



WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON  
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS

# SUMMIT ON EDUCATION REFORM AND HISPANIC EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Sept. 11, 2008  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, D.C.

**SUMMIT ON  
EDUCATION REFORM  
AND HISPANIC EDUCATION  
ATTAINMENT**

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*Presented by*



**WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON  
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR  
HISPANIC AMERICANS**



**U.S. Department of  
Education**

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This program contains information about public and private organizations for the reader's information. Inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any views expressed, or products or services offered.



## OVERVIEW

On Oct. 12, 2001, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13230, creating the President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. The executive order also established the office of the White House Initiative at the U.S. Department of Education to provide staff support and assistance to the commission in fulfilling its charge to examine the underlying causes of the education achievement gap existing between Hispanic American students and their non-Hispanic peers.

The White House Initiative believes that two essential factors help increase the education attainment of Hispanic students—partnerships and Hispanic family involvement. Since 2001, the White House Initiative has worked collaboratively with a wide range of partner organizations and stakeholder groups across the country to disseminate valuable education information, research and practices to Hispanic parents, families and entire communities. The centerpiece of this information draws on the important options and opportunities available to parents and families under *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). The White House Initiative also has expanded its partnerships to increase awareness of and develop strategies to reduce the high Hispanic high school dropout rate as well as to promote Hispanic education attainment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). These partnerships, coupled with the distribution of education information, have enabled Hispanic parents to make informed decisions about their children’s education.

Increasing awareness and sharing information are central to convening this summit on education reform and Hispanic education attainment. The summit will focus on the promising practices being implemented nationwide and the positive outcomes they are producing for Hispanic students.

Speakers and participants represent a wide cross-section of stakeholders from across the nation, including: representatives from Hispanic parent and family involvement groups; community-based, nonprofit and faith-based organizations; Hispanic-serving schools and school districts; local, state and federal government; business; Hispanic STEM associations; and education officials.



## PROGRAM

8:30 a.m.	Registration
9 a.m.	Welcome
9:15–9:45 a.m.	<i>No Child Left Behind</i> and the State of Hispanic Education Attainment

*No Child Left Behind* set in motion a historic transformation of the public education system. The core belief behind the change is that every child matters and every child can learn. According to the latest reports from the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the College Board, proficiency scores in reading and math and passing scores in Advanced Placement subjects are increasing for all students. This session will present data that shows that *NCLB* is working and is helping close the academic and achievement gaps for Hispanic students.

**Susan Aud**  
*Senior Advisor*  
Office of Planning, Evaluation and  
Policy Development  
U.S. Department of Education

9:45–10:30 a.m.	<b>Partnership to Address Hispanic Dropouts</b>
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The U.S. Department of Education is taking steps to ensure all states use the same formula to calculate how many students graduate from high school on time, and how many drop out. The data will be made public in a uniform manner so that parents, families and other stakeholders can compare how students of every race, background and income level are performing. A broad range of organizations also can use this data to address the exceedingly high rate of high school dropouts in Hispanic communities nationwide. This session will highlight a national campaign to address America's high school dropout crises. America's Promise Alliance, in particular, is implementing a five-year plan to address the nation's high school dropout crisis through its partnership network. As part of this plan, the alliance will sponsor dropout prevention summits over a two-year period in all 50 states and in at least 50 cities to increase awareness, encourage collaboration and facilitate action in those states and communities that want to improve their graduation rates.

*Briefing*  
**Adam Chavarria**  
*Executive Director*  
White House Initiative on  
Educational Excellence for  
Hispanic Americans

*Presentation*  
**Charles Hiteshew**  
*Chief Operating Officer*  
America's Promise Alliance

**10:30–10:45 a.m.**

**U.S. Department of Education  
Communication and  
Outreach Resources**

The Office of Communications and Outreach (OCO) supports the secretary's message to the public on *NCLB* and education reform and leads the Department's communications and outreach efforts. OCO oversees press relations, contacts with organizations, and communication with parents, educators, students, and residents. It also serves as a liaison for interagency and intergovernmental initiatives and programs, such as the Presidential Scholars Program and Book Donation Campaign. Additionally, it manages the production and distribution of Department publications, such as the *Tool Kit for Hispanic Families*, among others. This session will address how OCO serves as the primary point of contact and resource for parents, educators, students, organizations, and the general public through its exhibit and conference program and dissemination of education resources, including Spanish and bilingual education information.

**Lauren M. Maddox**  
*Assistant Secretary for  
Communications and Outreach*  
Office of Communications and  
Outreach  
U.S. Department of Education

**10:45–11 a.m.**

**Break**

11–11:45 a.m.

## Early Childhood Development and School Readiness

Early childhood development and school readiness are important provisions of *NCLB*. This session will highlight programs that are transforming existing early education programs into centers of excellence that provide high-quality early education to young children, especially those from low-income families. Preparing young children, especially English Language Learners (ELLs), to enter kindergarten with the essential language, cognitive, and early reading skills to prevent reading difficulties and ensure scholastic success is vital for continuous academic achievement. El Valor is an example of an organization that is working to meet the education needs of ELLs and children with disabilities.

