

Towards A Better Future

Latino/Hispanic Symposium | April 1, 2009 | Battle Creek, Michigan

"Perhaps we can bring the day when children will learn from their earliest days that being fully man and fully woman means to give one's life to the liberation of the brother who suffers. It is up to each one of us. It won't happen unless we decide to use our lives to show the way."

— César Chávez



W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

Towards a Better Future: Harnessing the Views of Latino/ Hispanic Leaders

The Latino/Hispanic Symposium — W. K. Kellogg Foundation, April 1, 2009

In preparation for the Kellogg Foundation Latino/Hispanic Symposium on April 1, 2009, D&P Creative Strategies was contracted to interview key community leaders and stakeholders regarding their views on the foremost issues confronting Latinos/Hispanics. Foundation staff were especially interested in deepening their understanding in four core areas: 1) Diversity within the Latino/Hispanic community; 2) Immigration; 3) Media: Myth vs. reality; and 4) Disparities. The goal was to apply this new knowledge to the Foundation's strategic framework and existing work/initiatives with Latino communities in New Mexico, Michigan, Mississippi and New Orleans. (See addendums 2 & 3 for interviewees and interview protocol applied.)

Interviewees were experts in their respective fields and distinguished by their academic, advocacy and community-based work. Many were aware of the Foundation's intention to expand its work on Latino/Hispanic issues, and were eager to contribute to this learning process as a way of supporting effective, targeted investments with families and communities.

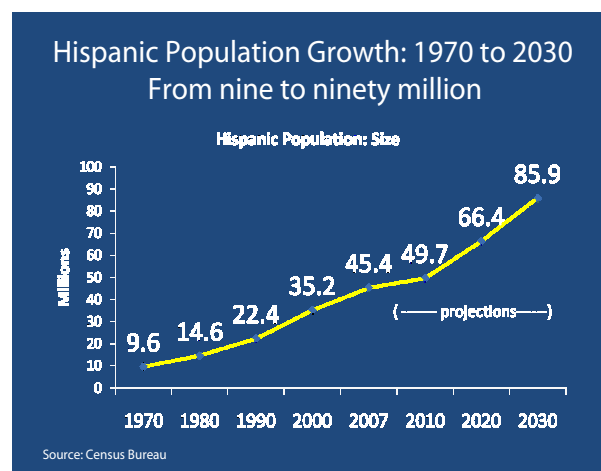
Information provided by interviewees on these four topics was further augmented by presentations, and subsequent discussions, at the April symposium. Panelists that provided written presentations included: Robert Suro, journalism professor in the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California, Charles Kamasaki, Executive Vice President of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), Janet Murguía, President/CEO of NCLR and Henry Cisneros, Executive Chairman of CityView.

Issues Currently Affecting Latinos/Hispanics Specifically, and Children in Particular

The most salient issues or themes particularly distinct to Latinos that resonated from the interviews and meeting presentations were also supported by a review of two significant policy papers¹ and various academic and other source documents. These issues are:

- Scale;
- Education;
- Immigration; and
- Effects of the Economic Downturn.

Scale: According to data presented by Robert Suro, the Latino/Hispanic population grew by 7.4 million between 2000 and 2005, representing 49% of the nation's population growth during that period. Of that total, 3.3 million were immigrants and 4.1 million were the result of a natural increase in the population, calculated by subtracting deaths from births.



Suro points out that while the population of non-Hispanic Whites continues to age, Latinos by comparison remain concentrated in younger age groups. Contrary to prevailing notions that Latino population growth is being fueled by immigration, Suro reports that the most significant increases over the next decade will be among second-generation Latinos, who will more than double their numbers between 2000 and 2020. In the next ten years, the number of school-age youth who are second-generation Latinos will grow by 100%, and their share of the labor force will more than triple. A February 2008 report by the Pew Research Center states that by 2050, Latinos/Hispanics—“already the nation’s largest minority group”—will triple in size to 128 million, and represent 29% of the U.S. population.²

Henry Cisneros sees a future in which Latinos/Hispanics become increasingly involved in every facet of American life. By 2040, says Cisneros, Latinos/Hispanics will be the majority population in the four most populous states—California, Florida, New York and Texas—as well as in New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada. An increasing number will ascend to positions of political leadership, says Cisneros, expanding their presence in Congress and in state houses across the nation. He predicts that by 2040 the nation will have had its first Latino/Hispanic president.

In business, Cisneros envisions greater numbers of Latinos/Hispanics in the entrepreneurial sector, at the helm of corporations and in company boardrooms. Education will increasingly become a vehicle for success and achievement within the community, with significant increases in college enrollments leading to an overall boost in socioeconomic status. Cisneros imagines that within the next 30 years Latinos/Hispanics will comprise the backbone of the middle class.

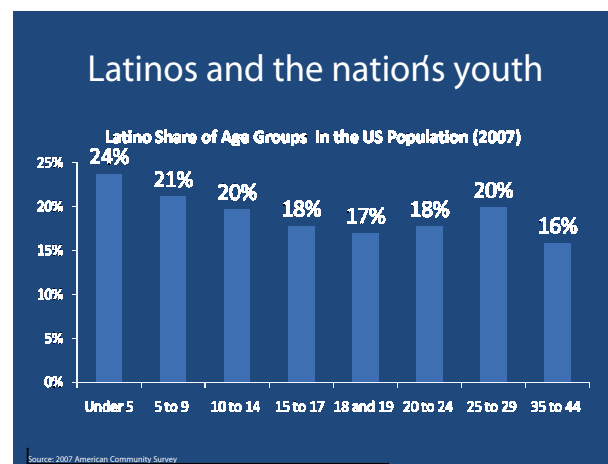
What he and others who were interviewed assert is that any issue that particularly affects Latinos will be of national significance as the years progress, given the sheer size and growth of the population. In short, increased scale always magnifies any given underlying issue.³

Education: One of the primary issues cited by interviewees and meeting presenters was education, an issue of chief importance to Latinos given comparatively low rates of high-school and college completion. According to research compiled by Sonia Perez of NCLR, “87% of Latinos consider education critical to expanding life opportunities for their children.”⁴

Issues of particular import for the Latino/Hispanic community include educational attainment, barriers to education, the number of youth who do not complete high school due to family obligations (such as the need to contribute to the support of the family or unintended pregnancies⁵ that hinder the ability to continue high school) and other challenges that fuel dropout rates.

