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10 Trendsetting Institutions Certified with Seal of *Excelencia* for Intentionally Serving Latino Students

Excelencia in Education Continues to Catalyze Change
With Transformational Strategy to Certify Colleges and Universities

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 29, 2021) – *Excelencia* in Education, the nation’s premier authority on efforts accelerating Latino student success in higher education, announced today 10 exemplar institutions earned the Seal of *Excelencia* certification in 2021:

- California State University, Fresno (Fresno State)
- California State University, Fullerton (CSUF)
- Miami Dade College (MDC)
- San Diego State University (SDSU)
- Texas A&M University – San Antonio (TAMUSA)
- University of California, Merced (UCM)
- University of California, Riverside (UCR)
- University of Central Florida (UCF)
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV)
- Wilbur Wright College (WWC)

This year’s cohort of 10 trendsetting institutions join a prestigious group of [14 Seal certified institutions](#) in the country ensuring America’s future through their unwavering commitment to intentionally SERVE Latino students, while serving all.

“These Seal certified institutions have been able to articulate and demonstrate they are modeling the behavior we need to see to accelerate Latino student success,” said Deborah Santiago, Co-founder and CEO of *Excelencia* in Education. “They are having measurable impact in changing the face of higher education.”

The proof is in the numbers. Of the thousands of colleges and universities across the country, the 135 presidents and chancellors of the 170 institutions in the organization’s network, [Presidents for Latino Students Success](#), enroll one in four of all Latino students in higher education. More importantly, these institutions account for one in three of all Latino graduates.

Santiago added, “These 24 Seal certified institutions are trendsetters. Combined, they enrolled 10% of all Latino college students and graduated 12% of all Latinos in the U.S. That is powerful and says a lot about their intentionality.”

An institution earns the Seal by demonstrating alignment across the three core areas of data, practice, and leadership, which show:

- Evidence of effectiveness and intentionality in institutional practices serving Latino students
- Positive momentum for Latino student progress in their data
- Dedication to transforming the institution into an environment where Latino students thrive
- Strategies in leadership that clearly articulate institutional focus on advancing Latino student success

Today's announcement was made during a hybrid, virtual/small in person gathering broadcasted nationally from The Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. James Kvaal, the U.S. Department of Education Under Secretary, delivered remarks.

Excelencia began Seal certification in 2019 as one of the organization's transformational strategies to lead colleges and universities to go beyond simply enrolling Latino students. The Seal provides the means to use data and practice to instill intentionality in serving Latino students.

"We are proud that by creating the Seal of *Excelencia*, we have catalyzed a transformation in higher education," said Sarita Brown, *Excelencia's* Co-founder and President. "It is gratifying to see that even during a pandemic and national reckoning for social justice, we doubled the number of institutions who were Seal certified this year. That shows a need and real desire to accelerate Latino student success. *Excelencia* shows how institutions can lead the way through these challenging times."

The Seal is not a ranking, nor an award. It is a rigorous verification process that culminates with certification. It is part of *Excelencia's* tactical and systemic approach to:

- Closing the education equity gap
- Meeting a goal of 6.2 million Latino students attaining college degrees by 2030
- Supporting America's civic and workforce needs by effectively preparing Latinos, now the nation's second largest ethnic population

The 10 institutions earned Seal certification by demonstrating specific inclusive strategies, implementing programs with evidence of effectiveness, and registering results that showed they are intentionally serving Latino students amongst all of their students. For examples of how the institutions are intentionally SERVING their Latino and other post-traditional students, visit the [Excelencia website](#).

"*Excelencia* sees more institutions are striving to hold themselves accountable to intentionally SERVE Latino students with the Seal of *Excelencia*," Brown said. "The institutions that earned it – as well as those striving to earn it – have told us that the Seal application process led to growth and institutional changes to better serve Latino students and all students.

"What they are accomplishing is the student success this country needs in order for the growing Latino population to be the educated workforce and engaged civic leaders our country needs now and, in the future," Brown continued. "This is the reason we started the Seal of *Excelencia* in 2018. Now, it is here, and everyone can see the results happening in real time. This is a movement that is proving, unequivocally, it can be done."

About *Excelencia* in Education

Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting Latino student achievement, conducting analysis to inform educational policies, and advancing institutional practices while collaborating with those committed and ready to meet the mission. Launched in 2004 in the nation's capital, *Excelencia* has established a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy's needs for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leaders. For more information, visit:

<https://www.edexcelencia.org/>