



# LULACnews

SUMMER 2023

**Domingo Garcia**  
*National President*

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Our Company Proudly Salutes LULAC  
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# LULACnews

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# WELCOME TO LULAC NEWS

## FROM DOMINGO GARCIA, LULAC NATIONAL PRESIDENT!

Dear LULAC *familia*, friends, and allies,

With immense joy and enthusiasm, I present the 2023 LULAC NEWS Summer issue and welcome you *con un abrazo* to the 2023 LULAC Convention and Exposition, a truly historic event in the beautiful city of Albuquerque. This vibrant city has been a close friend of LULAC for many years, and it is here that we gather to celebrate our mutual histories, shaped by the countless journeys of Latinos crisscrossing the Americas over nearly a century.

Albuquerque and the state of New Mexico have long been important epicenters for Latinos and indigenous peoples, their stories intricately woven into the fabric of our nation's history. For over 300 years, this land has witnessed a rich tapestry of cultures, from breathtaking landscapes to thunderous storms and glorious skies that ignite our people's imaginations. As we visit and spend time in this natural beauty, we are reminded of our deep connections to the land and the strength it imbues in our communities.

This event holds particular significance, as it marks the first national LULAC convention and exposition on the mainland since the pandemic swept across our nation. The timing could not be more critical. In these challenging times, we face mounting voter suppression, new anti-immigrant legislation in states like Texas and Florida, and the pressing impact of climate change on our nation's Latino workforce. Additionally, the changing legal landscape for women's health affects their well-being, forcing some to travel long distances for care. Furthermore, our schools are witnessing an alarming trend of infringement, with banned books, illegal LGBTQ+ education, and districts being seized by elected and appointed individuals with far-right agendas.

LULAC, now in its 94th year, remains steadfast in its commitment to continue the struggle for social justice. Our convention theme, "*Saber es Poder/Knowledge is Power*," is a powerful reminder of our collective responsibility to engage, inform, and mobilize LULAC members, allies, and community stakeholders. Through knowledge, we equip ourselves for the battles being waged now and those that lie ahead. We can and will prevail together, just as we have for nearly a century.

As we convene in Albuquerque and you read the stories of LULAC's work from Florida to Washington State, the Northeast to California, and on the island of Puerto Rico, let us celebrate our unity and resilience, drawing inspiration from the incredible legacy of LULAC and the unwavering dedication of its members and supporters. We can harness the power of knowledge to build a better future for all, to fight for justice, equity, and the preservation of our rich heritage. Together, we will overcome the challenges that lie before us, for the strength of our community knows no bounds.

*¡Hasta La Victoria!*

Domingo García  
LULAC National President



# LULAC AT GROUND ZERO: ADDRESSING THE BORDER IMMIGRATION CRISIS AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

At the heart of the escalating immigration crisis along the U.S.-Mexico border stands the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), tirelessly working to address the challenges faced by migrants seeking entry into the United States. As the number of asylum seekers reaches historic levels and the asylum system struggles to cope, LULAC finds itself at ground zero, determined to shed light on the severity of the crisis. By examining key statistics and highlighting the humanitarian implications, LULAC seeks to drive comprehensive immigration reform and advocate for change plus a solution based on shared economic interests.

In May, Domingo Garcia, LULAC national president; Lydia Guzman, LULAC national immigration chair; and Ray Mancera, LULAC national parliamentarian, stood within sight of one of the nation's busiest border crossings at El Paso-Juarez. They were there to witness the last 24 hours before the end of the

enforcement of Title 42. This policy gave U.S. Customs and Border Enforcement the power to turn away migrants seeking to apply for asylum. A law passed by Congress in 1893 to prevent the spread of cholera was the basis used to create Title 42. During the Trump Administration, this law led to 2.2 million interceptions by border agents of persons trying to cross into the USA. However, it also allowed 1.1 million migrants to enter the country on 'parole' while awaiting processing their asylum applications.

As of the end of 2022, nearly 800,000 asylum cases were pending in immigration courts, with an average processing time exceeding four years.

**As of the end of 2022, nearly 800,000 asylum cases were pending in immigration courts, with an average processing time exceeding four years.**

The overwhelming influx of migrants has placed immense strain on the U.S. asylum system, initially designed for individuals claiming to be fleeing danger. The system's ability to handle mass migration is severely overloaded. There are extensive backlogs and delays in processing asylum cases. In the fiscal year 2022, fewer than half of the applicants (22,311) were granted asylum; over 26,000 were denied, and immigration authorities say many of those who were supposed to be returned to their countries of origin stayed in the country without documents,

## **LULAC's Role and the Escalating Crisis:**

LULAC's role at the forefront of the border immigration crisis is essential in navigating the complex landscape and advocating for comprehensive solutions. Lydia Guzman, an influential advocate and immigration spokesperson for LULAC, stresses the situation's urgency. "We are witnessing an unprecedented surge in

migration, and we must address the humanitarian crisis unfolding at the U.S.-Mexico border,” Guzman states.

### **Migration Figures and Humanitarian Crisis:**

The consequence of this surge is overwhelming the system’s capacity and rippling far beyond the border. Major cities, such as New York City, have shouldered the responsibility of accommodating thousands of asylum seekers. Mayor Eric Adams says that over the past year, more than 57,000 asylum seekers have arrived in New York seeking a new place to live. Since they cannot work legally, public shelters are their only safe refuge, and Mayor Adams says New York is beyond capacity. The city has converted 103 hotels into emergency shelters, and more than 14,000 migrant children are now attending public schools. Mayor Adams reports an added \$4.3 billion in social services costs forcing the city to cut in other essential areas.



### **The Humanitarian Crisis on the Mexican Side:**

The effects of the surge in migration are being felt on the Mexican side of the border. Over 20,000 migrants lived in tent cities amid critical and often unsanitary conditions. Also, human rights organizations report Mexican drug cartels for violence and human trafficking often target migrants. The sheer danger the migrants face while in detention was made clear last March 27 when a fire broke out in a facility in Juarez, Mexico. Investigators said detention officials watched as 40 migrants perished, trapped and unable to escape after setting fire to mattresses in protest.

When discussing the outlook for immigration reform in the near term, Guzman acknowledges the complex political landscape. “Immigration reform has long been a contentious issue, but there is a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive and compassionate solutions,” she says.

While the path to reform may be challenging, Guzman remains hopeful. She points to recent bipartisan efforts and public sentiment in support of immigration reform as positive signs. “There is a growing realization that we need to address the root causes of migration, create more legal pathways, and provide a fair and efficient asylum process,” Guzman emphasizes.

### **A Call for a Latino Coalition:**

LULAC held a historic border summit in Laredo, Texas, in May to discuss the creation of an immigration coalition specifically focused on the U.S.-Mexico region. Guzman recognizes the power of unity and emphasizes the

importance of a solid Latino alliance in shaping immigration reform. “A Latino coalition can serve as a powerful force for change, amplifying our collective voice and advocating for policies that uplift our community,” she asserts.



***A Latino coalition can serve as a powerful force for change, amplifying our collective voice...***

Guzman envisions a coalition that brings diverse organizations, community leaders, and individuals together to collaborate and advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. By sharing resources, expertise, and support, a Latino coalition can effectively push for equitable policies addressing current challenges and working towards a fair and just immigration system.

### **Bright Spots Amidst Challenges:**

Despite the myriad challenges, Guzman remains optimistic and highlights bright spots in the fight for immigration reform. She points to the resilience and courage immigrant communities display as a source of inspiration. “The stories of strength and determination from immigrants who contribute to our society are a testament to the potential and promise that exists within our diverse nation,” Guzman shares.



Guzman also acknowledges the efforts of organizations, individuals, and lawmakers actively working towards progressive immigration policies. These dedicated advocates and allies are vital in pushing for change and creating a more inclusive society.

### **The State of Affairs in Texas and Florida:**

When discussing the state of affairs in Texas and Florida, two states deeply impacted by immigration, Guzman underscores the need for nuanced approaches to immigration reform. “Texas and Florida are at the forefront of immigration issues, and it is crucial to address the unique challenges Latinos face living or visiting these states,” she emphasizes.

Guzman explains that both states use the high border crossings and the subsequent strain on resources as a pretext for some of the most oppressive legislation passed recently. However, she highlights the potential for positive change by engaging local communities, partnering with grassroots organizations, and advocating for equitable policies that respect the rights and dignity of all individuals.

### **Challenges in the Asylum System:**

LULAC has long been on the frontline of the fight for social justice, civil rights, and immigration reform. As the organization looks to the future, it remains committed to its mission of empowering and advancing the Latino community. Guzman explains, “LULAC’s role going forward is to continue advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, supporting asylum seekers, and protecting the rights of immigrants.”

By leveraging its extensive network and resources, LULAC aims to amplify the voices of those affected by the broken immigration system. Through partnerships with other organizations, community outreach, and legal support services, LULAC provides a platform for immigrants to share their stories and advocate for change.

### **Conclusion:**

The statistics presented offer a sobering glimpse into the escalating crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border. As the number of migrants seeking asylum continues to rise and the asylum system grapples with extensive backlogs, stakeholders must come together and work towards comprehensive solutions that address the root causes of migration

while ensuring a fair and efficient process for asylum seekers.