Only 53% of Latinos graduate from high school, compared to 75% of non-Hispanic Whites.⁶ Of Latinos 25 years and older, only 13.4% have bachelor’s degrees⁷ compared to 30.6% of non-Latino Whites.⁸ When excluding immigrant children from this equation, the data still indicate that Latinos lag significantly behind Whites with regard to educational attainment; 23% of native-born Latino/Hispanics lack a high-school education versus 16% of Whites.⁹

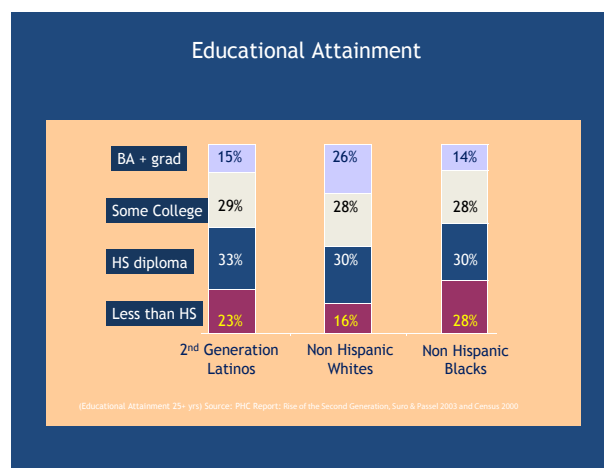
Part of the problem, say interviewees and presenters, stems from the fact that early education programs designed to establish the foundation for later academic success are failing to enroll eligible Latino/Hispanic children. Only 12% of Latino/Hispanic children under age 3 participate in formalized childcare, and only 43% of Latino/Hispanic children



ages 3–5 attend Head Start or similar programs. NCLR asserts that the absence of linguistically and culturally appropriate services inhibits access for many young Latinos/Hispanics.

The same holds true for the 20% of students in K–12 who are Latino/Hispanic, half of which are English language learners (ELLs). According to NCLR, two thirds of these students receive no services—such as bilingual classes or English-as-a-second-language instruction—to address their language needs. “It’s simply sink or swim [for these students]” says NCLR’s Murguía, “and far too many sink.” She adds that while “assessment and accountability are at the heart of No Child Left Behind’s theory of change, the Department of Education has not certified a valid assessment regime for ELLs, nor has it produced an accountability system that takes the challenges posed by ELL students into account.” Murguía calls on school systems to “do better,” particularly in light of the fact that current demographic shifts will continue well into the future.

While echoing the call for greater language services within school systems, Henry Cisneros also emphasizes that accountability for student academic achievements lies both with parents and educators. A widespread misconception in American society is that Latinos lack an “adequate education ethic,” says Cisneros. Latinos have countered largely by blaming school systems for student failures. The reality, he suggests, lies somewhere in the middle and requires acknowledgement that Latino/Hispanic integration into American society can be complex and challenging.



Immigration: While there is some debate within the community about whether the issue of immigration has been overly emphasized¹⁰ as a priority,¹¹ it is clear that immigration is a focus for many for Latinos. This is true either by virtue of the undocumented status of large segments of the population and how that issue affects policy areas or the fact that, due to past immigration, there are linguistic/cultural/assimilation/behavioral issues that continue to arise in the Latino community. For example, intergenerational tensions exist between immigrants, whose language barriers and legal status make it hard to navigate American society, and their native-born children, who are legally, culturally and socially American. In many immigrant households, the customary balance of power is shifted when a child becomes the parents’ conduit to the wider world, a reality that can prove stressful for the whole family. Interviewees raised this issue on a number of occasions (Angela Maria Kelley, Director, Immigration Policy Center; the American Immigration Law Foundation; and that of Marilyn Aguirre-Molina of Columbia University, Professor of Public Health).

Effect of the Economic Downturn: While not as “systemic” an issue as others, a recent but significant concern for Latinos is the disproportionate impact of the economic downturn on individuals at all socioeconomic levels.

For the relatively small percentage¹² of Latinos/Hispanics who are upper middle class, the plummeting value of their investments and retirement savings affects their current and future retirement plans, ability to contribute to their children’s educational expenses, and capacity for philanthropic giving, among other concerns. For middle class Latinos, especially those who have managed to become homeowners for the first time, the recent precipitous decline in home prices — coupled at times with lending practices that target people of color and have made maintenance of mortgage payments challenging or unmanageable — has erased the progress Latinos/Hispanics worked hard to achieve (see the interview of Arturo Vargas, Executive Director, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials or NALEO). While noting that 10% of Latino/Hispanic homeowners are currently

at risk of losing their homes, NCLR's Janet Murguía predicts that many more will face foreclosure in the coming year, as adjustable mortgages “re-set” to higher interest rates. She notes that the absence of culturally competent services within conventional mortgage markets, a fact that made the community vulnerable to predatory practices in the first place, may result in current homeowner assistance programs providing little relief to Latinos/Hispanics.

According to NCLR, as of January 2009 the Latino/Hispanic unemployment rate was 9.7% — with higher incidence of unemployment among U.S.-born versus foreign-born Latinos/Hispanics.¹³ NCLR's Murguía notes that Latinos/Hispanics, like other minority populations, tend to lose jobs more quickly at the beginning of an economic downturn and regain them more slowly as things improve. This is particularly the case for both middle- and lower-income Latinos/Hispanics.

Given that, as the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHCLA) reports, “half of Latino households have incomes of less than \$38,000, compared to 29% of non-Hispanic White households” and, “the poverty rate for Latinos is 22% compared to 9% for non-Hispanic Whites,”¹⁴ the depth and length of the country's ongoing economic crisis will be critical to the current and future well-being of this segment of the community. Murguía cites research indicating that Latino/Hispanic unemployment rates will remain high for the next year, ranging from 15%–50%, irrespective of whether the President's stimulus package generates a recovery. Without targeted interventions, she asserts, planned workforce development approaches will likely not work for Latinos/Hispanics.

As to the particular effect of the broad issues that were identified, beyond the obvious applicability of some of the specific answers, interviewees found that:

Issues affecting Latino children (again to scale) are poverty, family structure (some have “intact” families, but there is a growing incidence of teen pregnancies so family structure is more at risk than it used to be) and [in addition], for immigrant children, there is the challenge of learning a second language. In the U.S. there is a deficit model that basically sees non-proficiency as a weakness. [Children] that

are not proficient in English are seen as having “something wrong with them.” Likewise, if the child is malnourished or not yet able to speak the language, then [they are] seen as “needing repair.”¹⁵

Diversity Within the Latino/Hispanic Community

A succinct summary of this issue is well captured by Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of NALEO, who states that, “The Latino population is the definition of diversity in that we have new immigrants and those who have been here for generations.” “Some are citizens, and there are others who live with fear of discovery — they live in an underground economy,” he said. “There is the diversity of country of origin and there is [a] growing but significant wealth diversity.”

