

## Latino Political Empowerment: Are we there yet?

By: Roberto Haro, Ph.D.

By now, demographic data regarding the population increases within the Latino communities are known to most major policy makers and leaders in this country. However, in spite of steady Latino population increases, we see only sporadic examples of constructive efforts to address this phenomenon. This lethargy to craft economic, social and political policy that incorporates the growing presence of Latinos may be the result of what Professor Leo Estrada at UCLA refers to as "demographic denial." The most recent U.S. Census Bureau population estimates indicate that there are almost 31 million Latinos in the 50 United States. The African-American population, by comparison, is about 32.8 million. However, if one adds the Puerto Ricans living on the Island (more than 3 million) to the Latino count, Latinos are the largest minority in this country.

It is interesting to note that two major groups in this country have considered the numerical increases in the Latino population--the retail sector and organized political parties. The lower end of the market retail chains and department stores are very busy targeting sales to the Latino community. They're hiring more Latino/a sales clerks, especially if they possess bilingual skills. The same is true for major retail food chains and supermarkets. Business people in areas experiencing Latino population increases understand the need to tailor goods and services and marketing strategies to their actual and potential clientele.

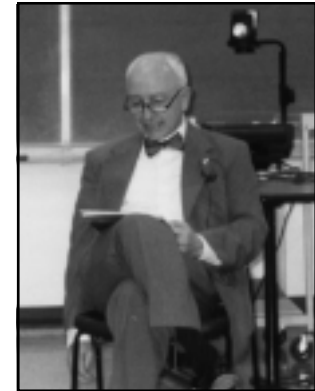
Another group concerned with the growing Latino presence are organized political parties. Researchers have begun exploring different facets of Latino participation in the political process. Information from the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) reveal a growing number of Latino/as serving in elected offices at the local and regional levels. Mainly, Latinos were being elected to school boards and city councils, with a smaller but significant number added to the state legislature

during the last five years. At the same time, the number of new naturalized citizens in California and Texas was increasing.

What have we learned in the last few years regarding Latino political participation in California? First, restrictive measures passed by the voters, such as Prop. 187 (anti-immigrant services), Prop. 209 (anti-affirmative action), and Prop. 227 (anti-bilingual education) sent a chilling message to Latino non-citizens that their benefits and lifestyles would be compromised with the passage of these initiatives. Pete Wilson, former governor of California, engaged in a vitriolic immigrant-bashing campaign that soon found receptive ears in other parts of this country, and in a Republican Congress. Major changes resulted in our system of welfare, and in the provision of services to immigrants. Too many immigrants were targeted for exclusion for social service safety nets in California and elsewhere. As a result, thousands of Latinos and other immigrants began the process to become U.S. Citizens. So great was the volume of applications to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) offices in California that in some locations there was over an 18-month waiting period just to process the paperwork! This delay reflected a priority within the INS for enforcement (task of the Border Patrol) rather than expedite naturalization proceedings.

Those who do become U.S. Citizens are becoming more of a political force. The Latino vote in the U.S. in 1998 increased from five percent to slightly more than 6 percent of the total vote. No other group in the U.S. had an increase in national voting strength. The projections at the moment are that by the year 2000, Latinos will be almost 9 percent of the total U.S. Voters.

Let us look closely at the 31 million Latinos in this country so that we have some understanding of the dynamics in our communities. First, Latinos are a very young populations with a high fertility rate. The median age for Latinos is 26.5 years. This compares to 38 for Anglos, 30 for African-Americans



*Dr. Roberto Haro*

and 32 for Asians. Latinos have, on average, 3.2 children per family, Anglos 1.4 per family, African-Americans 2.1 and Asians 1.8 per family. What this indicates is a slowing in the number of African American children being born as a percentage of the populations. Asians, particularly in the second and third generations, begin to parallel the birth rate patterns of Anglos. So, the relatively young age of Latinos, with large numbers of women represented in the most fertile years of their lives, ensures a 10-15 year population increase pattern for our communities. Now we need to consider the economic status and educational attainment of Latinos.