LULAC, alongside advocates like Lydia Guzman, remains dedicated to shedding light on the severity of the crisis, advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, and supporting migrants throughout their journey. By expanding awareness, fostering dialogue, and driving change, LULAC seeks to create a more compassionate and just system that upholds the rights and dignity of all individuals involved.

“The current immigration challenges demand our attention and action. We must address the humanitarian crisis at the border, the backlog in immigration courts, and the barriers to legal pathways for migrants,” Guzman asserts.

“

***The current immigration challenges demand our attention and action.***

# LULAC ACHIEVES HISTORIC VICTORY FOR LATINO VOTING RIGHTS IN WASHINGTON STATE



In a landmark decision, the Washington Supreme Court has dismissed an appeal challenging the constitutionality of the Washington State Voting Rights Act in a lawsuit concerning Latino voting rights against Franklin County. The court's ruling, which came only a month after the oral arguments were heard, firmly establishes the protections afforded by the act.

James Gimenez, an intervenor in the case, filed the appeal, contending that the Washington State Voting Rights Act only safeguards select racial groups, thereby violating the 14th Amendment and the equal protection guarantees of the U.S. Constitution. However, the court swiftly rejected this argument, citing an erroneous interpretation of the act's definition of a protected class.

Edwardo Morfin, one of the attorneys representing the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the Latino voters who initiated the lawsuit against Franklin County, expressed his satisfaction with the court's decision. "It reaffirmed that the Washington State Voting Rights Act is constitutional, and it's here to rectify past injustices," stated Morfin.

According to the court's opinion, the plain language of Washington's

Voting Rights Act safeguards all voters in the state from discrimination based on race, color, and language minority group. Moreover, the court affirmed that the plaintiffs have standing to pursue their claims, and the act is valid and constitutional.

The decision's actual language stated: "Gimenez's arguments cannot succeed because his reading of the statute is incorrect. The WVRA protects all Washington voters from discrimination on the basis of race, color, and language minority group. On its face, the WVRA does not require race-based favoritism in local electoral systems, nor does it trigger strict scrutiny by granting special privileges, abridging voting rights, or otherwise classifying voters on the basis of race. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs have standing and that the WVRA is valid and constitutional on its face." Further, the court ruled, "We reject Gimenez's interpretation of the WVRA. The plain language of the statute and basic principles of statutory interpretation show that the WVRA protects all Washington voters from discrimination on the basis of race, color, and language minority group. Therefore, the plaintiffs in this case have standing

and the WVRA has not been repealed by implication."

In a resounding victory for LULAC and the Latino community, the Washington Supreme Court upheld the trial court's ruling, awarding attorney fees and costs to the plaintiffs while remanding the calculation of fees incurred at the trial court to be determined.

Joel Ard, the attorney representing Gimenez, had argued during the oral arguments that minority groups can only file lawsuits if they constitute less than half of the local population. "Here, Hispanics are a majority in Franklin County," asserted Ard at the time. He also contended that the term "race" lacks a clear definition in federal law and in the official judicial interpretations of the Federal Voting Rights Act and the Washington Voting Rights Act.

Responding to the court's decision, the Washington State LULAC state director Gabriel Portugal expressed his elation, saying, "We have prevailed, and the Washington State Supreme Court decision is out." Portugal further added, "After more than two years of litigation, we



can take a moment and celebrate. Basically, the appeal to dismiss our claim was found baseless and incorrect.”

Portugal went on to express gratitude for the support received from the state of Washington, particularly for the passage of the 2018 Washington Voter Rights Act (WVRA) that bolstered their efforts. He also acknowledged the diligent work of the UCLA Voting Rights Project, led by

Chad W. Dunn and Sonni Wankin.

“With this victory, LULAC now has more time to focus on two other ongoing litigations: the Benton, Chelan, and Yakima counties mismatching signature case and the Washington State Commission redistricting case involving the 15th Legislative District,” said Portugal. He concluded by extending his thanks to President Garcia and LULAC for their unwavering

support in their mission to enhance political representation for the Latino community in the State of Washington. “We are proud and grateful to be part of a wonderful organization that continues to advocate for 62 million Latinos in the United States and Puerto Rico. Each of us is LULAC, and together, we have a powerful and effective voice,” he said.

## The History of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Source: National Archives)

This act was signed into law on August 6, 1965, by President Lyndon Johnson. It outlawed the discriminatory voting practices adopted in many southern states after the Civil War, including literacy tests as a prerequisite to voting.

This “act to enforce the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution” was signed into law 95 years after the Amendment was ratified. In those years, African Americans in the South faced tremendous obstacles to voting, including poll taxes, literacy tests, and other bureaucratic restrictions to deny them the right to vote. They also risked harassment, intimidation, economic reprisals, and physical violence when they tried to register or vote. As a result, African American voter registration was limited, along with political power.

In 1964, numerous peaceful demonstrations were organized by Civil Rights leaders, and the considerable violence they were met with brought renewed attention to the issue of voting rights. The murder of voting-rights activists in Mississippi and the attack by white state troopers on peaceful marchers in Selma, Alabama, gained national attention and persuaded President Johnson and Congress to initiate meaningful

and effective national voting rights legislation. The combination of public revulsion to the violence and Johnson’s political skills stimulated Congress to pass the voting rights bill on August 5, 1965.

The legislation, which President Johnson signed into law the next day, outlawed literacy tests and provided for the appointment of federal examiners (with the power to register qualified citizens to vote) in those jurisdictions that were “covered” according to a formula provided in the statute. In addition, Section 5 of the act required covered jurisdictions to obtain “preclearance” from either the District Court for the District of Columbia or the U.S. Attorney General for any new voting practices and procedures. Section 2, which closely followed the language of the 15th Amendment, applied a nationwide prohibition of the denial or abridgment of the right to vote on account of race or color. The use of poll taxes in national elections had been abolished by the 24th Amendment (1964) to the Constitution; the Voting Rights Act directed the Attorney General to challenge the use of poll taxes in state and local elections. In *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, 383 U.S. 663 (1966), the

Supreme Court held Virginia’s poll tax to be unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the most significant statutory change in the relationship between the federal and state governments in the area of voting since the Reconstruction period following the Civil War; and it was immediately challenged in the courts. Between 1965 and 1969, the Supreme Court issued several key decisions upholding the constitutionality of Section 5 and affirming the broad range of voting practices for which preclearance was required. [See *South Carolina v. Katzenbach*, 383 U.S. 301, 327-28 (1966) and *Allen v. State Board of Elections*, 393 U.S. 544 (1969)] In 2013, the court struck down a key provision of the act involving federal oversight of voting rules in nine states.

The Voting Rights Act had an immediate impact. By the end of 1965, a quarter of a million new Black voters had been registered, one-third by federal examiners. By the end of 1966, only four out of 13 southern states had fewer than 50 percent of African Americans registered to vote. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was readopted and strengthened in 1970, 1975, and 1982.



**Verizon is proud to  
support LULAC**

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as they continue to advance education, civil rights,  
health, and employment of Hispanic Americans.



## OUR COMMUNITY PROUDLY SALUTES LULAC NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS (LINESC)



## 50 YEARS OF EMPOWERING STUDENTS AND BUILDING LEADERS

In the bustling heart of Washington, D.C., an organization dedicated to shaping the futures of Hispanic and underprivileged students is celebrating a remarkable milestone. The LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc. (LINESC), the leading nonprofit educational organization for Hispanics, marks its 50th anniversary of providing vital education and leadership programs to students in need.

Since its founding on March 7, 1973, LINESC has been a beacon of hope for over 607,000 students on their journey to higher education. Through the unwavering support of numerous partners, including 90 school collaborators, LINESC's national office, and 16 education centers across the United States, including Puerto Rico, the organization has left an indelible impact on the lives of countless students and the communities they represent.

Each year, LINESC's educational and leadership programs reach an astounding 14,000 students, guiding them toward academic success and personal growth. The organization has proudly awarded over \$30 million in scholarship funds, enabling students to pursue their dreams and aspirations. Moreover, LINESC has sent an impressive 159,000 students to postsecondary education, empowering them to build bright futures and positively impact society.

Among LINESC's notable achievements is the Washington Youth Leadership Seminar, which has provided training and leadership development opportunities to over 550 students. This unique program equips young minds with the necessary skills and knowledge to become influential community leaders. LINESC's commitment to excellence has been recognized through the highest number of Department of Education TRIO program awards received by any nonprofit organization or postsecondary institution.

Richard Roybal, Executive Director of LINESC, expresses his pride in the organization's accomplishments: "Since its inception, LINESC has strived to provide exceptional education and leadership programs for Hispanic students, low-income individuals, and any student who can benefit from our resources. As we celebrate 50 years of service through education, our goal is to leave a lasting impact on the lives of all those who have participated in our programs, nurturing young talent and fostering future leaders."

The impact of LINESC's work is best reflected in the heartfelt testimonials of the students who have directly

benefited from the organization's support. George Elliot, a scholarship recipient from Schreiner University, shares his gratitude, stating, "The burden of student loans can be daunting, but LNESc's financial aid has lessened my doubts about the value of higher education. Thanks to their help, I was able to reduce the amount of loans I took out, easing the financial strain on both me and my family. I wish LNESc and all the students they support the best of luck moving forward."

