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NHI MAGAZINE

2019

Leadership In The Life of Every Child



NATIONALHISPANICINSTITUTE



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF NHI
COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRACIÓN 2019 EDITION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Dear Alumni and Supporters,

We've talked a lot this year about the 40th anniversary of NHI, basking a bit in the significance of this milestone, and taking a look back at how much we've grown and how much has changed. And although it was Ernesto Nieto's great vision combined with Gloria de León's background in social work and keen business acumen that set this great experiment in motion, it's important to remember that they didn't do it alone. That's why we've chosen this special year's Celebración to honor a number of those who made critical contributions to NHI in its adolescence. The First Families, as we're calling them, recognized the importance of developing Latino leadership at the high school level, and gave time, energy, and corazon to the effort. You can read about their contributions here, and there will be more remembrances coming out of this Cele to add to our collective history.

Of course, on this 40th anniversary, we must acknowledge Ernesto and Gloria's immense contributions to the organization and the nearly 100,000 alumni who have graduated from NHI programs to principled community leadership. While Ernesto and Gloria are still working to make NHI better, and even as they are anticipating the transition to the next generation of NHI leaders, they took time to do an interview earlier this year to share their memories of the organization's beginnings. The "Joyful Journey," as they've called it, is remarkable to look back on—reading it made me newly aware of their perseverance and their unwavering belief in NHI's mission.

As much as this year's Cele is about looking back and marveling at all we've done, it's also about looking to the next 40 years. We're looking forward to hearing from our students about their vision for NHI's next steps, in a city with such a rich tradition of Latino leaders. We're also looking forward to the students who will join us; in the last few years especially, we've been amazed at how they've stepped up to the challenges we've presented them. They have access to technology we couldn't have imagined existing 40 years ago, yet they've utilized it to extend the ideas and beliefs that have been with us all along.

We're also excited to honor the sponsors whose support has been vital to NHI's ongoing work. DishLATINO, the Roy G. Kerr Foundation, and State Farm. In 2018-2019, we also cannot thank Winston & Strawn LLP, enough, for dedicating hundreds of hours to our work in corporate governance. We proudly continue to partner with these organizations to make leadership development available to students from throughout the Americas.

Along the way, of course, many of our students choose one of our NHI College Register members for continuing their education, and we're grateful to all of those members for partnering with us to make leadership part of the lives of youth. While the work that NHI alumni do to develop extends beyond college, it's an important stage in their development, and it remains an important focus of our ever-evolving Collegiate World Series program.

Finally, I'd like to take this moment to express NHI's gratitude and memorialize our beloved Rev. John Minogue, who served on the NHI Board of Directors for more than a quarter-century, helped NHI gain a foothold in the midwestern U.S., and invested thousands of hours of time, resources, and energy to our cause in different roles. He was a great believer in what NHI offers, and we'll be forever appreciative of how he's helped us grow and evolve into the organization we've become.

With loving gratitude,



K. Nicole Nieto
Executive Vice President



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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2019

12:00 PM - 4:30 PM STUDENT REGISTRATIO
 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM FOUNDERS RECEPTION
 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM DINNER
 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM GREAT DEBATE ORIENTATION
 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM LDZ ORIENTATION
 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM CWS ORIENTATION
 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM OFFICIAL WELCOME
 8:30 PM - 10:30 PM STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING
 10:30 PM - 11:15 PM REFLECTION & REVIEW
 11:15 PM CURFEW & LIGHTS OUT

2NDFLOOR FOYER
 EXECUTIVE SALON 2
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 EXECUTIVE SALON 1 (ES-1)
 SAN ANTONIO BALLROOM (SAB)
 EXECUTIVE SALON 4 (ES-4)
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 WYNDHAM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2019

7:00 AM - 8:30 AM BREAKFAST
 8:30 AM - 9:00 AM STUDENT ROLL CALL
 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING
 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM LUNCH
 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM STUDENT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM DINNER
 7:30 PM - 7:45 PM STUDENT ROLL CALL
 7:45 PM - 9:30 PM BEST OF NOCHE
 9:30 PM - 10:30 PM REFLECTION & REVIEW
 11:00 PM CURFEW & LIGHTS OUT

TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 WYNDHAM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2019

7:00 AM - 8:30 AM BREAKFAST
 8:30 AM - 9:15 AM COLLEGE WORKSHOPS
 9:15 AM - 10:00 AM COLLEGE PANELS
 10:15 AM - 12:15 PM COLLEGE FAIR/CHALLENGE PREP
 12:15 PM - 1:15 PM LUNCH
 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM FINAL PROJECT PREP & PRESENTATIONS
 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM DINNER & EVENING PREP
 6:30 PM - 7:00 PM STUDENT ROLL CALL
 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM PROJECT COMPETITION FINALS
 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM AWARDS CEREMONY
 9:30 PM - 12:00 AM STUDENT SOCIAL & DANCE
 12:30 AM CURFEW & LIGHTS OUT

TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 3RD FLOOR FOYER
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 DINNER ON YOUR OWN
 ES-1, ES-2, SAB
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 TEXAS BALLROOM C
 WYNDHAM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2019

5:00 AM - 7:30 AM AIRPORT SHUTTLE FOR EARLY DEPARTURES
 7:00 AM - 8:30 AM BREAKFAST
 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CLOSING CEREMONY
 10:00 AM

2ND FLOOR FOYER
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 TEXAS BALLROOM
 CHECK OUT & AIRPORT SHUTTLES

GABRIELLE ACEVES, The University of Texas at Austin

JOCELINE ACOSTA, Harper College

ANALISA ARGUELLO, Boston University

CHRIS AVALOS, Brigham Young University

ELIZABETH BARRAZA, SureScore, Inc.

ADAM BRENNAN, Texas A&M University

EDGAR CASTILLO, University of Houston-Clear Lake

SAUL CESAR, University of Houston-Downtown

NATALIA CHAPA-MILLS, University of Texas at Austin

GEORGE CORTEZ, Cabrini University

JULIAN GARCIA-MENDEZ, University of Texas at El Paso

JULISSA GARCIA, Brown University

REILLY GARCIA, Texas State University

ANALCO GONZALEZ, OCI, Inc.

JAMES HERRING, University of Texas at Arlington

XAVIER LOGAN, Mercy College

ESTI MATULEWICZ, Princeton University

MARIO MONRROY, Illinois State University

SALVATORRE MORELLO, University of Rochester

ANTONIO MORIN, St. Edward's University

PAUL MORALES, Universidad de Monterrey

JESSICA NARANJO, Texas State University

JENNIFER OLGIN, LDZ Alumna Volunteer

DIEGO PARÁS, Universidad de Monterrey

DAVID RUYBAL, Colorado State University

ROBERTO SOTO, Harper College

FRANCISCO VIELMA, Wesleyan University

ANDREA YARITTU, University of Texas at Austin

BRIANA ZAVALA, Texas A&M University



BY ERNESTO NIETO

OPINION:

OUR TIME IS NOW: REFLECTIONS ON NHI'S 40TH

At no time in my life have I ever witnessed a greater need to have an organized and fruit-bearing means of supplying our community of Latinos with future leaders than today. It's not just about the demands of today's world, or who becomes the next president. The original framework of thought that resulted in establishing NHI 40 years ago came from recognizing the need we're facing — and taking steps to do something about it.

Small and large towns, civic and political organizations, church organizations, school boards, health entities, and grassroots groups are in constant need to resupply their leadership. In many respects we, as a community, have either accepted or were not considered worthy candidates to fill certain leadership roles in the communities where we resided. We used to determine which Anglos had our real sentiments in mind by how friendly they appeared, whether they had Latinos in higher-up positions under their leadership, or if they appeared at our celebrations to eat our tacos and sing "Volver" along with us.

Before that, we were essentially ignored. Circumstances have since changed. Latinos experience a much different and competitive modern-day era than before. But what has not changed is the lack of organized structures at community levels that specifically make youth leadership training a critical part of their development.

Today, NHI continues to be the only nationally and internationally-oriented entity in Latino community life that makes preparing future community leaders its core mission and purpose.

People who have emerged from our alumni base, like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Xochitl Torres Small, who were both elected to Congress in 2018, are examples of NHI's work. Other leaders like New York City Councilman Carlos Menchaca and New Mexico State Senator Michael Padilla are also not accidental. NHI shapes leaders who are vibrant and ready to meet challenges — and it doesn't stop with politics. Thousands lead in the professional ranks of society, including entrepreneurs, the arts, military, educators, and the list goes on.

NHI alumni also belong to national advocacy organizations, have policy-making influence on the local and state level, and shine professionally as doctors, dentists, attorneys, college professors, and entrepreneurs.

How did NHI make a difference for these leaders? When you join NHI as a high school student, you're given numerous platforms to build your skills, receive insight into your potential, and experience validation from your peers and yourself. NHI programs make taking risks more realizable and more achievable, and they bond you with a community that understands that.

When AOC first announced her plans to run for Congress, there were numbers of NHIers who showed up to help. Others sponsored fundraising events to bolster her campaign. Some took off from work to be volunteers. No one asked them to help. They wanted to join the campaign to support one of their own.

This goes all the way back to the early 1980s, when seeds were planted to grow NHI. We now have a harvest of community talent, more visible than ever, with 100,000 alumni in various stages of their careers.

This is, indeed, just the initial evidence of what NHI can do, engaging young people in learning experiences that are aspirational in their impact and produce energy.

When my mother and father were asked how they managed to do their work with barrio girls and boys in Houston, how they accomplished so much with so little, Mom would often respond by pointing upwardly to signify her firm and unwavering belief in God, saying, "On a wing and a prayer."

Gloria and I often said something similar. We had our own "wing and a prayer" - often known as P.O.O.F. (proceed only on faith) when we launched NHI as an experiment to establish a means to train future community leaders. We knew all along this would be an effort that continuously needed iteration, and constant processing.

We also knew that the effort had to come from within our community. We couldn't rely on government grants and foundation grants like the majority of community-based groups. In the world we were creating, we had to have an undeniable and unshakable faith in our community to respond through volunteerism, their investment of time, and sharing of their expertise.

And now, future generations will take the mantle from Gloria and me, and face the next forty years.