NCLR's Charles Kamasaki suggests that, socio-economically, the Latino/Hispanic community can be divided into three sectors. The “top third,”

2nd Generation Latinos The children of immigrants

- Between 2000 and 2020
 - Doubles in size: about 11 to 22 million
 - But stays young: median age rises 13 to 17
 - The share of the school-age population increases from 7.2% to 13.4%
 - The number in the U.S. labor force triples

according to Kamasaki, consists of families in which both parents have graduated from high school, been in the U.S. for at least three generations, have incomes at or above the median and have health insurance, which can serve as a proxy for other benefits. The “bottom third” includes those families whose annual incomes are below 200% of the poverty line, who lack health insurance and in which one or more of the adults is an immigrant and not proficient in English. The middle third falls somewhere in between and possesses characteristics of the other two.

Kamasaki points out that the level of diversity within the Latino/Hispanic community is broader than generally recognized and understood, and encompasses more than linguistic and cultural differences that stem from country of origin. These differences, in turn, reflect variations in individual and family circumstances and opportunities. Socio-economic diversity, says Acevedo Garcia, Professor of Society, Human Development and Health at Harvard School of Public Health, determines Latino/Hispanic access to health and other benefits.

According to interviewee John Trasviña of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), much of the Latino/Hispanic community's diversity is an outgrowth of changing immigration patterns in the U.S. He cites as an example the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which has facilitated an influx of immigrants who speak many different indigenous languages. As a result, there has been an increased need for translators to ensure that those who speak other languages are accorded appropriate legal protections and due process within the courts.

As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans have access to a range of opportunities and services unavailable to other Latinos/Hispanics. Cubans, meanwhile, under the wet foot, dry foot policy are allowed to pursue residency a year later once they set foot on American soil. At the other end of the spectrum are Mexicans, most of whom enter the country illegally and struggle to survive while trying to avoid deportation. Garcia suggests that to fully understand the diversity within the Latino/Hispanic community, it is crucial to know about individual patterns of immigration, the circumstances that drove distinct populations to emigrate, and the statuses they occupied once in the U.S.

Location also makes a difference, Garcia says, adding that where an immigrant group has more scale, like Mexicans do in Los Angeles, the community is better equipped to meet the needs of new arrivals. He suggests that Mexican immigrants in a place like Rhode Island would encounter more limited community support.

In terms of the specific issues that should be taken

into consideration when working with indigenous populations, as well as Central, South American and Caribbean populations, with respect to language, dialects, culture, etc., Ruben Navarrette, Editorial Writer for the *San Diego Union-Tribune* believes that we:

Need to know and learn the individual nuances of where people come from. There are times where cultural differences make it difficult to apply one strategy, say as in marketing, which tries to cover all people. You run into a one-size-fits-all approach [which does not work.] In South America, for example, there are differences in how people view things as compared to those from [neighboring] countries. [As to] language: The bigger divide is not who speaks Spanish with different dialects, but... who speaks English and who speaks Spanish.

Charles Kamasaki of the NCLR believes that:

We don't know a lot [when it comes to indigenous populations]. When you look at the census data, most people don't self-identify as indigenous, etc. That may be changing because younger Latinos may be demonstrating a different lens when considering race/ethnicity. Both Afro-Latinos and indigenous Latinos are experiencing more discrimination... but there is not a lot of research around [in terms of] what this means to programs or policy.

Mr. Navarrette observes that:

Language can be a unifying force even when we (as Latinos) don't speak it because an attack on language is seen as an attack on Latinos. For example, Republicans lost Latino votes in the last election, in part, because young Cubans, for example, turned away from the party because they felt as attacked [due to language] as those who are new immigrants. Most times, [foes] can pick on one particular group because we are not unified. But when [they] push it enough, they can cause a unifying backlash. Language is at once a dividing force (how we speak among generations differs due to levels of proficiency) and a unifying force (as was seen with the election).

Racial Equity and The Latino Community

In response to a discussion of the Foundation's grantmaking strategies, taking a racial equity approach to removing present-day barriers to equal opportunity and using a racial equity framework for addressing structural and systemic racism and healing/repair and reconciliation, the reactions of interviewees were largely uniform. The interviewees believed that viewing Latinos through a traditional Black/White lens might not be the best way to capture issues relating to equity in this community.

Vargas of NALEO, for example, suggests the Foundation clearly articulate how it defines racial equity and race. His concern is that the Foundation's approach may be too closely aligned with a Black/White framework. He rhetorically asks what the Foundation means by race. "When we talk about racial equity, are we talking about Latinos as a race?" he asks, and wonders how the Foundation views Latinos (racially) when speaking about racial equity?

Likewise, Vargas states that:

It can be confusing and distracting when talking about healing, repair and reconciliation. These are terms that are often used in conversations when we speak of the legacy of slavery and the lasting impact that [slavery] has had [on our country]. That is why this construct is difficult. In the case of Latinos, if we are going to work from that framework, then there should be more of a focus on Texas [and states like Arizona and California that had onerous propositions passed in the 1950's that greatly affected Latinos]. [These states are in greater need of reparation than is, say,] New Mexico [which] is singular and unique in the Latino experience. In New Mexico, Latinos are powerful in government and in control of the economy, so it is confusing to me how they will address these issues given that there are a small number of immigrants in New Mexico.

In this vein, the observations of John Trasviña of MALDEF are likewise worthy of consideration. He comments that:

Institutions have to... understand that the country is more than just Black or White. In the schools, Latinos are more segregated than any other group, and we are more segregated than we were 20-30 years ago. Housing patterns have not changed substantially because schools are based on residency; we still have segregated schools. There needs to be a greater recognition that there needs to be a Latino component [in matters] such as housing; foreclosures; [and] unemployment.