Another testimonial comes from Batula Hussein, a College Advisor at the University of Missouri, who affirms, "LNESC has been with me through my high school years, college years, and even served as my first employer. They guided me through unfamiliar phases of life, and I truly appreciate the support and preparation I received from the LNESc staff."

The positive impact of LNESc is also acknowledged by David Ndayishimuye, an alumnus of the Upward Bound Program and LNESc Kansas City, who says, "LNESC is making a real difference in our communities. Their commitment to their mission is commendable, and I am constantly inspired by the impact they achieve. Their efforts have made a tangible difference in my life and the lives of many others. I'm honored to work alongside each

and every one of them. Thank you for your hard work and dedication."

Michelle Tran, a scholarship recipient from the University of Houston, shares her transformative experience: "The scholarship I received from LNESc alleviated the financial burden of living on campus during my freshman year. It was a truly transformative experience, and to this day, I am grateful for all the support I had. The scholarship made me feel valued and worthy of investment. It motivated me to work harder, knowing that there were people who believed in me and wanted to see me succeed."

As LNESc commemorates its 50-year milestone, the organization plans celebratory activities throughout the year. Among the highlights is a one-day youth-focused education conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on August 2, 2023. The conference aims to equip high school students with the necessary tools for college preparation and the development of professional skills essential for future success. The event will feature motivational speakers, professional workshops, and a wealth of resources for college and career opportunities. The day will culminate in a lively reception celebration with live music, distinguished speakers, and empowering student voices.

## LNESC HOW THE PROGRAM STARTED AND A HALF-CENTURY OF GROWTH

LNESC, the LULAC National Educational Service Centers, has a remarkable history rooted in the vision and dedication of LULAC Council 2008 from San Francisco. In 1970, this council recognized a significant educational disparity faced by Latino students in the region. While postsecondary schools had developed special programs for ethnic studies and admissions, these initiatives often excluded provisions for Latinos. Determined to address this issue, the council took action by renting a storefront in the Mission

District and establishing a volunteer counseling program to assist Hispanic students in achieving their educational goals.

As the counseling program gained recognition for its impact, the U.S. Department of Labor recognized its potential in shaping the future labor force. In 1971, the department offered funding to LULAC Council 2008 to further support their efforts in educating Latinos. With this crucial support, the counseling center, now known as El Colegio de la Mision

de LULAC, began to expand its offerings. Through a partnership with local community colleges, the center started to provide courses for credit, empowering students to pursue higher education opportunities.

The visionaries behind LULAC Council 2008 were not content with addressing educational disparities solely in their region. They aimed to replicate their success in other Latino communities across the United States. In 1973, their aspirations were realized when LNESc was

incorporated as an independent entity. With a generous \$2 million grant from the government, LNESc gained its own governing board and full control over its programs. This milestone marked the beginning of LNESc's journey to transform educational opportunities for Hispanic students nationwide.

Over the course of the past 50 years, LNESc has expanded its presence and impact, establishing field centers in various states, including Colorado, Florida, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, and Washington. These centers serve as vital hubs for a range of educational programs catering to students of all ages.

One notable initiative is the Young Readers program, designed to assist elementary students in enhancing their reading skills. LNESc aims to lay a solid foundation for academic success by focusing on literacy development at an early age. Additionally, the Science Corps program engages middle school students by providing interactive science and engineering career development opportunities. Through hands-on activities and mentorship, LNESc inspires these young minds to explore and pursue careers in STEM fields.

To further address the barriers faced by low-income, potential-first generation students, LNESc operates programs like Upward Bound and Talent Search. These initiatives aim to provide college access and support, guiding students through the college application process and offering resources to help them navigate their educational journey successfully.

In 1975, LNESc established the LULAC National Scholarship



Fund (LNSF), a pivotal program that secures annual contributions from major corporations to fund scholarships for talented Hispanic students nationwide. The LNSF expanded in 1976 to include nationwide grassroots fundraising efforts by LULAC councils, with corporate donations matched to maximize the impact. This unique partnership between communities and corporations has resulted in significant scholarship support for disadvantaged students.

Thanks to the collective efforts of LNESc's education and technology centers nationwide, over 607,000 students have been served,

159,000 students have been sent to college, and over \$30 million in scholarships have been awarded. These remarkable achievements are made possible by the unwavering dedication of LNESc's network, including committed field staff, exceptional teachers, supportive school partners, and the invaluable support of local LULAC councils.

As LNESc continues to make a difference in the lives of Hispanic students across the country, its rich history serves as a testament to the power of community engagement and the transformative potential of educational access and support. With each passing year, LNESc reaffirms



its commitment to empowering and uplifting the next generation of Latino leaders, ensuring a brighter future for all.

LNESEC's enduring legacy of empowering students and building leaders is a testament to the transformative power of education. Over the past 50 years, the organization has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of students, shaping their futures and enabling them to reach their full potential. With a dedicated team of experienced directors, LNESEC aims to continue its mission for another 50 years and beyond, remaining at the forefront of Hispanic education nonprofits.

**For further information on LNESEC's 50-year celebration or the upcoming youth conference, please contact Raul Sanchez at [RSanchez@LNESEC.org](mailto:RSanchez@LNESEC.org).**

## About LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc. (LNESEC)

Established in 1973 by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc. (LNESEC) has been providing educational programming to high-need students throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Through its 16 education and technology centers, LNESEC has served over 607,000 students, sent 159,000 students to college, and awarded nearly \$30 million in scholarships. LNESEC's success is made possible by a dedicated network of field staff, exceptional teachers, over 90 school partners, and the unwavering support of LULAC, the largest membership-based Latino organization in the nation. LNESEC is committed to changing lives and building Latino communities, one student at a time. For more information, visit [www.lnesc.org](http://www.lnesc.org).



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## U.S. SUPREME COURT'S FINAL DECISIONS REVERSE DECADES OF PROGRESS AND PROTECTIONS

*The Supreme Court's Decisions on Affirmative Action and Student Loan Debt Relief Undermine Access to Higher Education at a Time When Latino Enrollment is Increasing at a Record Level*

LULAC, the nation's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization, says two rulings announced on the Court's final day of its term contradict America's constitutional guarantees of equality for all. In a closely watched decision, the Supreme Court struck down affirmative action programs, setting a dangerous and discriminatory precedent that could have far-reaching implications. The LULAC expresses deep disappointment in the Court's ruling, which undermines the promise of America's Declaration of Independence of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all.

"The Supreme Court's ruling on affirmative action programs is a historic civil rights setback," stated LULAC President Domingo Garcia. "This decision could make it significantly more difficult for minorities, particularly low-income first-generation Latino and DREAMER

students, to enter higher education institutions. It puts them at an immense disadvantage and perpetuates societal inequality and injustice.”

President Garcia stressed the importance of not standing idly by in the face of this ruling, stating, “We must take action and ensure that access to higher education is not just a privilege for the privileged few. Only then can we ensure that all members of our society have the same opportunities to succeed.”

The impact of this decision is significant. The ruling strips away a vital tool universities and higher education institutions have used since 1978 to promote diversity and equal opportunities. By recognizing that race plays a role in a student’s ability to compete on the same level as their white colleagues, affirmative action aimed to address the subliminal or direct effects of segregation in life circumstances and education.

“Eliminating the rule of colorblindness or race neutrality in a segregated society is hypocritical, where race has and continues to matter,” President Garcia emphasized. “Racial inequality is a deeply entrenched reality throughout the United States. This ruling is yet another attempt to reduce equality and opportunity for minorities, to solidify the preservation of power for the white population as their numbers decline.”

While the immediate challenges to using race in admissions were brought against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,



***It puts them at an immense disadvantage and perpetuates societal inequality and injustice.***

the repercussions of this decision are expected to be felt across the nation. Removing the factor of race as a consideration in college admissions will destabilize, leading to a further decline in the ranks of Hispanic and Black students at the nation’s best schools.

LULAC calls for unity among civil rights organizations to combat this egregious injustice. President Garcia urges all individuals and groups to take a stand on all fronts, using the powers of the courts and the ballot box to ensure that marginalized voices are heard.

“The world is changing, and it is time for the legal system to catch up,” President Garcia declared. “Our Latino students deserve equal access to education, and LULAC will continue fighting until we right this wrong. We stand with Judge Sotomayor in recognizing that the Court’s ruling cements a superficial rule of colorblindness in a society where race still matters.”

As an organization dedicated to advocating for the rights of the Latino community, LULAC

will not accept a society that perpetuates inequality and denies equal opportunities. It is time for our nation to acknowledge the existence of racism and address the disparities oppressed communities face. Together, we can create a more just and equitable future for all.

In a second alarming decision, the U.S. Supreme Court blocked the Biden administration’s plan to cancel over \$400 billion in student loan debt for millions of borrowers. The ruling, which came as a 6-3 decision by the conservative majority, invalidated President Biden’s proposal and undermined the fundamental principles of equality and access to education.

The justices, divided along ideological lines, deemed the program an unlawful exercise of presidential power, arguing that it lacked explicit approval from Congress. The Biden administration had proposed canceling up to \$10,000 in federal loan debt and an additional \$10,000 for certain eligible



***Our Latino students deserve equal access to education, and LULAC will continue fighting until we right this wrong.***

students. However, the Court's ruling halted this effort, burdening millions of borrowers with exorbitant student loan debt.

