

# 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL *Celebración* de EXCELENCIA

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## RECOGNITION PROGRAM

### WELCOME

SARITA BROWN, President, *Excelencia* in Education

### REMARKS

REPRESENTATIVE TONY CÁRDENAS (CA), Member, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Education Taskforce

JUSTIN RODRIGUEZ, State Representative (TX), and Board Member, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) and NALEO Educational Fund

### PRESENTATION OF THE 2014 EXAMPLES OF *EXCELENCIA*

DEBORAH SANTIAGO, Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Policy, *Excelencia* in Education

### GREETINGS

DIANA NATALICIO, President, University of Texas at El Paso

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

JULIET GARCIA, Executive Director, University of Texas Institute of the Americas

### RECOGNITION OF PARTNERSHIPS ENSURING AMERICA'S FUTURE

ACT, INC.

Jon Whitmore, CEO

UNIVISION COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Ivelisse Estrada, Senior Vice President Corporate Relations & Community Empowerment, and  
Honorary Board Member, *Excelencia* in Education

### CLOSING COMMENTS

*Reception directly follows program*

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## FOREWORD

In 2004, we launched *Excelencia* in Education in the nation's capitol to put a Latino lens on critical issues in postsecondary education and to provide intentional, strategic and tactical responses to meeting the challenge of accelerating Latino student success. In establishing the organization, we have built a portfolio that links research, policy, and practice to support Latino higher educational achievement. In the process, we created venues and opportunities to examine critical issues from new perspectives and reconsider traditional efforts in a post-traditional context that can benefit all students.

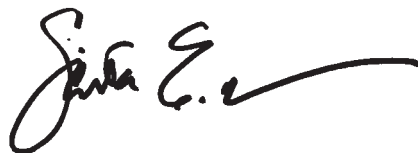
Premier in our work is Examples of *Excelencia*, the only evidence based national initiative to identify and publicize programs that accelerate Latino student success in postsecondary education. It functions, in part, as an organizing and communication campaign that redirects the field from the repetitive focus on problems to striving for student success solutions. Examples of *Excelencia* has created new energy, stirred competition, and started a network within higher education to discover and implement innovations that are effective with all students.

This evening we gather to announce the 2014 Examples of *Excelencia* at the annual *Celebracion de Excelencia*.

The programs being recognized today are at the forefront of meeting the challenge of improving higher educational achievement for Latino students and we congratulate them for their current and continued efforts. During the recognition program and in the compendium you will find more detailed information about these outstanding programs, the finalists, and honorable mentions. In the coming months video profiles of professionals and students in the programs will be available on our website, [www.EdExcelencia.org](http://www.EdExcelencia.org).

By sharing what works we hope to support educators, community leaders, funders, and policymakers to take an asset-based approach to serving Latino students. Ultimately we strive to inspire and support replicating, and bringing to scale evidence-based practices that serve Latino students and thus serve the country.

Sarita E. Brown



President

Deborah A. Santiago



Chief Operating Officer & Vice President for Policy

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## 2014 BACCALAUREATE LEVEL EXAMPLE OF EXCELENCIA

### **Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program**

University of Illinois at Chicago – Chicago, IL

**The LARES (Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services) Program** was founded in 1975 to improve Latino students' college level skills in math, reading, writing, and critical thinking while developing leadership skills. The LARES program also collaborates with schools, community colleges, social services and community agencies to facilitate college access.

In the past 10 years, Latino freshmen enrollment at UIC has increased by 80% and since the Fall of 1991, the six-year Latino graduation rate increased from 25% to 49%. During recruitment season, LARES assisted more than 10,000 prospective students.