### *Briefing*

**Sharon E. Yandian**

*Early Language Specialist*

Office of Head Start

U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services

### *Presentations*

**Maria E. Lopez**

*Director*

Institutional Advancement

El Valor

**Clara Lopez**

*Vice President*

Children's Services

El Valor

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## Parent and Family Involvement

As children's first teachers, parents and families play critical roles in helping to ensure their children's academic success, and even more so under *NCLB*, which provides options and choices for parents in obtaining a quality education for their children. Families represent a significant resource in the Hispanic community and have for generations. Although families take an active role in caring for one another and providing financial and emotional support to members, many families do not always know how to navigate the education system. This session will address the importance of the parental role in the education process.

Organizations such as the Parent Institute for a Quality Education (PIQE) are training and engaging parents to be active partners in their children's education.

*Briefing*

**Doug Mesecar**

*Assistant Deputy Secretary*

Office of Innovation and

Improvement

U.S. Department of Education

*Presentation*

**David Valladolid**

*President and CEO*

Parent Institute for Quality

Education

**Ana Burns**

*Parent and PIQE Graduate*

**12:30–1:45 p.m.**

**Lunch and Address**

**Anna Escobedo Cabral**

*Treasurer*

U.S. Department of the Treasury

**1:45–2:30 p.m.**

***NCLB: From Policy to Practice***

Until the passage of *NCLB*, the state of Hispanic education had changed very little. It was not surprising, then, that the chief recommendation of the President's Advisory Commission called for the full implementation and rigorous enforcement of *NCLB*. Recent improvements in the academic achievement of Hispanic students are due, in part, to *NCLB*. These results are a testament to the need to reinforce early childhood development, parental and family involvement, academic preparation, accountability, and highly qualified teachers—all elements of *NCLB*. This session will highlight efforts to strengthen education reform and to put policy into practice in order to attain increased success in our schools. Hidalgo Independent School District, Hidalgo, Texas, is one of a growing number of Hispanic-serving school districts that are implementing elements of *NCLB* to improve education outcomes.

*Briefing*  
**Kerri Briggs**  
*Assistant Secretary*  
Office of Elementary and Secondary  
Education  
U.S. Department of Education

*Presentation*  
**Eduardo Cancino**  
*Superintendent*  
Hidalgo Independent School  
District

2:30–3 p.m.

### Keynote Address

**Margaret Spellings**  
*Secretary*  
U.S. Department of Education

3–3:45 p.m.

### Academic Preparation and College Completion

Many low-income and Hispanic students who graduate from high school find themselves academically unprepared to undertake the rigors of a college education. Those who enroll in college often find themselves taking remedial classes to keep pace with their non-Hispanic peers. It is imperative that high schools equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed at the postsecondary level or to enter an increasingly competitive workforce. This session will address the need for rigorous academic preparation and the importance of taking Advanced Placement classes.

*Briefing*  
**Cheryl Oldham**  
*Acting Assistant Secretary*  
Office of Postsecondary Education and  
*Chief of Staff* to the Under Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education

*Presentation*  
**James Montoya**  
*Vice President*  
Higher Education Relationship  
Development  
The College Board

3:45–4:15 p.m.

## National Math and Science Initiative

The National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) represents an expanding effort to work with states and education-focused organizations that are providing low-income schools and school districts with the rigorous coursework that Hispanic students need to enroll and persist in, and ultimately graduate from, postsecondary institutions. The NMSI is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding programs that have a proven impact on math and science. This session will address how NMSI aims to significantly increase the achievement of students in mathematics and science courses and to graduate more qualified mathematics and science teachers by scaling up programs that have demonstrated a positive impact.

**John Winn**

*Chief Program Officer*

National Math and Science

Initiative

4:15 p.m.–5 p.m.

## Hispanic Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education

The impetus for improving education for Hispanics in the STEM fields was derived from the American Competitiveness Initiative President George W. Bush announced in his January 2006 State of the Union. At a subsequent White House Initiative conference, a diverse group of stakeholders emerged, including representatives from the corporate sector, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, K–12 schools, Hispanic STEM associations and nonprofit organizations, with the aim of improving Hispanic education attainment in STEM disciplines. This session will highlight the plans being implemented by a group of some of the nation's leading Hispanic STEM associations and other stakeholder groups that focus on collaborative efforts to increase the supply of Hispanic talent in the STEM fields.

*Briefing*

**Valerie Reyna**

*Cognitive Psychologist, Professor*

Cornell University

*Codirector*

Center for Behavioral Economics  
and Decision Research

Cornell University

*Member*

National Mathematics Advisory Panel

*Presentation*

**Mike Acosta**

*Director*

U.S.-Mexico Foundation for

Science Border Office

Office of University Relations

The University of Texas at El Paso

5 p.m.