LULAC believes this ruling is a disheartening setback for aspiring students and borrowers who are already struggling under the weight of their loans. The decision places politics and business interests ahead of pursuing higher learning. It fails to recognize the urgent need for relief and the detrimental impact of unaffordable education on the future of our nation.

"LULAC sees this ruling as part of a not-surprising pattern by a conservative majority, handpicked and confirmed by a Republican leadership that is willing to give tax breaks and bailouts to corporations and fat cats but denies working students breathing room from predatory loans with exorbitant interest rates," expressed Domingo Garcia, LULAC National President. "Wall Street is applauding today's decision because greed has prevailed over good insofar as encouraging modest-income persons from pursuing higher education. This rhetoric cannot continue - we must advocate for a change right now. It is unacceptable that young Latino professionals are saddled with a high percentage rate of student loan repayment, making it even more difficult for them to make ends meet with the salary they are already receiving."

Access to affordable higher education is paramount for America to remain competitive in the rapidly advancing world of artificial intelligence and technological innovation. Denying debt relief from unbearable student

loans only perpetuates a sharply divided society, with an elite class advancing while others struggle in low-paying jobs throughout their lives.

Domingo Garcia further emphasized, "If our country is to move forward and thrive, it is essential that all individuals have the opportunity to pursue a college or university education. Today's ruling only exacerbates the growing divide between the haves and have-nots."

“  
**Today's ruling  
only exacerbates  
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the haves and  
have-nots.**

LULAC recognizes the importance of President Biden's commitment to addressing student loan debt and understands the political significance of this issue, especially for younger voters who played a crucial role in his election. The Supreme Court's decision now places the responsibility on the Biden administration to explore alternative avenues to provide relief for student loan borrowers that can withstand legal challenges.

LULAC urges Congress to take swift action to alleviate the burden of student loan debt on millions of Americans. Furthermore, we

implore the Biden administration to use all available legal routes, including the 1965 Higher Education Act, to protect student loan borrowers and ensure that higher education remains accessible to all.

As we strive for a fair and equitable society, LULAC remains committed to advocating for the rights of Latino students and all marginalized communities. We will continue to work tirelessly to dismantle the barriers that hinder educational opportunities and stand against decisions prioritizing profit over our nation's well-being and future. **Together, we can build a brighter and more inclusive future for all.**



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**Student Loan Debt Relief**

[https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/22-506\\_nmip.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/22-506_nmip.pdf)



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# WE STAND TOGETHER!

STATEMENT BY THE LULAC NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE

JUNE 30, 2023

“Today, the U.S. Supreme Court undermined the affirmative action plans of Harvard College and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and proclaimed that they violate the Equal Protection Clause. While the decision makes it clear that universities are allowed to consider a student’s account of how race affected their life and identity, critics note how the Supreme Court decision supports color blindness by not allowing these universities to take race into account.

David Hinojosa was one of the litigators representing plaintiffs before the Supreme Court and serves as the Director of the Educational Opportunities Project. He states, “The majority of this country is on the side of justice and ensuring opportunity for all. We will pursue every avenue available to ensure our colleges remain open to all and reflect campuses where students’ identities are celebrated, not shunned.”

As the largest Latino organization in the United States, LULAC does not support this Supreme Court decision. We see the connections between this decision and the many anti-equity efforts by right-wing extremists, such as the banning of multicultural books, the banning of accurate history, the public fights against Critical Race Theory, the attempts to stop Ethnic Studies, and the silencing of faculty in discussing issues diversity, equity, and inclusion.

LULAC supports standing together across all ethnic, socioeconomic levels, lgbtqia+, gender, and all other diversity categories. Through our Higher Education committee, we are currently conducting research on the demographics of students and faculty at six major universities across the country to identify trends around equity and inclusion. This work is the beginning of a long-term strategy to support equal opportunity for all.

We recognize this as a pivotal moment in our nation’s history and demand that all schools and institutions of higher education examine their demographics and their policies for inclusion while simultaneously examining the role that race plays in structural inequalities and what it takes to create racial justice. The undermining of affirmative action is the undermining of democracy. Furthermore, LULAC does not tolerate using a deficiency lens in the application process; instead, we recognize the many gifts and strengths our students of color bring to education. We stand with the civil rights of all students for racial equity that acknowledges and affirms the assets our students of color bring to the classroom so that every student has the opportunity to fulfill their potential and achieve their dreams.”



**Dr. Angela Valenzuela**  
Professor  
University of Texas  
Austin, Texas  
(LULAC Higher Education Taskforce Co-Chair)



**Dr. Theresa Montano**  
Associate Chair, Chicana/o Studies  
Professor, Chicana/o Studies  
California State University Northridge  
(LULAC Higher Education Taskforce Co-Chair)

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# THE HONOR ROLL 20:

## HOUSTON STUDENTS DENIED RECOGNITION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

In a shocking turn of events in the Houston, Texas, surrounding areas, the Humble Independent School District (Humble ISD) recently denied a group of Latino students their rightful moment of acknowledgment for their outstanding community service. The students, known as the Honor Roll 20, had their stoles, symbolizing over 100 hours of volunteer work each and a minimum 3.0 GPA, forcibly taken away by an Assistant Superintendent during a graduation ceremony. The incident has sparked outrage and calls for change within the district, exposing other significant issues of discrimination and lack of representation. This article delves into the events that transpired, the reactions of those involved, and the pressing need for reform.

### The Stolen Recognition

Judith Bautista, a Spanish teacher at the school, had purchased and presented the stoles as gifts to the Honor Roll 20, filled with pride over their remarkable accomplishments. However, their moment of joy was shattered when an Assistant Superintendent intervened and took away the stoles. This act of humiliation was later defended as a misunderstanding and miscommunication by the Humble ISD superintendent and board members, but the damage had already been done.

### The Impact and Responses

Heartbroken by the incident, Bautista labeled it a disgraceful attempt to make the students feel unworthy. Nevertheless, she expressed her unwavering pride in her students' achievements and their determination to continue their community service efforts. Bautista

said she resigned after failing to receive support from the district, expressing her determination to help her community elsewhere. She stated, "We cannot be silent when we see denials of this type targeting our youths." The students remained resilient, with one student declaring, "Our stoles were taken... but we graduated and are proud of it! No one can steal that joy, ever!"

Meanwhile, students also expressed their dismay and said they would not forget what they experienced but would not let that stop them from succeeding. "I am more determined than ever and sure that I'm going to continue my studies," one student told the board. "Our stoles were taken when we walked across the stage, but we did it anyway; we graduated and are proud of it! No one can steal that joy, ever!"

Greater Houston LULAC 4967 leader, Dr. Sergio Lira, addressed the Humble ISD board, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines to prevent such incidents in the future. He also highlighted the lack of diversity among the school board members and teachers, urging the district to be more reflective of the community it serves. He addressed the Humble ISD board, stating, "You can and must do better so that youths see themselves in you." He called for clear guidelines to prevent such incidents and emphasized the lack of diversity among the school board, administration, and teachers.

### Resignation and Community Support

Feeling unsupported by the district despite her years of effort, Bautista turned her protest into action, leaving her position as a teacher and expressing her intention

to use her education, training, and experience to serve her community better. LULAC, standing up for justice, supported Bautista and highlighted the need to expose injustices targeting young individuals. Undeterred by the incident, the students voiced their determination to continue their studies and succeed.

**A Reflection of Wider Challenges**

David Contreras, LULAC’s national historian, attended the school board meeting and emphasized that Humble ISD’s actions shed light on ongoing challenges faced by Latinos in Houston’s public education system. Contreras’s wife, Millie Contreras, had been forced out of her education position through false claims and harassment, further illustrating the issues plaguing the community. Contreras drew attention to the divisive politics infiltrating public education systems and stressed the importance of learning from history to combat discrimination effectively. “Humble ISD and Houston ISD are just two of many districts being overtaken by divisive politics that have no place in public education,” he said. “If we do not learn from history, we are bound to repeat it. What was done by school officials to these

students was wrong. So too, what is being done to dedicated Latinos in education who are forced out of their positions through false campaigns mounted against them and plain harassment. These are prime examples of the challenges the Latino community faces,” he added.



**The Call for Change**

LULAC demanded the termination of the Assistant Superintendent, who removed the stoles from the Honor Roll 20. However, the Humble ISD School Board has failed to take any disciplinary action or implement policy changes in response to the incident. “Humble ISD is a glimpse into the ongoing challenges Latinos in Houston continue to fight in public education,” adds Dr. Lira. “We

are witnessing the blatant acts of discrimination... that we saw in the past. LULAC can and must continue the struggle... to root out hatred and marginalization,” he added.

**Conclusion**

The unjust treatment faced by the Honor Roll 20 students in the Humble Independent School District highlights deep-rooted issues of discrimination and marginalization within the education system. It serves as a stark reminder that progress is still needed to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their background. The incident, accompanied by the brave voices of those who stood up against it, emphasizes the importance of community support and advocacy in pursuing justice and equality in education. The path forward requires addressing the immediate concerns and striving for systemic change that promotes inclusivity, representation, and celebrating students’ achievements.