*Hugo Teruel, Director*

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## 2014 BACCALAUREATE LEVEL FINALISTS

### **Achieving in Research Math and Science (ARMAS) Center**

New Mexico Highlands University • Las Vegas, NM

### **Community Fellows Program of the Community-Based Learning Program**

Mount Holyoke College • South Hadley, MA

### **CMAS Academic Achievers Program**

University of Houston • Houston, TX

### **Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program**

University of Florida • Gainesville, FL

## 2014 BACCALAUREATE LEVEL HONORABLE MENTIONS

### **CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative**

California State University, Northridge • Northridge, CA

### **GANAS (Gaining Access 'N Academic Success)**

California State University, East Bay • Hayward, CA

### **Imperial Valley University Partnership**

San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus • Calexico, CA

### **Spanish Language Family Orientation**

University of North Texas • Denton, TX

### **The Nepantla Program**

Nevada State College • Henderson, NV



## CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative

### COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

California State University, Northridge  
[www.ecs.csun.edu/aims2](http://www.ecs.csun.edu/aims2)

### GOALS

The HSI-STEM Initiative aims to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students who successfully transfer from Glendale Community College (GCC), and College of the Canyons (COC) to California State University, Northridge, to pursue majors in Engineering and/or Computer Science.

### DESCRIPTION

In October 2011 the College of Engineering and Computer Science at California State University, Northridge, was awarded a five-year, \$5.5 million HSI STEM grant by the U.S. Department of Education to implement a program designed to increase the number of low-income, Hispanic and other underrepresented students graduating from CSUN with engineering and computer science majors. This collaborative project entitled AIMS<sup>2</sup> (for Attract, Inspire, Mentor and Support Students), is led by CSUN, in partnership with Glendale Community College (GCC) and the College of the Canyons (COC). Students enrolled in the AIMS<sup>2</sup> cohorts have access to special mentoring and advisement by faculty, tutoring and peer mentoring, social activities, field trips and opportunities to take part in summer research projects. Students enrolled in the program receive a stipend to motivate and inspire them to succeed. Outreach activities by cohort students to other colleges and high schools helps raise awareness of the grant and encourages future students. Since 2012, more than 160 students have been served in three cohorts and 67% have been Latino. The program has served 87 first-time transfer students at CSUN, 39 at GCC, and 36 at COC.

### OUTCOMES

- On average, cohort participants when compared with a control group, completed 5.9 more units (30 units/year), earned a cumulative GPA of 3.03 vs. 2.38, and experienced a higher persistence rate (97% vs. 79%).
- Of participating students, 40% have completed degree programs.
- Student-faculty interaction has increased in all three campuses.