Latinos, for the most part, are located in the mid to lower strata of the income groups in this country. Far too many are living at or below the poverty line (\$15,000 per year). Latinos are over-represented in inner city schools, and in rural schools, particularly in Southwest (AZ, CA, CO, NM, TX). Their school dropout rate is among the highest in the nation. And for the major ethnic/racial groups, it is  
*see Haro, p. 3*

## National Advisory Panel

Mr. Eddie Basha  
Member, AZ Board of Regents  
CEO and Pres., Bashes, Inc.  
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Executive Director Western  
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The College Board  
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Ms. Elvira Reyna  
TX State Representative  
Austin, TX

Ms. Belén Robles  
National President, LULAC  
El Paso, TX

Mr. Armando Ruiz  
Saddleback College  
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Ms. Loretta Sanchez  
U.S. Representative  
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Samuel Vigil  
NM State Representative  
Sante Fe, NM

# From the Executive Director



Leonard A. Valverde

Since the start of the ninety's decade, in education, the concept and practice of partnership has become a way of working. In the original creation of HBLI, we realized that Hispanic educators had to work with various groups both in and out of education, if the condition of education for Hispanics was going to improve. Because of the idea of partnerships, we formed a national advisory panel that brought together leaders of various government, business, professional organizations and education institutions.

Since the start of this year, we have undertaken efforts to extend HBLI's cooperative connections, particularly with projects that are funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Let me share two examples. In January, in San Antonio, Texas, at the IDRA headquarters, I met with **Dr. Abelardo Villarreal** and **Linda Cantu**, who are heading up *Project Alianza*. Funded by the Kellogg Foundation, *Project Alianza* is to increase the number of bilingual teachers (Spanish/English) by recruiting "normalistas," i.e., Mexicans who received their teacher training in Mexico and have since migrated to the United States. Besides providing more bilingual teachers, Project Alianza will help to change the curriculum of bilingual teacher preparation programs in the participating universities. ASU is participating by conducting research. In February at the CAFE meeting in Los Angeles, I met with the participating institutional members to discuss how HBLI and Project Alianza would work together, given that we have many commonalities.

The second example took place March 26 and 27 at ASU. For many years, the Kellogg Foundation has been providing support for persons to earn a doctorate at the University of Texas at Austin in the Community College Leadership Preparation Program. Kellogg fellows in the ASU HBLI program and the UT CCLP had a joint leadership session that featured presentations by UT endowed chair and Director of CCLP **John E. Roueche**, **Dr. Suanne Roueche**, ASU Professor **Howard L. Simmons** on topics of National Status of Remediation, New Perspectives on Accreditation, and Transforming the Higher Education Campus to be Multicultural.

As HBLI continues to move forward on its mission, we anticipate networking more and establishing lasting partnerships.

Adelante.

## 1999 HBLI CALENDAR

Month	Date	Event	Location
February	11	Platica Speaker Hector Galan	NMSU
	19	Platica Speaker Francisco Marmolejo	ASU
	25-27	University of Arizona, CONAHEC 4th School Board Leadership Development Workshop	SWTSU
March	7-8	Doctoral Fellowship Interviews for UTPA	UTPA
	12	Platica Speaker Dr. Consuelo Nieto	ASU
	26-27	Long Beach State University Joint Seminar of ASU and UT Kellogg fellows	ASU
April	9	Platica Speaker Cuca Robeldo, IDRA	NMSU
	15	Deadline for Doctoral Fellowship Applications to University of California Riverside	
	30	Platica Speaker Alicia Paredes Scribner	ASU
		Southwest Texas State University	

*Haro, cont'd from p. 1*

the highest. As far as educational attainment is concerned, consider the following: more than 59% of Anglo students attend some college within four years of graduation, compared with 47% of African-Americans, and 45% of Latinos. Remember that almost 70% of Latinos enroll in 2-year institutions, and less than 17% transfer to a 4-year institution. Only about 11% of Latino 22 year-olds attain a bachelor's degree. This rate is four-fifths of that for African-Americans and less than half that for Anglos. The limited educational attainment of Latinos poses serious economic, social and political challenges for our society. Let us turn our attention to the political process, and try to understand what factors affect Latino voting strength, and the possible influence our community might have on state and national politics.