As we celebrate 40 years as an organization, we should collectively realize that our moment in history has arrived. Our moment in the sun has come. It's right in front of our eyes. Today NHI employs a full-time professional staff. The organization owns its offices and 46 acres of land for future development. It enjoys a national and international network of affiliate members that are actively in contact with hundreds of schools that generate thousands of student prospects every year.

NHI has also successfully developed and tested an entire ecosystem of youth and community-based leadership programs and curricula that can be applied from 8th grade all the way through college and into adulthood. NHI has a research capacity that constantly reviews and critically examines changing trends in Latino youth thinking that spans the U.S. and also includes regional views. And finally, NHI is now represented in different countries that provide the organization with a means of further expanding its constituency base into Latin America.

Whether the Latino community in general has an organized, structured, and especially a sustainable means of supplying the Latino community with its future leaders, the answer is clearly an

affirmative. Forty years of effort and substantial financial resources have been invested in establishing the structures for this purpose.

The next logical questions are what's next, what vision should drive the next forty years, and how will the continuation of the NHI effort be secured as the Latino community continues to be a significant and integral part of American life?

These critical questions will have to be answered by NHIers who realize the critical importance of the previous forty years, and accept the challenge that "temples are not built by wishes."

If we expect to have a significant voice in determining our future, we either give it up for others to respond, or we make a place for ourselves at the table to make the decisions. Either way, we must always recognize that time takes its toll and that the security of tomorrow not only relies on you, but who you invest in to prepare to take your place.



THE JOYFUL JOURNEY: 40 Years of NHI

This past April, NHI Magazine editor Phil West sat down over breakfast with NHI's two primary architects, Ernesto Nieto and Gloria de Leon, to get some of their insights on the 40-year journey that brought NHI from a notion to a vision to an international movement. They discussed the organization's beginnings, the evolution of its flagship LDZ program, and the growth NHI had helped foster in students, as well as how the two of them grew NHI as a couple

ON NHI'S BEGINNINGS

GDL: I'm surprised about how quickly 40 years have gone by. It seems like just yesterday. At the start, there were a lot of conversations and a lot of buzz, a lot of excitement about all the things that were possible to do. There wasn't necessarily a clear direction that said we're going to do leadership development from the very beginning. It wasn't that way at all. It was about the excitement that this was something that was going to be our own making.

We weren't looking to the side or behind us or up the hierarchical ladder to get approval for something that we instinctively knew we wanted to do, that we were capable of doing ... We kept saying, we were the experts. And so that was, I think, a very significant part of the joy and the liberation we felt. There was a constant sense of excitement.

EN: I personally witnessed the decline of leadership after the 1960s. To me, that was very significant, because we were used to a lot of activity in the neighborhood, and a lot of the nonprofit organizations doing that just shut their doors almost overnight. They were tired from the Civil Rights Movement, emotionally and physically.

One of the things I didn't want to do was go back and deal with at-risk populations ... We started by working with young professionals, from 23 to 35, called the Executive Management Program, but we found that once they were 25 or 26, they were frustrated with their jobs, the way they were being treated even with college degrees and having invested time ... there was still segregation and limited upward mobility.

We thought, we need to work with younger people before they get there, before they face that kind of reality in their lives. We didn't know what we were going to do exactly, but there was a grant being offered from the Target stores' foundation [in 1980], we had a friend who guided us through the process. We got a little grant, but at the time, it was big for us. It was a starting point.

GDL: Target was opening in Austin for the first time, and they wanted to concentrate on youth projects. So we submitted a grant to create

the first Austin Young Leaders Conference. And a segment of that was for young professionals who are still in college, who were supposed to be their mentors, teaming up with the high school kids.

ON STARTING THE LDZ

Note: The Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session started as a two-day demonstration at the Texas State Capitol at the end of the existing Young Leaders Conference. Though some concepts of the LDZ followed similar lessons of democracy of the Boys State and Girls State programs, it was a distinctly NHI program from its inception.

GDL: I looked at my cousin Edward's Boys State booklet [after he went to the conference], and noticed that out of the 600 young men who went to Boys State that year, 12 had Spanish surnames. That's when we decided we needed to do our own.

It was after that [initial demo] event [in '82] that the kids said this was awesome, but it would have been better if it was longer, they had just met each other, it'd be better if we'd stayed in the dorms. So that's when Ernie said to me, "Do that." And I said, "Yes, okay," and so I expanded it into the eight-day program.

I think that what we realized more than anything else is that they'd had enough of school, of sitting and listening to lectures. They were moving around the Capitol, they were collaborating, they were getting on the microphone, everything. They were active - they were active learners. And I was sitting in the gallery. I remember just how they felt about hearing their own voices over that microphone, in that environment. You could tell they were really getting into realizing their opinions counted.

EN: We've talked about it for years, but the magic continues even today. It puts you outside of your routine experience of home - school - home - school - football - cheerleading. It puts you in a position of realizing a little bit of self importance, learning about yourself.

It's the fact that you can discuss ideas freely and share ideas freely, and to have that reinforced by counselors who were in college, supporting them, backing up, and encouraging them. It was a lot of testing ideas; we weren't so much as interested in what they were saying as we were in how they were repositioning themselves as competent, intelligent leaders. A lot of them were from small Texas towns ... and hadn't thought of themselves as leaders.

ON RECRUITING IN THE EARLY YEARS (BACK WHEN PEOPLE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT NHI WAS AND WHEN THERE WERE FEW ALUMNI TO SERVE AS AMBASSADORS).

GDL: We did send out brochures to statewide high schools. And from the very beginning, we got them torn up, scribbled on, tossed back in our faces, even people asked us, "Where's the National White Institute?" We didn't know how to approach the schools.

I remember being at Mission High School, just going on a cold call, sitting outside. School had started, everybody was running around, and this gentleman went by, and he said, "Has someone helped you?" I explained who I was, he said, "Come on in," I sat there and explained to him what we're trying to do, and he said, "Okay." I mean, and that's basically the type of response that we got in the Rio Grande Valley. Just about every single school district had Hispanics as counselors, principals, attorneys, maybe some superintendents already. I always say they, they're the ones who took a chance on an unproven product.

We had nothing to show yet, but the schools in the Valley were sending us kids. And not just one kid, but 10, 12, 15 per school, so from the very beginning, with NHI and with the LDZ, half the kids were from the Valley.

EN: From the very beginning, we had to take it to the community, and we had to overcome the idea that is wasn't for free. There were some surprised looks. There were some criticisms: "What do you mean? You're charging kids?"

GDL: We weren't marketing it as a preview of college back then. It wasn't until the college recruiters started getting involved that we thought, you know, that's true. What they're doing is they're getting this preview. But that's not how we approached it. It was always about leadership development. It wasn't a conduit.

Because remember, and again, I make this point about the Valley, is that nobody was going after the high-academic Hispanic student in 1980. The joke in the Valley was that the only people that went to recruit in the Valley was the Army, the Navy, and the Marines. So that part I don't think came about until later, when the college recruiters were saying, "Oh my God, where did you find these kids?"

So, justifying it to the parents and the counselors, it was almost like a preview to college, a week away from home, getting the parents used to that adjustment of their kids going off to college.

EN: We had support early on in West Texas and in Dallas, but not like in the Valley. We had the good fortune that the residue of La Raza Unida, the Civil Rights Movement, those questions were still in the minds of the young people who were beginning to become school administrators in the Valley. They saw the benefit of it and emotionally supported it.

Like in Harlingen, a lot of teachers and administrators saw the benefit of it. They saw the goodness of it. Whereas we would go to Houston to talk to a white teacher or counselor who might not give us the time of day. Whereas, in La Jolla, it's a school that's 98 percent Latino. At those schools, they say that this was good and they were just more than opening doors; they were encouraging kids to go, helping to select kids ... They were very supportive. It basically came out of the Valley and out of San Antonio.



GDL: When you take a look at numerically, between 1983 and 1987, we had 183 kids in 1983, then by 1987, 287 kids that attended the LDZ. And that's when we knew we had to replicate it. But every year, at least 100 of the kids were from the Valley.

EN: I think we were frank enough with ourselves to know what worked and what didn't. We would drop sections of the program we didn't think worked. We were constantly evaluating and constantly fine-tuning.

ON NHI TRANSFORMING STUDENTS, AND GROWING AS A RESULT

GDL: For me, just from a personal level, the thrill was that we started feeling confident about what we could do. There's no doubt that as soon as students went through the programs, they went back and reported to the counselors. I mean, they saw the kids were different, were completely different.

The kids themselves reported, "I went back and I ran for student body president" or "I decided to go for cheerleader." I mean, they themselves were reporting this breakout, were saying I can do this. There were some good things and sad things, like one of our alumni from Floresville got elected the Floresville Peanut Queen for the first time in the history of the town ... and was the recipient of all this racism and racist comments. So while good things were happening to the kids, and they were breaking out, they also started feeling the backlash of being those early kids that were doing great things, you know, not just good things, but doing outstanding, great things.

I remember one year, I think it was 1987, we got a lot of great coverage. We came out in the Christian Science Monitor, we were written up in the New York Times, there was an article that came out in the Chronicle of Higher Education. There was a woman at Southwestern University who was part of the PR team, who had contacts. So we had write ups.

And I remember that we just didn't know how to handle it at the time, because there were a lot of people who called and said, "We want to know more." It was just Ernie and I; we didn't have the capacity to do anything. We did get invited to the University of New Mexico that way, we got a call from Alex Sanchez, who was the VP over there, and said, "I'm interested in this; come and see me." So Ernie and I travel there, and he says, "Let's do this" ... and that next summer, we're doing a program in New Mexico.

And the same thing happened everywhere we went. We were invited by the University of Iowa to expand the program there. Universities were encouraging us because they saw it as a way of targeting bringing in the qualified "diversity" that they wanted for their schools.

EN: Therein lies the opportunity and the threat. It's a threat in that [hosting NHI] is a ROI concept. Once they reach goals for recruiting Latino students to their campuses, they don't have that commitment to us. They sense that ...

GDL: ... they can do it on their own. We would always send information to Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, and they would be like, "We don't need to go to your college fairs. Our cup runneth over with applicants. When you achieve critical mass, or you think you're getting recruits on your own ... that's when they're like, "Why do we need to host LDZ?"

