

VALHEN – VIRGINIA LATINO HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK



Encuentro 2011

Hosted by Northern Virginia Community College

Latinos: Growing and Driving Success in Virginia



Annandale Campus

March 24-25, 2011



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Robert F. McDonnell
Governor

March 1, 2011

Dear friends:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I am pleased to welcome you to the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network (VALHEN) 2011 *Encuentro*, hosted by Northern Virginia Community College—Annandale Campus.

We Virginians take great pride in our higher education system. Our colleges and universities are highly valued within our Commonwealth, within our nation and throughout the world. VALHEN's dedicated efforts are yet another step in making this highly prized Virginia treasure accessible to all Virginians, making VALHEN a dedicated and dynamic partner in the achievement of our higher education goals.

VALHEN's mission is to support and encourage the pursuit of higher education for our Virginia Latino citizenry. This translates into increased college access and completion, moving us down the road to achieve our target goal of 100,000 new college degrees. Ultimately, this successful academic participation will mean increased job opportunities for the fastest growing segment of Virginians and will provide a well-educated and trained workforce for employers.

Congratulations on the excellent and much needed work you do on behalf of education and our Commonwealth, and best wishes for a successful event!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert F. McDonnell".

Robert F. McDonnell



The Board of Directors and members of the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network wish to thank Dr. Robert G. Templin, Jr. for his generous support of our mission and for hosting the *2011 Encuentro*.



I am very pleased to once again have the opportunity to welcome members of the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network (VALHEN) to your annual *Encuentro*, hosted by Northern Virginia Community College. A good education provides a solid foundation for future success, for individuals as well as the communities where they reside. However, as you know, there is still work to be done to ensure that every Virginian who desires to pursue a higher education has access to the tools and resources he or she needs. As the recent Census tells us, Hispanics now make up 7.9 percent of the state's population, a 91 percent increase since 2000. Some of our fastest growing businesses are Hispanic-owned. VALHEN's mission to support, promote, and advocate for Latino success and advancement in higher education truly does and will continue to benefit the entire Commonwealth of Virginia for many years to come. VALHEN members are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of young Latinos through the Scholarship Program and other outreach. The Lecture Series and VALHEN Listserv serve as a valuable resource to those who wish to assist you in this endeavor. I commend the members of VALHEN on your continued hard work and dedication to your mission and wish you the very best for a fulfilling and successful *Encuentro 2011*.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark R. Warner".

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator



Greetings from Senator Jim Webb:

I would like to congratulate the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network (VALHEN) on your annual 2011 *Encuentro* event taking place on the Northern Virginia Community College Campus in Annandale. I applaud the work that VALHEN does to encourage our Latino youth to pursue a higher education. In order to ensure that we are globally competitive we must provide more students with access to a high quality education and I appreciate VALHEN's efforts to support our Latino youth in Virginia. I wish you a successful conference.

Thursday Program

March 24, 2011 – Northern Virginia Community College

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	Registration and Refreshments	
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Welcome and Opening Remarks	(Forum)
2:00 PM - 3:15 PM	Plenary Session	(Forum)
Demographics and Education: the Nation and the Commonwealth		
Presenters: Qian Cai, Ph.D., Weldon Cooper Center Richard Fry, Ph.D, Pew Hispanic Center Jonell Sánchez, College Board		
Moderator: Mirta M. Martin, Ph.D., Virginia State University		
3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	Break	(Sponsored by VACU)
3:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Concurrent Sessions	

Session A1 (Seminar Room A):

Innovative Initiatives Through Service Learning: A Catalyst for Change in Richmond

Presenters: Anita Nadal
Erika Del Cid
Jaime González

Session A2 (Seminar Room B):

The Importance of Entrepreneurship

Presenters: Martee Saldaña Pierson
Marcela Chaván-Matviuk, Ph.D.
Mavél Velazco, Ph.D.

Session A3 (Seminar Room D):

Let's Talk financial Education

Presenters: Cherry Hedges
 Alexia Arama

Session A4 (President's Dining Room):

Understanding Diversity and Cultural Issues

Presenters: Manuel Pérez-Quiñones, D.Sc.
 M. Quintana-Baker, Ph.D.

