Harvard's Center for Public Leadership Unveils Effort to Support Young Latino Leaders

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Cambridge, MA—The Center for Public Leadership at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government announced today an initiative to help prepare the rising generation of Latino leaders for the opportunities and challenges they will face in the coming decades.

Twenty-eight college students have been chosen from a highly selective application process to take part in this collaboration, which is being called the Latino Leadership Initiative (LLI). These rising seniors come from five universities: Loyola Marymount University (Los Angeles), University of California-Merced, Texas A&M International–Laredo, the University of Houston, and the University of Massachusetts–Boston.

The inaugural LLI class will convene in Cambridge on June 12 for a weeklong program that will include classes on public speaking, teamwork, negotiation and public narrative, as well as sessions designed to help students develop greater self-awareness. LLI participants will also have opportunities to build relationships with respected Latino mentors from the government, nonprofit, and business sectors.

Faculty for the program will include Harvard Kennedy School professors Andy Zelleke, Marshall Ganz, Celia Gonzalez, and David Gergen; Georgetown professor Bob Bies, and MIT professor and Pulitzer Prize–winning author Junot Diaz.

"With Latinos expected to comprise nearly 30% of the U.S. population by 2050, quality leadership is imperative to this community and to the nation," said Andy Zelleke, faculty chair for LLI. Regular teleconferences hosted by the Center for Public Leadership, Zelleke explained, "will enable LLI participants to continue their leadership development over the ensuing academic year. In addition, the students from each of the five participating universities will work as a team to design a community service project that will be implemented in collaboration with faculty and/or administration from their home university."

Walter Ulloa, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Entravision Communications Corporation, whose support led to the creation of LLI, voiced his enthusiasm for the initiative: "I believe we are creating a compelling program that brings together the right kind of mentoring and resources to develop promising young leaders in the Latino community."

Echoing Ulloa's sentiments, David Gergen, director of the Center for Public Leadership, observed that "the Latino community is young and growing and its success is vital for our country. We see this program as an opportunity to develop the talents of the next generation of Latino leaders and help them connect with each other to form a broader network.

"This experiment seeks to identify students whose leadership potential has already been recognized by their local communities," Gergen continued. "But instead of uprooting students, our goal is to equip them to have a deeper impact on their communities once they return, and to stay connected with them long enough to ensure that the learning sticks. For this vision, and also for the seed money that has enabled us to launch, we are profoundly grateful to Walter Ulloa and Entravision."

For more information about the LLI, and to stay informed about the students' community service projects as they take shape, go to:

http://content.ksg.harvard.edu/leadership/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=574&Itemid=153

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About the Center for Public Leadership
Established through a generous gift from the Wexner Foundation, the Center for Public Leadership is celebrating its tenth anniversary of advancing the frontiers of knowledge about leadership through research and teaching, and deepening the pool of leaders for the common good through cocurricular activities that include skill-building workshops, fellowships, and programming in leadership for social change.

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