Close



## BIOGRAPHIES

### HONORED SPEAKERS

#### Margaret Spellings

*Secretary*

U.S. Department of Education

Margaret Spellings is the U.S. Secretary of Education. As the first mother of school-aged children to serve as education secretary, Spellings has a special appreciation for the hopes and concerns of American families.

Secretary Spellings is working to ensure that every young American has the knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century. She has partnered with states to implement and enforce the *No Child Left Behind Act*, which commits our schools to bringing all students up to grade level or better in reading and math by 2014. The law has led to rising test scores and shrinking achievement gaps in states across the country.

Secretary Spellings has been a leader in reform to make education more innovative and responsive. She supported teachers with new financial incentives for gains in student achievement and parents with new educational choices and options. She announced new rules to ensure that students with disabilities and English language learners are educated to the highest standards. She also proposed the landmark Plan for Higher Education that would improve accessibility, affordability and accountability.

Secretary Spellings believes we must not retreat from the world in the face of increased competition. She is leading the effort to pass President George W. Bush's American Competitiveness Initiative, which would strengthen math and science instruction and encourage high schools to offer more rigorous and advanced coursework. She worked to implement Academic Competitiveness and National SMART grants, which are providing millions of dollars to low-income students who major in math, science or critical foreign languages.

Prior to her tenure as education secretary, Spellings served as assistant to the president for domestic policy, where she helped create the *No Child Left Behind Act* and crafted policies on education, immigration, health care, labor, transportation, justice, housing, and other elements of the president's domestic agenda. Previously, Spellings worked for six years as senior adviser to then Gov. George W. Bush with responsibility for developing and implementing the governor's education reforms and

policies. From the White House and the state house to the school board and college campus, Spellings has been involved with education policy at every level.

Born in Michigan, Spellings moved with her family at a young age to Houston, where she attended public schools. She graduated from the University of Houston with a B.A. in political science.

**Anna Escobedo Cabral**

*Treasurer*

U.S. Department of the Treasury

Anna Escobedo Cabral was nominated on July 22, 2004, by President George W. Bush to serve as treasurer of the United States. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Nov. 20, 2004.

Immediately prior to taking this office, Cabral served as director of the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Latino Initiatives, where she led a pan-institutional effort to improve Latino representation in exhibits and public programming among the Institution's 19 museums, five research centers and the National Zoo. From 1999 to 2003, Cabral served as president and CEO of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., which partners with Fortune 500 companies to increase Hispanic representation in employment, procurement, philanthropy and governance. Under her leadership, the organization published a best-practices series and instituted a partnership with Harvard Business School to provide executive training programs in Corporate Governance Best Practices to community leaders.

From 1993 to 1999, Cabral served as deputy staff director for the United States Senate Judiciary Committee under Chairman Orrin G. Hatch. The committee's jurisdiction ranges from oversight of the Department of Justice and our nation's criminal and drug enforcement laws to approving federal judicial nominations, and it includes review of immigration-, antitrust-, patent-, trademark-, and technology-related legislation. In addition, she simultaneously served as executive staff director of the U.S. Senate Republican Conference Task Force on Hispanic Affairs from 1991 to 1999. Cabral managed this task force of 25 senators dedicated to ensuring that the concerns and needs of the Hispanic community are addressed by Congress through legislation.

A native of California, Cabral majored in political science at the University of California, Davis, and earned a master's degree in public

administration with an emphasis in international trade and finance from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Also, Cabral most recently earned her law degree from George Mason University School of Law.

Cabral and her husband Victor have four children, Raquel, Viana, Catalina and Victor Christopher.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS**

### **Kerri Briggs**

#### *Assistant Secretary*

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education

Kerri L. Briggs is assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education. She was nominated by President Bush on March 6, 2007, and confirmed by the United States Senate on June 22, 2007. As assistant secretary, Briggs plays a pivotal role in policy and management issues affecting elementary and secondary education. She directs, coordinates and recommends policy for programs designed to assist state and local education agencies with: improving the achievement of elementary and secondary school students; helping ensure equal access to services leading to such improvement for all children, particularly children who are economically disadvantaged; fostering educational improvement at the state and local levels; and providing financial assistance to local education agencies whose local revenues are affected by federal activities.

Briggs served as acting assistant secretary for planning, evaluation and policy development from Sept. 1, 2006, through January 2007. Before that, Briggs served for one year as senior policy adviser in the Office of the Deputy Secretary, where she worked on K–12 policy and regulations pertaining to the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. In 2001, she joined the Department as a senior policy adviser in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, working for four years on the review and approval of state accountability plans for NCLB. She also helped write the original regulations and nonregulatory guidance for implementation of the law's accountability, assessment, flexibility and teacher quality provisions.

A native of Midland, Texas, Briggs moved as a young girl with her family to Houston, where she attended public schools. She earned her bachelor's

degree in political science from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1989, and completed her postgraduate work at the University of Southern California, where she earned a master's and, later, a Ph.D. in education policy and organizational studies.