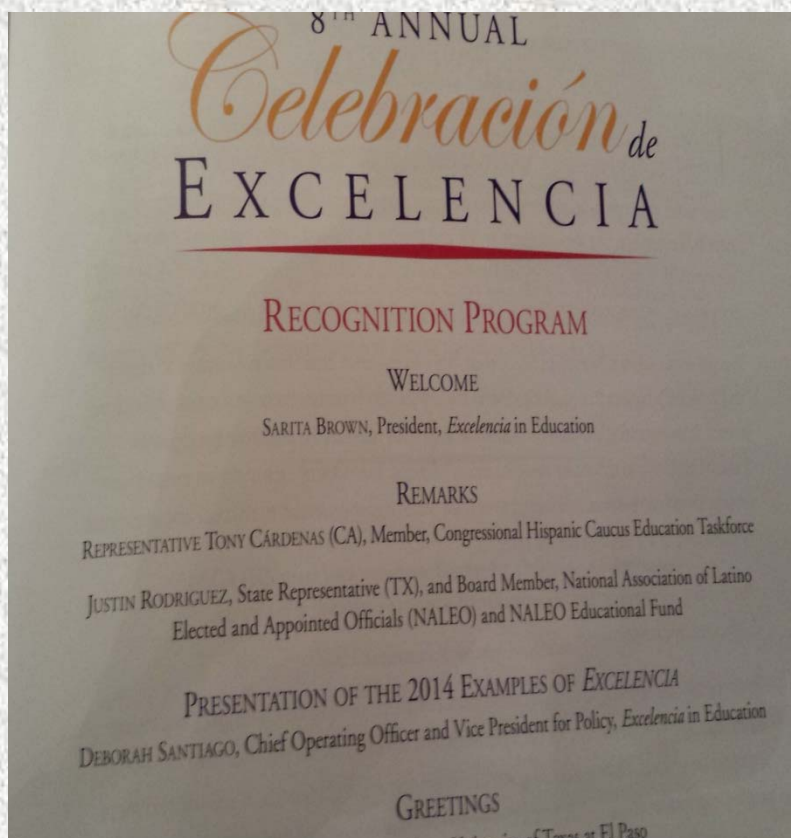
### KEY PERSONNEL

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# CSUN SHINE

## *Celebracion de Excelencia: 9/30/14*



"This year's Examples of *Excelencia* and finalists are at the forefront of meeting the challenge of improving higher educational achievement for Latino students," said **Sarita Brown, president of *Excelencia* in Education**. "No longer should policymakers and institutional leaders ask how to improve college success for Latinos – we have the largest accumulation of proven examples and tested strategies that show them how. Today's question is do leaders have the will to put these practices into action."

- **U.S. Rep. Tony Cárdenas (San Fernando Valley, Calif.)** brought greetings on behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. He congratulated *Excelencia* in Education and the Examples of *Excelencia* program, highlighting the California State University, Northridge's Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative, an institution from his congressional district who received recognition as an Honorable Mention in the bachelor's degree category. Cárdenas urged the audience never to pass up an opportunity to mentor Latino students toward success.

See more at: <http://www.edexcelencia.org/media/press-releases/excelencia-announces-top-programs-increasing-latino-student-success>



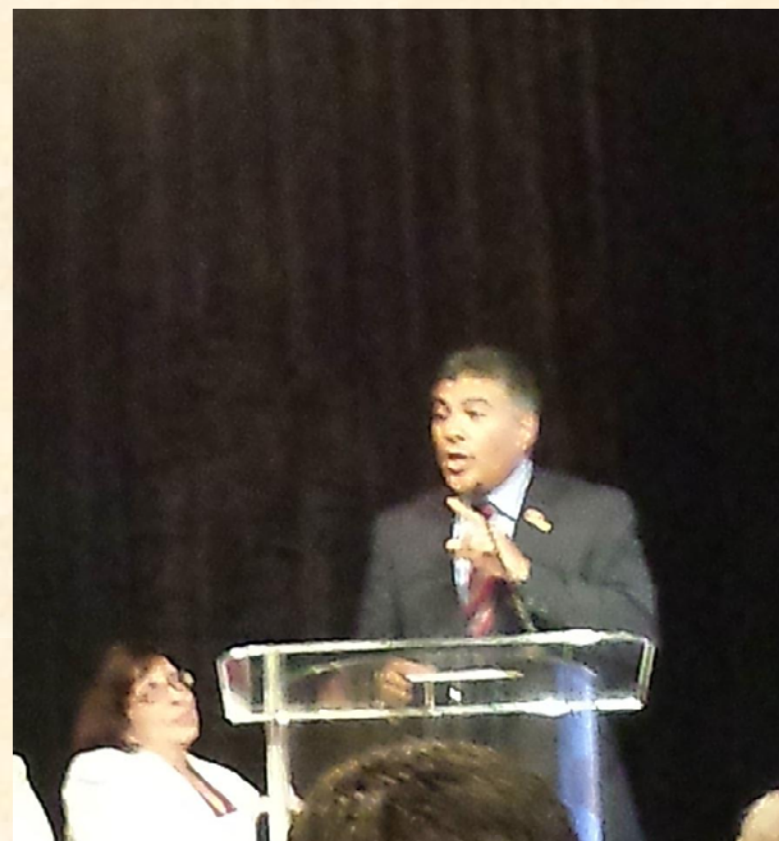


**CSUN  
SHINE**

## *Excelencia Foundation Recognition: 9/30/14*



Anwar, Ramesh, Sarah, Richard (above)  
Richard, Bruno, Anwar, Ramesh (below)



Congressman Cardenas' remarks  
President Sarita Brown looks on