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LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARMEN LEBRON

I hope this letter finds you well and filled with the same sense of inspiration and enthusiasm that we all experienced during the 35th Annual Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees (IAHSE) Conference. The resounding success of this event was a testament to the dedication and passion of our members, attendees, sponsors, and volunteers. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you. The theme of this year's conference, "Power of the Past, Force of the Future," served as a reminder of the rich cultural heritage and accomplishments of the Hispanic community in Illinois. It was heartening to see how the legacy of our predecessors continues to empower the present and inspire the future. The discussions, workshops, and presentations delved into the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, equipping us with valuable insights for our shared journey.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the state agencies that sponsored the conference. Your support played a pivotal role in making this event a reality. Your commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion within the workplace is truly commendable. We are proud to be partners in this endeavor. Our deepest appreciation goes out to the exhibitors who participated in the IAHSE job fair. The high attendance and enthusiastic engagement in this event were inspiring to see. Your presence and commitment to connecting potential job seekers with opportunities were invaluable. As the number of Latinos in Illinois continues to grow, your involvement becomes even more critical. Latino state employees bring diverse perspectives and experiences that enrich our government and, in turn, the lives of all Illinois residents.

Additionally, I'm pleased to report that we had a positive meeting with state agency directors during the conference, where we discussed the importance of Latino state employment and ways to further enhance opportunities for our community. These discussions were productive and have paved the way for more collaboration in the future.

A special word of gratitude goes to our keynote speaker, Thomas Saenz from MALDEF. His insightful address was both inspiring and thought-provoking, reminding us of the power of advocacy and the importance of our mission. We are deeply thankful for his participation in our conference. We would also like to recognize and express our appreciation to the award recipients of this year's conference. Your contributions to our communities in Illinois are truly remarkable. You are shining examples of the positive change we can bring to our state. Let us not forget the dedicated volunteers who selflessly contributed their time and effort to ensure the success of our conference. Your hard work did not go unnoticed. You made it possible for us to host an event that was both enriching and enjoyable for all.

As we reflect on the achievements of this year's conference, we look forward to next year's event with great anticipation. Once again, thank you for being a part of the 35th Annual IAHSE Conference. Your participation and enthusiasm were integral to its success. Together, we are advancing the cause of IAHSE.

-President Carmen Lebron

PHOTOS FROM RECENT EVENTS



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

On Tuesday, October 24, Governor Pritzker made an announcement regarding a proposal to establish a new state agency responsible for consolidating all early childhood programs and funding. To kick off this multi-year process, Governor Pritzker has signed an Executive Order and will collaborate with the General Assembly on crafting legislation in the spring of 2024.

This newly formed agency will bring together the following programs into a single agency:

- The Early Childhood Block Grant at ISBE, which provides funding for programs such as Preschool for All and the Prevention Initiative home-visiting program.
- The Child Care Assistance Program, Home-Visiting, and Early Intervention services at DHS.
- Daycare licensing, which is currently managed by DCFS.

For more detailed information about this announcement, please [click here](#). We will continue to keep our members informed about how these changes may impact our Latino population. We strongly encourage our members working within the affected agencies and programs to contact their collective bargaining union on the implications of this executive order.

OTHER RESOURCES

The Brookings Institution, in partnership with The Latino Policy forum, produced a [new report](#) analyzing the differences in Latino wealth by geographical region, focusing on assets and debt in six states: Illinois, California, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, and New York. The report also analyzes Latinos from lower-wealth backgrounds describe their lived experiences, particularly around wealth-building barriers and aspirations, to illuminate potential policy directions. To view the report, [click here](#).

HISPANIC STATE EMPLOYEES WORKFORCE UPDATE

As of the end of August, the total number of Hispanics subject to the Personnel Code is approximately 45,319. Hispanic employees represented about 7.5% of the total code employees (3,389). It is worth noting that there are approximately 6,640 veterans employed in code positions which includes 324 Hispanic veterans. The number of Hispanics receiving bilingual pay is approximately 1,409.

(Data source: Illinois Dept. of Central Management Services)

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- Conference attendees should have received an email with a survey link for the sessions they attended. Kindly complete these surveys at your earliest convenience.
- If you are receiving any IAHSE communication on your work e-mail, i.e. @illinois.gov, please update your e-mail with us as soon as possible. All IAHSE communication should be going to your personal e-mail.



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