Briggs came to the Department after working for two years at the University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts in Austin, where she served as a research associate and as the director of evaluation.

The author of many articles on reading, charter schools and school-based management, Briggs was the coeditor of the 2003 book *Reading in the Classroom: Systems for Observation of Teaching and Learning*, published by the P.H. Brookes Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.

Briggs is a former chair of the Junior League of Washington: Literacy Partnerships committee, for which she also served as vice chair from June 2005 through July 2006. She is also a board member for the Aged Women's Home of Georgetown.

**Lauren M. Maddox**

*Assistant Secretary for Communications and Outreach*

Office of Communications and Outreach  
U.S. Department of Education

Lauren M. Maddox is the Department's assistant secretary for communications and outreach. She was nominated to her post by President George W. Bush on Sept. 7, 2006, and confirmed by the Senate two weeks later on Sept. 21. As assistant secretary, she serves as the primary communications adviser to Secretary Margaret Spellings, developing strategies for communicating to the public about the nation's education policies and initiatives. In addition to media relations, Maddox directs both internal and external communications and oversees outreach efforts to key stakeholders, including state elected officials, school district administrators, business and nongovernmental organization leaders, teachers, students and parents.

Born and raised in Milwaukee, Maddox earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. After graduating in 1986, she landed a job as an advertising assistant with Ingalls, Quinn and Johnson in Boston, where she worked for a year before seeking a master's degree in broadcast journalism from the Medill School at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. During the program's winter term, she worked at Medill's Washington, D.C., bureau, found the city to her liking and resolved to return after graduation.

By 1988, Maddox was back in Washington, this time as the communications director for the National Association for Home Care. A year and a half later, she went to Capitol Hill as the press secretary to Rep. Joel M. Hefley (R-Colo.), for whom she worked for five years on judiciary and armed services issues.

In January 1995, Maddox was named deputy press secretary to newly elected Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.). She worked in the speaker's office and with House leadership on the new majority's agenda through 1997, when she left to become senior vice president of communications for the Federation of American Hospitals.

In 1999, Maddox returned to the Hill to work for the House Republican Conference chairman, Rep. J.C. Watts Jr. (R-Okla.), helping to craft a long-term strategic communications plan.

In 2000, leaders at the government affairs firm PodestaMattoon, now Podesta Group, were successful in convincing Maddox to join them as a principal. During her five years there, she served as a legislative and public relations counsel to a broad range of corporate and nonprofit clients, including Google, Heineken USA and Children's National Medical Center, until joining the Department.

## **Doug Mesecar**

### *Assistant Deputy Secretary*

Office of Innovation and Improvement

Secretary Margaret Spellings named Doug Mesecar assistant deputy secretary for innovation and improvement on March 2, 2008. In this position, he leads the Department's efforts to support innovations in education, make strategic investments in promising educational practices, and implement the public school choice and supplemental educational services provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)*. He oversees the administration of 28 grant programs related to education improvement, school choice, teacher quality and technology, including the Public Charter School Program. His office also disseminates information about parental rights and options under *NCLB*.

From March to October 2007, Mesecar served as the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD), coordinating with the Office of Management and Budget, the House and Senate education committees and state education associations. OPEPD is home to the Department's Budget Service, Performance Information Management Service, Policy and Program

Studies Service, and the Office of Educational Technology. Prior to his current post, he was detailed to the Office of the Deputy Secretary to work on revising and strengthening NCLB's Title I regulations and developing the Differentiated Accountability pilot.

Born and raised in Grand Rapids, Mich., Mesecar earned his bachelor's degree in political science Phi Beta Kappa from Hope College in Holland, Mich., where he also played four years on the college's basketball team.

In 1996, he pursued graduate studies in education at the University of Denver, where he also earned a teaching certificate, and then taught fifth grade at Witt Elementary School in the Jefferson County, Colo., School District.

After gaining experience as a teacher, Mesecar moved to Washington, D.C., to work on federal education policy in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2001, he joined the professional staff of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to work for then-Chairman John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) as the panel wrote the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and the *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*.

Mesecar first joined the Department as the chief of staff in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2003, helping to implement *NCLB*. From 2004 to 2005, he was deputy chief of staff in the Office of the Secretary. After two years with the New York-based Edison Schools Inc., as director of state and local affairs, he was asked to return to the Department in 2007.

Mesecar, his wife, Shannon, and their two children, Rohwan and Ellarie, live in Lovettsville, Va.

### **Cheryl Oldham**

#### *Acting Assistant Secretary*

Office of Postsecondary Education and *Chief of Staff* to the Under Secretary of Education

Cheryl Oldham was designated in July 2008 by President George W. Bush to be acting assistant secretary for postsecondary education. She also serves as the chief of staff to Under Secretary of Education Sara Martinez Tucker. The Office of the Under Secretary is responsible for implementing the work of the Secretary's Commission on the Future of Higher Education as well as coordinating policies, programs and activities related to vocational and adult education, postsecondary education and college aid.

