

# 2021 NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

## MEETING IN A BOX



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# Introduction

## NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

From Sept. 15 – Oct. 15, we celebrate the culture of the diverse community of people whose ancestors come from Spanish-speaking countries as part of Hispanic Heritage Month.

This Meeting in a Box is a valuable tool to share with employees as part of your organization's cultural competence education. This month, we will highlight the contributions of the Hispanic/Latinx community to the U.S. and the working world.

## Historical Timeline

### 1865

U.S. Navy Seaman **Philip Bazaar** became the first Hispanic Congressional Medal of Honor recipient for his service carrying dispatch communications between soldiers onshore and the USS Santiago de Cuba during the assault on Fort Fisher off the coast of North Carolina.

### 1867

Following the defeat of the French monarchy, Mexico entered an era known as the **Restored Republic under President Benito Juárez**, the first Mexican president of Indigenous origin. Among his achievements were: the secularization of the country to limit the Catholic church's power in Mexico, the recognition of his government by the United States, and the advancement of equal rights for indigenous peoples.

### 1893

The **Garza Revolution**, an armed conflict between the Mexican state of Coahuila and Texas, came to an end. It was an important confrontation that shaped the U.S.-Mexico border today and the lives of the people who occupy those lands.

### 1902

Cuba gained independence from the U.S. as the **Republic of Cuba**. The country's new constitution allowed the U.S. to retain the right to intervene in Cuban affairs and supervise its finances and foreign relations. The Platt Amendment allowed the U.S. to lease the Guantánamo Bay naval base.

### 1914

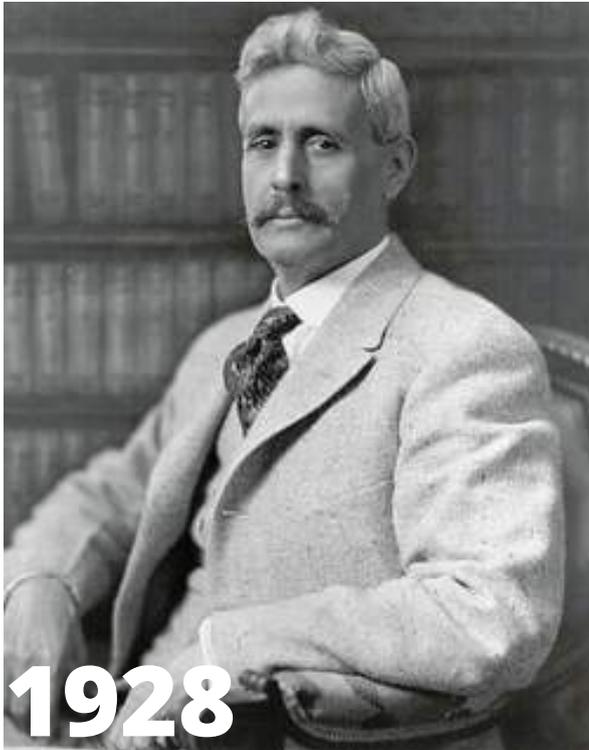
The **Panama Canal** officially opened on Aug. 15, completed at the cost of more than \$350 million. It was an event that would reshape global trade and helped establish the U.S. as a global power but had a tremendous cost in the century to come, changing the landscape and demographics of Panama permanently.

### 1918

The **Hispanic American Historical Review** printed its first issue. Latin American historians who felt the American Historical Association had marginalized their cultures sought to create an institutional structure that would provide a scholarly journal to examine Latin American history.



## Historical Timeline (cont'd)



### 1928

**Octaviano Larrazolo** became the first Mexican American to serve in the U.S. Senate. The former governor of New Mexico had been serving in the New Mexico State House of Representatives when U.S. Senator Andrieus Jones died. Larrazolo won the election that would see him serve for the remainder of Jones' term.



### 1942

World War II drastically changed the U.S. views and policies toward Mexican immigration. The governments of the U.S. and Mexico jointly created the **bracero (laborer) program**, which encouraged Mexicans to come to the U.S. as contract workers to support wartime industries.



### 1952

**Puerto Rico proclaimed its constitution** and was approved by the United States Congress, officially establishing a formal government structure to include a legislative branch, an elected governor and a judicial system based on civil liberties.

## Historical Timeline (cont'd)

### 1954

President Dwight D. Eisenhower institutes a controversial program known as “**Operation Wetback**” in which the U.S. government detained and deported more than 1 million people. Rhetoric blaming immigrants for low wages led to the policy, which would only last a few months due to funding and a lack of support after agriculture was severely disrupted.