**LULAC honors each of the Humble ISD Spanish Honor Society whose names we are proud to include in this historical issue of LULAC News. They shall live in our hearts and minds forever:**

**OLIVIA SILVA  
KEVIN GONZALEZ  
HAILEY HERNANDEZ  
SERGIO CABRERA  
CELVIN RENE HERNANDEZ  
XOCHITL JUDD DIAZ ORTIZ  
SOFIA PLATA**

**YURITZA SALINAS  
AARISA WEST  
CYNTHIA SANCHEZ  
LAILA ANALISE GONZALEZ  
ANGELES MARTINEZ  
MIRANDA RODRIGUEZ  
CYNTHIA CUELLAR**

**KAYLEN BARCENAS  
ZAHALI LARA  
LESLY ZUNIGA  
NATALIA TORRUBIARTES  
ALISSON ESCOBAR FLORES  
JOANNA DANAET JOAQUIN**



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# LULAC IS POISED AND READY TO LEAD THE LATINO COMMUNITY INTO THE NEW WORLD OF BROADBAND FOR ALL

THE LEAGUE IS EMPOWERED AND ALREADY UNDERWAY ENVISIONING HUBS FOR A NATIONWIDE ROLL-OUT.

*“The horizon is wide, and the sky is limitless in the digital space,” says Domingo Garcia, LULAC National President*

LULAC is on the broadband-for-all launch pad, and the crew is ready to go! In today’s interconnected world, the Internet serves as the backbone of our society. It powers education, fuels the economy, supports our health and well-being, and connects us to our loved ones and neighbors. However, a significant portion of the American population is deprived of these benefits due to a lack of internet access. Shockingly, approximately one in five American households remain unconnected, preventing them from fully participating in modern life.

This is why the news is so exciting. The Biden-Harris Administration has announced allocations for \$42.45 billion high-speed internet grant program as part of the Advancing America Agenda. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the Department of Commerce has disclosed the distribution of funds to all 50 states, the District

of Columbia, and five territories to facilitate the deployment of affordable and reliable high-speed internet services nationwide. This comprehensive initiative, the “Internet for All” program, is a pivotal pillar of President Biden’s broader mission to propel the nation’s progress through strategic investments.

All 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the territories will employ the funds from the \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to administer grant programs within their respective jurisdictions.

Recognizing that internet access is not a luxury but a necessity, the Biden-Harris administration has taken proactive steps to bridge the digital divide. They have allocated a substantial \$65 billion to expand internet access, aiming to ensure that every individual in

America has access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet. The impact of high-speed Internet goes beyond individuals; it strengthens our country as a whole. It saves us time and money, creates job opportunities within the United States, and fosters connections that build a more robust and accessible society.

Garcia adds, "Let's explore some remarkable ways high-speed Internet has transformed various aspects of our world."

### **Maximizing Educational Opportunities:**

Access to high-speed Internet is crucial for students to access quality education and training, enabling them to compete globally. Whether completing homework assignments, researching, or applying to colleges and trade schools, students rely on the Internet for their academic pursuits. Unfortunately, students without

internet access at home face significant disadvantages and may fall behind their peers.

### **Stimulating Economic Growth:**

By connecting workplaces, we can establish stronger links between businesses and consumers. This connectivity opens up new markets, increasing sales and job creation. High-speed Internet empowers American companies to compete for talent and expand their reach in the global marketplace. Additionally, it helps workers connect with well-paying jobs, regardless of their geographical location.

### **Lowering Healthcare Costs:**

Telehealth has emerged as a revolutionary development that enhances access to healthcare anywhere and anytime. Telehealth lowers costs and improves patient care by reducing the need for hospital visits and shortening stay durations. It plays a vital role in

improving healthcare access and outcomes for individuals across the nation.

### **Strengthening Community Bonds:**

High-speed Internet connects us to essential services, allowing first responders to save lives and enabling us to engage with our elected officials. Moreover, it strengthens our ties to friends and loved ones, regardless of their location. The Internet has become indispensable for fostering community connections and enhancing our daily lives.

### **Investing in a Robust Workforce:**

High-speed Internet is pivotal in improving access to education, job opportunities, and high-quality workers. It connects job applicants with resources and training for skill development, empowering them to qualify for well-paying jobs, irrespective of their geographical constraints.





*...the Administration has implemented initiatives to lower the cost of Internet services.*



*...40% of Latinos did not have broadband internet access at home.*

**Who Can Get Access to Broadband:**

Garcia says, “To ensure that high-speed Internet is accessible and affordable for all, the Administration has implemented initiatives to lower the cost of Internet services. They are lowering internet costs for millions of families through partnerships with service providers. By visiting GetInternet.gov, individuals can learn about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and how it can reduce their internet expenses.”

The FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program offers additional benefits for those seeking more affordable high-speed Internet. It provides service discounts of up to \$30 per month, with an increased discount of up to \$75 per month for qualifying Tribal lands. Furthermore, individuals can receive a device discount of up to \$100 for a qualifying device. Eligibility for these benefits can be determined based on enrollment in government programs.

**Bridging the Digital Divide: Latino Students Struggled with Access to Education during the Pandemic**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, technology became a lifeline for families as they went into quarantine. However, for many low-income Latino families and their children, accessing the Internet proved to be a significant challenge. Without Wi-Fi, some students were forced to do their homework in parking lots to access public hotspots. There were instances where students had to be driven to locations like McDonald’s or libraries just to connect to public Wi-Fi because they had no internet access at home.

Even before the pandemic hit the United States, a study conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed that 57% of Hispanic adults owned a desktop computer or

laptop, compared to 82% of White adults. Additionally, around 25% of Hispanics surveyed stated that they only had internet access through smartphones. As the pandemic surged, a survey conducted in April by SOMOS found that nearly 40% of Latinos did not have broadband internet access at home, and 32% did not have a computer.

While many school districts provided laptops to students for online learning, the supply was insufficient to meet the demand. According to labor leader and civil rights icon Dolores Huerta, this lack of proper resources devastates families. She emphasized that catching up will require extensive efforts as these underserved communities were already behind before the pandemic.

**Access to Broadband Is Essential So Latinos Can Prepare to Compete in the AI World**

A recent study explored the technological challenges undergraduates face at a large, Hispanic-serving public university with a significant population of low-income and first-generation students. The study results indicated that internet quality and device reliability were the most important concerns for students, with nearly one-third reporting issues related to these factors. The incidence of the first level of the digital divide, as observed in this study, aligns more closely with national studies focusing on college-bound high school students or K-12 households in California rather than nationwide studies or research conducted at R1 institutions.

Specifically, within the sample, 21% of students did not have the optimal device combination of a smartphone and a laptop or desktop, while 3% relied solely on a phone and tablet. A recent study of higher education in California reported that 10% of students across 23 California State University campuses lacked computer



access. In comparison, 8% of students at the nine undergraduate University of California campuses faced similar challenges.

Furthermore, the disparity in internet quality was significantly greater but consistent with the findings. Unstable internet access was reported by 29% of students in the study, compared to 17% nationally. Similar discrepancies were observed when comparing data from other California State University and UC campuses. The EducationTrust—West, a nonprofit organization, found that 12% of students nationally and in California reported limited or sporadic internet access.

“LULAC is working hard to ensure that Latinos are not left behind; from policy to implementation, we must be present, involved, and ready,” says Garcia. “For 94 years, LULAC has always been in the forefront, and we are committed to doing the same heading into this new frontier,” he concluded.



***...10% of students across 12 California State University campuses lacked computer access.***



***LULAC is working hard to ensure that Latinos are not left behind; from policy to implementation...***



# REDESIGNATING AFTER HERO

By Col. Chad R. Foster, Garrison Commander  
Fort Hood May 4, 2023

*“We are proud to be renaming Fort Hood as Fort Cavazos in recognition of an outstanding American hero, a veteran of the Korea and Vietnam wars and the first Hispanic to reach the rank of four-star general in our Army. General Cavazos’ combat proven leadership, his moral character and his loyalty to his Soldiers and their families made him the fearless yet respected and influential leader that he was during the time he served, and beyond.”*

*Lt. Gen. Sean Bernabe, III Armored Corps Commanding General.*

FORT HOOD, Texas — The redesignation of our installation to Fort Cavazos marks a new chapter in the history of the Great Place. This turn to a new page is not a transition. Instead, it is a reaffirmation of the legacy of service and sacrifice that has characterized our community since this installation was founded in 1942. General Richard Cavazos, a native son of Texas and war hero, will be our new namesake. His example is emblematic of who we were yesterday, who we are today and who we will be in the future.

Over the course of 80 years, we grew from humble beginnings to become the U.S. Army’s leading site for the training and deployment of armored forces. In the early days of World War II, we served as the training location for tank destroyer units bound for the European Theater of the war. Today, our live fire ranges, maneuver training areas and power projection capabilities are unmatched. Our installation can support the training of up to two armored divisions. If our nation calls, the many units stationed right here in Central Texas are ready to answer. This has been the case for 80 years, and it will remain so in the years to come. We will still have nearly 40,000 Soldiers and more than 196,000 acres of maneuver training area, all situated within an incredible Central Texas community whose support to our military families is second-to-none.