Secretary Margaret Spellings appointed Oldham as executive director of her commission in September 2005. In that capacity Oldham was responsible for the management of the commission's work, its members and staff. Until April 2006, she also served as the Department of Education's White House liaison. In this capacity, she oversaw the political personnel process, advised the secretary, and served as the White House's contact to the Department on matters of personnel and political affairs.

Oldham began her career working for then Governor George W. Bush in the Texas Office of State-Federal Relations in Washington, D.C., handling policy matters under the umbrella of health and human services. She moved to the White House in January 2001 and worked on the transition team and ultimately in the Office of Presidential Personnel where her primary responsibility was the recruiting of appointees to the departments of Health and Human Services and Education as well as several sub-cabinet agencies. Oldham went on to serve as associate director in the Office of Cabinet Affairs before moving to the Department of Education in January 2003. She received her Juris Doctor from St. Mary's University School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts from Texas Christian University.

### **Susan Aud**

#### *Senior Advisor*

Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development

Susan Aud has been a senior fellow with the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation since early 2003. She has also been on the James Madison Institute's Research Advisory Council since 2006. Currently Aud is a senior advisor with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development. In recent years she has taught Quantitative Methods in Political Science Research as a professorial lecturer at the Paul H. Nitze School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and Statistical Methods in Policy Analysis at the George Mason University School of Public Policy. While her research initially targeted the economic impact of changes to the market structure of public education, in recent years Aud has focused her research on the specifics of public education finance formulas at both the state and federal levels.

## **Adam Chavarria**

### *Executive Director*

White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans

Adam Chavarria joined the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (White House Initiative) as associate director in June 2001. He presently serves as the executive director, a position to which he was appointed by the Bush administration in December 2003. In this capacity, he is responsible for directing the efforts of the White House Initiative in engaging Hispanic parents, families and communities nationwide as active participants in improving the academic achievement of Hispanic Americans.

Prior to his appointment, Chavarria served for more than eight years as the executive director of the Hispanic College Fund (HCF), a national nonprofit organization founded by Hispanic business leaders in 1993. Chavarria led the HCF, headquartered in Washington, D.C., since its inception, during which time more than \$1 million in scholarships was awarded to over 600 Hispanic students enrolled in colleges and universities across the country. As its executive director, he led the HCF from its start-up to its success as a national scholarship-granting organization. In the process, he forged lasting partnerships with corporations, higher education institutions and the Hispanic business community.

Chavarria was a consultant in Dallas prior to leading the Hispanic College Fund. While in Dallas, he also served as vice president with SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc., a national employment and training organization.

A native of Harlingen, Texas, Chavarria was the first in his family to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees. He received a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Minnesota. As a graduate student, he was selected to attend the United Nations' Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva, Switzerland.

Chavarria has been listed in *Who's Who Among Hispanic Americans* and has been a member of the Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Dallas Association of Mexican American Professionals. He has served as an active member of the U.S. Senate Republican Conference Task Force on Hispanic Affairs Advisory Committee since 1991.

## PRESENTERS

### **Michael Acosta**

#### *Director*

U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science Border Office  
Office of University Relations  
The University of Texas at El Paso

Michael Acosta is the director of external relations in the College of Engineering at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). He is also the director of UTEP's Border Office of the U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science. He has served on the Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists' national board of directors for 13 years and has been instrumental in establishing key technology-based economic development endeavors as well as research and academic projects along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Prior to his current position, Acosta was the director of external relations for the College of Engineering at UTEP, and from 2000 to 2006, he was the associate director of the Institute for Policy and Economic Development at UTEP. He served as the associate director of the Texas Center for Border Economic Development and the Institute for Manufacturing and Materials Management at UTEP from 1994 to 2000. Acosta also taught the electrical-computer engineering senior project (capstone) design courses at UTEP for 10 years (1992–2002).

He is an alumnus of the UTEP College of Engineering, having received his bachelor's degree in 1971. Prior to his career at UTEP, Acosta had a 21-year career with IBM as a technical manager and engineer (1973–94). He has received several awards and recognitions during his career. These include: the MAES Medalla de Oro Award (gold medal) in 1999; the HENAAC National Award for Outstanding Community Service in 2001; and the Small Business Administration Award as the Minority Business Advocate of the Year for the El Paso-West Texas region in 2000.

### **Ana Burns**

#### *Parent and PIQE Graduate*

Ana Burns, a homemaker, is a mother to three children and two foster children. In May 2008, she was a member of the first Fairfax, Va., graduating class of the Parent Institute for Quality Education. Burns, originally from San Salvador, El Salvador, immigrated to Fairfax, Va., 33 years ago to learn English and obtain a high-quality education. Although she attended Northern Virginia Community College, she did not

complete her undergraduate degree. However, Burns is a firm believer in education. Through PIQE, Burns learned the value of being an informed parent and discovered the resources available to her to help her children graduate from high school and go to college.