ON WHAT IMPRESSES THEM ABOUT THE KIDS IN NHI

GDL: Ernie and I have had this conversation a lot about when the light bulb goes off for a kid in NHI — to be in a social experiment, to be in a role that you've never been in before, and to do something, and to all of a sudden realize you're really good at this, that you know what you're doing. You have, in Español, we call it saliva. You have the ability to orchestrate and put together and string together thoughts and ideas, you can speak passionately about something, you can convince other people that what you believe is important and significant enough to support. To have intellectual conversations about anything that transcends; it's not just, you know, how did you do on your math test? And to do that without judgment? To not feel like there's somebody sitting right next to you saying, "Oh, there she goes again."

There's a sense of being free to do, to confirm what you've always known you could do, but you never had the stage to do it. And to know you were you surrounded by like-minded peers? Who wanted the same thing?

So what it did was change the chemistry of the environment. The expectation was, first of all, that Ernie and I expected them to do anything to the very best they could. We always would say to them, you come in with these talents, we're not going to teach you these talents. You come in with this, you have this. So the opportunity is for them to just demonstrate it.

And then the other thing, the one thing that I think was very beautiful about any [NHI] experience overall is that you couldn't make a mistake. So if you screw up and lose an election at LDZ, you go on. It's this idea of get up, keep going, you don't define yourself by the preliminary failure or defeat or whatever ... The great thing about the LDZ is that once the kids were elected, which is the first challenge, basically the marker goes down to day one, again, with the three days of the legislative session, because the awards are all going to be decided, based on what they do those last three days.

And there's so much symbolism, so much recognition, so much cultural familiarity, there are just all these things built into the experience that honestly, unless you grew up in the Rio Grande Valley, and you lived it and breathe it every day, and you felt comfortable speaking in Spanish ... most kids today never experience that. I realized years later that that's what I was doing. I was recreating that childhood experience that made me feel like I was never a minority, there wasn't anything that could hold me back. And if we could just give that taste and experience to a child for at least a week — and now there are multiple experiences, but back then, it was only LDZ — they could go through that, and that was going to stay with them the rest of their lives.

ON LEADING NHI TOGETHER

EN: I think that all our programs are now designed to give people a lot of agency without criticism, license and essentially expected accomplishments. But I think the real untold story of NHI, not what has happened, what went into what continues to go into yesterday, when we were thinking of building a pavilion. We were just going to roll the dice with that, that's been our attitude. We didn't need an architect or a person in the construction industry; we could pick that up on our own, and mobilize and evaluate. The idea is are you willing to make those big financial decisions, ones that could blow up in your

face? Are you willing to have a backup plan? It's the same psychology when we first did this — is this going to work? Will it work in New Mexico, Colorado, the Midwest? What we found is let's go ahead and risk it. Let's continue. Let's do the authentic part of the program. And the kids responded.

The light bulb going off for me was at the 1983 LDZ at Concordia, or in New Mexico, I remember Gloria and I being emotional that we had replicated the program.

GDL: We looked at each other and said, "It works."

EN: And by 1987, when we had the huge group together every day [for Texas LDZ], we knew that it was not only going to work, but was going to be replicated all over the United States. And here we are in 16 sites, and it's gotten to be international. That's momentum. And now, I'm in my late seventies, watching the staff do it on their own. You're still worried about all the things you're worried about.

We know the history. We know you don't want to just take a swipe at the ball. We have executives in now without a lot of game experience. You don't want to swipe too hard, swipe at it wrong, or swipe too soon without really thinking about. And we've learned that. When to do things and when to hold up a little bit.

GDL: You can look at it from an organizational perspective and organizational mandate or a vision or mission. But I think that the greatest joy for me with NHI is to be able to be a witness to change. You don't just put water on a plant and it grows. It's a long-term process, it's a lifetime process.

Being a part of those conversations was thrilling and exciting for both of us. It's very difficult to find someone to engage with on an

intellectual level, that has the background, either historically, or just being exposed to a lot of reading, just reading so much, and being able to bring to the table so much from a sociological or psychological perspective. Knowing and understanding your community, and using that expertise to form something is an experience.

I think that as a couple, I think we're probably the only ones in history that has ever had that daily, to this day, that daily dialogue, discussion analysis, and, and using everything that we've learned today to influence the next step ... Even to this day, the question is, "Are you awake?" Because we'll be in bed, and there will be something that we need to discuss, something that needs to be dissected, and we'll get up every morning, have coffee, and talk about it. The joy for me has been to have to be part of that partnership, and to do it with my husband.

We've gone through this seesaw back and forth over the years. There were times when Ernie, it's not that he doubted it — he knew it could be done, but he doubted whether the reaction was going to be what's going to come that we wanted. We did the trigger, but what was going to be the response?

And a lot of stuff has happened. There were a lot of discouragers along the way. People making accusations, or naysayers, or people wanting to see it on a racial level. And, you know, not understanding the commitment that we needed to create, to evolve to where we are now.

We did do the balancing act. When in the times when I went either through tragedy or whatever, when I could not function, Ernie was able to pick it up, and when he could not function, I was able to thrive. And so, doing it as a team worked very well. That's contributed to the longevity, the survival, just the fact that NHI is still around.



At a Place Called Home

ERIKA AGUIRRE AND ANALCO GONZÁLEZ REMEMBER LEADING THE LDZ



By Olivia Travieso

In the summer of 2001, I attended the National Hispanic Institute's Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session at Southwestern University. I had never attended an NHI program before, and I remember being blown away by the visuals, the music, the emotion, and most of all, the people making it all happen. More than a decade after that Texas LDZ, I would have the opportunity to continue my ongoing work with NHI as an Educational Director for the California LDZ at the University of San Diego. I feel honored to be among the select NHI alumni who have served in this capacity.

While NHI has had tremendous leaders emerge from its alumni throughout the country and internationally, few have played as pivotal a role in shaping NHI's flagship program, the LDZ, as Erika Aguirre and Analco González. In the summer of 2000, Erika and Analco became the first alumni to take on the role of LDZ Educational Director, succeeding NHI Co-founders Dr. Ernesto Nieto and Dr. Gloria de Leon and paving the way for NHI's continued evolution.

To help commemorate NHI's 40th Anniversary this year, I spoke with them both to learn more about their remarkable experience.

Olivia Travieso [OT]: It is so important that we continue to tell the stories of the people who shaped NHI over the past decades—the NHI lore that is sometimes forgotten but provides such valuable insight into our past and our present selves as NHIers. What do you remember most about that summer when you both became the first LDZ Educational Directors after Ernesto and Gloria?

Erika Aguirre [EA]: I remember Analco and I being overwhelmed with the idea that anybody could serve in the role of ED aside from Ernie and Gloria. We didn't think we could do it without them, but Ernie would say, you have to because that is what NHI was created to do; we put leadership into action and make it possible for the youth to step into big leadership roles. In any other organization, people would look at you and say you're too young, but I am telling you that you can do it because I believe in you.

We knew no one could do the LDZ like Ernie and Gloria, but we had to have the faith in ourselves that they had in us. They told us, we will always be here, but if we don't let young people take over, they will never be able to see themselves in your shoes. They are looking at you because they have to see themselves through you and believe they can do it too. We were the EDs for every LDZ program that summer and we were so tired by the end, but it was phenomenal.

Analco González [AG]: It was a huge responsibility, and we took it very seriously because we understood the historical significance to NHI since it was the first time that someone other than Ernesto and Gloria would be up on that stage. Erika and I would constantly talk with Ernesto, Gloria, and other folks like my parents [Dr. Héctor and Mary Helen González] to make sure we were prepared because we knew this wasn't about replacing Ernesto and Gloria-- which no one can do-- it was about taking another step in the trajectory of NHI so that Ernesto and Gloria could look at what's next in evolution of the Institute, and so that the work of NHI could continue to impact more lives.

OT: I can't imagine how exciting, and daunting, that must have been for you both. What was one of the greatest challenges you encountered along the way?

AG: The toughest challenge was finding our own voice and our own style as EDs. Ernesto and Gloria were always telling Erika and I to loosen up, to free ourselves of mental inhibitions, and to embrace this experience. It was extremely difficult, but once we were able to do that, it was it was a lot more fun and rewarding.

There are certain formulas and ingredients to the magic of the LDZ, but what we learned was that there wasn't one specific way to create that magic. Once we were able to tap into our unique strengths and all of the talent that came from every level of our staff, from the Junior Counselors to the Onsite Director, it taught us not only about what we were capable of, but about the assets within our community because everything comes together when you look within.

EA: For me, one of the greatest challenges was learning how to be a true Educational Director and delegating out responsibilities, like program logistics, to others. Ernie and Gloria instilled in us that we were there to ensure that the participants walked away truly knowing what NHI was, what they were there for, and what NHI meant to their lives after the program.

So, learning how to become the principal educator and delegate other responsibilities that would pull me away from that was so difficult, but we got better as the summer went on. We learned how to sit down and listen to the students, challenge them at the microphone, catch them in the hallway for little conversations, and ultimately tap into their feelings and their curiosities. In the beginning we wanted to handle the logistics because that's what we knew, but they reminded us that is not what you're here to do. We had to model for the staff what Ernie and Gloria were doing for us in letting go, so we could grow.

OT: That resonates with me so much. I remember struggling as a new ED because it was easy to fall into past roles like Onsite [Director], but I was fortunate to have an experienced Co-ED and colleagues that had been in those shoes to guide me and help me grow into the new role. That's why I believe it is so important to hear from people like you both who have been there, because whether it is 10, 15, or now almost 20 years later, we can always connect with and learn from past experiences. With that said, do you have a favorite memory or story you can share?

EA: I have so many, but one of the greatest memories was being at the end of the awards ceremony in California, and as I looked around at our team I thought, we really did it! This was the first program ever that Ernie and Gloria had not been there at all, and while we were far from perfect and mistakes were made, we still did it. We realized that what Ernie and Gloria created [in the LDZ] was so pure, as long as you knew why NHI existed and what it really stood for, you could carry it forward.

After the Circle of Love the next day, I couldn't wait to call Gloria and we were both crying over the phone. She was like, I told you, mija, each of you have it in you if you really want to do this. It was designed to let it go forward and never die. This will be shared years after Ernesto and I are gone. It was very emotional. I remember crying out of sheer gratitude and pride.

AG: I don't think I have one favorite memory because that entire summer was like one long, continuous journey that had highs and lows. It was ultimately was one of the most special experiences I have ever had.