In terms of reconciliation, Trasviña observes:

There is a different dynamic in addressing this in the Latino community than in the Black community. When we speak of reconciliation for example, I think of the U.S./ Mexico border; much of the border belonged to Mexico. [It is important to] recognize that people had [land] that belonged to them and they lost it. Moving to the 21st century, there is much more interaction between [communities] north and south of the border and that is unprecedented (for example, Nogales/ Nogales, El Paso/Juarez). I went to a Kellogg event last fall and they showed a film about this great woman whose family got all this money due to slave trade. This [type of work] really needs to be done for, say, New Mexico.

Finally, Kamasaki comments that:

While NCLR is a civil rights organization and our roots are very much in that movement — [looking toward that past is] an awkward fit. The whole framing of the issue [reconciliation etc.] comes from an African-American perspective that frankly doesn't fit Latinos very well. "Latino" for example, is not [a term] based on race — more often [it] comes from national origin/language — this is a highly problematic framing.

Immigration

Reacting to the overarching topic of immigration, interviewees found that:

- Every American family, community, and business is affected by immigration. The ability of a woman to work outside the home is often influenced by Latinos who have immigration issues, [undocumented workers are the nannies, caretakers, housekeepers etc.];¹⁶
- While the effects of immigration are largely felt at the local level, immigration is a critical issue that must be addressed through national policy because it affects the educational, healthcare, community, housing, and financial access needs of Latinos/Hispanics;
- There are many issues involving family separation;¹⁷
- There is a need for immigrants to be able to integrate into the community as quickly as possible;¹⁸
- One of the negative outcomes that needs to be ameliorated is the impact on community relations when bad ordinances [are adopted];¹⁹ and
- The “wave of hate” against immigrants fostered by the likes of Lou Dobbs, various talk radio shows and the Internet is more pronounced than advocates have seen in the last 25 years.²⁰

2nd Generation Latinos The children of immigrants

- Between 2000 and 2020
 - Doubles in size: about 11 to 22 million

**That's a done deal.
US born, US educated.
They are our children.**

On the last point, NCLR’s Murguía notes that the “extreme rhetoric” permeating national discussions on immigration reform has contributed to a 40% increase in hate crimes against Latinos/Hispanics since 2003.²¹ She says NCLR itself has been the target of numerous threats and harassment over the past several years. “What do we think it

says to young Hispanics when their community is continuously demonized and de-humanized in the media as crime-ridden, disease-prone, disloyal [and] unpatriotic?” she asks.

Many interviewees discussed the critical issues of the immigrant experience versus the experiences of first-, second-, and third-generation Latinos/Hispanics and how these issues can differ between immigrants and “established”²² Latinos/Hispanics. Angela Kelley, Director of the Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration Law Foundation, finds that:

Some of the obvious differences between the immigrant experience and that of first-, second- and third-generation Latinos/Hispanics are integration, language, and immigration status. Because so many families are of mixed status, even within a given family, a lot of the challenges that they face are those of typical undocumented individuals. We know that once immigrants get more assimilated, they acquire language and homes and get wealthier. However, there is an 800- pound gorilla that sits in these peoples’ living rooms...those family members without status while some in the family have legal status.

Regarding the question of how the location of a Latino/Hispanic community affects individuals and the larger community (for example, how the Puerto Rican experience is different than that of a person living along the U.S./Mexican border or in Los Angeles, Chicago or New York, and the differences in rural vs. urban living), Angela Kelley believes that locale can have a profound impact. More interestingly, Kelley points out:

Locales don’t have to be as distinct [a geographic difference] as California [is] to Arkansas. It can be as close as Arlington to Prince William County in Virginia. In the former case, for example, they have a great ESL (English as a Second Language) program, and police won’t check immigration status [as] compared to Prince William County that has had an active anti-immigrant stance, and the two areas are only miles apart. The feeling of the communities is so different.

Viewed from a broader perspective or perhaps through a different lens, NCLR's Kamasaki believes that although there are many differences between the experiences of immigrants versus the native-born, as well as between Latinos/Hispanics living in different locales, he is "not sure how salient those issues are for policy purposes." Kamasaki further adds,

...the way we (NCLR) look at it is that [all] those barely living above poverty [irrespective of locale] will be affected [in the] same [way]. It is the new immigrants and the category in between (families of mixed immigration status) where we really need to do some work. From a sociological perspective, probably [we] can make all kinds of distinctions, but [I'm] not sure it makes a difference for policy purposes. More important to know [is] that there is a fairly affluent bucket that has been here for a while that we probably don't need to worry about from a policy perspective. It is the other two that [we] need to focus on.

In terms of rural vs. urban issues, Angela Kelley finds that most urban centers in the U.S. have long served as gateway cities for immigrants and, therefore, are more welcoming to them generally. Immigrant Latinos/Hispanics are likely to find a different climate awaiting them in the cities of New Jersey, for example, than in those of North Carolina, where policy attacks on immigrants are not uncommon.

In the rural context, Cecilia Muñoz, formerly of NCLR, indicates that:

What happens with respect to farm workers is different than that of any other population. They don't have the same labor protections, and that affects living conditions, creates isolation and [affects] the ability of parents to interact with educational [and other] systems. When you don't have labor protections for the hours you work, then that clearly affects the way you are able to engage in society.²³

As far as the priority immigration concerns that need to be addressed at the community and national levels, MALDEF's Trasviña believes it's important not to confuse immigrant policy with immigration policy. He clarifies by saying,

It's our failed immigration policy that has created these large undocumented populations. It is that policy that has created a system that is completely dysfunctional, divided families and affected children. Then there is immigrant policy: What do we do with [Latinos/Hispanics] to help them access the American dream? How do we make sure that they are being integrated into the economy, fairly compensated, and economically successful?"²⁴

Muñoz urges consideration of the effect of immigration raids on communities and families, particularly children. In communities around the country, people are dealing with the disruptive effect of raids, and schools must spend time and resources on contingency plans that contemplate a child being dropped off at school in the morning and potentially not being picked up by his or her parents in the afternoon because they have been deported. Beyond the emotional effects of raids, they result in an unnecessary drain on communities, schools and teachers.²⁵

Finally, Muñoz states immigration reform should address three very important priorities: 1) Integration of the 12 million undocumented persons currently living in the U.S.; 2) Reexamination of the conditions under which people come to the U.S. (a critical goal is to reform the system so that it functions in a way that actually regulates migration, i.e., transforming the legal system so that it facilitates family unification and the immigration of both high- and low-skilled workers in an orderly fashion, rather than in a manner that puts their lives at risk); and, 3) Address economic development in communities into which migrants arrive.

