

Special Report



NUESTRO FUTURO

The 2015 Latino Education Conference took place on November 20 in our nation's capital. LATINO Magazine's sixth annual event brought together several hundred Latino opinion makers, influencers, and community leaders at the Capital Hilton a few blocks from the White House.

Participants also included executives from companies such as ExxonMobil, GM, Lockheed Martin, AT&T, Microsoft, and Cisco; members of the Obama Administration; representatives from



Tony Jimenez, Dalia Smith and Jose Niño

the U.S. Armed Forces; students from High Point, Bladensburg and Elanor Roosevelt High Schools in Prince George's County, MD, as well as 8th graders from Hart Middle School in Washington, DC affiliated with the Communities in Schools



Julie Chavez Rodriguez

program. One common thread running through the panels and roundtable discussions throughout the day was the need for outreach to encourage Latinos to enter the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

"Many more companies are talking the talk," said LATINO Publisher Alfredo Estrada as he opened the conference. "But sometimes they're only talking to themselves, so the message has not gotten through to the Latino community. The purpose of our NUESTRO FUTURO initiative is to spread the word about STEM through Latino media."

Students in the morning sessions were welcomed by Arjuna Rivera, Lockheed Martin, the MST Business Area Information Security Officer and



NUESTRO FUTURO
 2015
LATINO
EDUCATION
CONFERENCE
 NOVEMBER 20, 2015 • WASHINGTON, DC

Following the panel, participants heard from two outstanding leaders. The first was Lawrence Romo, Director of the Selective Service System. Romo delivered to students the message that young men must register with the Selective Service System upon their 18th birthday. The second was Frank Gomez, who heads strategic alliances at ETS, the world's leading



Blanca De La Rosa, ExxonMobil



Panelists Panel Two *Careers in STEM* (l-r) J.J. Curry, Dalia Smith, Gladys Rodriguez and Mario Middleton

Panelists Panel One *Partnerships in STEM* (l-r) Nelson Perez, Celeste Carrasco, Blanca Barcelo and Jed Bhuta

Privacy Lead reporting to Lockheed Martin's Mission Systems and Training CIO. He described his 16-year career at the company and urged students "to be the best they can be at whatever they want to do."

This need for STEM education and outreach was a central theme in the first morning panel, entitled "Partnerships in STEM." It was moderated by Celeste Carrasco, Director of Public Affairs for AT&T. Panelists included Jed Bhuta, Director, Federal Affairs, GM; Blanca Barcelo, Coast Guard; and Nelson Perez, Vice President, Federal Government Affairs at National Grid.



Tom Oliver and Johnny Yataco



Speaker Arjuna Rivera, Lockheed Martin

educational research and assessment institution. It administers more than 50,000 tests per year, among them the AP, SAT, and GRE.

The second panel was "Careers in STEM" and was moderated by Dalia Almanza Smith, LATINO; Gladys Rodriguez, Microsoft; J.J. Curry, Cisco; and Mario Middleton, University of Phoenix.

Lunch was served in the historic Congressional Ballroom, and featured several guest speakers including Blanca De La Rosa on behalf of luncheon sponsor ExxonMobil. Blanca has a distinguished global career with the oil company and is the author of *Empower Yourself for an Amazing Career* in which she



Frank Gomez, ETS

offers valuable information and encouragement for people who want to progress their careers.

The next speaker was introduced by Jose Nino, former CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



Lawrence Romo, Selective Service System

and national board member of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Tony Jimenez is the award-winning Founder, President, and CEO of MicroTech, a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB). His company is an industry leading prime contractor on over 100 Federal projects and holds more than 25 procurement vehicles, offering access to 2500 vendors and over a million technology products and services.

Guests then heard from a representative of the Obama Administration. Julie Chavez Rodriguez is Special Assistant to the President and Senior Deputy Director of Public Engagement. In this role, she manages a team of associate directors who work with leaders in the LGBT, AAPI, Latino, Veterans, Youth, Education,





Labor, and Progressive communities. Over the past four years, Julie has worked in the Office of Public Engagement, supporting efforts to reform the nation's immigration system, improve services for veterans, and increase access to affordable, quality health care, among other issues.



It was an exciting end to NUESTRO FUTURO, our sixth annual Latino Education Conference. Many thanks to our partners at ExxonMobil, GM, Lockheed Martin, AT&T, Microsoft, Cisco, Herbalife, Selective Service System, Coast Guard, National Grid, Cigna, ETS, UC Davis, University of Phoenix and BSA for their support, and to all who attended, especially teachers and students. ¡Gracias!