Let's assume that there are 31 million Latinos living in the 50 states. Some approximations are in order here for this analysis. Half of the Latino population is 25 years of age or younger. In that age spread (0-25) almost 12 million (80%) are less than 18 years old and not eligible to vote. We also know that there are about 7 million Latino immigrants who are not naturalized. Moreover, there are about 3 million Latinos currently incarcerated or convicted of a felony who are unable to vote. And finally, almost 40% of Latinos move their primary residence every 18 months. Once you do the math, only 6 million Latino voters are left. These numbers tell us that Latino voting strength has potential, but that the hemorrhaging of Latino voters is a very serious obstacle to making our voices known at the ballot box.

It is important to consider the potential that Latinos offer within different political arenas. The large and growing cohort of Latinos under 18 years of age represent a potentially increasing block of voters in the very near future. Most informed demographers estimate that there may be as many as 900,000 new eligible Latino voters available for the November 2000 elections. Moreover, most of these new voters will be located in three states--Arizona, California and Texas. So, Latinos in the year 2000 may be able to significantly influence the Presidential election.

We must continue to stress education and participation in the political process for all Latinos in order to impress upon decision-makers the changes underway in our society and the contributions of Latinos.



Fifteen school board members from Texas, California, and Arizona, as well as four first-year HBLI fellows, participated in the fourth Board Leadership Development Seminar held in San Marcos, TX on the campus of Southwest Texas State University. Participants heard several top-notch presentations, including **Jimmy Vasquez** (Educ. Service Center, Region 19), **Blandina Cardenas Ramirez** (UTSA), Representative **Leticia van de Putte** (TX) and others. The intended purpose of the seminar, like the previous three, is to inform Hispanic board members of pertinent issues of board leadership practice and to allow fellows an opportunity to network with school, college, and university board members from the Southwest.



First-year HBLI Fellows attending the San Marcos Board Leadership Training were, L to R, **Dolores Gross-Delgado** (NMSU), **Gloria Armendáriz** (ASU), **Miranda L. López** (ASU), and **Rachel Ortiz** (NMSU).

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# Introducing ASU, NMSU



**Eugenio Arene (ASU)**

**Hometown:** San Salvador, El Salvador

**Education:** B.A., Economics, National University of Nicaragua, M.A., Political Science, Southwest Texas State University

**Work Experience:** Eugenio has worked on organizational development and public policy issues for the UT Austin Hogg Foundation and has been a consultant on bilingual education for the Texas Education Agency.

**Career Goals:** Serve as an advocate/representative for improving the educational environment and structure for Hispanics.

**Dissertation Topic:** Immigration and Schooling in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area



**Carlos Nevarez (ASU)**

**Hometown:** Modesto, CA

**Education:** B.A., Sociology and Chicano Studies, California State University at Fresno, M.A., Counseling, Arizona State University

**Work Experience:** Carlos has worked in the mental health field as a therapist and for Arizona State University as a recruitment/retention specialist. He is currently a part-time instructor at ASU.

**Career Goals:** Faculty position at a major university or in public policy for a Latino advocacy organization.

**Dissertation Topic:** Examining Higher Education Institutional Strategies that Contribute to the Graduation Rates for Hispanic Students.



**Esiquio R. Uballe (ASU)**

**Hometown:** Austin, TX

**Education:** B.A., Political Science, University of Michigan, M.A., Human Services, St. Edwards's University

**Work Experience:** Esiquio has experience in higher education as federal programs director at SWTSU and previous experience as an admissions counselor, court bailiff, and as a dispute resolution mediator.

**Career Goals:** Executive director of an educational institute

**Dissertation Topic:** Hispanic Access to Higher Education: A Middle Class Phenomenon



**Janelle Taylor-García (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Albuquerque, NM

**Education:** B.S., Elementary Education, University of New Mexico, M.A., Elementary Education/Bilingual-Multicultural Emphasis, University of New Mexico

**Work Experience:** Janelle's experience has been primarily in the classroom, beginning as a 1st grade teacher in Los Lunas, NM then as bilingual resource teacher for the same district. She also has been involved in political campaigns as campaign consultant/manager.

