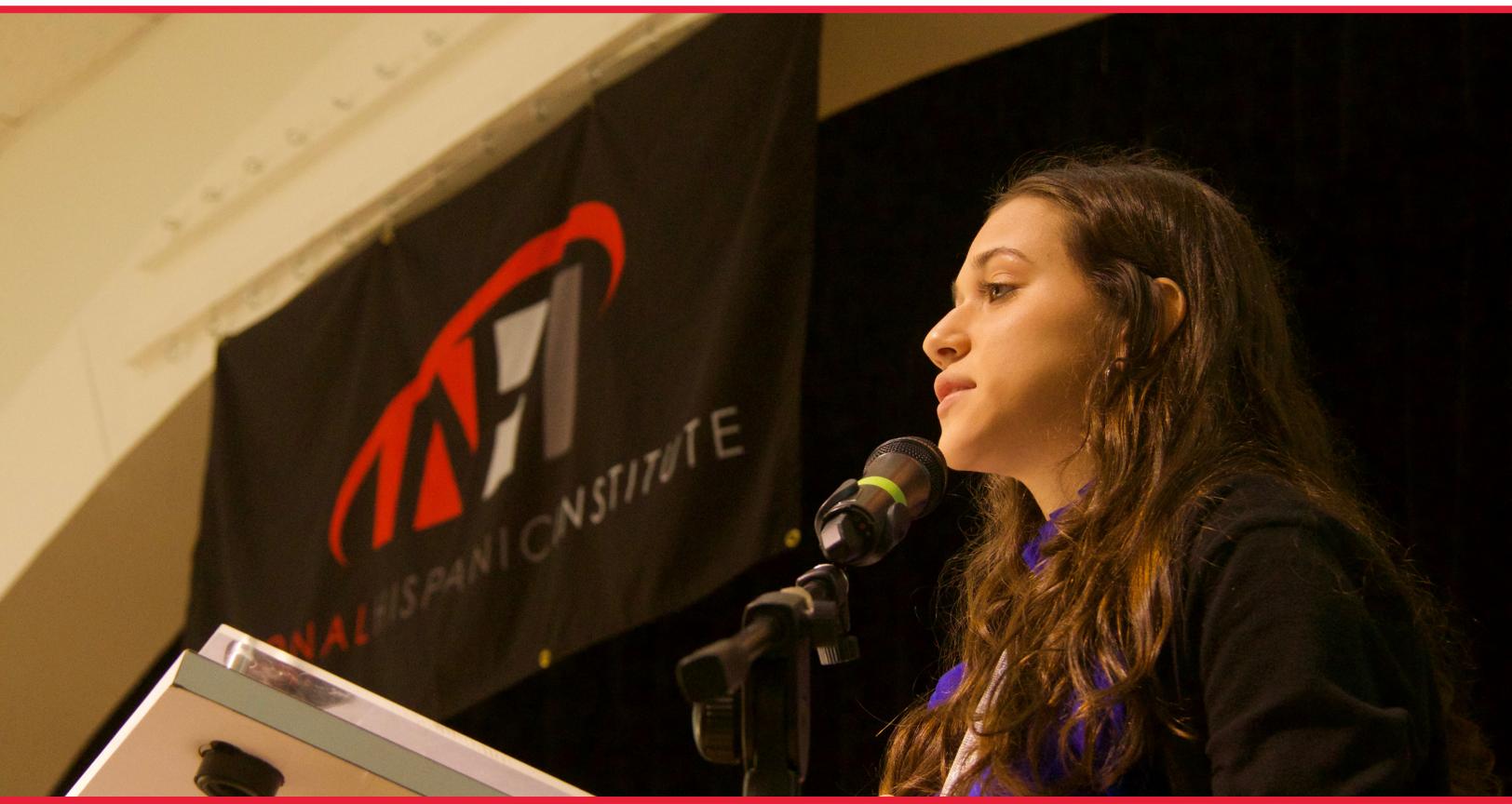
NHI's foundational concepts are captured in Nieto's book, *Third Reality*. The theme places civic engagement and asset-based thinking as central to envisioning one's community.

## Awards

Over its more than 40 years of work, the organization has been honored with a number of awards, including the Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association, the National Association of College Admission Counseling Award and the University of Texas Community Engagement Award.

Ernesto Nieto was named a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow and honored with the Splete Award for Civil Rights by the Council of Independent Colleges in 2018. Both Gloria de Leon and Ernesto Nieto hold Honorary PhDs from Texas Wesleyan University and Austin College, and were most recently jointly awarded the Corazon Award from Austin-based nonprofit organization Con Mi MADRE.

Nicole Nieto, NHI's executive vice president and chief operating officer, has most recently been honored with the Tower Award on Wednesday of next week from the University of Texas at Austin.