Growing so close to my counterpart, Erika, being able to see my brother Luis as Secretary of State, and my sister Ixchell as Onsite Director, working with amazing people like "Stormin' Norman" Garza, and the many JFLs and NHI alumni that would come by different programs across the country, like Gustavo Vargas at the Colorado LDZ or Nick Gonzalez at the California LDZ—sharing and enjoying the experience with so many people is what I remember the most.

I remember that summer we sat with Gloria and tried to pinpoint what was so special about the LDZ. We all agreed that it was a place that you could call "home," and that became our summer mantra. We were at "a place called home."

OT: There is such a special bond that is created by those who staff an LDZ, like a family, and every program is an unforgettable experience. But the summer of 2000 will no doubt go down in NHI history as one of the most notable because it created the model of training LDZ Educational Directors from alumni all across the country. What words of advice would you share with younger alumni who may be interested in staffing an LDZ and eventually becoming an Educational Director?

EA: I would say there is no other place like NHI where you can find your voice and discover who you are as a leader, whether you are a young person or at any age. Only at NHI will you be put into an environment that allows for this kind of real-life training, self-discovery, and community discovery in a way that makes you proud of who you are and where you come from.

So, I say if this is something you are interested in, give a summer or two to NHI, and in turn NHI will work with you and invest in you. 20 years later, I still carry the lessons I learned that summer with me—the tenacity, quick thinking, and problem solving. I learned what true leadership was from Ernie and Gloria; you have to be fearless and give it everything you've got. I had the courage to say yes that summer, and it was life changing.

AG: The first thing that comes to mind is a quote by the NHI legend, Sam Moreno, who said, "The future of the National Hispanic Institute and our community is in the hands of our alumni." This has always resonated with me because I find it to be so true. Our leadership is constantly evolving and it requires the next generations of alumni to step up if we are to continue moving forward.

But for anyone who is interested in taking on any leadership role, the biggest thing to know is that you will undoubtedly be challenged in NHI, whether you are 18 or 38 years old, and if you don't accept that you are going to be pushed, and if you think you know all the answers, and know how all the programs operate, then you will be doing yourself a disservice and ultimately a disservice to the experience of those around you. We learned that through our experiences that summer, and this still rings true. Having the freedom and open-mindedness to grow and evolve is the beautiful thing about NHI and it is precisely why 40 years later, it is still unmatched by any other organization throughout the world.

At the 2019 Ambassador Great Debate this summer, I had the opportunity to see Erika Aguirre and Analco González together at a program for the first time in years. They were beaming from ear to ear, laughing, and reminiscing about old times. It was in that moment that I knew theirs was a story that needed to be shared. In some ways, the experiences of Erika and Analco couldn't have been further from what a present-day ED encounters, yet at the core, there are more similarities than not, and there are so many valuable insights that apply to all of us as NHI alumni, no matter when or where you participated in the LDZ.

¡Seguimos adelante, NHI, y feliz aniversario!

NHI FUNDAMENTALS

The National Hispanic Institute utilized the 2019 Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend to conduct its annual Project Administrator training, readying those who are working to make the summer program experience possible for students across the nation and throughout Latin America. The training was also the official launch of NHI's 25 Fundamentals, which encapsulates ideas of the heart of NHI's mission, philosophy, and code of conduct into one document.

Though the fundamentals fit on one small, folded card (as shown in the picture accompanying this article) and are anchored in short statements, they contain principles that not only inform the NHI experience, but can also serve as a code of conduct for NHIers no matter where they find themselves.



At the National Hispanic Institute we develop leaders. In this commitment we not only contribute skills and talent, we also create, inspire and serve. Our promise is demonstrated by 25 fundamental behaviors that are core to our success. These principles define how we relate to ourselves, each other and our community. We continuously learn, teach and practice them in order to foster a space of imagination and new possibility for community advancement.

FUNDAMENTAL #1: ACT WITH INTEGRITY.

Be ethical. Demonstrate an unwavering commitment to doing the right thing in every action you take and in every decision you make, especially when no one's looking. Tell the truth and settle matters respectfully and courteously, directly at the source. If you make a mistake, own up to it and make it right.

FUNDAMENTAL #2: TREASURE, PROTECT & PROMOTE OUR LEGACY.

As NHI members, we are recognized for and benefit from our proud leadership legacy. Consider how your actions affect our collective reputation. Represent our community well and be a proud ambassador of the organization.

FUNDAMENTAL #3: CELEBRATE & CHERISH OUR LATINO CULTURE.

Invest your time and talent in advancing our unique heritage with pride and gratitude. Build upon our community and history for the next generation. Be an example for others, and honor those before us.

FUNDAMENTAL #4: HONOR COMMITMENTS.

Practice bringing deep respect to your word when you give it. Identify your priorities and plan actions that realistically fulfill them. Manage obstacles that impact your commitments. Do what you say you're going to do, when you say you're going to

do it, the right way. If a commitment can't be fulfilled, let others know in advance and do what you can to make it right.

FUNDAMENTAL #5: ENGAGE WITH ENTHUSIASM & RIGOR.

Have a passion for what we do and be fully engaged. Make the most of each day by approaching every task with energy, purpose, and enthusiasm. Work with a sense of rigor to get things done.

FUNDAMENTAL #6: HAVE FUN & BE POSITIVE.

While our passion for excellence is real, keep the perspective that the world has bigger problems than our daily challenges. You have the power to choose your attitude and have fun. Spread joy, optimism, and enthusiasm. Don't take things personally or take yourself too seriously. Laugh every day.

FUNDAMENTAL #7: BEHAVE LIKE A STAKEHOLDER.

Demonstrate a passion for excellence and take pride in your work. Have a healthy disdain for mediocrity. Be a fanatic about accuracy and precision. Work to get things right, not simply get them done. Good is not good enough. Always ask yourself, "Is this my best work?" Take responsibility for the outcomes.

FUNDAMENTAL #8: APPRECIATE & ACKNOWLEDGE.

Regularly extend meaningful acknowledgment and appreciation in all directions throughout NHI. Celebrate progress as much as victory. Seek out the best in others and praise often. Allow yourself and others to learn, improve, and grow. Make corrections respectfully and in an encouraging manner.

FUNDAMENTAL #9: PROCEED ONLY ON FAITH.

(POOF) YOU have the power to imagine possibilities and only YOU can allow yourself to dream. Have faith in yourself and your community. Do good work, don't cut corners, have faith in others, and they will have faith in you.

FUNDAMENTAL #10: CREATE & SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS.

Create clarity and avoid misunderstandings by discussing expectations up front. Set expectations for others and when you're not clear on what is expected of you, ask questions. End all meetings with clarity about action items, responsibilities, and calendars for completion.

FUNDAMENTAL #11: FORECAST & ANTICIPATE.

Address possible problems before they develop by anticipating future issues, planning for contingencies, and designing projects that create harmony and reduce conflict. Work with appropriate

lead times. Preventing issues is always better than fixing them.

FUNDAMENTAL #12: REFLECT, ADAPT & EXECUTE.

When presented with a challenge, be flexible and curious to better understand the underlying issues. Use unbiased inquiry to discover possible areas of conflict. Gather diverse points of view to review the situation and find common ground. Get agreement on the intended outcome, and re-align your actions to get there.

FUNDAMENTAL #13: INITIATE PLANS & DELIVER RESULTS.

Take personal responsibility for making things happen. Respond to every situation by looking for how we can do it, rather than explaining why it can't be done. While we appreciate effort, we reward and celebrate results. Set high goals, measure your progress, and hold yourself accountable for achieving those results.

FUNDAMENTAL #14: TREAT PEOPLE LIKE FAMILY.

Approach everyone with respect, dignity and as a valuable asset with a contribution to make. Be inclusive and follow the Golden Rule – treat others as you want to be treated. Whether it's a kind word during a tough stretch, a friendly smile each morning, or a helping hand in stressful times, treat others like family.

**FUNDAMENTAL #15:
FREE YOUR MIND TO CREATE.**

Innovation, improvement, and success don't come from routine custom and practice. They come from unbridling your mind to reach its full potential. Ask profound questions. Test out possible scenarios and outcomes before launching projects. Be thoughtful and willing to try the unconventional.

**FUNDAMENTAL #16:
CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT.**

Know and practice our safety procedures for everyone's well-being. Always secure areas that involve you and your teammates. Have contingency plans in case of emergencies. Don't take shortcuts that compromise the safety of you and those around you.

**FUNDAMENTAL #17:
IF IT'S MEANT TO BE, IT'S UP TO ME.**

We have the capacity to design and initiate plans that give us advantages in life. Invest time in learning, reflecting, improving and sharing best practices. Feeling uncomfortable at times means you're in a growth mode. A new mindset means new results. Find ways to get things done better, faster, and more creatively. There are more opportunities than problems, if you believe in yourself!

**FUNDAMENTAL #18:
PRACTICE BLAMELESS PROBLEM SOLVING.**

When problems arise, focus on resolutions and avoid fault-finding. Remember your larger purpose and accept your role in helping make things right. Apply your creativity, spirit and

enthusiasm to solutions. Lessons learned from shortcomings improve future performance and wisen us to potential mistakes before they happen.

**FUNDAMENTAL #19:
LISTEN GENEROUSLY.**

Listening is more than simply "not speaking." Give others your undivided attention. Be present and engaged. Suspend judgment, the need to disagree, the need to interrupt with your opinion, and be careful about assumptions and jumping to conclusions. Strong and attentive listeners help others feel secure and understood. Generous listening allows a space for others to express their ideas and thoughts, free from fear or judgment.

**FUNDAMENTAL #20:
RECIPROCATE SUPPORT.**

When people invest in you, show gratitude and endeavor to help them in return. Whether it be a kind thank you note, your time and effort on one of their projects, or publicly recognizing their contributions, work to cultivate your relationships. We serve our community as it serves us. Being a community that reciprocates support is a quality we can all benefit from and pass on to future generations.

**FUNDAMENTAL #21:
LEAD BY SERVING & INSPIRING OTHERS.**

Be a model leader who inspires people and serves the community. Initiate by offering help and encouragement to others, and be willing to step into different roles if that's what it takes to be successful. Create opportunities for the growth and development of people.