**Career Goals:** Aspires to superintendent position; plans on active state political involvement as elected official

**Dissertation Topic:** Hispanic Female Public School Administrators in New Mexico



**Luis I. "Nacho" Quiñones (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Bayard, NM

**Education:** B.A., Journalism, New Mexico State University, M.A., Teaching, Western New Mexico University

**Work Experience:** Nacho was a Chicano Studies, English, Creative Writing, and Mariachi teacher at Cobre High School in Bayard. Previously, he was a sports broadcaster for KOAT-TV in Albuquerque and co-founder/editor of a Raza community newspaper in Silver City, NM.

**Dissertation Topic:** New Mexico School Board Members' Views about Hispanic Education Issues

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# Second-Year Doctoral Fellows



**Bonavita Quinto (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Taos, NM

**Education:** B.A., Communicative Disorders and Spanish, M.A., Spanish, University of New Mexico

**Work Experience:** Bonavita was previously an instructor at the College of the Sequoias (CA) for eight years, and has also been a public school teacher and assistant director of the Summer Language Institute in Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico.

**Career Goals:** Serve as a community college administrator, ultimately as vice-president or president

**Dissertation Topic:** Factors Influencing the Career Enhancement of Hispanic Women Community College Administrators along U.S.-Mexico Border States.



**Fernando Z. Quiz (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Del Rio, TX

**Education:** B.B.A., Southwest Texas State University, M.A., Education Administration, Sul Ross State University

**Work Experience:** Fernando has been a bilingual school teacher in both the Sharyland (TX) and Del Rio (TX) school districts. Prior to that, he was general manager of Wyatt's Cafe for a number of years.

**Career Goals:** To obtain an educational administrative position

**Dissertation Topic:** Leadership Styles of Public School Principals along the Texas-Mexico Border as Perceived by School Superintendents



**Miriam Muñiz Quiz (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Del Rio, TX

**Education:** B.S., Pan American University, M.Ed., Sul Ross State University

**Work Experience:** Miriam has been a classroom teacher and curriculum technology specialist, as well as an educational consultant for software companies.

**Career Goals:** To obtain an educational administrative leadership position

**Dissertation Topic:** Profile of School Board Members Along the Texas-Mexico Border



**Michelle R. Valverde (NMSU)**

**Hometown:** Deming, NM

**Education:** B.A., Sociology, University of Arizona; M.S.W., Management and Planning, University of California-Berkeley.

**Work Experience:** Coalition building, border health planning, youth organization coordination and workshop facilitation.

**Career Goals:** To become a leader in the movement to make our public schools more responsive and effective for all children.

**Dissertation Topic:** Attendance Policy in New Mexico and Texas and Interaction with Student Count



# UC Riverside Joins HBLI Consortium

The University of California at Riverside recently became the seventh member of the HBLI family when they joined the consortium. UC Riverside will admit seven new HBLI fellows by Fall 1999 in the doctoral program in Educational Administration and Policy. Coordinating the program will be **Dr. Flora Ida Ortiz**, Professor in the School of Education.

The University of California-Riverside was founded in 1907 as the Citrus Experiment and became a general University of California campus in 1959. UCR is one of nine campuses of the University of California. Located in the Inland Empire of Southern California, the 1,200-acre campus lies at the foot of Box Springs Mountain in Riverside, a city of about 250,000 people. UCR enrolls some 9,130 undergraduates and 1,472 graduate students. Hispanics comprise 21% of the undergraduate enrollment.

The doctoral program is designed to prepare educational leaders for a variety of professional and scholarly roles. The program combines attention to problems of professional practice with a commitment to the use of sophisticated methods of inquiry and analysis. Candidates will develop a thorough understanding of the cultural, social, political and economic forces shaping the history and operations of public education. In addition, they will develop the intellectual foundations and skills of inquiry and analysis needed to evaluate school operations and design and implement needed improvements.

**Dr. Robert Calfee**, Dean, of the School of Education, said, "UCR is moving along with plans to expand out doctoral programs--for research, for practice, and for leadership. Given the needs in our region for leaders who reflect our ethnic diversity, the HBLI Fellowships are a godsend; they will allow us to make a giant step in the Inland Empire."

