



Contact: media@EdExcelencia.org

Excelencia in Education Announces Four Examples of What Works for Latino Student Success in 2020

Higher Education Programs Receive National Recognition for Strategies Advancing Equity for Latinos

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 1, 2020) – *Excelencia* in Education, the nation’s premier authority on efforts accelerating Latino student success in higher education, has recognized four evidence-based programs from across the country as the 2020 Examples of *Excelencia*.

In the midst of a global pandemic and continuing epidemic of systemic inequities in higher education, *Excelencia* remained resolute to identify programs at the forefront of advancing equity for Latino students. Examples of *Excelencia* was created in 2005 and today still is the only national initiative to recognize and promote evidence-based practices accelerating Latino student success in higher education. These evidence-based programs at the institution and community level are national exemplars of what works for Latino students.

“Identifying and advancing what works is central to *Excelencia*’s tactical plan to accelerate Latino student success,” said Deborah Santiago, CEO of *Excelencia* in Education. “We look to these evidence-based practices and the leaders working directly with students and community as exemplars of what others can do to ensure our students are served well.”

“By promoting what works for Latino students in higher education, *Excelencia* increases national awareness of efforts effectively engaging the growing Latino student population,” shared Sarita Brown, President of *Excelencia* in Education. “We are relentless, as are these programs, in highlighting the benefits to institutions and this country of intentionally serving Latino and other post-traditional students.”

The four 2020 Examples of *Excelencia* by category are:

Associate Level: Mi Casa Es Su Casa at Lone Star College-North Harris (Houston, TX). The program connects Hispanic community college students to the local campus community, acclimates them to the rigors of academic life, helps them succeed for the duration of their college career, and prepares them to achieve in college and beyond. In Fall 2019, 68% of Latino program participants persisted to second year compared to the institutional average of 50% and overall program average of 60%.

Baccalaureate Level: Arizona’s Science, Engineering and Math Scholars (ASEMS) Program at the University of Arizona (Tucson, AZ). ASEMS provides support services toward graduation for underrepresented, majority Latino, undergraduate STEM majors. Of Fall 2015 first-time, Latino freshmen, 93% were retained to their fourth year and 81% remained STEM majors.

To learn more about the 2020 Examples of *Excelencia* visit:
<https://www.edexcelencia.org/2020-examples-excelencia>

Graduate Level: Latinx Leadership Initiative (LLI) at Boston College School of Social Work (Chestnut Hill, MA). LLI trains and supports Latino, bilingual MSW and PhD students to transform how the social work profession works with Latinx communities in the United States. The Initiative has a network of 148 Latino alumni across 23 states that support current students as advisors and mentors. Of program graduates, 100% have secured full-time positions and many are now in leadership positions informing practice and serving their community.

Community-Based Organization Level: Scholar Program at Generation Hope (Washington, DC). The Scholar Program empowers teen parents—a majority of whom are Latino—to attain a college degree, professional success, and economic stability by providing mentoring, emotional support, and financial resources needed for them to thrive in college, thereby driving a two-generation solution to poverty. Of Latino program participants, 59% graduate college within six years and 90% persist through first year of college. In comparison, nationally, only 50% of Latino college students graduate within six years and 71% of students persist through their first year of college.

The 2020 Examples were announced during the organization's annual *Celebración de Excelencia*, which was held virtually for the first time. *Excelencia* received 112 program submissions this year representing 24 states, DC, and Puerto Rico. The four Examples and 16 finalists are now featured on *Excelencia*'s website in the [Growing What Works Database](#)—the only national online, searchable database for institutional leaders, funders, and policymakers interested in identifying what works for Latino students.

Examples of *Excelencia* begins annually with a national call for nominations encouraging individuals and programs to share initiatives accelerating Latino student success. *Excelencia* reviews all programs and identifies finalists using rigorous criteria that are then presented to a national selection committee composed of higher education leaders, grantmakers, and stakeholders. The committee assesses the strength of innovative, intentional, culturally relevant, and effective high-impact practices tailored to Latino students and their communities to select the four Examples of *Excelencia*.

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: <http://www.EdExcelencia.org>.

Examples of *Excelencia* expands on the legacy of work first began in 1999 by its two visionary leaders, Deborah Santiago and Sarita Brown. Since 2005, *Excelencia* in Education has received over 1,000 program submissions; recognized over 300 programs for their impact in accelerating Latino student success; and raised and awarded \$2 million to the programs making a difference for Latino students to support their sustainability and expansion.

###

**To learn more about the 2020 Examples of *Excelencia* visit:
<https://www.edexcelencia.org/2020-examples-excelencia>**