**FUNDAMENTAL #22:
SEEK COMMON GROUND.**

Work from the assumption that there is common ground between you and others. Be open to learning from people, no matter what role they have, and regardless of their age, industry, experience, or tenure. Set aside your own judgments and preconceived notions. Give others the benefit of the doubt that we are all doing our best to make a difference, each in our own way.

**FUNDAMENTAL #23:
HEALTHY BODY/HEALTHY MIND.**

Take care of your physical and mental well-being. Make healthy choices for your body, mind, and spirit. Notice when you're "off" mentally, emotionally, physically, or spiritually. Seek out help and set aside time for yourself. The more you take care of yourself, the more prosperous and generous you can be.

**FUNDAMENTAL #24:
CREATE THE OPPORTUNITY.**

Be the leader who envisions new opportunities that inspire and engage others to get involved. Communicate the positive outcomes and benefits to be derived from community endeavors. Share and celebrate success when opportunities materialize into real, sustainable projects.

**FUNDAMENTAL #25:
APPROACH PEOPLE WITH HUMILITY AND COURAGE.**

Approach others with respect, humility, and a healthy courage to make good things happen. Remember your higher purpose, and that nobody is under any obligation to help you. Win people over with your positive intention to do good. Inspire rather than obligate. Make it attractive for people to get involved in achieving larger goals.

FIRST FAMILIES

BY PHIL WEST

Many of those families became involved with one family member intrigued by an NHI program — and in turn, the parents became so intrigued that they involved themselves, siblings, relatives, and other community members. We gathered the stories of ten of the honorees who will attend this year's *Celebración* in San Antonio to be recognized for their exemplary contributions to growing NHI in their communities.

Look to NHIMagazine.com for coverage at the event and after the event.

VIRGINIA GARCIA

Virginia Garcia was instrumental in NHI's earliest efforts to grow in New Mexico. As she remembers, she was teaching at Mayfield High School in Las Cruces in 1991, was called into Principal Robert Ogas' office, and given a mission. Mayfield students had attended the New Mexico LDZ in Albuquerque during the previous summer, loved it, and were trying to get additional students to sign on for the subsequent year — so many, in fact, that Principal Ogas felt they needed a sponsor, which is where Virginia came in.

She wanted to see it for herself first. "Needless to say, I was completely impressed with the program," she recalls. "After observing the activities, I decided I wanted to help with the program." She ended up working throughout the Southern New Mexico region as a project administrator, recruiting students for the Young Leaders Conference (today known as the Great Debate) and the LDZ. She was particularly proud of the 1994 Southern New Mexico team, who battled their El Paso rivals as well as teams from Albuquerque, Southern Colorado, Las Vegas and Lubbock to win the regional YLC.

"Getting students to join the programs was the challenging part of the process," he remembers. "Once I selected the qualifying students, parental approval had to be achieved. Parents are the backbone of these programs, and only with them can success be met." She also noted that because of poverty throughout the state, but particularly in her region, it was an additional challenge to fundraise — but it's one that she met head on. "No student was ever left behind."

The work was important to her, in large part, because of her

experiences with racism. As she remembers, "That changed my outlook in life. In school, we were not to speak Spanish, I was one that did not obey that, and I got reprimanded many a time for it. I did not let that make me ashamed of my language and culture." She went to New Mexico State University to major in secondary education, motivated to teach Spanish. As she remembers, she wanted to teach the culture as well as the language, incorporating the history of the Southwest.

But she continued to learn lessons about the racism in New Mexico which made NHI all the more integral for her. "What I did and do notice is that the further north you go, the less you hear the language, and that was one of the things I wanted to change. But I was very guilty of not being proud of who I was. I did not teach my own children how to speak Spanish because I did not want them to be discriminated against. Involving myself with NHI, I worked with the youth stressing for them not to be embarrassed about who they were and to speak the language. I wanted my people to be recognized and accepted for their potential and who they were and where they were going would make a difference."

LOUIS DE LA GARZA

Louis de la Garza wanted to help other Latino students aspiring to become engineers or scientists — in large part, because he was a first-generation college student who came from self-described modest beginnings to graduate in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin. He'd become involved as a mentor with organizations like AMPS (Association for Minority Participation in Science), TAME

(Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering) and SHPE (Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers). But then his son, then a high school freshman, told him about NHI — and he was intrigued, given that it was a program that focused on leadership.

As he remembers it, "I was very impressed at how easily these students would get up and talk about their experience in such an articulate manner." He got to know some of the parents involved, including professionals working with the Texas State Legislature and the City of Austin, and was impressed by the parents as well as the students. He determined it was the right place for his son, Louis Jr., and his daughters Cristina and Andrea.

They all went on to have roles in NHI over the years. Louis became President of the NHI Austin Community Council Program, and then became president of the NHI National Community Leadership Council organization, when there was a move to bring parents together across the country. Both Louis Jr. and Cristina, meanwhile, took on coaching roles with Austin's Great Debaters, and Cristina even worked for NHI as the Director of the Great Debate.

"I think NHI had a great impact on my community," he reflects. "I saw many Hispanic students start the program as very shy individuals with not much confidence or self-esteem. I saw these same students flourish to become great orators and speakers. I saw the shyness fade away and much more confident individuals emerge. I saw this time and time again throughout my tenure with NHI. Even though I always encourage my own kids to be vocal and stand out, they too needed that extra push. I saw that they each became very good accomplished speakers and that has helped them in their chosen careers."

Reflecting on his and his wife Grace's involvement, he feels they've contributed to NHI's overall success. As he notes, "I personally remember many meetings with Ernesto, Gloria and other NHI staff to discuss NHI's direction. We gave input based on how our kids were developing and the kids of our community. We always supported NHI

and did what we could to continue the work. It's very rewarding to see NHI has flourished over the years and we are very happy to see and be a part of the 40th anniversary."

SILVIA AND DANIEL GARCIA

Silvia and Daniel Garcia are educators with 80 years of experience between them in their long and storied careers. In fact, Silvia was finishing a doctorate degree in education from Texas A&M University-Kingsville while in the final years of serving as a Parent Administrator (PA) for the Brownsville region.

Brownsville was just starting up as an NHI region when the Garcias became involved with NHI. At that time, their eldest child, Daniel Alonso, was starting at Pace High School; and their two daughters, Marisilda and Lizabeth, would also go through NHI programs as they progressed through high school. "While my kids were already confident in themselves, NHI strengthened their confidence and helped them affirm their beliefs as they became more focused toward their future," she recalls. "They became a bit more assertive and were able to stand on their own."

"I saw a lot of growth, not only with my kids, but in the students who participated in NHI," she adds. "Although many of the students would start the program being rather shy; some didn't want to get involved or didn't even want to talk. And then, all of a sudden, you'd see this complete change in them."

She notes that giving students ownership of the program was key to the Brownsville region's success. "My job was to be there for them, helping as needed, and ensuring that things were organized and worked well. If they needed anything, I was there. But I gave the kids the chance to take a leadership role in everything they did. And I believe that that really helped them to get organized, to be on the ball, and to react to problems."





Saint Joseph Academy is now synonymous with NHI's presence in Brownsville — thanks in large part to Tino Villarreal, who succeeded the Garcias — but it was under the Garcias' leadership (and, of course, the leadership of the students working with her) that the school became a home for NHI. "One of the challenges at the time was that we didn't have a regular place to meet and prepare for the Great Debate," she recalls; remembering, that on numerous occasions, they utilized the public library and several churches before locking in Saint Joseph Academy as a meeting site.

The Garcias are particularly buoyed in seeing how NHI has helped many Brownsville and surrounding area students throughout the Tip of Texas region, as these students have grown and developed, graduated from high school, and college or university, and have their professional careers.

"Through the years, I have seen a lot of my former NHI students with degrees and professional jobs; and that makes me feel very proud of them," she notes, adding that NHI provided students the platform to learn confidence, organization and speaking skills. "In many cases, some of the students who went through NHI, may not have had the financial means to go to a four-year college or university, and now they are attorneys, CPAs, and schoolteachers. And to me, that's the greatest accomplishment."

HECTOR AND MARY HELEN GONZALEZ

The initial enthusiasm a high school student has for NHI can bring his or her parents into the NHI community, and that happened for Hector and Mary Helen Gonzalez when their son Analco learned about NHI in 1995. For them, though, it's been a lifelong commitment in keeping

one of NHI's most energized regions — San Antonio — fully engaged and active.

As Mary Helen recalls, Analco's enthusiasm was instrumental to them becoming engaged in NHI's work — he returned from LDZ with six new friends from San Antonio, and they all created a club to help recruit more students. "They returned energized, all telling the story about how their families, including ours, had shared with them about our political and community involvement. It came full circle and took on meaning with their LDZ experience regarding family, community involvement and the importance that we all play a role in it." They consulted with Ernesto Nieto to ask how they could help, and started a Community Leadership Council and a Young Leaders Conference (now Great Debate) team — which became the foundation for what is now known as NHI@SA.

NHI@SA now works with as many as 200 students a year committing to all levels of NHI leadership programs, including an estimated 100 a year who participate as Great Debaters. "We have worn many hats," she notes, adding that students have graduated into trainers and PAs, contributing to what she calls a legacy. "Everyone has different roles in leadership to keep making it a better, evolving community, to keep it alive for future communities and generations yet to come." Their own children are among those students who are, as Mary Helen puts it, "in sync with the belief of community." Ixchell was the first NHI@SA PA, Analco served as a trainer, and Luis has been involved in various roles along the way — and the three of them now work together at OCI Group, a San Antonio-based consulting group with other partners (including Anita Fernandez and Olivia Travieso) remaining highly involved in NHI@SA.

Mary Helen characterizes her and her husband's continuing work as "contributing to a unified effort to build a true leadership Latino

paradigm, building a new generation of young Latinos, using a Latino-based community lens to lead our community locally and globally."

"Personally," she notes, "we have had a great opportunity to see youth being challenged on issues that impact our Latino community, and propose actions to truly transform our community to a level of fairness and equity. We constantly remind our youth that they don't have to wait to shape and change the world after they graduate; they have the power for intellectual change. We give them the example of these six young kids back in the 1990s who came back from an NHI program and went to San Antonio's Central Library to propose a Mexican-American section and it was approved with much deliberation. Now the community has a place to go and see themselves with pride." She sees that effort as evidence that today's NHIers have the potential to become community leaders, adding, "That is what takes on the meaning of 'I am NHI!'"