Dr. Ortiz added, "My colleagues and I in the School of Education look forward to participating in educational experiences which will not only benefit the HBLI Fellows, but will enrich our School's community."

Applications for the seven doctoral fellowship slots have been received (February 28, 1999 was the deadline). Coordinating Council members will likely convene in April to begin interviewing candidates for the seven HBLI fellow slots. Each fellow will receive a stipend of \$20,000 per year (for three years) from the Hispanic Border Leadership Institute in order to pursue full-time doctoral studies.



*Campus scene at University of California at Riverside*

**Dr. Leonard Valverde**, Executive Director of HBLI, remarked that having a west coast consortium partner is a tremendous asset for the Kellogg-funded HBLI program.

"We are extremely pleased to have UC Riverside, an institution with such outstanding programs and reputation, join the HBLI consortium. Given the tremendous demographic shifts in California, particularly the growth of the Latino population, it is indeed appropriate that HBLI will provide fellowships to seven new doctoral students who will be our educational leaders of the near future in California and elsewhere."

For more information about the doctoral program or HBLI fellowships at UC Riverside, call (909) 787-2329.

# Platicas Feature Distinguished Speakers

The Spring 1999 Platica speaker series at Arizona State University and New Mexico State University has featured several noted individuals from academia, the media, and the non-profit sector.

**Dr. Roberto Haro**, executive director of the Cesar Chavez Institute for Public Policy at San Francisco State University, was the January Platica speaker at ASU. For a synopsis of his presentation, see the article on Latino political empowerment on page 1 of this issue.

NMSU brought nationally recognized documentarian **Hector Galán** to Las Cruces as their February speaker. Galan has been involved in television for over twenty years, beginning as a camera operator in his hometown of San Angelo, TX. He has since been involved in every aspect of television production, now contributing programs to national networks. Some of his works include, *Songs of the homeland*, *Go Back to Mexico!*, *Los Mineros*, *Power, Politics and Latinos*, and more. Since reaching the national level, he has worked non-stop producing and directing a variety of documentaries and specials, earning him numerous awards. In 1996, he was a guest at the White House where his most recent documentary, *Chicano! History of the Mexican-American Civil Rights Movement*, was screened. His talk at NMSU was well-received by the campus and community.

**Dr. Francisco Marmolejo**, executive director of CONAHEC, the Consortium on North American Higher Education Collaboration, gave an enlightening presentation as ASU's February Platica speaker. He spoke on Mexico's educational system, and presented an informative overview of the historical, political and social developments that impacted the Mexican school system. He spoke of that country's move to decentralize education, that is, to impart responsibility back to the states and away from the federal government. Several issues that are also hot topics in the U.S., such as access, quality, accountability, and school funding, were discussed with respect to Mexico's educational system.

Yet to come at ASU and NMSU are two other Platica speakers. **Dr. Consuelo Nieto**, professor at Long Beach State University, will speak on "The Hispanic Woman's Struggle: A Perspective" on March 12 at ASU.

**Dr. Cuca Robledo Montecel**, executive director of IDRA, the Intercultural Development Research Association, will address New Mexico State University's campus community on April 9 on the issue of school vouchers. It promises to be an interesting session.



*Civil rights activist Dolores Huerta (center front) spoke at NMSU in December.*



*Film producer/documentarian Hector Galán, NMSU Platica speaker.*



*Francisco Marmolejo of CONAHEC addressed ASU in February.*



*Dr. Roberto Haro lunches with ASU faculty after his Platica presentation in January.*

### Coordinating Council

Dr. Raul Cárdenas, President  
Paradise Valley Comm. College

Dr. Jaime Chahin, V.P.  
Southwest Texas State University

Dr. Enrique Solís, President  
Palo Alto College

Dr. Leonard A. Valverde, Exec. Dir.  
HBLI & Professor ASU

### HBLI Member Institutions

Arizona State University  
New Mexico State University  
Paradise Valley Community College  
Palo Alto College  
Southwest Texas University  
University of California at Riverside  
University of Texas at Pan American



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