4:45 PM – 5:00 PM	Break	(Sponsored by VACU)
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5:00 PM – 6:15 PM	Keynote Speaker	(Theatre)
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Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Robert G. Templin, Jr., Ph.D.

President, Northern Virginia Community College

**The Arc of Triumph and the Agony of Defeat: Latinos in the
Polity and the Danger of the Discourse.**

Michael A. Olivas, J.D., Ph.D.

William B. Bates Distinguished Chair in Law and IHELG Director
University of Houston Law Center

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM	Reception	(Atrium)
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Friday Program

March 25, 2011 – Northern Virginia Community College

07:30 AM - 08:30 AM	Breakfast	(Forum)
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08:30 AM – 09:30 AM	VALHEN Annual Business Meeting	(Forum)
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09:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Plenary Session	(Forum)
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**Latinos-Under-Represented in Strategic Areas: STEM, Nursing,
and the Public Sector**

Presenters: Pamela B. Moreno, Ph.D., Marymount
University

Jorge Ponce, Office of Civil Rights, DOC

Carlos Rodriguez, Ph.D., American Institutes
for Research

Moderator: Manuel Pérez-Quiñones, D.Sc., Virginia Tech

10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	Break	(Sponsored by VACU)
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11:00 AM – 12:15 PM	Concurrent Sessions
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Session B1 (Seminar Room A):

**Pathways to Baccalaureate: Creating Partnerships to Enhance
College Access and Success**

Presenter: Mónica Gómez

Session B2 (Seminar Room B):

The Issue with Money

Presenters: Raquel Vélez

Deborah Aguiar-Vélez

Session B3 (Seminar Room D):

Virginia 529: Helping You Plan, Save, and Pay for College

Presenters: Beth Miller
 Becky Robinson

Session B4 (President's Dining Room):

**Subprime Opportunity: The Unfulfilled Promise of For-Profit
Colleges and Universities**

Presenter: José L. Cruz-Rivera, Ph.D.

12:15 PM – 2:00 PM	Luncheon and Scholarship Awards	(Forum)
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Closing Speaker: José Rico, Deputy Director, White House
Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans

2:00 PM – 2:15 AM	Closing	(Forum)
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Main Speakers

Michael A. Olivas

Michael A. Olivas is the William B. Bates Distinguished Chair in Law at the University of Houston Law Center and Director of the Institute for Higher Education Law and Governance at UH. From 1983-1987, he also chaired the UH graduate program in Higher Education. From 1990-95, he served as Associate Dean of the Law Center; he once again served in 2001-2004. In 1989-90, he was a Visiting Professor of Law at the University of Wisconsin, and Special Counsel to then-Chancellor Donna Shalala. In 1997, he held the Mason Ladd Distinguished Visiting Chair at the University of Iowa College of Law. He holds a B.A. (Magna Cum Laude) from the Pontifical College Josephinum, an M.A. and Ph.D. from the Ohio State University, and a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center.



José Antonio Rico

José Antonio Rico is the deputy director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. Named to his post on Feb. 1, 2010, Mr. Rico helps carry out President Obama's efforts to improve the academic achievement of Hispanic students. In 2005, Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan named Mr. Rico the first principal of Chicago's Multicultural Arts High School. He served as principal of the school, which currently has 24 teachers and an enrollment of 350, until he joined the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence in 2009. Mr. Rico holds two master's degrees, one from the University of Chicago in curriculum instruction and the other from National-Louis University as a principal resident in the New Leaders for New Schools program.



Overview of Plenary Sessions

Latino Demographics and Education: the Nation and the Commonwealth

Presenters: Qian Cai, Ph.D. (UVA/Weldon Cooper Center)
Richard Fry, Ph.D (Pew Hispanic Center)
Jonell Sánchez (College Board)

Moderator: Mirta Martin, Ph.D. (Virginia State University)

These experts will address Latino demographics, education and civic involvement—both at the national and the Virginia levels, and the College Board’s national new "College Completion" agenda.