MINERVA HERNANDEZ

Minerva Hernandez remembers when her daughter, Reyna, wanted to attend her first NHI program as a high school student. She and her husband thought it sounded terrific, but worried about their first-born daughter being away from home for the first time. She was finally reassured enough by staffers, who even gave her permission to make a brief visit onto the DePaul University campus where the program was taking place.

She took them up on the offer, and found that trip life-changing, noting, "The pride I felt when I witnessed so many Hispanic students together in one location, speaking up and supporting each other was inspiring. I immediately felt that I needed to be an advocate, to assure that NHI continued, and that not only my daughter benefited from this experience, but that it be offered to more students. I knew the need in our community for our kids to be exposed to Latinos who are excelling in the mainstream society."

She volunteered to become Project Administrator for Waukegan, Illinois, and served in that role for nine years, coordinating with longtime NHI associate Chris Pluta, to build the Chicago area into one of the most active regions for NHI participation. It wasn't always that way, though; Minerva recalls, "Ernesto Nieto would tell me over the years, 'I love that this woman will attend with a group every year, if she has 18 students or four, it doesn't matter, she shows up.' I'd smile... and took it as a compliment."

She eventually found herself in the role of reassuring parents, unsure of sending their kids to NHI, that the program would be worth it. "NHI offered a doorway to expose our youth to another world," she recalls, "empowering them, teaching them to use their voice and to share their opinions." While all four of her children were influenced by NHI and its teachings, Reyna has followed most closely in her mother's footsteps as an NHI organizer, now serving on NHI's Board of Directors.

But she sees the influence of the organization reaching not just her own children. As she observes about her time as a Project

Administrator, "NHI united young Latinos helping them stand strong knowing that they were not alone. NHI empowered our community by giving us the means to build future leaders and trailblazers."

It also awakened something in her, drawing back to a formative memory from her teenage years. "When I was a freshman in high school, my mother became very ill and needed around the clock care. I went to my counselor and asked about my options to stay in school and retain my straight A's while taking time off to care for my mom." He told me that I was a very pretty girl and I would not have any trouble at all getting married so I didn't have to worry about that, and my best choice was to drop out." She dropped out, but now realizes what was behind that advice, and understands how much differently NHI sees talented young Latino and Latina students.

As she asserts, "NHI and the opportunity that it offered to a better future for the next generation was enough to ignite my passion."

BARBARA AND TONY HINOJOSA

Barbara and Tony Hinojosa started their commitment to NHI in 1991, when their daughter Amy became interested in going to a program, and like many parents at that time, went to a meeting to hear what Ernesto Nieto had to say. They were on board, even though they were living in the Baytown area and were commuting to Houston to participate.

They were attracted, in particular, to NHI's message about self-esteem and self-advocacy, and encouraging high school students to do that "like adults." As Barbara remembers, "Ernesto's initial message to us really struck home in our hearts."

Amy returned from the LDZ inspired; Barbara reports that it "definitely energized her to try to reach out to other students" throughout the Baytown area, and she stayed involved even beyond high school in a mentoring and counseling role. Barbara's son Anthony became involved when he was old enough. But it was Amy's energy, combined with the distance from Baytown to Houston, that inspired them to become parent leaders in Baytown and start recruiting there.

Though NHI wasn't as well-known in Baytown in the early '90s as it was in other Texas cities with a head start, they found themselves able to reach out and sell parents on the NHI concept. "As you talk to people and you make the parents understand, then the kids get enthusiastic," she explains. "Then, once the kids get enthusiastic, it's not hard for us, as the parent leaders, to just want to embrace them and say, 'Okay, let's help them learn everything they possibly can.'"

The Hinojosas stayed involved while both Amy and Anthony were in high school, but Barbara recently stepped back into the role of talking to parents and children, in part because a local community center near her house is part of the network in Baytown that's keeping NHI active.

"I'm excited that NHI is still going strong," she says, recalling that when they were building up NHI in Baytown, they had to do a lot of educating the schools on NHI, but now the schools are "100 percent

behind NHI,” contributing greatly to recruiting and taking some of the pressure off the organizers. “It really, really makes me feel good that it’s continued.”

Saying that, “I consider all the NHI kids my kids,” Barbara’s proud of the professional gains she’s seen Baytown alumni make, and is perhaps even more proud of the community involvement she’s seeing from them. “You see them all grown up,” she gushes, “and it’s just so overwhelming to see how successful they’ve all been.”

DORIS AND RICHARD LUCERO

Doris and Richard Lucero’s journey with NHI started in 1989 with Doris’ mother, Hilda Gallegos, who was working as a counselor at Central High School in Pueblo, Colorado. Ernesto Nieto reached out to Hilda to explain the LDZ program that had just started at Colorado State University. As Doris recalled, “He had to convince my mother that the program was worthwhile for students. She didn’t just talk to anybody. She was committed to ensuring that programs helped students reach their goals during and after high school.”

Not only did Ernie get Hilda on board, but she also got Doris and Richard interested. The next year, their oldest daughter, Sara (who was attending Central High School), became part of the 1990 class of Colorado LDZ students. Upon her return, as Richard observed, “She was excited when she came home. She talked about how good the program was for the students.” He noted that there wasn’t much of an emphasis on civics in the school district’s curriculum, and LDZ helped Sara with that missing part of her education. Similarly, the program gave her an awareness of her identity as a Latina. Doris notes that Sara also attended Colorado Girls’ State and although she enjoyed that experience, she found the LDZ program more rewarding.”

Though Doris says, “We’re proud that all three of our children were active participants in NHI programs,” it was Sara’s NHI experience that inspired Doris and Richard to work with NHI in forming the Southern Colorado Community Leadership Council and serving as project administrators for the region for the next decade. They worked on recruiting, noting that fundraising was a challenge because many students couldn’t afford tuition on their own. If students advocated for themselves, community members were more willing to assist. However, teaching students to be active participants in their own fundraising was one of their biggest challenges. Doris recalls the SCCLC constantly explaining to the students, “You’ve got to present yourself. You have to let them [potential donors] know who you are and why this is important to you ... and it got easier over time.”

Doris was impressed with a curriculum that emphasized “personal organization, research methods, creative writing and public speaking,” while Richard was impressed with the focus on Latino leadership. “We can’t lead from behind,” Richard observed. “We’ve got to lead from the front. That’s imperative, especially now, with the growth in the Hispanic population.”

Working with NHI enabled the Luceros to see that the Hispanic population in Southern Colorado was connected to a whole network

of people throughout the country invested in Latino leadership. And, as they’re particularly proud about, they’re getting to see students they worked with come back and take on leadership roles — including in Pueblo, where they still make their home.

“It was amazing watching these kids grow,” Doris recalls. “We got kids that were quiet and we encourage them to come out of their shells.”

GLORIA MAYO-MORENO

Gloria Mayo-Moreno knew Ernesto Nieto even before NHI was born; she worked in the Governor’s office with him, and when they were laid off, she and her husband decided to help Nieto launch NHI — back when it was geared toward young adult professionals — before they began resuming their careers.

A decade later, in the late ’80s she reconnected with Nieto while working as a Chief of Staff for a member of the Texas House of Representatives. As she recalls, “Every year, I would see Boys’ and Girls’ State Conventions held at the State Capitol, and there were very, very few Latinos involved. Participation was very limited and selective.”

That’s something that Gloria de Leon had noticed as well, and that observation was crucial to the launch of the LDZ. As Mayo-Moreno observed, “The NHI concept was brilliant and I was totally in, especially when my middle daughter, who was painfully shy, participated in the Great Debate.”

She became more than an NHI parent, becoming a program director between 1991 and 1997 for the Great Debate program (then known as the Young Leaders Conference), and later becoming an NHI board member.

As she recalls, “The early years of investing our personal time toward making NHI a reality has been well worth it. Ernie and Gloria stayed with it and made it a national model. NHI has impacted the lives of so many young Latinos in such a positive way. To my knowledge, there is no other program like NHI and I hope the legacy lives on.”

She’s seen the program positively impact a great number of students she came in contact with over the years, and has found that especially true for her own children.

“The most rewarding thing about NHI to me personally has been watching my daughters grow intellectually, socially and personally as strong young women who want to give back to the community,” she reflected. “Their experience with NHI had a lot to do with their personal growth. They met many young, intelligent youths with similar goals as theirs. They made life-long friends.”

IRENE AND JOHN ROSALES

John Rosales first learned about NHI while working at the Johnson Space Center; he attended a talk Ernesto Nieto gave in Houston about “paying it forward” to help Latino youth succeed, and liked

what he heard. He liked it so much, in fact, that he arranged for Nieto to come and speak to his NASA colleagues.

At that time, his wife Irene was a teacher; several months after the NASA talk, a student came up to her and talked about how he was inspired by NHI and wanted to get more involved in school activities as a result. When Irene shared the story with John, and let him know she’d like their own children to get involved with NHI, he exclaimed, “That’s Ernesto Nieto’s program!”

Their sons Victor and David did end up going to NHI programs, and Irene and John both became involved in helping NHI, starting by chaperoning and otherwise volunteering to help with programs in Houston. They eventually extending their commitment to the Board of Directors, with John serving as a member for some of its first years.

“It was a very rewarding time for both of us,” Irene recalls of her and her husband’s time with NHI. She notes that they worked with “bright, energetic Hispanic youth who were being given the encouragement and the tools to be leaders in their schools and communities. You could see their enthusiasm increasing and even very shy students would proudly tell us that they were running for office at their high school because of the NHI influence.”

John, along with Victor (who is now a physician in San Antonio) and David (now a computer engineer in San Francisco), even contributed their time to Houston students to help them prepare for the SAT, hoping to impact those students’ futures.

“NHI has obviously played a very effective role in Hispanic communities, inspiring kids to be all they can be, including our own two sons,” Irene observes, adding they are hoping for their first grandchild to become involved in NHI once eligible. “We believe parents are the first and most important educators,” she adds, “but we also believe it does take a village, and NHI has been a good part of that village for families over the last 40 years.”