General Richard Cavazos is one of our own. He was born and raised in Kingsville, Texas. After earning his commission in 1951 from Texas Technological College (now known as Texas Tech University), he went on to distinguish himself in combat during both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, earning two Distinguished Service Crosses. Later, he served as the commanding general of the III Armored Corps at Fort Hood from 1980-82 before continuing in his career to ultimately serve as the commanding general of U.S. Army Forces Command. In this last capacity, he became the first Hispanic American to be promoted to the rank of 4-star general. After he hung up his uniform, General Cavazos played a key role in establishing the Army's senior training program for our general officers. He became a mentor for countless division and corps commanders at Fort Hood and many other locations throughout the Army.

The Cavazos legacy lives on today in the thousands of Soldiers, families and Department of the Army civilians who currently serve across our installation. These amazing people — all of YOU — made this the Great Place and will keep it so for as long as the Army stands watch over our national defense here in Central Texas. I will always

remember Fort Hood as the place where I gained so many cherished personal and professional memories. This is where I cut my teeth as a young company commander, grew into the role of a field grade officer and returned years later to command the best garrison in the Army. This will always be my Army home.

Although names change, our legacy of service and sacrifice endures. No one will ever forget Fort Hood as long as we live because we are simply entering a new chapter of that same proud history. The redesignation to Fort Cavazos is really about the continuation of this legacy. Each new page that is added to our long, shared history will be written by us, showing the quality of our people and the strength of our community. This is who we are — yesterday, today and tomorrow!





# EMPOWERING WOMEN, AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF STRENGTH FOR LULAC NOW AND THE FUTURE

Empowering women has always been at the forefront of LULAC's mission, as they recognize that women play a vital role in shaping and driving change within the Latino community. Pastor Emma Lozano, a LULAC national board member and vice-president for women, understands the significance of empowering women and its impact on LULAC's work in the present and future.

Following this year's LULAC National Women's Conference in Los Angeles, California, we asked Pastor Emma her thoughts about the role she sees for women in LULAC and the nation:

"One of the pressing issues facing the Latino community is the plight of refugees and migrants. With the increasing Latino population in the country, LULAC must be present and proactive in addressing their needs and ensuring they have access to the necessary services upon their arrival. Additionally, we must emphasize

the importance of advocating for a pathway to citizenship for those who have been living in the shadows. Many individuals, including family members, relatives, and neighbors, have been marginalized and denied the recognition they deserve.

LULAC's role in defending the unity of the Latino family is essential in securing a brighter future for all.

Also, we must recognize that women's voices need to be heard in the fight for their autonomy, particularly regarding decisions about their own bodies. LULAC has always championed the cause of women's rights and fought against government interference in personal choices. By placing women at the forefront, LULAC ensures that their voices are heard and respected and that they can be stewards of their own lives.

Furthermore, LULAC's work in defending democracy is of paramount importance. We must look at the

issue of gerrymandering, which has been used to divide Latino communities and suppress their political power. LULAC is committed to ensuring that Latinos have equal access to voting and are not faced with unnecessary barriers. By electing more Latinos to positions of power in Congress and the Senate, the community's interests can be better represented, leading to a more inclusive democracy.

Even in states like Illinois, where we have a Democratic governor, we acknowledge that Latinos have ongoing challenges. The community often finds itself overlooked and neglected, emphasizing unity's importance. LULAC is a unifying force, allowing Latinos to stand together, protect their rights, and fight for their well-deserved place in society.

It is essential to note that the potential reversal of hard-fought victories is



a cause for concern. The progress made in gender equality and women's discrimination in the workforce cannot be undermined. While striving for further improvements, defending the victories already achieved is crucial. We draw inspiration from women like former LULAC national president Rosa Rosales and other trailblazers who have paved the way for change. Their accomplishments should be respected and celebrated rather than eroded.

Reflecting on our recent conference in Los Angeles, we can all be proud of its success and for inspiring a coalition of women who came together to make it happen. The conference provided a platform for women to discuss pressing issues, empower one another, and educate themselves. It served as a catalyst for positive change and inspired me to recruit new councils, further strengthening the movement. Here in Chicago, we formed seven new councils that will be present at the 2023 LULAC national convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

There are other areas of paramount importance. We must continue recognizing the importance of LGBTQ representation within the

LULAC leadership and reiterate the organization's commitment to equality. LULAC stands firmly for equal rights, regardless of gender, race, or religion. Actual progress can only be achieved by promoting equality in all aspects of society, and LULAC continues to lead the way in ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

Indeed, our dedication to social justice extends beyond the empowerment of women. We can and should be advocates for deported veterans, shedding light on the injustice they face. Furthermore, there are environmental issues plaguing Latino communities, particularly in Chicago. We need to fight against polluters and assert that the Latino

community will not be underestimated or marginalized.

Addressing Congress directly, we have two critical messages for them. Firstly, we want a renewed focus on the environment and the need to combat environmental injustice. LULAC women call for action on the urgent need for clean and safe living environments for Latino communities. We challenge the notion that our community is weak or unable to fight for our rights.

Secondly, we urge Congress to act on immigration reform. With approximately 12 million undocumented individuals living in the shadows, LULAC implores Congress



to vote for a legalization process. However, if that is not possible, we call upon President Biden to use executive action to resolve the issue. Drawing attention to the fact that other groups have benefited from such actions, it is time for the Latino community to receive the same consideration.

This country has acted when politically expedient to address other humanitarian crises and welcomed refugees from Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Venezuela, even allowing them to work. Yet, undocumented persons from Mexico who have been living in the United States for decades, paying taxes and abiding lawfully by this country's requirements, are still denied a path to legalization and an opportunity for citizenship. This does not seem right, and the time for waiting is over. The women of LULAC will struggle and raise our voices however long it takes to achieve victory for our families and our community."

In conclusion, Pastor Emma's unwavering commitment to empowering women and fighting for social justice shines through her role within LULAC. Her words serve as a rallying call to action, inspiring individuals to stand



up against injustice and advocate for equality. LULAC's mission to unify the Latino community, defend victories, and strive for progress ensures a brighter future for all. By empowering women and prioritizing their voices, LULAC continues to impact the Latino community and beyond significantly. Together with leaders like Pastor Emma, LULAC is a beacon of hope, resilience, and determination in pursuing justice and equality for all.

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# VICTORY IN THE LYTLE RANCH COMMUNITY OF MOAPA VALLEY, NEVADA, WHERE LULAC IS STANDING WITH FORTY LATINO FAMILIES



Lytle Ranch in Moapa Valley, a small community nestled in Nevada, has recently been grappling with the devastating impact of flash floods. For years, the forty Latino families residing in this rural area have faced constant peril and uncertainty due to the absence of essential flood control measures and paved roads. Finally, their desperate calls for help have been answered, thanks to the relentless efforts of LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) and their unwavering advocate, Euler Torres, the Vice President of the Northwest region.

LULAC, recognizing the dire circumstances endured by these families, has taken up their cause, vowing to champion their safety and well-being. The absence of adequate flood control improvements and paved roads has rendered these families vulnerable to the devastating force of flash floods, which have damaged their homes and claimed lives. LULAC emphasizes the urgency for local authorities to promptly address this issue and ensure the security of these vulnerable families.

Euler Torres, LULAC National Vice President of the Far West, highlights the plight of the forty migrant families



***These families live in constant danger due to a lack of adequate protection against flash flooding...***

in Moapa. “These families live in constant danger due to the lack of adequate protection against flash flooding caused by the absence of paved roads and flood control improvements. LULAC hears their pleas and is committed to acting so local authorities address this issue promptly and ensure the safety of these vulnerable families,” says Torres.

Delfina Anchondo, the granddaughter of one of the first families in Moapa Valley, has been at the forefront of this campaign, determined to shed light on her community’s plight and garner support for their cause. Her

own residence, perched on a small hill adjacent to other homes occupied by seniors, has suffered significant damage from the floods. The county finally fixed a large crack on the dirt road leading to her house that had long rendered it impassable for vehicles.

Anchondo says, “Our 40 families have been waiting for years for the county to take action, and the community has been largely ignored. As a result, flooding has become a growing danger and threat with every heavy storm. Also, at least two deaths have happened because ambulances could reach us during an emergency requiring immediate care.”

Moapa Valley residents, including Anchondo and her neighbors, have endured the consequences of inadequate flood control measures for years. Arturo Villezcas, a Moapa Valley resident, vividly recounts the aftermath of the floods, describing how roads transformed into turbulent rivers, forcing him to park half a mile away from his home downhill. Meanwhile, other communities may see flooding during 100-year storms, which are very few and far between; Lytle Ranch has been prone to flooding during virtually every

occurrence of severe weather, a very different situation.

Anchondo adds, “This is not a new issue, and we are tired of no one paying attention to our cries for help. This is not them doing us a favor. We pay taxes, too, for heaven’s sake, and we have just as much right as our neighboring community to get the safe roads and flood controls they have received. The only difference is that we’re Latino, working families, and some elected officials don’t think we matter.”