### 1959

**Ritchie Valens**, the first-ever Mexican American rock and roll star, was killed in a plane crash in Iowa along with Buddy Holly and other musicians on Feb. 3 (an event often referred to as “**The Day the Music Died**”). Valens was the creator of the famous song “La Bamba.”

### 1962

Civil rights activists César Chávez and Dolores Huerta establish the **National Farm Workers Association** to advocate for migrant workers’ rights. In the 1960s, it became the United Farm Workers of America.

**Rita Moreno** wins the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *West Side Story*. She goes on to win an Emmy, Grammy and Tony Award during the 70s, becoming the first Latina actress to win all four major awards (commonly referred to as “EGOT”).

### 1963

The last baseball game ever played at New York’s historic Polo Grounds was the first and only **Hispanic All-Star Game**. Hall of Famers such as Roberto Clemente, Orlando Cepeda, Luis Aparicio and Juan Marichal were all featured in the game.

### 1965

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965**, better known as the **Hart-Celler Act**. The reform bill ended the quota system that allotted immigration opportunities based on country of origin. The act gave priority to highly skilled immigrants and those with families already living in America.

### 1973

As the U.S. government officially recognized the word “**Hispanic**,” the Dade County Commission unanimously passed a resolution from Miami’s mayor making Spanish the city’s second official language and creating a department of bilingual and bicultural affairs. Later that year, Maurice A. Ferré was elected Miami’s first Hispanic mayor and the first Puerto Rican to lead a major U.S. mainland city.



## Historical Timeline (cont'd)

### 1975

The Voting Rights Act of 1975 makes bilingual ballots a requirement in many areas.

### 1986

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities was founded to champion higher education for Hispanic students. The Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) was founded to advance the inclusion of Hispanic professionals in corporate America.

### 1987

The National Hispanic Leadership Institute addresses the lack of representation of Latinas in corporations, politics and nonprofits.

### 1989

[Ileana Ros-Lehtinen](#) becomes the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress.



### 1990

[Antonia C. Novello](#) becomes the first woman and Hispanic surgeon general of the U.S.

### 1993

[Ellen Ochoa](#) becomes the first Hispanic woman to go to space.

### 1995

*Dreaming of You*, the posthumous album by [Selena](#), becomes the first predominantly Spanish-language album to debut at No. 1 on the Billboard 200.

### 1999

California's controversial 1994 ballot measure called **Prop 187**, which sought to stop illegal immigrants from receiving benefits or public services in the state, was struck down by a federal court mediation. Judges labeled most of it as unconstitutional, declaring that the state cannot regulate immigration and that no child will be deprived of education or healthcare due to their place of birth.

## Historical Timeline (cont'd)

### 2001

Representative Luis Gutiérrez proposes the first version of the **Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act**, granting citizenship to those who entered the U.S. undocumented as children.

### 2003

Hispanics have become the nation's largest minority group yet remain underrepresented in workforce leadership.

### 2007

America Ferrera becomes the first Latina to win Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series for her role in *Ugly Betty*.

### 2008

Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights* wins the Tony Award for Best Musical and goes on to produce the equally successful *Hamilton*.



### 2009

Puerto Rican **Sonia Sotomayor** becomes the first Latina Supreme Court Justice.

Richard Gonzalez becomes the CEO of AbbVie, achieving status as one of the highest-paid CEOs without completing a college degree.

### 2012

The **Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) begins** under President Obama. It allows those who entered the U.S. undocumented as children to have eligibility for a work permit and a two-year deferred action from deportation.

### 2017

"Day Without Immigrants" protests take place across the nation to show the government how valuable immigrants are to the economy. These protests get widespread media attention and raise awareness about immigration issues.