Latinos—Under-Represented in Strategic Areas: STEM, Nursing, and the Public Sector

Presenters: Pamela B. Moreno, Ph.D. (Marymount University)
Jorge Ponce (Office of Civil Rights, DOC)
Carlos Rodriguez, Ph.D. (American Institutes for Research)

Moderator: Manuel Pérez-Quiñones, D.Sc. (Virginia Tech)

Latinos are under-represented in a number of key 21st Century occupations, including STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), nursing, and the public sector. These three experts will address under-representation and explore possible ways in which our higher education institutions can help address the issue.

Overview of Breakout Sessions

A1. Innovative initiatives through service learning as a catalyst for change in Richmond, Virginia

Anita Nadal, Erika Del Cid, and Jaime González

Virginia Commonwealth University has seen service learning as a valuable tool for success for Latino students. Thus, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment are great. This reciprocal enhancement of service in the community helps to lower barriers and serves as a vehicle for improved synergy of the students and the numerous Latinos in the Richmond area. This presentation focuses on these benefits in the Richmond area, which has provided positive results for both the students and the community.

A2. The Importance of Entrepreneurship

Martee Saldaña Pierson, Marcela Chaván-Matviuk, and Mavél Velazco

Discussion about the importance of entrepreneurship and the fundamental ideals of a “credit based” economy as being vital additions to what we teach our ESL students. There is a great difference between “surviving” and “thriving” in the United States economy. This session will offer some fundamental knowledge of these very important topics to help our new immigrant community lead over the chasm of the FUD FACTOR (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt) as it relates to breaking out and taking advantage of all that the United States offers.

A3. Let's talk Financial Education

Cherry Hedges and Alexia Arama

In this session you will learn about the new mandate for Financial Literacy in Virginia high schools. Part of the discussion will address the work that financial institutions, such as credit unions, are doing to support this mandate and how these efforts benefit the Latino population. This session will highlight available free resources and an overview of what is available for colleges when teaching personal finance to the Latino population.

A4. Understanding Diversity and Cultural Issues

Manuel Pérez-Quiñones, D.Sc. and M. Quintana-Baker, Ph.D.

This session will present a broader perspective of diversity and cultural issues by addressing some of the research around the topic of diversity and cultural differences. Diversity is often equated with affirmative action and other points of view rooted in social justice. Yet, research shows that the benefits of diversity go beyond a social justice point of view. More diverse groups perform better than other more homogeneous groups. Companies with a diverse employee base tend to be more financially successful. Overall, there are many strands of research that are discipline specific that provide a strong case for why diversity matters. This breakout session will explore diversity from a multi-disciplinary perspective and explore the popular misconceptions on the topic.

B1. Pathways to Baccalaureate: Creating Partnerships to Enhance College Access and Success

Mónica Gómez

Pathway to the Baccalaureate is a highly successful, replicable initiative that addresses barriers to the transition, retention, and transfer of large numbers of at-risk students in Northern Virginia through an effective collaboration among local K-12, community college, and university partners. In 2010-2011, over 5000 students will participate in the Pathway Program, with nearly 35% of those students identifying themselves as Latino or biracial/Latino.

B2. The Issue with Money

Raquel Vélez and Deborah Aguiar-Vélez

Latinos currently make 81 cents for every dollar made by white men. Latinas make even less. This presentation will discuss the cultural influences that drive our relationship with money, the wage disparity, and what we can do to overcome the gap. The presenters work with Escuchame, Inc., a community for organizing, showcasing and promoting smart Latinas.

B3. Virginia 529: Helping you Plan, Save and Pay for College

Beth Miller and Becky Robinson

The Virginia College Savings Plan is dedicated to helping students and families plan, save and pay for higher education. With four tax-advantaged savings options, families will find the plan an affordable and flexible way to pay for qualified higher education expenses. Beyond the 529 Program, SOAR Virginia is

a new seven-year pilot project designed to help select Virginia students aspire to higher education by offering them counseling on academic courses, college admissions and financial aid, along with an opportunity to earn up to \$2000 for college tuition.