Despite residents’ pleas, Clark County commissioners and public works personnel have been sluggish in addressing the issue. While some flood control projects have been initiated, more comprehensive measures are necessary. Commissioner Marilyn Kirkpatrick, who represents the district encompassing Moapa Valley, acknowledges ongoing assessments of problem areas and the implementation of projects as funding permits. Lytle Ranch residents challenge Kirkpatrick’s claims of the community resisting new infrastructure projects and zoning changes, which hinder the progress

of flood mitigation efforts. “Zoning and infrastructure needs were never presented to us as an issue until now,” says Anchondo. “We are still waiting for a town hall meeting to take place for community-wide input by the Lytle ranch families. Also, there are several flood projects in our community in other, primarily non-Latino areas right now. They make it a zoning and infrastructure issue when it’s convenient for the county to deflect from our neglect,” says Delfina.

The lack of action and funding from local and state authorities has left Moapa Valley residents in constant fear of the next storm. Emergency services struggle to reach them during crises, and residents find themselves cleaning up debris and drains without assistance from the county. Anchondo expresses her frustration, emphasizing that the community has endured neglect for far too long, with their pleas for help being brushed aside. The fact that they are hardworking Latino families adds another dimension of marginalization, as some elected officials appear to disregard their concerns.



This summer, these forty families took action. They contacted LULAC national board member Euler Torres, who helped them start the first LULAC council in the Moapa Valley. Delfina says the families finally feel like help is on the way. “Being part of LULAC allows us to have hope and believe that change for the better is finally coming. County officials are beginning to make statements that we will see improvements, something long overdue. LULAC empowers us to stand up, be part of something bigger than just us, and be an organization with respect and credibility to get action for our small community.

In response to this dire situation, the forty families in Moapa Valley took matters into their own hands. They reached out to Euler Torres, a national board member of LULAC, who played a pivotal role in assisting them in establishing a LULAC council, the first of its kind in Moapa Valley. Joining forces with LULAC has infused them with renewed hope and empowerment. Finally, their voices are being heard, and county officials are beginning to make promises of improvement. The scrutiny cast upon years of neglect and the efforts of LULAC is compelling officials to take notice and initiate action.





The community's story has gained further recognition, with their testimonies before the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Chicago and their coverage in the Las Vegas Journal Review. Through their collective efforts, they are striving to preserve their homes, protect their people, and safeguard their way of life in the arid landscape of Nevada.

The victory in Moapa Valley is a powerful testament to the potential of community mobilization and the important role organizations like LULAC play in advocating for marginalized communities. While the path ahead may still be arduous, the residents of Moapa Valley now possess hope, solidarity, and an organization that will continue to support them until their voices resound, their safety is assured, and their lives are significantly improved.

“

***Wherever there is injustice against one person, one family, or one Latino community, it is an injustice being committed against all of us.***



“LULAC is going to stick with the Latino families of the Moapa Valley,” says Torres. “It’s our duty and responsibility to see this through. Wherever there is injustice against even one person, one family, or one Latino community, it is an injustice being committed against all of us. I’m proud of Delfina. She’s already making a great LULAC leader in her small community, and who knows; she could inspire other young women to stand up where they live and defend their street, their neighborhood, and their town. This is what LULAC is all about. ¡Felicidades to Delfina y que viva el pueblo de Moapa Valley!”

“One more update,” adds Anchondo. “I testified in front of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on June 27 in Chicago on the impact of coal ash on communities. I was in attendance with my goddaughter and other families invited by Earthjustice. Also, we finally got on the front page of the Las Vegas Journal Review with our story, and we’re finally waking officials up now that the spotlight on their years of neglect is on them. Through these efforts, we just got street signs! This action was one of our requests to the county for years and will undoubtedly help ambulances identify our homes more quickly in an emergency. Thanks, LULAC! We’re proud to be part of the familia that cares about one another. Keep us in your prayers so we can save our homes, our people, and our way of life out here in the desert country of Nevada. Gracias!”



# ***LULAC STEPS UP ACTION TO PROTECT LATINOS IN THE WORKPLACE***

## **ADDRESSING CHILD LABOR AND DISPROPORTIONATE WORKPLACE RISKS**



The state of Iowa is proposing rolling back child labor laws, sending shockwaves through the community. LULAC swiftly condemned this alarming move, vowing to protect the rights and well-being of Latino youth and undocumented children. “LULAC strongly opposes making child labor legal,” said Domingo Garcia, LULAC national president. “This movement is essentially about filling jobs that adults are unwilling to take or supplementing a company’s workforce with cheaper labor.”

LULAC recognized the potential for exploitation, excessive workloads, and educational disruption that such a bill could bring. As concern grew, LULAC expressed deep worry about eliminating restrictions on the working hours of 16 and 17-year-olds in restaurants serving liquor. This trend of relaxing child labor laws has been seen in other states like Ohio, Georgia, Minnesota, and Arkansas. Nick Salazar, Iowa LULAC state director, said, “This bill was never about job training; it was always about preying upon our brown and black communities to do low-wage work.”

Joe Henry, Iowa LULAC state political director, emphasized the impact on low-wage working families, who may feel compelled to allow their children to work in dangerous industries like meatpacking and agriculture

due to their own financial struggles. Henry warned that history would judge the Governor of Iowa, who allowed this bill to become law.

The urgent need for strict child labor laws was underscored by the U.S. Department of Labor's investigation into the meatpacking industry. Shockingly, children as young as 11 were found working through the night, handling hazardous chemicals, and suffering injuries. Domingo Garcia firmly stated, "Our children are not for sale at any price!"

Rafaela Schwan, LULAC's Chief Operating Officer, stressed the organization's commitment to providing educational opportunities and empowering youth to pursue successful careers. She explained that LULAC sought to harness the intellectual potential of the community rather than perpetuate exploitative labor practices.

In response to these alarming developments, LULAC has taken action. They urged the U.S. Department of Labor to intensify monitoring and enforcement efforts to safeguard against abuses by private employers. Furthermore, LULAC called upon community members to report any companies employing children, working together to prevent injuries and protect the youth.

This is only the latest development in a troubling trend in America's workplaces. A recent federal report has shed light on the disparity faced by Hispanic and Latino workers regarding workplace injuries and fatalities. Despite representing around 18.7 percent of the U.S. population, this demographic group accounted for 21.7 percent of workplace fatalities, indicating a heightened risk for Latino workers. These findings have prompted calls for action to enhance worker safety and protection.

The report underscores why LULAC collaborates with employers and other stakeholders to address this issue and help create safer workplaces nationwide. Recently,



**LULAC entered into a pilot program with Red Wings Shoes in Texas and California to increase educational events around personal protective equipment (PPE), including footwear designed to safeguard them in dangerous workplace settings better.** Red Wing Shoes store personnel share information in English and Spanish and provide a personalized 3D foot fitting analysis to identify the worker's individual needs. There is no obligation to buy, and the educational benefits will help workers learn how to avoid getting injured on the job.

LULAC's involvement on the ground in industry sites across the country is happening as the United States grapples with labor shortages and immigration reform; Latinos emerge as the backbone of the American economy. With a projected one in three Americans to be of Latino heritage by 2050, their presence and contributions are undeniable. Latinos now comprise approximately 65 million people, accounting for one in every four individuals. In states like California and New Mexico, Latinos have even become the majority, surpassing the Anglo-Saxon population.

Specific industries that rely heavily on manual labor, such as construction, trade, transportation, mining, and agricultural production, are hazardous for Latino workers. These sectors involve physical demand and often expose workers to dangerous conditions, increasing their potential risks on the job. Falls, slips, or trips were the leading cause of death for Hispanic



and Latino workers, further highlighting the need for targeted safety measures.

LULAC has also witnessed the increased vulnerability of immigrant workers in the United States. While immigrants constitute approximately sixteen percent of the workforce, they account for twenty-one percent of workplace fatalities. This disparity underscores immigrant workers' unique challenges and emphasizes the need for tailored support and protection within the workplace.

LULAC says initiatives should focus on several key areas to address these disparities. Strengthening worker rights, ensuring comprehensive training programs, implementing effective safety protocols, and enhancing access to protective equipment are all vital



***While immigrants constitute approximately sixteen percent of the workforce, they account for twenty-one percent of workplace fatalities.***

## The Latest Data from the Bureau for Labor Statistics (BLS)

Hispanics are substantially overrepresented in several occupational categories compared to their overall employment percentage of 18 percent. These categories include painters and paperhangers (59 percent), construction laborers (49 percent), maids and housekeeping cleaners (48 percent), and landscaping and groundskeeping workers (47 percent). These figures demonstrate the integral role that Latinos play in industries related to construction, maintenance, and hospitality. Latinos have a strong presence in the construction sector. Approximately 22 percent of employed Hispanic men work in construction, higher than their White (14 percent), Black (7 percent), and Asian (4 percent) counterparts.

While Latinos make substantial contributions to the American workforce, it is evident that there are areas where equal opportunities need improvement. Diversifying industries and promoting inclusivity across all sectors will contribute to a more equitable labor market, benefiting both Latinos and the overall economy. Among employed Asian men, 22 percent are engaged in professional and business services, surpassing the percentages for White men (14 percent), Black

### Employment percentage in professional and business services

12% Hispanic men	12% Hispanic women
22% Asian men	16% Asian women
12% Black men	9% Black women
14% White men	12% White women

### Employment percentage of men in the construction industry

22% Hispanic men
4% Asian men
7% Black men
14% White men

### Employment percentage of women in the leisure and hospitality industry

13% Hispanic women
9% Asian women
8% Black women
9% White women

men (12 percent), and Hispanic men (12 percent). A similar trend is observed among Asian women, with 16 percent working in professional and business services, compared to White women (12 percent), Hispanic women (12 percent), and Black women (9 percent).

steps. Employers must prioritize the well-being of their workers, actively seeking ways to mitigate risks and address hazards specific to their industries.