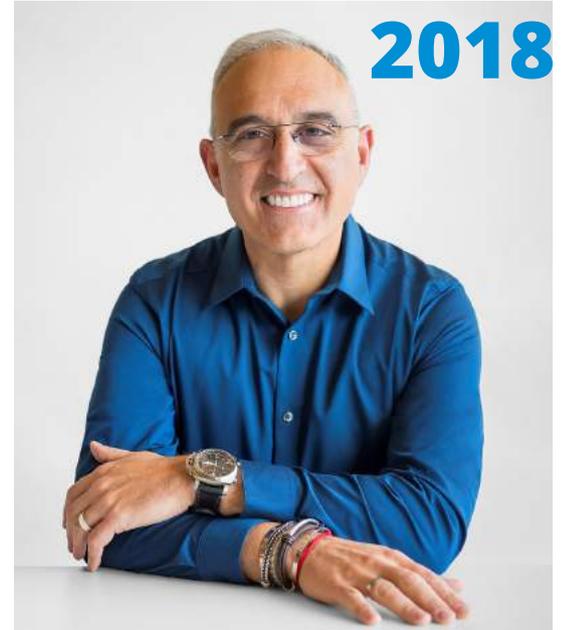
## Historical Timeline (cont'd)

### 2018

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez beats out Joe Crowley, a longtime representative of New York's 14th congressional district.

Antonio Neri becomes the CEO of Hewlett-Packard.

Esteban Hotesse, the only Dominican to serve as a Tuskegee Airman during WWII, was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his bravery. Hotesse was one of the airmen who stood up against the Army's segregationist orders and went on to reach the rank of second lieutenant. He died in July 1945 on his 68th mission with the all Black squadron. He was 26.



### 2020

The Supreme Court blocks efforts to end DACA, ensuring that 700,000 young immigrants can work and study in the U.S. without fear of deportation.

18.7 million voters (around 1 in every 10 voters nationwide) were of Latin American descent in 2020, with a historic 53.7% of the Hispanic population eligible to vote. For the first time in the history of U.S. presidential elections, Latinos born in the U.S. voted at the same rate as naturalized citizens.

### 2021

U.S. Census Data revealed that the Hispanic population of Texas is now equal to the white population of the state before accounting for undocumented immigrants, signaling a shift in the state's demographic makeup in the coming years as Hispanic voters and consumers will become the majority.



## 6 Hispanic/Latinx People Making a Difference

In any group of people, there will be stars, influencers, leaders and philanthropists. But once in a while, those special few people prove to be the complete package. Let's take a look at some of the Hispanic community's most influential difference-makers doing their part to lift marginalized communities.



### **Chef José Andrés**

The famous chef and restaurateur is also the founder of World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit devoted to providing meals in areas where natural disasters have occurred. He was awarded the National Humanities Medal for 2015 and is considered an influential figure best known for bringing "tapas"-style dishes to America. In 2021, Jeff Bezos announced that Andrés would be one of the first two recipients of the Courage and Civility Award, which comes with a \$100 million donation from Bezos. Andrés has pledged the award toward doubling food aid efforts at World Central Kitchen in a continued effort to fight hunger and food insecurity.



### **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**

The representative from New York's 14th congressional district has too many legislative and political accomplishments to list in a paragraph. She couldn't even fit them neatly into two minutes of rapid dialogue for her YouTube channel and the list will continue to grow following her re-election in 2020 with 72% of the vote. She's become a target for right-wing attacks and rhetoric but has stood tall in the face of everything to co-sign 78 pieces of legislation, 14 of which were signed into law. She's not been short on charity work either. In late 2020, the 31-year-old congresswoman live-streamed the game *Among Us* on Twitch on numerous occasions to encourage everyone to vote in the 2020 election and also to raise \$200,000 for food banks, eviction defense legal funds and community organizations.

## 6 Hispanic/Latinx People Making a Difference



### Indya Moore

The model/actor of Puerto Rican and Dominican roots has become a star on screen and off it due to their work as an activist for transgender causes and advocacy of showcasing realistic representations of trans people on screen. In 2020, the star of FX's *Pose* raised funds to help Black and trans people navigate the uncertainty of COVID-19. In 2021, Moore teamed up with Tommy Hilfiger to launch the TommyxIndya collection to create gender-fluid fashion options.



### Carmen Maria Machado

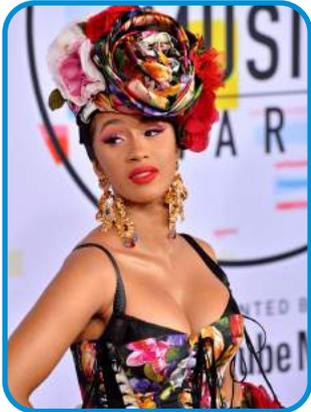
Look at a list of the most influential sci-fi or horror fiction writers of all time and you're likely going to see a collection of mostly white male faces. That may be changing with the arrival of Machado, however. The 35-year-old author from Pennsylvania has established herself as one of the most influential voices in sci-fi, fantasy and horror writing of the last decade. She's a regular contributor of short stories and essays published in *The New Yorker* and other literary magazines, breaking boundaries for LGBTQ authors through her explorative, genre-bending work.