Media Portrayals of Latinos and the Relationship of Immigrant Relations to Public Policy

Regarding the media portrayal of Latinos/Hispanics and what feeds the current mindset, the interviewees find that:

- The vitriolic tenor of anti-immigrant sentiment expressed by Lou Dobbs and xenophobic radio personalities is a significant impediment to immigration reform and causes an increase in hate crimes against Latinos/Hispanics;
- Negative portrayals of Latinos/Hispanics by the media are driven in part by the paucity of community members in front of and behind the cameras/microphones and a lack of appreciation for how big a commercial market the community represents;
- To advance a positive portrayal of the community, media outlets need to employ Latinos/Hispanics who have the professional credentials, but also speak Spanish, as Spanish proficiency is sometimes key to getting an accurate story; and
- The mischaracterization or absence of Latinos/Hispanics in television and radio is partially due to fact that the entertainment business is largely focused on the East Coast (with the exception of movie studios), which the interviewees view as an environment more reflective of a Black/White dynamic and not as inclusive of Latinos/Hispanics.²⁶

One myth about Latinos/Hispanics perpetuated by the media is that they are all immigrants, when in fact many families have been in the country for several generations. Other media falsehoods include the view that Latino/Hispanic parents don't value education, that immigrants only come to the U.S. for welfare or to engage in criminal enterprises, and that the community is insular and does not seek engagement in civic life.

Alex Nogales, President/CEO of the National Hispanic Media Coalition says that:

"Hate speech is a very big problem affecting Latinos/Hispanics. Local radio call-in shows entertain calls and conversations about 'the deadly diseases immigrants bring in,' Latinos are portrayed as criminals, and as people migrating to the United States to live on welfare, etc. Hate crimes against Latinos in-

creased by 40% between 2003 and 2007.²⁷ Hate speakers have gone mainstream (like Lou Dobbs), and this is a huge danger. One study has begun to quantify speech and measure its effect on increases in hate crimes. On a Montana station someone called in to say that if an immigrant comes to the U.S. and does not learn how to speak English in the first year, then that person should have his arm cut off. My organization understands the implications of [the media and] words on hate crimes. Some reactionaries are saying this is a first amendment right. [But understand] we are not interested in suppressing speech, it's just that if someone says 'cut off an immigrant's arm' we want someone there to say why that should not happen."²⁸

Few credible mainstream sources offering accurate media portrayals are readily cited beyond those found on the Spanish-language news channels, such as Jorge Ramos, or Ray Suarez and Maria Hinojosa of the Public Broadcasting Service.

In general, the interviewees felt that Kellogg can play a role in promoting more accurate media-portrayals of Latinos/Hispanics by pressuring television companies to include more Latinos/Hispanics on their staffs, and supporting educational and professional efforts that encourage community members to enter media-related fields.

Latino Health

There are indeed major health disparities affecting Latinos/Hispanics, and in particular children. The interviewees opined that:

- There is no homogeneous Latino/Hispanic population. For these purposes, one should separate immigrants and new arrivals from those who have been in the U.S. for a long time.²⁹ In a phenomena called the *Immigrant Paradox*, new immigrants are actually far healthier than immigrants who have been in the country for a longer period of time, and are also healthier than the first- and second-generation Latinos/Hispanics. While this phenomenon is the subject of continuing study, among those factors believed to be producing healthier immigrants are diet

(individuals coming from developing nations do not eat as many processed foods as people living in the U.S.), exercise, and a greater emphasis on communal living;³⁰

- Health disparities for Latinos/Hispanics are driven by immigration policy (lack of access to the safety net, a fear of deportation, etc.), a lack of cultural/linguistic competence³¹ in health care agencies and among health care personnel, and the virtual absence of Latinos/Hispanics working in the health field.

In terms of the role that economics, education, immigrant status, and culture play in the health of Latinos/Hispanics, Dr. David Hayes Bautista, Director of the Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Medicine and several others interviewed indicate that Latino/Hispanic culture plays a key role in the *Immigrant Paradox* and the resulting good health enjoyed by those individuals whose environment would otherwise suggest that their health should suffer. While the situation is not yet fully understood, a generalized health/culture takeaway is that:

...learning English and retaining Spanish does not hurt you, but not speaking Spanish will kill you. If you didn't go to college and don't speak Spanish, then you are very much at risk. The least educated and poorest have the best health. With an increase in income and education, you begin to see degradation and then an upward swing (improved health) with a further increase in education. Immigrants from Mexico and Central America have particularly strong cultural patterns.³²

Not surprisingly then, when asked how the Foundation's resources can be better leveraged to address health disparities, at least one interviewee underscored the importance of understanding the link between culture and health. In this scenario, if researchers could identify the factors contributing to the *Immigrant Paradox*, then the occurrence of heart attacks, cancer, and stroke—the three highest causes of death—could potentially be lessened. The thought is that if Latinos/Hispanics can do it, then anyone can do it.

Parting Thoughts for the Foundation in Advancing Its Philanthropic Goals in the Latino Community

In speaking with experts around the country, several trends became evident. These observations may be obvious to those deeply involved in, and educated, regarding Latino/Hispanic community issues or organizations. It appears few organizations have their arms around the totality of topics addressed in this paper, so interviewees urged further exploration of the issues through the lens of the Foundation's new strategic direction, priority areas of focus and approaches, and the geographic overlay.

- Latinos/Hispanics are everywhere. While the largest concentration of Latinos continues to be along the Mexican/U.S. border³³ and traditional destination cities, such as New York and Chicago, the past 15 years have seen migration trends change to include states not previously thought of as migratory destinations. Thus, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington, Virginia, Maryland, Utah, Nevada, and even states like Maine, Montana, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Louisiana have seen significant spikes in Latino/Hispanics population growth. For example, New Orleans has had a Honduran population for some time³⁴ but the recent significant increase of Latinos/Hispanics in New Orleans is due to the number of workers who have arrived to work on post-Katrina clean up and construction.³⁵ Accordingly, as one seeks to better address the needs of Latinos/Hispanics and their children, one must think beyond the few states or locales traditionally thought of as "Latino."
- Latinos/Hispanics are not a monolithic population. They have diverse racial backgrounds, can emigrate from more than 20 countries, or simply have been in the United States for hundreds of years. Some Latinos/Hispanics speak Spanish, some are bilingual and some speak no Spanish at all.
- There is economic diversity within the Latino/Hispanic community that suggests a "one-size-fits-all" strategy will not prove effective in addressing the most enduring barriers to individual and family well being in the economic, educational, social and employment spheres. The Kellogg Foundation should consider targeted efforts that focus on low-income Hispanics/Latinos and reflect their unique needs.