B4. Subprime Opportunity: The Unfulfilled Promise of For-Profit Colleges and Universities

José L. Cruz-Rivera

Three years after the U.S. housing market collapse, our country continues to suffer the effects of misplaced priorities and weak regulation of subprime mortgage lenders. Meanwhile, as the Education Trust's report "Subprime Opportunity" warns, the most vulnerable Americans are being targeted by yet another set of corporations peddling access to the American dream but delivering little more than crippling debt. This time, it's under-regulated for-profit colleges.

Conference Presenters

Deborah Aguiar- Vélez, Founder and CEO, *Sistemas Corporation*

She is an accomplished engineer and businesswoman, nationally recognized for innovative leadership in the areas of entrepreneurship, technical development and public service. She is the founder and CEO of *Sistemas Corporation* (www.sistemas.com), a 27 year old customized software and training firm for engineers, scientists and technical personnel. In 2009, Ms. Aguiar-Vélez started *Escúchame, Inc.* (www.escuchame.org), a virtual community of smart Latinas who are aiming to change the way the world views Hispanics. She was recently named to The Agenda 100 by the Financial Times' *Agenda Magazine*. Ms. Aguiar-Vélez earned her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering with honors from the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez, and has attended two executive education programs at the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration.

Alexia Arama, Community and Business Development Officer, *CommonWealth One Federal Credit Union (COFCU)*.

With a leading role in the COFCU Financial Literacy Program, Ms. Arama is the primary liaison with the Alexandria City Public Schools and other sponsor groups and community partners to provide financial education opportunities to the communities they serve. The increasing numbers of Hispanics in the area has called to her attention the need to implement a plan to better serve the under-banked Latino community. *CommonWealth One's* strategy focuses on offering educational programs to further educate our underserved Latino members.

Qian Cai, Ph.D., Director of the Demographics & Workforce Group, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, *University of Virginia*.

She is an internationally known expert in population studies. Prior to coming to Virginia, Dr. Cai was the manager of the Population Estimates Program at Portland State University. Dr. Cai is a native of Nanchang, the capital city in Jiangxi Province, in the southeastern part of China. She received a bachelor's degree in economics in 1991 and a master's degree in demography in 1994, both from Peking University. She received a Ph.D. in sociology from Brown University in 2000.

Marcela Chaván-Matviuk, Ph.D., Director for the Center for Latino Leadership, *Regent University*.

She has extensive experience in a variety of fields and settings including higher education, ethics, entrepreneurship, mass media, and community and faith-based organizations. She possesses a rich international experience leading nontraditional educational projects and is passionate about cultures and the success of Latino students. She holds a doctorate degree in Intercultural and International Communication, and a master's degree in both counseling and social communication. Her research includes women's leadership, the impact of leadership training centered on values, and the experience of Latino students in Christian higher education. She is actively involved in the community as chair of the education committee of the Hampton Roads Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, is the founder and outreach director of the Hispanic Leadership Forum, and the Chair of the Latin American Leadership Program (LALP) at Regent University.

José L. Cruz-Rivera, Ph.D., Vice President for Higher Education Policy and Practice, *The Education Trust*

Former vice president for student affairs of the University of Puerto Rico System (UPR), where he was responsible for admissions, financial aid, and student-life programs. He led UPR's *Access to Success Initiative* and cofounded Puerto Rico's K-16 Council. He previously served as professor and chair of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and as dean of academic affairs of the UPR Mayagüez campus, where he led various research and academic projects with significant K-12 STEM outreach components. He earned a doctorate in electrical engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology and is a recipient of the National Science Foundation Career Award.

Erika Del Cid, International and Latin American Studies Major, *Virginia Commonwealth University*.

She enrolled in a service learning course for the opportunity to volunteer in schools and in programs that benefit Latinos in the community. Through this service learning experience, Ms. Del Cid worked at *Primeros Pasos* (an event created to help Latinos go to college), and had the opportunity of being a guest speaker for Latinos at a local high school and a Spanish teacher's aide at a local

elementary school. The goal of the service learning program is to encourage more Latinos to pursue higher education and share Latino culture.

