



# AVISO NEWSLETTER

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## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

IAHSE celebrates Black History Month by recognizing the invaluable contributions of our black state employees in Illinois. Including our Afro-Latino community. Throughout history, these dedicated individuals have played a crucial role in shaping our state and making significant strides in various fields. Their resilience, leadership, and cultural richness enhance the diversity of our workforce, fostering an inclusive and dynamic environment. Join us in honoring and amplifying the stories of these remarkable individuals who continue to make a lasting impact on our great state. Happy Black History Month!

## 2024 Raíces Report



The Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation (ILLCF) published their 2024 Raíces Report last month. The 2024 Raíces Report contains data on key indicators within the five policy pillars of the ILLCF: Health Equity, Latiné Representation, Economic Justice, Education, and Immigration & Language Access. The Illinois Latino Legislators will use the contents of this report to inform their 2024 legislative initiatives and sponsored bills as they advocate to address the wants and needs of Latiné communities. It is important to note Language Access within Government (Page 34), some possible solutions highlighted include:

- Increase bilingual staff in state government agencies.
  - Translation of materials and services beyond initial or introductory documents.
  - Use different modes of translation services including technology or text messages.
    - Conduct a needs assessment on bilingual speakers needed to meet capacity within the state government and its agencies.
    - Provide standardization, training, and incentives for agencies to adopt best practices in providing culturally responsive service and language services.
  - Update the State Services Assurance Act while also holding state agencies accountable for implementing language access plans.
    - Develop legislation for mandating a specific percentage of staff available to serve non-English speaking populations in state service agencies that include Spanish and other languages to accommodate diverse populations.
  - Use a regional approach to solutions since needs can vary across local levels.
- Click [here](#) to read the report.

## EVENTS

- The Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE) conference will be April 26, 2024 in Northern Illinois University. For more information, [click here](#).
- Latino Unity day will be may 7-8 in Springfield. may 7th will be a half day event. May 8th will be a full day event with an evening reception starting at 6:00 PM by the Latino Caucus. More information coming soon, including registration, please check our [events section our website](#) periodically.
- Our 46th Annual Conference will be October 11, 2024 at the Hilton Chicago/ Oak Brook Hills Resort & Conference Center. More information will be available at a later date.

## CONOCE A TU IAHSE COMPAÑER@

We will be feauturing IAHSE members in our monthly newsletter highlighting our diverse and talented Latino/a/e/x membership. If you wish to be highlighted or wish to nominate another IAHSE member, please email us at [IAHSE.Assoc@illinois.gov](mailto:IAHSE.Assoc@illinois.gov). This month, we will be featuring IAHSE President Mitsi Gallardo.



**Current State Agency & Title:** Illinois Department of Public Health, Administrative Assistant I

**What city are you based in?** Chicago

**How long have you worked for the State of Illinois?** 7 years

**What interested you in working for the State of Illinois & the current agency you are working for?**

My best friend worked for DCFS and kept pushing me to work for the State of Illinois; she thought that I would be an asset to Illinois residents. I have always loved medicine and science, so public health was perfect for me! I absolutely love my job!

**What are your hobbies?** DANCING!! I absolutely LOVE salsa music and dance as much as I can!

**Fun fact about you?** While English is my first language, it is not the first language for either of my parents. My father's first language is Spanish, my mother's was French.

**Any achievements that you wish to share? Professional and/or personal?** I recently graduated with my Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from Northeastern Illinois University. I am a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and I recently became a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). On a personal level, I love to travel and spend time with those I love and care about - including my church family! I believe in the power of prayer!

**Anything else you wish to share with your IAHSE colleagues?** Each of us has a voice; use your voice to stand up for those who can't. Don't let anyone tell you who you are or what you are capable of - you determine that. Let the doubters be amazed by who you are and what you do!

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Illinois General Assembly's 2024 Legislative Session kicked off on January 16. Below are a few bills that have been introduced recently that may be of interest to our members:

## SB2797

Senator Neil Anderson, Aledo- introduced Senate Bill 2797. The bill amends the Department of Central Management Services Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois. Provides that the Department of Central Management Services, in conjunction with the State Employees Retirement System, shall enter into a contract with a qualified and experienced administrator to establish and conduct a State Retiree Medicare Primacy Coordination Audit and Assistance Program to identify retirees who are eligible for Medicare, but not enrolled in Medicare, and to assist those retirees in enrolling in Social Security and Medicare. Provides further duties and requirements for the program. Amends the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois. Provides that the Department of Healthcare and Family Services shall enter into a contract with a qualified and experienced administrator to establish and conduct a Medicare Primacy Coordination Audit and Assistance Program to identify Medicaid recipients who could benefit from Social Security Disability Insurance representation that could provide them with income and ultimately Medicare benefits. Provides further duties and requirements for the program. Sets forth reporting requirements. Effective January 1, 2025. To follow the bill, [click here](#).

## SB3805

Senator Celina Villanueva, Chicago- introduced Senate Bill 3805. The bill amends the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Law. Creates the Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment. Provides that the Office shall assist minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, and other underserved communities and constituencies through targeted programs, resources, and outreach and promotional activities. Provides that the Office may engage in or conduct promoting and conducting outreach efforts to ensure access to State and federal funding opportunities, and assisting minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, and businesses owned by persons with disabilities and other underserved communities and constituencies in applying for and receiving loan funds in the State. Provides that the Office may engage in other specified workshops, public forums, and other functions that assist minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, businesses owned by persons with disabilities, and other underserved communities and constituencies. To follow the bill, [click here](#).

## SB3762

Senator Karina Villa, West Chicago- introduced Senate Bill 3762. The bill creates the Language Equity and Access Act. Requires the Governor's Office of New Americans, in partnership with the Department of Human Services, to: prepare a Language Needs Assessment Report that identifies the languages spoken throughout the State; assist State agencies in the creation of language access plans; provide oversight and central coordination to State agencies in the implementation of language access requirements under this Act; ensure that each State agency develops an internal complaint and review process specific to the provision of language assistance services in addressing complaints in a timely manner; and perform other duties. Requires the Office and Department to work with State agencies to compile available United States Census data on language used across the State to inform the Language Needs Assessment Report. Provides that the report shall be updated every 10 years in conjunction with the decennial federal census. Requires each State agency to prepare and submit a language access plan to the Governor's Office of New Americans. To follow the plan, [click here](#).

As more bills are introduced this session that may affect our membership we will include them in our monthly newsletter. Stay tuned!



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