- Kellogg could help achieve the best outcomes for the Latino/Hispanic community through a multi-disciplinary strategy that includes research and policy formation, the establishment of an advocacy infrastructure, grassroots organizing and mobilization, and implementation and evaluation of best practices.
- The history of Latino/Anglo relations is not predicated upon as shocking and readily identifiable tragedy as slavery, rather the racism, isolation, hate, and bigotry that African Americans/Blacks feel as a minority population. Those feelings are every bit as real for Latinos. Latinos are the victims of hate crimes, have had to withstand “Whites Only” drinking fountains, and are often used as scapegoats for lost jobs and the perception regarding the lost potency of the American worker. However, because the external vestiges of race are not as evident for Latinos/Hispanics as they are for Blacks and Whites, their needs are often overlooked or not fully explored. If one is going to seek to redress this issue, it is vital to view Latino/Hispanic issues through a different lens and learn more.
- Meaningful immigration reform is needed to address the needs of the disenfranchised and other sizable segments of the Latino/Hispanic population in the U.S. The current chaotic state of immigration policy and the effect it has on immigrants, their families, and their communities affects Latino/Hispanic access to education, health care, banking and other significant U.S. institutions, organizations, and systems, including the important safety net. Families experience physical and emotional stress when faced with separation from their loved ones. U.S. Customs and Immigration Services raids can leave native-born children without parents³⁶ at a moment’s notice³⁷, producing isolation and the unnecessary stigma that is caused by having to live and subsist in an underground economy.
- The health care needs of Latinos/Hispanics are influenced by whether one is a new immigrant (with the additional variables of English proficiency, access to Spanish-speaking health professionals, and being documented or undocumented, among other factors), in which case he or she may actually be healthier³⁸ than acculturated Latinos/Hispanics. It is also influenced if the child of an immigrant (with the question then being whether one’s parent is documented or undocumented — a variable that influences how reticent a parent might be in seeking health care for his or her child) and an acculturated Latino, who unfortunately loses the benefits of the *Immigrant Paradox* until they fully assimilate into the United States culture and norms.
- The gap in educational preparedness and achievements between Latinos/Hispanics and Whites is stark and untenable. This reality affects the ability of Latinos/Hispanics to access health care, institutions, services, their government, and ironically, the number of Latino/Hispanic educators with the linguistic and cultural skills to increase the future number of graduating Latinos/Hispanics.
- There is a relationship between how Latinos/Hispanics are portrayed and discussed in the media, are perceived by other citizens and are considered in public policy. In some cases, violence against community members is fueled by the absence of Latinos/Hispanics in front of and behind media cameras/microphones.
- By using an asset-based strategy that harnesses the talents, energy and aspirations of community members, Kellogg can help cultivate the potential of the Latino/Hispanic community as a vital force in our nation’s social, political and economic development. Rather than focusing on getting Latinos/Hispanics to adhere to existing norms, a strategy that pushes the community to a new level is warranted. This approach could include, among other things, increasing access to and awareness of education savings accounts so that college becomes a consideration for all Latinos/Hispanics, coordinated efforts to strengthen and expand the Latino/Hispanic middle class, ongoing leadership development, enhanced community organizing, and early childhood services that address health, education and family wealth generation.

Conclusion

We applaud the Foundation for convening this symposium and for having the vision and foresight to seek greater understanding of the major issues facing the Latino/Hispanic community and exploring avenues for becoming more engaged in making an impact through its work and leveraging of its resources. There is incredible excitement and enthusiasm among those who were interviewed and those who participated in the Foundation's symposium. These individuals are very committed, have tremendous energy, experience and expertise and want to work with the Foundation to find additional opportunities to expand what the Foundation is currently doing to make a significant impact on the well being of the Latino/Hispanic community. The Foundation has an opportunity to use what it has learned from the interviews and symposium discussions to address the critical issues affecting the Latino/Hispanic community and create a comprehensive national and place-based strategy that includes knowledge development, capacity building, policy development, service delivery, information dissemination and public engagement. There is a real potential for the Foundation to expand its leadership role in the country by further investing in the Latino/Hispanic community. As Henry Cisneros says, the community's "best days are yet ahead, when its talent is unleashed and the barriers are removed."

Endnotes

- 1 *2008 Hispanic Policy Agenda*, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, Washington, DC, John Trasviña, Chair and *2009 NCLR Agenda: A Public Policy Briefing Book*, a collaborative effort by staff within the Office of Research, Advocacy, and Legislation (ORAL) at National Council of La Raza.
- 2 *U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050*, Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, Pew Research Center, Washington, DC, February 2008.
- 3 Interview with Arturo Vargas, Executive Director, National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials.
- 4 *Shaping New Possibilities for Latino Children and the Nation's Future*, *The Future of Children*, 2004, pages 122–126
- 5 According to Dr. Guerra, Director of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, it is not uncommon to see young women aged 17–18 already having given birth to two or even three children.
- 6 *Losing Our Future, How Minority Youth Are Being Left Behind by the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Gary Orfield, Daniel Losen, Johanna Wald and Christopher B. Swanson, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, 2004.
- 7 *2008 Hispanic Policy Agenda*, page 5.
- 8 With these dire statistics as a backdrop, and closely related to the topic of immigration that will be more fully addressed below, it is all the more vexing that each year some significant percentage of the "approximately 65,000 immigrant students with stellar academic achievement are denied the opportunity to pursue a postsecondary education due to their immigration status..." *2009 NCLR Agenda: A Public Policy Briefing Book* at page 9.
- 9 Suro, R. & Passel, J. (2003). The rise of the second generation: Changing patterns in Hispanic population growth. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- 10 In the minds of some Latinos, one should not overemphasize the weightiness of immigration as an issue for Latinos writ large. For example, Arturo Vargas of NALEO believes that "It is a big concern but it is not the only issue – it is not the defining issue. Immigration/immigrant policy affects many Latinos but not all Latinos — (for example, Puerto Ricans). There are other unifying [policy] issues, like poverty — that affect all Latinos."
- 11 What Latinos in the United States inherently know, and virtually all of those interviewed pointed out, is that millions of Hispanics in the United States have been here for generations, either by virtue of their predecessors having immigrated long ago; the unique relationship between the US and Puerto Rico and therefore generations of Puerto Ricans being able to move freely from the island to the mainland; or the post Mexican-American war border shift that incorporated many former Mexican citizens into Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California.