Richard Fry, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, *Pew Hispanic Center.*

Dr. Fry is a recognized expert in the analysis of U.S. education and demographic data sets and has published more than 35 articles and monographs on the characteristics of U.S. racial, ethnic and immigrant populations. Before joining the Pew Hispanic Center in 2001, he was a senior economist at the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Mónica Gómez, Pathway Transition Counselor, *Northern Virginia Community College*

She is trilingual in English, Spanish, and French. She received her BA in Spanish and French from Mary Washington College and her MA in Counseling from Trinity College. Ms. Gómez has extensive experience working hands-on with the Latino population, in particular with regards to college outreach and financial aid assistance in Spanish. She works as a Transition Counselor for the Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program.

Jaime González, History Major, *Virginia Commonwealth University.*

In pursuit of his minor in Spanish he enrolled in a service learning course. The service learning course at VCU gave him the opportunity to work and communicate with the Latino community in Richmond. While interpreting and aiding immigrants he has learned about the problems that Latinos face in Virginia. Mr. Gonzalez believes that service learning programs provide role models for Latino children in the community. The programs also provide the volunteer with knowledge about the Latino community's situation in their area by working directly with them.

Cherry Hedges, Director of Financial Education, *Virginia Credit Union*

A former kindergarten teacher, she taught at Ridge Elementary School in Henrico County for 8 years and holds a master's of education degree in instruction and curriculum from the University of Virginia. Attracted to Virginia Credit Union's not-for-profit status and its mission of helping every day people get ahead, she has formed successful partnerships with schools and community organizations. A member of the Board for the Jump\$tart Coalition for Financial Literacy, she has organized numerous educational programs for teachers in meeting State Board of Education requirements for personal finance and

economics. Under her direction, nearly 10,000 people have participated in Virginia Credit Union financial education workshops or seminars in each of the past three years.

Mirta Martin, Ph.D., Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business, *Virginia State University*.

Dr. Martin was appointed by governor McDonald to serve on the Virginia Commission on Higher Education Reform, Innovation and Investment. Prior to joining VSU, Dr. Martin served as Special Assistant to the Chancellor for the Virginia Community College System, and also as the Executive Vice President of the John Tyler Community Foundation. She received her Baccalaureate from Duke University, with a triple major in Political Science, Psychology, and French. She has an MBA from the University of Richmond and a Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University with a concentration in Strategic Management and Leadership. Previously, she directed executive education and workforce activities at the University of Richmond, Robins School of Business. She has over fourteen years experience as a tenured faculty member and administrator. Dr. Martin started her career in the banking industry, serving in her last position as Senior Vice President for First Union Bank.

Beth Miller, Director of Scholarships & Education Outreach, *Virginia College Savings Plan*.

She is a business strategist with expertise in marketing and product development. Since July 2009 she has lead the implementation of BB&T CollegeWealth®, the plan's fourth college savings program. Ms. Miller also led the design and is implementing an early commitment scholarship program that awards financial incentives to high school students who aspire to pursue post-secondary education. In partnership with several of the state's college access providers, the new program – SOAR Virginia – was launched in fall 2010 as a pilot in select schools in the Richmond area. A graduate of the University of Virginia and its Darden Graduate School of Business, Miller is a Certified Public Accountant and Six Sigma business management strategist.

Pamela B. Moreno, Ph.D., Associate Dean and an Assistant Professor of Nursing, *Marymount University*.

Dr. Moreno holds a Bachelors degree in Nursing from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas and her Masters degree in Nursing from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Her doctoral degree is in Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership from the University of Northern Colorado. Dr. Moreno is a professional registered nurse with over 26 years of experience in clinical nursing, management, staff development and nursing education. She is a member of the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society and the Pi Lambda Theta International Honor Society and Professional Association in Education. She is a past recipient of the Colorado Graduate Fellowship Award and a former Fellow in AACN's Leadership for Academic Nursing Program. Her research interests include Ethnic Identity Development in Nursing Students; First-Generation Nursing Students and Nursing Students' Clinical Experiences.