**Eduardo Cancino**

*Superintendent*

Hidalgo Independent School District

Hidalgo, Texas

Eduardo Cancino has 19 years of experience in public education and currently serves as the superintendent of Hidalgo Independent School District (ISD) in Texas. In this capacity, he has provided leadership for improvement initiatives to support high-quality education for all students, including Hidalgo Early College High School, Full Day Pre-K 3 and 4, Dual Language Program, Adult Literacy Academies, and Summer Educator Internships. These quality educational programs have led to: Hidalgo ISD's rating as the 2006–07 number-one school district in Texas by being awarded the Excellence in Education Award; the Hidalgo Early College High School initiative earning the Gold Medal Award; Hidalgo ISD's ranking number 11 out of 18,000 high schools in the nation; and Hidalgo ISD's rating as the number-one high school in Texas for college readiness by *U.S. News and World Report's* America's Best High Schools edition. In addition, under Cancino's leadership, the school district's Board of Trustees earned the Magna Award from the *American School Board Journal* for being an exemplary school board.

Cancino has experience leading school districts in systemwide continuous improvement initiatives, curriculum alignment and data-driven instruction and has shared effective education practices at the local, state and national levels. He has spoken at such events as the 2008 Auburn University Educational Leadership Summer Institute and the 3rd Annual National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Summit on the State of Latino Education.

Among his many accomplishments, Cancino also has been: an educational consultant for the College Board's Education Service Center, Region One (Southwest region); adjunct faculty member at South Texas Community College and the University of Texas Pan American (UTPA); member of the Texas Statewide Advisory Committee on Equity and Access; member of the National Mathematical Sciences Academic Advisory Committee; subcommittee chair for Educator, Student, Parent College Connection, Junior Achievement National Hispanic Advisory Council; and member of the Hispanic Serving School Districts Advisory Council.

Cancino holds a bachelor of science in mathematics, a master's degree in education and a master of science degree in mathematics and interdisciplinary studies all from UTPA. He is currently completing doctoral course work in educational leadership at UTPA.

**Charles Hiteshew**

*Chief Operating Officer*

America's Promise Alliance

Charles Hiteshew came to the America's Promise Alliance from the DC Education Compact (DCEC), where he served as deputy director after having merged his previous organization, the Public Education Partnership Fund (PEP Fund), with DCEC. At DCEC, he managed the investment portfolio, pooled money for those investments and oversaw internal operations. Prior to that, Hiteshew served as the founding executive director of the PEP Fund, chartered to support the ongoing transformation of D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) through a series of annual investments. In that capacity, he was responsible for board development, strategic planning, investment planning, implementation and evaluation. During his tenure, the PEP Fund leveraged a \$1.2 million investment in a systemwide partnership between DCPS and the College Board, and most recently worked with DCPS and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards on a five-year, \$7 million effort to accredit 500 teachers via the National Board's highly regarded Teacher Certification Program. He coordinated closely with DCEC during that time, and DCEC will assume those investments.

Hiteshew came to the PEP Fund from Venture Philanthropy Partners, where he supported the investment planning process. Prior to that, he spent a year with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of America, where he worked with the local D.C. BBBS affiliate to increase the capacity of its school-based mentoring efforts and measure organizational performance. Hiteshew also ran one of the largest BBBS programs in the country in Fort Worth, Texas, managing more than 1,000 mentor-mentee matches, with a staff of 24 and a budget of \$1.5 million. He previously worked in the Washington region at Communities In Schools (CIS), a premier national dropout prevention organization based in Alexandria, Va. At CIS, Hiteshew was responsible for quality and standards design and implementation while providing management training and technical assistance to CIS programs nationwide.

Hiteshew began his career as a street counselor and a school-based prevention coordinator for a street youth organization based in Boston.

He spent a year in Africa as both a headmaster in a rural secondary school in Kenya, and a World Wildlife Fund project coordinator in Uganda. On his return to the U.S., he coordinated school-to-career services for several years at a Boston high school. Hiteshew received a master's degree in human services management from the Heller School at Brandeis University. After graduation, he became the technical assistance director for the United Way in Boston, and then went on to direct a series of corporate academies within the Boston Public Schools system.

Hiteshew received a bachelor's degree with honors from Amherst College. He is married to Suzan Murray, head veterinarian at the National Zoo. They have three children and live in the Washington, D.C., area.

### **Clara A. López**

*Vice President, Children's Services*

El Valor

Clara A. López is the vice president for Children's Services at El Valor, a nonprofit organization that works with over 3,000 children and their families throughout Cook County, Illinois.

López has more than 25 years experience working with young children, including children with disabilities and their families. During her tenure with El Valor, López has been a Head Start parent and teacher, a curriculum specialist, and director of the Head Start programs. Her classroom experience and commitment to education and training have enabled her to be recognized as a leader in early childhood education by her peers.