# Programs

NHI's leadership education program has three stages, designed for students to engage in an immersive, game-centered learning exercise each summer. Programs are led by adult NHI alumni members, with college students and high school students among the volunteer corps who run programs as a way of contributing to the development of future leaders through NHI.

## The Great Debate

Designed for students in 9th grade, the Great Debate's purpose is to demonstrate to young people how their command of language and communications skills can bolster their capacity to lead, be heard, and understood. Students work together on teams and compete in speech and debate tournaments that include oratory, cross examination debate, mock trial, and extemporaneous speaking. NHI hosts open Great Debates where eligible applicants can compete in immersive, 6-day formats. There are also community-based programs that require organized training and rehearsals in the spring, followed by a 4-day finale. Coaching staff consist of former participants and NHI-certified directors.

## The Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session

Designed for students between 10th and 11th grade (though some rising seniors also participate), NHI's flagship program, the LDZ, is designed to awaken students' understanding of their role as engaged citizens in a democracy. Eight days of immersion allows them to practice the finer points of policy making through a mock legislative session, including political party formation, campaigning for office, policy-writing and proposing legislation, debating and negotiating. Community equity building and community social entrepreneurship are introduced as the chief strategies for community advancement. The LDZ themes are culturally relevant to Latin communities, and the program environment is culturally affirming. While collaborative, it's a very individual journey that tests students and brings them to new levels of resourcefulness and resilience.

## The Collegiate World Series

The NHI capstone program, for students between 11th and 12th grade, gives participants two principal areas of focus. The first area prepares students to deliver the best version of themselves in the college application process, increasing their chances for admission. Whether in a virtual or in-person interview, a typed application submission, a resume, a social media page, or a personal statement, students are guided to present their best work. Coaches are professional college admission counselors who are members of the NHI College Register, and junior mentors are NHI students currently enrolled in college. Not only do CWS participants receive invaluable feedback, they also gain a valuable support network. The second part of the CWS provides students with a mental model for making important plans, priorities, and life choices. NHI provides an Inquiry-Based Learning Model where students learn to use questions, investigation, and test plans as the chief means to make decisions about their future. The goal is to accelerate student success through making wise choices, while also prioritizing what's most enriching to their life experience and where they will gain the greatest fulfillment.



## Beyond High School

Though NHI is known for its high school programming, NHI alumni connect with the organization far beyond their participation in 9th through 12th grade. Ninety-eight percent of students who attend NHI programs enroll in college, with more than 90 percent graduating within five years and 90 percent of those students going on to graduate programs – but the commitment to NHI principles and ideals go far beyond college enrollment.

Here's how NHI connects with people beyond high school.

### The College Register

As part of NHI's partnership with universities, NHI established the College Register to help bridge the organization's college-bound students with higher education institutions invested in Latino leadership development. College Register members participate in onsite and online college fairs and bring representatives to Collegiate World Series programs who serve in coaching and mentoring roles.

### John F. Lopez Fellowship Program

As many as 400 college-age alumni each year participate in training to run summer programs under NHI's peer leadership training, and a select group each year are chosen as John F. Lopez Fellows to work in NHI's Maxwell, Texas, headquarters and onsite at NHI summer programs.

### Alumni Networks

NHI has a number of active regional networks that engage alumni members in "paying it forward," serving in a variety of volunteer roles as well as connecting and interacting in professional circles.

### Audience and Reach

NHI has a broad membership base, with more than 100,000 alumni who have participated in at least one program, as well as a great number of educators and administrators from schools and school districts throughout the United States, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. NHI alumni attend college at a near-universal rate, and go on to professional careers in government (including two members of Congress), education, medicine, business, and numerous other fields.

NHI maintains a mailing list of nearly 4000 engaged current students, alumni, partners, and supporters, distributing a monthly newsletter (currently boasting a 55 percent open rate) as well as other dispatches from its headquarters.

NHI also maintains a regular social media presence among three different platforms to reach its broad audience spectrum ranging in age from high school students to seniors. This includes an Instagram account with more than 5,000 followers, a Facebook account approaching 10,000 followers, and a Twitter account with nearly 3,000 followers.

Prior to interruptions in its recruiting and programming due to COVID-19, NHI was annually drawing more than 2,000 students to its summer programs located on college campuses throughout the U.S, in Mexico, and in Panama, and NHI is working to move back to those numbers in 2022 with its combination of in-person and online programming.

NHI also partners with a number of corporations, foundations, and organizations to further its mission, including State Farm, Walmart, Sands Cares, and the U.S. Forest Service. Partners on previous initiatives include H-E-B, Union Pacific, and DISH Latino.



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