Anita Nadal, Spanish Instructor and Community Liaison, *Virginia Commonwealth University*

She received a Master's degree in Latin American and International Cultural Studies with honors from the University of Richmond. Her studies have taken her to Mexico, Spain and the Caribbean. In 2005, she received the *Who's Who Among Teachers Award* and the *Distinguished Service Award* for outstanding community service related to language and cultural training in the Richmond area. She has presented research at the MACLAS. Her interests include research in Transculturation, Cultural Awareness and Immigration. Nadal was the recipient of the *2009 Napoleon L. Peoples Distinguished Multicultural Award* and the *2010 Nonprofit Learning Point Instructor of the Year*.

Manuel A. Pérez-Quiñones, D.Sc., Associate Professor in the Department of Computer Science, and a member of the Center for Human-Computer Interaction at *Virginia Tech*.

Dr. Pérez-Quiñones holds a D.Sc. in Computer Science from George Washington University. His research interests include human-computer interaction, personal information management, user interface software, digital government, and educational uses of computers. Dr. Pérez-Quiñones is the current chair of the Coalition to Diversify Computing (2010-2011) where has been a member since 2006. He co-directed the national program Collaborative Research Experience for Undergraduates in Computer Science and Engineering

and serves on the editorial board for the ACM Transaction on Computing Education. For 2008-2010 has been included in the IEEE Computer Society Distinguished Visitor program.

Martee Saldaña Pierson, Director of Diversity Marketing, *Liberty Tax Service*.

Ms. Pierson is a strategic marketing professional with over 30 years of experience, two graduate degrees in Marketing and Communications, and a baccalaureate degree in English, Secondary Education. She is fluent in Spanish and has studied French and Arabic over the years. She has led the marketing effort for many well known high tech and software firms nationwide, taking them through IPOs and/or sales and mergers. Ms. Pierson's focus with Liberty Tax is to lead the Hispanic initiative – ***Una Familia Sin Fronteras*** – to ensure it is providing the highest level of community service, education and commitment to Hispanic communities nationwide.

Jorge Ponce, Director of the Policy and Evaluation Division, Office of Civil Rights, *U.S. Department of Commerce*.

In 2002 he was named one of the most influential Hispanics in the Nation by Hispanic Business Magazine. Mr. Ponce has worked on important civil rights initiatives with the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Blacks in Government (BIG), and others. He served as Vice-Chair of the Council of Federal EEO and Civil Rights Executives from 1997-2000, and as Co-Chair from 2001-2008. In 2009, Mr. Ponce selected the theme for National Hispanic Heritage Month – “Embracing the Fierce Urgency of Now!” He holds an MLS from Catholic University, earned his baccalaureate at George Mason University, where he majored in Psychology, and also attended George Mason University Law School for one year.

Maricel Quintana-Baker, Ph.D., Principal, *MQB-Consulting*

She specializes in research, writing, and training on higher education policy and Latino and women issues. Previously she served as Associate Director for Academic Affairs and Planning at the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). She is a member of the National Advisory Board for the Computing Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institutions. She currently holds a gubernatorial appointment to the Virginia Council on the Status of Women,

served on the Virginia Latino Advisory Board for five years, helped found the Central Virginia Chapter of LULAC, and served on the Executive Board of The Women's Network, the state affiliate of ACE's Office of Women in Higher Education. Dr. Quintana-Baker held an ORISE Post-Doctoral Fellowship at NSF's Division of Education and Human Resource Development. She earned her Ph.D. from American University and is a graduate of Harvard University Graduate School of Education's MDP Program.

Becky Robinson, Marketing, Virginia 529

She focuses on the *Virginia College Savings Plan's* educational initiatives, focusing on families with children in kindergarten through 12th grade. She conducts numerous presentations on planning and saving for higher education and manages Virginia 529's marketing agreement with the Virginia Parent Teacher Association. With over 20 years of experience in customer service and marketing, Ms. Robinson has won numerous achievement awards for the caring and respectful way that she views and values her customers, and the manner in which she emphasizes the importance of higher education for all students.