Lopez has cochaired the national Head Start Conference for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Region V office and has worked with partners to put research-based curricula into practice. Examples of this curricula include: I Can Problem Solve, a conflict resolution program; Raising the Thinking Child, a program that teaches parents how to implement the I Can Problem Solve program at home; Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training (NCAST), which utilizes a research-based approach to ensure interaction and bonding between mothers and infants; the Father's Initiative, which encourages a father's participation in his child's upbringing; and the Mis Padres, Mis Maestros parent education video and curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of early childhood education. In addition, Lopez has also promoted a Health Advisory Committee dealing with health issues that affect young children and a countywide training program for Spanish-speaking licensed child-care providers. She and her team have taken

these curricula to Mexico, where they have been implemented in schools in the states of Michoacán, Guanajuato and Nuevo Leon.

In addition to her many responsibilities, López has led the development, construction and start-up of El Valor's three children and family centers. Each center works with more than 1,000 families. Her most recent project was the Carlos H. Cantu Children & Family Center, which opened in September 2007.

**Maria E. López**

*Director, Institutional Advancement*  
El Valor

Maria E. López is the director for Institutional Advancement at El Valor, a community-based agency in Chicago that works with infants, toddlers, youths, people with disabilities, and their families. López's role includes the coordination of resource development activities, marketing and media campaigns, policy and advocacy research and implementation, and government and international relations. She also manages El Valor's capital projects, including the planning of the 100,000 square-foot International Inclusion Center for Persons With Disabilities and the recently completed 28,000 square-foot Carlos H. Cantu Children & Family Center that houses home- and center-based programs for children birth to age 5.

**James M. Montoya**

*Vice President*  
Higher Education Relationship Development  
The College Board

James M. Montoya is a national leader in higher education and currently serves as the College Board's vice president for Higher Education Relationship Development. Though best known for his work in the college admission process and the transition from secondary school to college, he has a deep interest in public policy related to education.

He is profiled in the book *American Achievers* by Gus Frias, and has appeared on Ted Koppel's *Nightline* defending the practices of need-blind admission and need-blind financial aid.

Prior to August 2001, he was Stanford University's chief student affairs officer. Before assuming the position of vice provost for Student Affairs in July 1997, he served as Stanford's dean of undergraduate admission from 1991 to 1994, and dean of admission and financial aid from 1994 to 1997. He continues

to serve as a lecturer in the Department of Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University.

A native of San Jose, Calif., Montoya earned a bachelor's degree with academic distinction from Stanford University in 1975 and a master's degree in administration and policy analysis from Stanford's School of Education. At his undergraduate commencement, Montoya received the Dinkelspiel Award, the highest honor bestowed on a graduating senior, in recognition of his scholarly attainments and his outstanding contributions to undergraduate education at Stanford.

In 1980, Montoya accepted the position of director of admissions at Occidental College in California, making him the youngest director of admissions at a leading liberal arts college. In 1985, he headed east to become the director of admissions and then dean of student life at Vassar College in New York.

In 2001, Montoya was named Hispanic Hero of the Bay Area for his contributions to the Latino community. He is also the recipient of the Human Relations Award of the Western Association of College Admission Counselors and the Outstanding Alumnus Award from the Bay Area Chicano-Latino Alumni Association of Stanford University.

In addition to his responsibilities at the College Board, Montoya serves on the Board of Trustees of the Oakwood School in Southern California and on the Advisory Board of the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa. He previously served as a trustee of the College Board in New York (1993–95), and chair of the Guidance and Admission National Assembly (1993–95). In addition, he has served on the boards of the Stanford University Alumni Association; the National Hispanic Institute; TheatreWorks, one of California's premier professional theatre groups; and Hidden Villa, a 1,600-acre farm and wilderness preserve and multicultural center in Los Altos Hills.

**Valerie F. Reyna**

*Professor*

Cornell University

*Codirector*

Center for Behavioral Economics and Decision Research

Cornell University

*Member*

National Mathematics Advisory Panel

Valerie Reyna is professor of human development and psychology at Cornell University, and a codirector of the Center for Behavioral

Economics and Decision Research. Reyna holds a Ph.D. in experimental psychology from Rockefeller University, and publishes regularly in such journals as *Archives of Internal Medicine*, *Cognitive Psychology*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *Psychological Review*, and *Psychological Science*. Her research encompasses human judgment and decisionmaking, numeracy and quantitative reasoning, risk and uncertainty, medical decisionmaking, social judgment, and false memory. Reyna's current research program is focused on: risky decisionmaking in adolescents; risk communication in genetics, cancer and AIDS prevention; and criteria for rationality in decisionmaking. She is a developer of "fuzzy-trace theory," a model of the relation between mental representations and decisionmaking that has been widely applied in law, medicine, and public health. Reyna also teaches an undergraduate and a graduate seminar on risk and rational decisionmaking.