TITA YANAR

Tita Yanar, best known to NHIers as the Project Administrator for NHI during its formative years, first became aware of NHI when the first class of El Paso YLC students were being trained in 1989 by Dr. Roberto Villareal and his wife Norma. Their daughter, Ethel, was best friends with Tita’s daughter, Soraya. When it came time to appoint a PA to prepare the 1990 YLCers for the Texas Great Debate, Norma surprised Tita by volunteering her at a parents’ meeting. Although initially intimidated by the prospect, she accepted. Her daughter, Soraya, participated in the YLC Cross Examination team team in 1990 and discovered her impressive aptitude for debate.

Tita became completely invested in NHI and its mission. “I would talk with Ernie for hours in an effort to better understand and learn about the organization and its methodologies,” she recalls. “This was different from everything I had learned in my university training as an educator. It was truly learning by doing.”

When Soraya went off to college, Tita was ready to pass the mantle to someone else. But her son Omar, who was entering the ninth grade, had become fascinated by the NHI experience and declared that it was “his turn.” Even after he went off to college in 1997; Tita continued to serve as PA for three more years, guiding her El Paso NHIers through a dominant stretch of Texas and New Mexico Great Debate championships.

Tita is particularly proud that her two children, like so many El Paso NHI alumni, took what they learned from NHI into their lives as professionals and community leaders. Soraya is now a lawyer practicing in El Paso. Omar is an educator. He founded a college prep charter middle school, the El Paso Leadership Academy (EPLA). EPLA has distinguished itself academically and is at the forefront of implementing character and leadership development curriculum based on NHI principles.

Tita is extremely proud of the students she had the privilege to serve. She firmly believes that El Paso’s NHI success was due to their intellect, skills and capacity for hard work, as well as pride in their community, heritage and biculturalism. It is also her belief that there’s something special about El Paso that NHI helped the rest of the world discover. She notes, “Ernie says that you can always tell someone from El Paso by the positive attitude and confidence they project.”

FIRST FAMILIES IN ABSENTIA

Gloria Mayo-Moreno and Arturo Moreno, Austin, Texas

Dr. Rene and Veronica Vela, Corpus Christi, Texas

CITATION OF MERIT AWARD

Todd Thorson of Winston & Strawn, LLP

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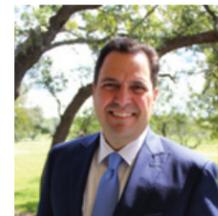
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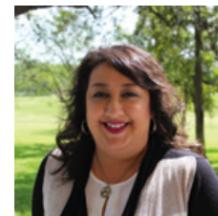
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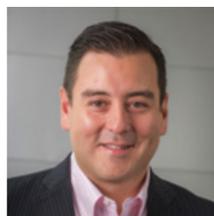
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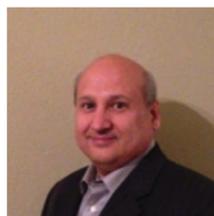
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2019 COLLEGIATE WORLD SERIES CELE COHORT

Alejandro Acevedo, Christopher Columbus HS, Miami, Florida
Airam Alvarado, Challenge Early College HS, Houston, Texas
Alexis Alvarado, IB at Lamar Academy, San Juan, Texas
Miguel Alvarez, Round Lake HS, Round Lake Beach, Illinois
John Antowan, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
Omar Arias, All Hallows HS, Bronx, New York
Daniel Benitez, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
Sebastian Conklin, John Paul II HS, Allen, Texas
Dulce De La Cruz, IDEA Pharr, Pharr, Texas
Joseph Decilos, Harlingen HS South, Harlingen, Texas
Matthew Diaz, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
Maria Drobny, Lyons Township HS, La Grange, Illinois
Sarah Eckenroth, Judson HS, Converse, Texas
Maya Felan, Judson Early College Academy, San Antonio, Texas
Abigail Garcia, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
Emilio Garcia, Bellarmine College Prep, San Jose, Texas
Sebastian Garcia, Sandra Day O'Connor HS, San Antonio, Texas
Jillian Garza Garza, Porter Early College HS, Brownsville, Texas
Lazaro Garza, Palmview HS, Mission, Texas
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Daniel Gonzalez, Eastwood HS, El Paso, Texas
Mia González, Goose Creek Memorial HS, Baytown, Texas
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Fabiola Jaimes, Cypress Falls HS, Houston, Texas
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Timothy Lona, Plaza Academy, Kansas City, Missouri
Jacob Magallanes, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
Javiera Magna, James E. Taylor HS, Houston, Texas
Carina Martinez, Lincoln College Prep, Kansas City, Missouri
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Kaitlyn Padron, Judson Early College Academy, San Antonio, Texas
Grace Pena, Math and Science Academy, McAllen, Texas
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Jareth Quintero, Judson Early College Academy, San Antonio, Texas
Elizabeth Ramos, Energy Institute HS, Houston, Texas
Geraldine Ramos, Windermere HS, Winter Garden, Florida

Yamilex Romero, Albuquerque HS, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Regina Romero-Garza, John Paul II HS, Plano, Texas
Santiago Ruiz, Eastwood HS, El Paso, Texas
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Isabella Sanchez, Saint Mary's Hall, San Antonio, Texas
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Ahtziri Serrano, Cypress Park HS, Katy, Texas
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Angel Silva Aguirre, Cypress Falls HS, Houston, Texas
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Sarah Tomasino, Tom C. Clark HS, San Antonio, Texas
LeeAnn Trevino, Thomas Edison HS, San Antonio, Texas
Antonio Valdez, Alamo Heights HS, San Antonio, Texas
Fabián Valerio, School for the Talented and Gifted, Mesquite, Texas
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Teresa Vielma, Oratory Athenaeum for University Prep, Pharr, Texas
Helen Wilson, The Science Academy of South Texas, Mercedes, Texas
Joel Ythier, Archbishop Stepinac HS, White Plains, New York
Jaime Zuniga, Lake Ridge HS, Mansfield, Texas

2019 LORENZO DE ZAVALA YOUTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION CELE COHORT

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Sybonae Acosta, Loretto Academy, El Paso, Texas
Alexis Aguirre, Tucson High Magnet School, Tucson, Arizona
Gabriella Alba, Warren Township HS, Gurnee, Illinois
Sonny Aldaco, Cotulla HS, Cotulla, Texas
Andres Aleman, Idea Quest College Prep, McAllen, Texas
Daniela Alfaro, Round Lake HS, Round Lake Beach, Illinois
Dena Antowan, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
Caroline Apodaca, Fossil Ridge HS, Fort Collins, Colorado
Lennon Aragon, Westwood HS, Round Rock, Texas
Allan Arias, All Hallows HS, Bronx, New York
Shriya Armstrong, Southwest HS, San Antonio, Texas

Avarie Ávila-Dickson, Regents School of Austin, Austin, Texas
Lluvia Ayala-Pound, Pittsford Sutherland HS, Pittsford, New York
Diego Balderas Rivas, Fossil Ridge HS, Fort Collins, Colorado
Lorelei Barboza, Goose Creek Memorial HS, Baytown, Texas
Kendra Bejarano, Fort Collins HS, Fort Collins, Colorado
Santiago Berkley, Anderson HS, Austin, Texas
Lorraine Betancourt, Palmview HS, Mission, Texas
Carlos Bollar, Lenape HS, Medford, NJ
Cassandra Brewer, Incarnate Word HS, San Antonio, Texas
Anna Brunnick, El Paso HS, El Paso, Texas
Destiny Calderon, Stony Point HS, Round Rock, Texas
Julia Calzada, Prepa Tec de Monterrey, Monterrey, Mexico
Maya Cantu, Intl. School of the Americas, San Antonio, Texas
Angel Carmenaty, Central Catholic, HS San Antonio, Texas
Vernice Casiano, IDEA Quest College Prep, Pharr, Texas
Barbara Castillo, Loretto Academy, El Paso, Texas
Nicole Castro, John F. Kennedy The American School of Querétaro, Querétaro, Mexico
Briana Chapa, La Joya HS, Palmview, Texas
Paul Contreras, Uplift Williams Prep, Dallas, Texas
AnaMarie Cordova, Loretto Academy, HS, El Paso, Texas
Nicholas Crezo, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
Avril Cruz, Cypress Falls HS, Houston, Texas
Rachel Davis, TMI-Episcopal, San Antonio, Texas
Elizandra De Leon, Austin HS, Austin, Texas
Emily De Leon, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
Joseph De Leon, Idea Quest College Prep, Edinburg, Texas
Elyseth DeLeon, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
Alexis Duenas, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
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Natasha Flores-Acton, Central HS, San Angelo, Texas
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Annalisa Garcia, Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, Austin, Texas
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Tania García-Jasso, Oratory Athenaeum for University Preparation, McAllen, Texas
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Luciano Gil-Garcia, All Hallows HS, Bronx, New York

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Ryan Gonzales, Central HS, Pueblo, Colorado
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Maxwell Gonzalez, Fordham Prep, Bronx, New York
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Sena Koneru, Incarnate Word HS, San Antonio, Texas
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Hector Lopez, Jesuit College Prep of Dallas, Dallas, Texas
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Kathryn Marquez, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
Renato Martinez, El Paso HS, El Paso, Texas
Isaac Martinez, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
Gavin Maxwell, Colleyville Heritage HS, Colleyville, Texas
Robert McGinn, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
Joseph Miron, All Hallows HS, Bronx, New York
David Molina, Conservatory Green HS, Denver, Colorado
Raul Montoya, Palmview HS, Mission, Texas
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Montserrat Nieto, St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Austin, Texas
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 Juliana Reyes, YES Prep West, Houston, Texas
 Iliana Rivera, Bowie HS, Austin, Texas
 Catalina Rivera, Oratory Athenaeum for University Prep, McAllen, Texas
 Fernando Rivera, American Military Academy, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico
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 Sofia Rodriguez, IDEA Pharr College Preparatory, Pharr, Texas
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2019 GREAT DEBATE CELE COHORT