Carlos Rodríguez, Ph.D., Principal Research Scientist, American Institutes for Research

He is a nationally recognized expert on issues of equity, access and educational attainment with particular focus on enhancing educational opportunities and outcomes for minorities, women, and persons with disabilities especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). He serves as the Senior Advisor to the STEM-Up project in Los Angeles for Great Minds in STEM, and has ongoing work with the National Science Foundation (NSF) on conducting national evaluation projects related to underrepresented minorities in STEM. He led the evaluation of the Partnership for Health Professions for the Office of Diversity of the Health and Human Service Administration that assessed a national initiative to establish school and university partnerships as a means to increase minority student's pursuit of health related professions. Dr. Rodríguez holds an appointment as Scholar-In-Residence at American University in Washington DC. He received his Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of Arizona and his Master's degree in Bicultural and Bilingual Studies from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Jonell Sánchez, Senior Director of Academic Initiatives/Program Development, College Board's ACCUPLACER and CLEP programs.

In this role, he works closely with federal and state leaders, both secondary and postsecondary faculty and staff, as well as national and international organizations, with the goal of fostering college preparedness and student success. Prior to College Board, Mr. Sanchez held faculty and administrative positions at Rutgers University and Farleigh Dickinson University.

Mavél Velazco, Ph.D., Professor, *Virginia Wesleyan College*.

She teaches Spanish language courses and Latin American Literature, Civilization, as well as Latin American Music and Dance. A native of Bolivia, she was brought up in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual family and has raised two bilingual, bicultural sons. She has traveled extensively around the world and has lived in Saudi Arabia, Spain, and Japan. Dr. Velazco received her Ph.D. in Latin American Literature from Rutgers University in New Jersey, has published several articles on Contemporary Latin American Literature and has given many lectures on Spanish Literature and the Culture and Civilization of South America. She is the founder of *Los Libros del Sol*, an NGO that provides books for Bolivian children and currently serves as chair of the Hispanic Leadership Forum of Hampton Roads.

Raquel Vélez, Chief Technology Officer, *Escúchame, Inc.*

Received her Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech). She has worked in the robotics field for over 8 years in the US, Germany, and Italy. As the Chief Technology Officer of Escúchame, Inc., she oversees the company's virtual community of Smart Latinas (<http://escuchame.org>). Ms. Vélez passionately advocates for technology, education, and community leadership. In her spare time, she volunteers as a robotics advisor, travels around the world, and enjoys cooking, eating, and learning new languages.

Conference Organization

VALHEN wishes to thank the following INDIVIDUALS for their support, assistance, and encouragement in the organization of this annual event:

María Nieto-Shahsavarian, Encuentro Chair
Sylvia Rosa-Casanova, Scholarship Chair
Christopher Doval, Website
Juan Espinoza, Fundraising
Lou Kadiri, Senator Warner's Office
Erin McGrath, Publicity
Emily Sumner, Publicity
Aida Pacheco, Fundraising
Manuel Pérez-Quñones, Website
Martee Saldaña Pierson, Scholarships and Publicity
Maribel Ramos, Senator Webb's Office
Maureen Shanahan, Fundraising
Emily Webb, Governor McDonnell's Office

VALHEN wishes to thank the following HIGHER EDUCATION ENTITIES for their support and encouragement during our journey thus far:

James Madison University
Northern Virginia Community College
Old Dominion University
State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
University of Richmond
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Tech
Virginia State University
Virginia Community College System

VALHEN wishes to thank the following CORPORATE SPONSORS for their support and encouragement in our development and of this annual event:

Verizon Corporation (Platinum Sponsor)
Dominion Resources (Silver Sponsor)
Virginia Community College System (Bronze Sponsor)
Liberty Tax-*Una Familia Sin Fronteras* Initiative (Scholarship Sponsor)
The College Board
Virginia Credit Union (Break Sponsor)
Diverse: Issues in Higher Education
Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education
Hispanic Leadership Center at Regent University