Reyna has been elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She also is a fellow of the: Division of Experimental Psychology; Division of Developmental Psychology; Division of Educational Psychology; Division of Health Psychology of the American Psychological Association; and the American Psychological Society. Reyna has been a visiting professor at the Mayo Clinic, a permanent member of study sections of the National Institutes of Health, and a member on advisory panels for the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences.

Reyna was appointed senior research adviser in the U.S. Department of Education, where she oversaw research grant policies and programs, and was a member of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel. She also has held leadership positions in organizations dedicated to equal opportunity for minorities and women as well as on national executive and advisory boards of centers with similar goals, such as the Arizona Hispanic Center of Excellence, Arizona Association of Chicanos in Higher Education, National Center of Excellence in Women's Health, and Women in Cognitive Science (supported by a National Science Foundation ADVANCE leadership award).

### **David Valladolid**

*President and CEO*

Parent Institute for Quality Education

David Valladolid is the president and CEO of the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), based in San Diego. PIQE is a nonprofit organization founded on two main principles; that every parent loves

their child and wants a better future for them; and, that every child can learn and learning is a natural process. Through free, nine-week training programs, PIQE provides the information and tools that parents, especially low-income families, need to become more involved in their children's education.

Prior to accepting his current position with PIQE, Valladolid was a policy administrator for the United Domestic Workers of America (UDWA). Other positions of note include legislative consultant for Willie Brown of the California State Assembly; chief of staff for Assemblyman Peter Chacon; senior deputy labor commissioner for the California State Department of Industrial Relations; and a civil rights consultant for the California State Department of Fair Employment and Housing. His many accomplishments include the cofounding of coalitions and organizations such as the Law & Justice Coalition; the Latino/a & Indigenous Unity Coalition; the Leadership Training Institute, Chicano Federation; and the Latino Policy Institute.

Valladolid is currently an adviser to the California State PTA Board and is the former San Diego mayoral appointee commissioner for the San Diego Human Relations Commission. Valladolid is also chair emeritus of the board of directors for the Chicano Federation, Inc. He is a member of the Governor's Appointee-Reading and Literature Project Advisory Board; a member of the board of directors for Operation Samahan Clinic; and a member of the National Task Force-Children's Defense Fund, which works to end the "cradle-to-prison pipeline" for Latino and African-American youths.

Valladolid is a graduate of San Diego State University and a seventh-generation Mexican-American. A Vietnam Combat Veteran and a Purple Heart recipient, he and his wife Teresa have four children, Dave, Sara, Maite and Evita.

### **John Winn**

*Chief Program Officer*

National Math and Science Initiative

John Winn has a distinguished career in education policy and a lifelong commitment to quality education for all students. An educator for 35 years, he began his career as an elementary and middle school teacher. He joined the Florida Department of Education in 1984 and held several positions, including that of deputy commissioner and chief of staff before being appointed as the commissioner of education in August

2004. In February 2007, he retired from that position. He then joined the National Mathematics and Science Initiative in March 2007 as the chief program officer for Advanced Placement (AP) and pre-AP courses.

In 1999, Winn joined Gov. Jeb Bush (Fla.) as his education policy coordinator. While in that position, he was responsible for drafting and directing the governor's education budget recommendations and legislative initiatives for all education sectors. These included the A+ Plan for Education, One Florida programs, K–20 education system, and charter district legislation. He was also instrumental in crafting the John McKay Scholarship authorizing legislation. While in this position, Winn played a major role in developing the concept and implementation of measuring annual student learning gains, school grading formula, and the K–20 data warehouse.

Winn returned to the Florida Department of Education with Commissioner Jim Horne to assist in the restructuring of the department and the K–20 education system. There he coordinated the massive restructuring of the Florida School Code, centralized all data and accountability operations, and participated in creating a high-performing senior staff team.

During his tenure as commissioner of education in Florida, student achievement in reading and mathematics reached an all-time high in the state. The achievement gap closed considerably, and students with disabilities and limited English proficiency more than doubled their reading improvement scores. Also, Florida led the nation in the percentage of high school graduates taking at least one AP exam. During the past three years, Florida has rated among the top three states in the increase of minority students taking and passing AP exams.

Winn has built a solid reputation as an authority in statewide implementation of innovative education improvements and on policy issues facing public education at every level. He is respected nationally and throughout the Florida education community. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a commitment to and compassion for improving education quality for all students.

**Sharon E. Yandian**

*Early Language Specialist*

Office of Head Start

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Sharon Yandian is the early language specialist at the Office of Head Start in the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, where she focuses on dual language learning practices and translation issues. Prior to her current position, she was director of the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Technical Assistance Center and vice president and director for the Center for Early Care and Education at the Academy for Educational Development. Yandian also held the positions of training and special projects director for Teaching Strategies, Inc., as well as that of program specialist at the then Head Start Bureau, where she monitored, funded, and provided technical assistance to Migrant Head Start programs nationwide. She served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador, where she was a health educator and a preschool teacher. Yandian holds a master's degree in education in curriculum and instruction, with a particular focus on multicultural bilingual education.

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