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 Jared Aguilar, Highland Park HS, Highland Park, Illinois
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 Isabel Aldrete-McIntosh, Lake Highlands HS, Dallas, Texas
 Jacob Barrera, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Margarito Benavides, J.W. Nixon HS, Laredo, Texas
 Sophia Bollar, Lenape HS, Medford, New Jersey
 Emma Bucardo Rivera, Pompton Lakes HS, Pompton Lakes, New Jersey
 Lizandro Bustamante, YES Prep White Oak, Houston, Texas
 Mariana Camacho Pérez, ITESM CSF, Ciudad de México, Mexico
 Andrea Castaneda, Round Lake HS, Round Lake, Illinois
 Amanda Chapa, La Joya HS, La Joya, Texas
 Natalia Cisneros, Colegio Ignacio Zaragoza, Saltillo, Mexico
 Alexander Cruz, YES Prep West, Houston, Texas
 Reagan Davis, TMI-Episcopal, San Antonio, Texas
 Isaiah Davis, John Paul II HS, Plano, Texas
 Rommel De la Garza, Colegio Ignacio Zaragoza, Saltillo, Mexico
 Fanelysse de la Rosa, Notre Dame School of Manhattan, New York, New York
 Diego de la Torre, James B. Conant HS, Schaumburg, Illinois
 Marissa Del Bosque, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Catherine Diaz, Energy Institute HS, Houston, Texas
 Pablo Diaz, Harmony School of Advancement, Houston, Texas
 Jonathan Diaz, Energy Institute HS, Houston, Texas
 Kenneth Escobar, International Leadership of Texas Katy-Westpark HS, Houston, Texas
 Julian Estrada, Lockhart HS, Lockhart, Texas
 Elias Flores, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
 Deegan Flores, Palmer HS, Pueblo, Colorado
 Kalista Fong, El Paso High, El Paso, Texas
 Sofia Garavito, Instituto Lux, León, Mexico
 Christiana Garcia, Young Women's Leadership Acad., San Antonio, Texas
 Jocelyn Garcia, Cotulla HS, Cotulla, Texas
 Julieta Garza, AHSP/STEM, Penitas, Texas
 Robert Garza, Uplift Summit International Prep, Arlington, Texas
 Fiorela Gomez, Raymond and Tirza Martin HS, Laredo, Texas
 Julian Gomez, Saint Joseph Acad., Brownsville, Texas
 Maria Gómez, Instituto Lux, León, Mexico
 Jaxon Gonzales, Liberal Arts and Science Academy, Austin, Texas
 Israel Gonzales, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Maria Jose Gonzalez, Escuela Sierra Nevada, Cuajimalpa, Mexico
 Sergio Gonzalez, Medical Acad. School, Brownsville, Texas
 Diana Granados Guardiola, Colegio Ignacio Zaragoza, Saltillo, Mexico
 Simon Gross, Energy Institute HS, Houston, Texas
 Salvador Guadarrama, International Leadership of Texas Katy-Westpark HS, Houston, Texas
 Jose Maria Guajardo, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Valentina Hernandez, John Paul II HS, Plano, Texas
 Isabella Hernandez, John Paul II HS, Plano, Texas
 Isaiah Hernandez, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas

Malaki Hernandez, Judson HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Santiago Hernandez, John Paul II HS, Plano, Texas
 Fabiola Hinojos, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
 Sofia Homes, South Texas Academy of Medical Professions, Rancho Viejo, Texas
 Max Intebi, El Paso HS, El Paso, Texas
 Joshua Jaramillo, Academy of American Studies, North Bergen, New Jersey
 Izabela Jimenez, Round Lake HS, Round Lake, Illinois
 Zachary Joch, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Jake Kilbride, TMI Episcopal, San Antonio, Texas
 Madeline King, Science Academy of South Texas, Mercedes, Texas
 Olivia Landriscina, Catonsville HS, Catonsville, Maryland
 Carolyn Lanford, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
 Analisa Lona, Ewing Marion Kauffman School, Kansas City, Missouri
 Angelica Longoria Lopez, Early College HS, Brownsville, Texas
 Alex Lozano, Energy Institute HS, Houston, Texas
 Isabela MacClemmy, John F. Kennedy The American School of Queretaro, Queretaro, Mexico
 Dacia Marquez, Rio Rancho HS, Rio Rancho, New Mexico
 Emily Medina, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
 Christopher Medrano, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Reynaldo Medrano, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Megan Mendoza, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Liam Minerero, International Leadership of Texas Arlington-Grand Prairie HS, Grand Prairie, Texas
 Marcelo Molina, Cedar Ridge HS, Round Rock, Texas
 Sergio Monarrez, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
 Bruno Mondragón, Williams HS, Plano, Texas
 Faith Monsivais, El Paso HS, El Paso, Texas
 Stephania Montero, Cantu Early College/Martin HS, Laredo, Texas
 Vanessa Morales, Lake Forest HS, Lake Forest, Illinois
 Hizau Morales, Round Lake HS, Round Lake, Illinois
 Susana Moreno, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
 Christopher Munoz, Central Catholic, San Antonio, Texas
 Aydali Nevarez, Greeley West HS, Greeley, Colorado
 Jose Palacios, Colegio Ignacio Zaragoza, Ramos Arizpe, Mexico
 Nicole Parada, Rangeview HS, Aurora, Colorado
 Ariella Pequeno, IDEA Quest, Edinburg, Texas
 Isabella Perez, Brandeis HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Michael Plundo, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
 Fabricio Pons, Instituto Lux, Leon, Mexico
 Lucas Rael, Laguna Hills HS, Laguna Hills, California
 Diego Ramos, St. Thomas HS, Houston, Texas
 Oyuki Rangel, Greeley Central HS, Greeley, Colorado
 Laura Reilly-Sanchez, Health Careers HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Julian Reyna, Glenbard East HS, Lombard, Illinois
 Jacob Rincon, Coronado HS, El Paso, Texas
 Vanessa Rodriguez, Highland Park HS, Highland Park, Illinois
 Marco Rodriguez, IDEA Pharr College Prep, Pharr, Texas
 Jadrian Rodriguez, Cotulla HS, Cotulla, Texas
 Michael Rodriguez, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas

Elena Rojas, Waxahachie HS, Waxahachie, Texas
 Julian Romero-Moreno, Health Careers HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Sophie Rubio, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
 Juan Ruiz Maza Nava, Instituto Lux, Leon, Mexico
 Jesus Sanmiguel, Hillcrest HS, Dallas, Texas
 Gabriella Saucedo, Bishop Dunne Catholic HS, Dallas, Texas
 Geneveva Seidel, Cotulla HS, Cotulla, Texas
 Ariana Sifuentes, Eastwood Academy, Houston, Texas
 Jacqueline Silva, Lockhart HS, Lockhart, Texas
 Bryan Simmons, Stony Point, Round Rock, Texas
 Caleb Solorzano, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Lily Thorson, Ursuline Academy, Dallas, Texas
 Mikayla Trejo, Veterans Memorial HS, Brownsville, Texas
 Samuel Trejo, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Rianna Trevino, Hanna HS, Brownsville, Texas
 Jack Tusini, iSchool High at University Park, Cypress, Texas
 Marissa Valdez, Alamo Heights HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Ana Vallarta Marcos, Colegio Ignacio Zaragoza, Saltillo, Mexico
 CeAna Vasquez, Young Women's Leadership Academy, San Antonio, Texas
 Elver Vicente, Greeley West HS, Greeley, Colorado
 Dante Villarreal, Cathedral HS, El Paso, Texas
 Yleanna Villarreal, Mathis HS, Mathis, Texas
 Robert Violante, Liberty HS, Frisco Texas
 Avery Westbrook, El Paso HS, El Paso, Texas
 Gloria Wickham, Bishop Dunne Catholic School, Dallas, Texas
 Annel-Fernanda Wipachit, Hoffman Estates HS, Hoffman Estates, Illinois
 Danielle Worthington, Sharyland HS, Mission, Texas
 Albert Wylie, Central Catholic HS, San Antonio, Texas
 Vincent Yang, Radford School, El Paso, Texas
 Alejandro Zamudio, Stony Point, Round Rock, Texas
 Isabella Zapata, Palmview HS, Mission, Texas
 Maizy Zenger, W.B. Ray HS, Corpus Christi, Texas

THANKS TO OUR COLLEGIATE SEMINAR GUESTS

The collegiate seminar was developed for NHlers who wish to serve as future NHI board members, SOSs, education directors, onsite directors, and other NHI leadership capacities.

Sofia Hernandez, Wheaton College, Chicago, Illinois
 Reilly Garcia, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas
 Jessica Naranjo, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas
 Gizehv Ramirez, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas
 Isabella Sada, Austin College, Sherman, Texas
 Paolina Sada-Nieto, Schreiner University, Kerrville, Texas

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Dear Alumni and Supporters,

I cannot express our gratitude for your ongoing support in the community throughout the years, and especially during Celebracion! It's been a joy to work with NHI board members, community members, and so many individuals who give of their time to make Celebracion possible for our students.

Many may not know this, but Celebracion is an event where every single person serving in staff roles donates their time to be part of it. This means that the college mentors and the professionals acting as Education Directors and trainers are all volunteering their time! Why do they dedicate time to Cele and take time away from their busy lives and families to be with you for four days? One simple reason: They believe in YOU and they want to be part of your success.

We are so happy that that you have chosen to join us for this wonderful and special occasion. This program is a keepsake for each of you. Why? Because it honors our founders, Ernesto Nieto and Gloria de Leon, who have given 40 years of their lives to NHI. Alongside them, we will honor some of the first families who helped NHI in its early years. The individuals you will meet and interact with during Celebracion are legendary!



NHI COLLEGE REGISTER



ADELPHI UNIVERSITY
 AMHERST COLLEGE
 ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY - CAMPUS QUERÉTARO
 AUGUSTANA COLLEGE
 AUSTIN COLLEGE
 BATES COLLEGE
 BAYLOR UNIVERSITY
 BENEDICTINE COLLEGE
 CABRINI UNIVERSITY
 CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
 COLBY COLLEGE
 COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY
 COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY - FT. COLLINS
 COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY - PUEBLO
 CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY TEXAS
 EARLHAM COLLEGE
 ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE
 FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
 GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
 GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
 IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

MAKE SCHOOL
 MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
 NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
 NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
 OBERLIN COLLEGE
 OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY
 PURDUE UNIVERSITY
 RHODES COLLEGE
 SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY
 SCHREINER UNIVERSITY
 SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
 ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY
 ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
 SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - CORPUS CHRISTI
 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - SAN ANTONIO
 TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
 TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
 THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - RIO GRANDE VALLEY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
 TRINITY COLLEGE
 TRINITY UNIVERSITY
 UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
 UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY
 UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
 UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
 UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
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