VALHEN Board of Directors:

Maricel Quintana-Baker, Ph.D. (President)
Mirta M. Martin, Ph.D. (Vice-President)
Maureen G. Shanahan, J.D., Ph.D. (Secretary)
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Aida Pacheco (Board Member)
Manuel A. Pérez-Quiñones, Sc.D. (Board Member)
María Nieto-Shahsavarian, M.A. (Board Member)
Emily Sumner, Esq. (Community Representative)

VALHEN wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals this past year:

Tania Alvarez (ODU), Dr. Jonathan Arries (CWM), Dannette Gomez Beane (VT), Leslie Bozeman (VCU), Carlos Evia (VT), Art Dean (JMU), Dr. Elin Doval (VSU), Juan P. Espinoza (VT), Dr. George Font (JMU), Mallory Griffith (ODU), Mr. George Hiller (SWHEC), Raoul Godines (UVA-Wise), Jean-Pierre Laurenceau-Medina (UR), Judy Mejia (UR); Dr. Ellen Mayock (W&L), Dr. Lourdes Travieso-Parker (CNU).

Membership Benefits

Network of Peers—The LISTSERV

Members tell us the chance to network with other members is one of their most prized benefits!

Recognition for Your Work—The Lecture Series

VALHEN's innovative **Lecture Series** (*planned to start Fall 2010*) will feature the research and work of our **members**. This effort is a win for everyone!

Free Membership in the Virginia Credit Union

- The **Virginia Credit Union** (www.vacu.org) has designated VALHEN as one of its *Eligible Companies and Groups*.
- Join the Virginia Credit Union and enjoy the benefits of membership.
- Open your VACU membership with a \$5 deposit. To join, go to http://www.vacu.org/About_VACU/Membership/How_to_Join.aspx

Complimentary Subscriptions

- Each member will receive a one-year subscription to ***Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*** (<http://www.hispanicoutlook.com/index.htm>).
- Each member will receive a one-year *digital* subscription to ***Diverse Issues in Higher Education*** (<http://diverseeducation.com>).

Develop and Grow Our Scholarship Process

- One of VALHEN's priorities has been to establish a **Scholarship** for deserving students of Latino origin who are either graduating from high school or already in the first three years of college.

Design and Deliver Our Outreach Activities

- One aspect of VALHEN's three-sided mission focuses on members performing **Outreach** efforts designed to improve access to higher education for our Latino students. The organization expects to begin modest outreach activities during 2010—wait for news and plan to get involved!!

For joining VALHEN and for additional information about VALHEN Membership and its Benefits, please go to www.valhen.org/membership.

Congratulations
to our
VALHEN Scholars!



Thank you to Liberty Tax's
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to our scholarship fund.



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VALHEN – VIRGINIA LATINO HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK



Dear Friends of VALHEN:

Thank you for coming to our 2011 Encuentro. On behalf of our Board of Directors, welcome as members of VALHEN!

Please join me in expressing our deep appreciation to President Robert G. Templin, Jr. and to the Northern Virginia Community College-Annandale Campus for hosting this year's *Encuentro*. We wish also to thank our friends and sponsors; without their generosity we would not be here today.

VALHEN is the *only state-wide, non-profit, 501(c) (3)* organization serving as a networking structure to support, promote, and advocate for Latino success and advancement in higher education for the benefit and betterment of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Our non-profit organization has come a long way since first incorporating in December 2008 with an all-volunteer group and \$100 in seed money! And, thanks to the warm reception and support (in-kind and otherwise) of a number of our higher education entities and institutions, we have experienced substantial growth in the last two years. It is amazing what can be accomplished when people of like minds focus on a common purpose and the goals necessary to achieve results.

There is much work to be done to help our Latino students obtain a post-secondary education. Get involved! Every year is crucial in the development and advancement of VALHEN, and this next year will be no different. We need all hands on board; we need YOU on this journey. Join us!

Muchísimas gracias y cordiales saludos,

Maricel Quintana-Baker, Ph.D.
President