- 12 While an imperfect proxy for overall wealth, it bears noting that “Approximately 22% of Latinos have a ‘thin’ credit file or no credit history at all which usually results in a credit score of zero compared to only 4% of Whites.” Michael Stegman et al., “Automated Underwriting, Getting to ‘Yes’ for More Low-Income Applicants (2001 Conference on Housing Opportunity Research Institute for Housing America Center for Community Capitalism, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, April 2001.)
- 13 2009 NCLR Agenda: A Public Policy Briefing Book page 12.
- 14 2008 NHLA Hispanic Policy Agenda, page 21.
- 15 Interview with Arturo Vargas, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials.
- 16 Interview with John Trasviña, MALDEF
- 17 According to Angela Maria Kelley, Director, Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration Law Foundation, “Those who come illegally have [to make the] gut wrenching decision; they have to live in the shadows and decide whether to bring family members with them to live that life. It used to be that the first/only person to come was the breadwinner; he or she (though almost always [it] was “he”) would come here and then go home. You don’t see that as much anymore because it’s too expensive and dangerous for him to go back and forth. So the family makes the decision that he should stay here and maybe bring the whole family if they are able to pay enough to a coyote.”
- 18 John Trasviña, MALDEF.
- 19 “Typically when these come up for discussion, they have amazing turnout; people yell at each other and nothing gets done. There is a need to bring educators, clergy, and healthcare professionals together and get immigrant workers integrated.” Trasviña, page 3.
- 20 Charles Kamaski, National Council of Raza.
- 21 U.S. Department of Justice. (2007). *Hate Crimes Statistics*. Washington, DC.
- 22 The word “established” here means Latinos/Hispanics who have been in the United States for generations, either by virtue of having immigrated some time ago or by virtue of living in Puerto Rico or along the US/Mexico border for long enough periods whereby any immigration status, language and cultural proficiency are not longer as relevant.
- 23 “Agriculture has an entirely different set of labor laws; migrants don’t stay in communities very long, so the issues of migrant kids are distinct. There is a migrant Head Start program, there are programs that help them work in a migrant context, but mitigates some of the effects of the migratory nature of life.” Interview with Cecilia Munoz.
- 24 John Trasviña, MALDEF.
- 25 “You have kids that are now becoming wards of the state or being sent back to countries they don’t know – you are creating a sub-class of kids that are being treated wholly differently.” Angela Kelley, American Immigration Law Foundation.
- 26 In the opinion of Ruben Navarrette, if the media capitals were moved to Phoenix or Los Angeles, that would likely change.
- 27 U.S. Department of Justice. (2007). *Hate Crimes Statistics*. Washington, DC.
- 28 Interview of Mr. Nogales, National Hispanic Media Coalition
- 29 Interview with Marilyn Aguirre-Molina, Columbia University.
- 30 Interview with Dr. Bautista, UCLA School of Medicine.
- 31 “Culture is the key element in understanding Latino health — it is absolutely critical — it overrides income and access to health care.” Dr. Bautista, UCLA School of Medicine.
- 32 Dr. Bautista
- 33 Due to much of that territory originally belonging to Mexico and the fact that individuals tend to migrate to population centers where there are pre-existing Latino populations.
- 34 Interview with Arturo Vargas of NALEO.
- 35 *Migrants Find a Gold Rush in New Orleans*, Los Angeles Times, Sam Quinones, Times Staff Writer April 4, 2006
- 36 “According to a study recently released by Rep. Jose Serrano, D-N.Y., 108,434 parents of U.S.-citizen children were deported from 1998 to 2007. Currently, immigration judges are forbidden to balance family unity against deportation requirements, even if the departure of one or both parents would harm a child emotionally, financially, or medically.” Talking points for H.R. 182, the Child Citizen Protection Act.
- 37 “In December 2006, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents simultaneously raided Swift & Company’s meatpacking plants in Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, and Utah, detaining nearly 1,300 undocumented immigrants in the largest immigration enforcement action in recent history. The consequences of these raids also spread to many U.S.-born children, who faced the loss of a parent and great instability. The unique circumstances of these citizen children pose fundamental questions for our immigration law system about their rights and interests—questions that remain unresolved more than two years after the arrests.” Urban Institute e-mail of March 13, 2009, around the launch of a new report, entitled “Severing a Lifeline: The Neglect of Citizen Children in America’s Immigration Enforcement Policy.”
- 38 As provided within this paper, “The Immigrant Paradox refers to a phenomenon in which, for Latino and Asian populations in this country, individuals who are poorer and less acculturated to the US, display more favorable outcomes [in health] than more highly acculturated or native-born individuals from the same ethnicity or the white population.” <http://brown.edu/Departments/Education/research/cgc/research/>

Addendum One

*Bibliography/Additional Reading for the W.K. Kellogg April 1, 2009
Latino/Hispanic Symposium*

Compendium of Issues

2009 NCLR Agenda: A Public Policy Briefing Book, a collaborative effort by staff within the Office of Research, Advocacy, and Legislation (ORAL) at the National Council of La Raza.

*National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, 2008
Hispanic Policy*, Washington, DC.

Education

Learning a New Land, Immigrant Students in American Society, Carola Suárez-Orozco and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, Irina Todorova, February 2008, Harvard University Press.

Latino Civil Rights

“Comment on The Latino Civil Rights Crisis: A Research Conference,” Yzaguirre and Kamasaki, Harvard Civil Rights Project and Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, December 3, 1997 (forthcoming under separate cover).

“Comment on The Latino Civil Rights Crisis: A Research Conference,” Yzaguirre and Kamasaki, Harvard Civil Rights Project and Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, December 3, 1997.

Health

Are Racial Disparities in Preterm Birth Larger in Hypersegregated Areas? Theresa L. Osypuk and Dolores Acevedo-Garcia, *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 2008, Published by the Johns- Hopkins’ Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Hispanics and Health Care in the United States: Access, Information, and Knowledge, A Joint Pew Hispanic Center and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Research Report

Toward A Policy-Relevant Analysis of Geographic and Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Child Health, Improving Access, as “opportunity neighborhoods should be regarded as a vital public health intervention, Dolores Acevedo-Garcia, Theresa L. Osypuk, Nancy McArdie, and David R. Williams, *Health Affairs*, Volume 27, Number 2, The People to People Health Foundation Inc., 2008.

Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, Committee on Understanding and Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, National Academies Press, Washington, DC, 2003.

Housing

Fragile Rights Within Cities: Creating a Fair Housing System That Works for Latinos, by Janis Bowdler and Charles Kamasaki of the National Council of La Raza, 2008.

Immigration/Generational Change

Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age, Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters and Jennifer Holdaway, 2009, Harvard University Press.

The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration Since 1965, Edited by Mary C. Waters and Reed Ueda, with Helen B. Marrow. 2007, Harvard University Press.

The Other Latinos, Edited by José Luis Falconi, Edited by José Antonio Mazzotti, 2008, Harvard University Press.

Media

Exposure to Television Portrayals of Latinos: The Implications of Adverse Racism and Social Identity Theory. Dana Mastro, Human Communication Research 34, 2008 (1–27).

Network Brownout Report: The Portrayal of Latinos and Latino Issues on Network Television, 2005. National Association of Hispanic Journalists, 2006. Washington, DC.

Population/Demographic Trends

U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050, Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, Pew Research Center, Washington, DC, February 2008.

The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth, Jeffrey Passel and Robert Suro, Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, DC, October 14, 2003

Race Relations/Racial Equity

Day Laborers Are Easy Prey in New Orleans, Adam Nossiter, *New York Times*, February 15, 2009

HISPANIC: Why Americans Fear Hispanics in the US, Geraldo Rivera, Published by Celebra Books, an imprint of Penguin Group (USA)

Sociological Studies/Social Criticism

Brown: The Last Discovery of America, Richard Rodriguez, Penguin Books 2002

Addendum Two

Individuals Interviewed

Marilyn Aguirre-Molina

Columbia University
Professor of Public Health

Dolores Acevedo-Garcia

Associate Professor of Society,
Human Development, and Health
Department of Society, Human Development,
and Health

Dr. Fernando Guerra

Director of the San Antonio Metropolitan
Health District

David Hayes Bautista

Director
Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture
UCLA School of Medicine

Charles Kamasaki

National Council of La Raza

Angela Maria Kelley

Director
Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration
Law Foundation

Cecilia Muñoz

Director for Intergovernmental Affairs for the
White House and formerly Senior Vice President
National Council of La Raza

Ruben Navarrette

Editorial Writer
San Diego Union-Tribune

Alex Nogales

President/CEO
National Hispanic Media Coalition

Dr. Elena Rios

National Hispanic Medical Association

Roberto Suro

Professor
USC Annenberg School for Communication and
Former Director of Pew Hispanic Center

John Trasviña

President/CEO
Mexican American Legal Defense
and Education Fund

Arturo Vargas

Executive Director
National Association of Latino Elected
and Appointed Officials

Addendum Three

Interview Protocol

(Depending on the interviewee, the interviewer would ask some questions and not others)

The following questions were within the context of the guiding assumptions that lead W.K. Kellogg's work [element areas, state teams, approaches; See Mission and Vision].

Questions Of A General Nature

(e.g., Children, diversity, concerns/issues, state teams, etc.)

Understanding that there are issues that uniquely affect Latinos/Hispanics as part of the broader US population, which are of the most concern or the most importance based on your experience or your work within this community? How, if at all, do they differ for Latino/Hispanic children? Can you talk about diversity within the Latino/Hispanic community? What should we know and consider when working with indigenous populations, Central and South American populations, and Caribbean populations, language/dialects, culture, etc.?

How does your view relate to:

- Family, Income & Assets?
- Education & Learning?
- Civic & Philanthropic Engagement?
- Food, Health & Well-being?

What are your views on how this plays out in:

- Michigan
- New Mexico
- Mississippi
- ...and also the ongoing work in New Orleans

How does your view relate to:

- Policy
- Racial Equity
- Leadership

The Kellogg Foundation's grant-making strategies have a racial equity approach, the intention of which is to remove present barriers to equal opportunity using a racial equity framework that addresses structural and systemic racism, and healing/repair and reconciliation. They also use a leadership, and policy approach. What advice would you give to the Foundation regarding these key approaches and their grant-making efforts in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans to create thriving communities for Latino/Hispanic children?

How does your view/s relate to:

- Family, Income & Assets?
- Education & Learning?
- Civic & Philanthropic Engagement?
- Food, Health & Well-being?

Immigration

Identify the critical issues of the immigrant experience versus those of a first-, second- and third- generation Latino/Hispanic. How different are the issues for an immigrant versus an “established” Latino/Hispanic? How does the locale of a Latino/Hispanic community affect individuals and the larger community? For example, how is the Puerto Rican experience different from that of a person living along the U.S./Mexican border or in Los Angeles, Chicago, or New York? Or rural vs. urban? I know immigration is a top concern for the Latino community. In your mind, what are the priority concerns that need to be addressed (socially, economically), at the community and national level to better address this issue? What affect does the current system have on Latino/Hispanic children?

How does your view/s relate to:

- Family, Income & Assets?
- Education & Learning?
- Civic & Philanthropic Engagement?
- Food, Health & Well-being?

What are your views on how this plays out in:

- Michigan
- New Mexico
- Mississippi
- ...and also the ongoing work in New Orleans

How does your view/s relate to:

- Policy
- Racial Equity
- Leadership

Media

What are your feelings about how Latinos/Hispanics are currently represented in the media? What factors do you feel are feeding the current mindsets? What do you feel are some of the myths vs. the reality regarding this issue? What needs to be done to get more correct information provided by the media? Which/who are the credible mainstream resources? What role might the Kellogg Foundation play in affecting this change?

How does your view/s relate to:

- Family, Income & Assets?
- Education & Learning?
- Civic & Philanthropic Engagement?
- Food, Health & Well-being?

What are your views on how this plays out in:

- Michigan
- New Mexico
- Mississippi
- ...and also the ongoing work in New Orleans

How does your view/s relate to:

- Policy
- Racial Equity
- Leadership

What are some of the major disparities affecting Latinos/Hispanics and in particular Latino/Hispanic children? What role and what kind of role does economics/education/immigrant status/culture (if any) play regarding this issue? How might Kellogg Foundation resources be better leveraged to address these disparities?

What are Some of the (Available/Possible Solutions for the Disparities in Health Care?

- Food Systems
- Nutrition
- Well-being
- Education
- Community Assets
- Civic & Philanthropic Engagement