Latinos play a significant role in the American workforce, contributing to various industries and occupations across the country. Their employment patterns highlight both their representation and areas where improvement is needed for equal opportunities.



Hispanic women, however, are more likely to be employed in the leisure and hospitality industry (13 percent) than White women (9 percent), Asian women (9 percent), and Black women (8 percent).

Education and health services are significant industries for employed women across all racial and ethnic groups. Black families (40 percent), White families (36 percent), Asian families (32 percent), and Hispanic families (30 percent) have a high representation of employed women in these sectors.

This demographic growth stems from a combination of immigration and high birth rates. Despite anti-immigrant policies, continuous migration from Central and South America has sustained the influx of Latinos. Additionally, the Latino community's average birth rate is twice that of their Anglo counterparts, with Latinos having an average of four children per family. These factors suggest that the Latino population will continue to grow in the future.

Notably, Latinos often occupy jobs that other populations, including African Americans, are unwilling to accept. They form an integral pillar of

the U.S. economy, particularly in sectors like agriculture, services, and construction, where undocumented Latino workers dominate the labor force. Although these workers are paid low wages, their remuneration remains higher than they would typically earn in their home countries. Their crucial role in driving economic growth cannot be overstated.

As the struggle continues, organizations like LULAC stand with Latino essential workers, recognizing their indispensable contributions to the American economy. Their advocacy seeks to highlight the plight of Latino workers and propel the nation toward a more inclusive and prosperous future.

# FLORIDA LULAC STANDING STRONG IN THE FACING OF BLOWING WINDS AGAINST LATINO IMMIGRANTS

In a bold move to protect the rights of Latino immigrants, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) has issued a historic travel advisory, warning Latinos about the dangers they may face when traveling to Florida. This action by LULAC comes as a response to the recently signed anti-immigrant measures by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, which have sparked outrage and concern among immigrant communities.

LULAC, the nation's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization, has been at the forefront of defending the rights and welfare of Latinos in the United States for decades. With their latest move, LULAC aims to shed light on the extensive impact of Governor DeSantis' anti-immigrant policies and protect the Latino community from discrimination and mistreatment.

"The warning intended to make people aware of the changes coming up in Florida as of July 1, 2023," says Lydia Medrano, LULAC's Vice-President for the Southeast. "This is an unprecedented persecution of immigrants without proper documentation and profiling of immigrants in general. Transporting family, friends, coworkers that don't have proper documentation into Florida is an offense punishable with up to 15 years in prison," Medrano adds.

One of the most troubling aspects of the new law, known as Bill 1718, is its potential to profile and target Latinos. Under the new regulations, immigrants without proper documentation will face difficulties in various aspects of their lives. Medrano says, "About 20 states provide driver licenses regardless of migratory status. These driver licenses are invalid in Florida as of July 1, 2023." This restriction on driver's licenses further adds to the challenges faced by immigrants in the state.

Employment opportunities will also become increasingly limited for immigrants without proper documentation. Medrano explains, "The immigrants without proper documentation will have difficulty finding employment. Employers with 25+ employees will have to use E-Verify and risk losing their licenses if they employ

undocumented workers. In addition, if the employer doesn't check eligibility, the employer will be fined \$1,000 per day." These measures put undocumented workers and employers at risk and contribute to a hostile environment for immigrants in the job market.

Access to healthcare is another area of concern. While patients seeking healthcare cannot be denied treatment based on their immigration status, they may still face invasive questions. Medrano clarifies, "When seeking healthcare, patients will be asked about their immigration status, though they can refuse to answer and still receive healthcare." This additional scrutiny creates a sense of fear and may deter individuals from seeking necessary medical care.

LULAC urges travelers to be cautious and informed when considering a visit to Florida under Governor DeSantis' administration. "Travelers need to be aware of the persecution and profiling of anyone who looks like an immigrant in Florida," warns Medrano. "This is a reality. \$12 million has been allocated to relocate undocumented immigrants to other states," she adds.

In response to these concerning developments, LULAC is actively exploring legal avenues to challenge Governor DeSantis' anti-immigrant measures. A potential federal lawsuit could seek to protect Latino immigrants' rights and halt the harmful policies' implementation.

**The following is the Florida Senate Summary of the bill (Chapter 2023-40, L.O.F.) which amends various**



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By joining together, we can mobilize our members to launch our NEA Honesty in Education initiative and fight for racial, social and economic justice in public education.



## **Florida statutes to address provisions related to individuals in this state who may be unauthorized aliens.**

### **Specifically, the bill:**

- Amends the crime of human smuggling to provide that a person commits a third degree felony when he or she knowingly and willfully transports into this state an individual whom the person knows or reasonably should know has entered the United States in violation of the law and has not been inspected by the Federal Government since his or her unlawful entry from another country;
- Enhances the crime of human smuggling when smuggling a minor, more than five people, or when the defendant has a prior conviction for human smuggling;
- Adds the crime of human smuggling to the list of crimes that allow for prosecution under the Florida RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization) Act;
- Allows a law enforcement agency to send relevant information obtained pursuant to enforcement of s. 448.095, F.S., to a federal immigration agency;
- Amends the state's domestic security statutes to provide the necessary authority for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate with and provide assistance to the Federal Government in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, and responses to immigration enforcement incidents within or affecting Florida;
- Beginning July 1, 2023, requires private employers with 25 or more employees to use the E-Verify system for new employees (the bill retains the current law requirements for public employers and contractors and subcontractors thereof to use the E-Verify system);
- Alters the defenses for employers using the I-9 Form or E-Verify system; and, beginning July 1, 2024, amends the penalties for an employer's noncompliance to register and use the E-Verify system, including imposing a daily fine of \$1,000 and allowing for the suspension of employer licenses after multiple findings of noncompliance;
- Creates penalties for employers who knowingly employ unauthorized aliens, effective July 1, 2024, including quarterly reporting and the suspension or revocation of employer licenses in certain circumstances;
- Creates a third degree felony for an unauthorized alien to knowingly use a false identification document or who fraudulently uses an identification document of another person, to obtain employment;
- Prohibits a county or municipality from providing funds to any person, entity, or organization for the purpose of issuing an identification card or other document to an individual who does not provide proof of lawful presence in the United States;
- Prohibits a person from operating a motor vehicle if his or her driver's license is issued by another state which exclusively provides such a license to undocumented immigrants who are unable to prove lawful presence in the United States when the licenses are issued;
- Provides that certain existing exemptions from obtaining a Florida driver license for nonresidents do not apply for undocumented immigrants;
- Repeals the statute that allows an applicant to the Florida Bar who is an unauthorized immigrant to be admitted to the Bar by the Florida Supreme Court if certain conditions are met effective November 1, 2028;
- Requires a person who is in the custody of a law enforcement agency and is subject to an immigration detainer to submit a DNA sample when he or she is booked into a jail, correctional, or juvenile facility;
- Requires any hospital that accepts Medicaid to include a question on its admission or registration forms inquiring about whether the patient is a United States citizen, is lawfully present in the United States, or is not lawfully present in the United States;
- Requires each hospital to provide a quarterly report to the Agency for Health Care Administration, detailing the number of emergency department visits or hospital admissions by patients who responded to the above question in each category; and
- Appropriates a nonrecurring sum of \$12 million from the General Revenue Fund to the Division of Emergency Management for the 2023-2024 fiscal year for the Unauthorized Alien Transport Program created in ch. 2023-3, L.O.F.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023, except where otherwise provided.

*Vote: Senate 27-10; House 83-36*



## A FINAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: WHAT MOVES YOU TO STAY INVOLVED IN LULAC?

This edition of LULAC News highlights many of the battles LULAC is still engaged in every day all across the country. We made the stories longer to give you a deeper look and see the facts, reasons, and examples of why the mission of LULAC still matters.

My journey as a storyteller is not really work the way others who toil every day in the hot sun, through the night, or maybe do both to support themselves and their families. They are the real heroes. No, my task is to share their lives with you and hopefully help us all feel more connected with each other.

To say it's a hot summer is an understatement. Yes, our communities in the Southwest are dealing with record heat, while the Northeast has been affected by smoke from wildfires in Canada. Yet, the political climate is changing too, getting worse for millions of Latinos in several states, led by Texas and Florida.

Now, our 2023 LULAC Convention and Expo give all of us, members, corporate sponsors, community allies, and other stakeholders, a chance to reconnect, discuss, and yes, debate with mutual respect the way forward for the League into the 2024 election and all the work being done and yet unfinished.

I have enjoyed meeting many of you while writing the *LULAC News* Summer 2023 edition. Others, whom I already know, thank you for always taking my calls, emails, and reminders for stories, pictures, and support. I love and respect each and all of you, for you are the LULAC familia.

Whatever your heart and soul motivate you to stay involved in LULAC, keep that fire burning. This is our watch, our time to stay awake and alert for nuestra gente.

**LULAC is you, and together, we are the League of United Latin American Citizens!** There is no other member organization that does what we do. May we never forget, and may God continue to bless our work.

In Unity,

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*Editor*

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