### Mj Rodriguez

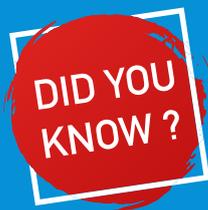
Another star of FX's *Pose*, Rodriguez has gone beyond film and stage to kickstart a music career under Michaela Jaé. The breakout star has also moved into trans activism, particularly the Black Trans Lives Matter movement. The winner of the 2018 Hispanic Heritage Trailblazer Award, Rodriguez has supported and helped fundraise for the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), which works to ensure safe schools for all students, and The Trevor Project, an advocacy group focused on suicide prevention among LGBTQ youth.

## 6 Hispanic/Latinx People Making a Difference



### Belcalis Almánzar, aka “Cardi B”

A controversial figure to some because of her song lyrics or spending habits, the rapper known as Cardi B has done her share to lift people up in the past year. After donating more than \$1 million to coronavirus relief funds, she gave another million to fans via Cash app and 20,000 meal supplements for New York area hospitals to distribute to medical staff. She followed that by challenging her detractors on Instagram to post their receipts of what they’d donated to charity and offered to match them in giving to those same charities.



**More than 20 million Latinos identified with more than one race on the 2020 census, up from 3 million in 2010.**



## Discussion Questions for Employees

- How should companies look to highlight the achievements and contributions of Hispanic/Latin American citizens more?
- Many of the people mentioned here showcase how intersectionality makes people and their experiences complex. How do you think that intersectionality changes their experience as Hispanic/Latin/Latinx citizens?



## The Debate Around the Term "Latinx"

As inclusivity has taken center stage in our culture and workplaces, new terms and phrases are adopted to ensure that we're as intentional in our language as possible.

Who that language is for and how we use it is an important part of its development that can't be overlooked. Sometimes, a new term begins to be used interchangeably with another that means something different. For example, you may have noticed how some people use African Americans when referring to Black Americans. Similarly, this is true of Hispanics, Latin and Latinx, the latter of which has been a source of divisive debate.

Throughout the last 60 years, American corporations, media outlets and politicians have searched for a single term that could capture the diverse interests, political agendas and experiences of people from Latin American cultures. Each of these efforts, be it Latin American,

Hispanic, Latino or Latinx, has generated controversy of its own.

Sometimes, adjustments to terminology are made yet don't quite suit the culture — or worse, they don't make it easy for the people those terms that are supposed to serve to identify with the language used. Many have begun to wonder about the use of Latinx and whether it's a culturally appropriate way to create inclusive language around Latin American culture.

Writing for Mother Jones, activist and author John Paul Brammer said the usage of the term Latinx increased following the 2016 shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, when a gunman killed 49 clubgoers and injuring 53 others during a "Latin Night" event. Latinx is a gender-neutral compromise for those who didn't identify as "Latino" (male) or "Latina" (female), as is the case for many within the LGBTQ community.

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After more than a decade of usage, and after the term Latinx was added to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary in 2018, you might expect it to be widely adopted by people within the Latin and Hispanic community, just as it is in corporate diversity pamphlets.

According to an August 2020 study from Pew, that simply isn't the case. Only 25% of the Hispanic population has heard of Latinx, while roughly 3% actively used it. The majority of those who use the term are younger people, with 7% of those aged 18-29 using it compared to just 2% of people over 30.

The research also shows that Americans primarily use the term, most often by well-educated people who tend to lean left on the political spectrum. This has led critics to conclude that the use of Latinx is an exercise in political correctness rather than serving the people it aims to include.

### A Linguistic Issue

The term is reflective of a mentality of gender-neutral inclusion, but not necessarily Hispanic culture or the language that permeates it: Spanish. Pronounced "La-TEEN-ex" by people in the English-speaking world, the phrase doesn't translate well or phonetically to the language that many of the people it's meant to represent.

The letter X is always preceded by a vowel in Spanish, meaning Latinx isn't consistent with Spanish linguistics. As a result, some have proposed alternatives such as "Latinu" or "Latiné."

Pronunciation is important because the letter X is often used in so many different ways that just the mere sight of the word Latinx could be confusing. On paper, it may appear to those new to the term as a typo. When speaking, X can be used to replicate a variety of sounds in both English and Spanish, so much so that linguists sometimes call it a "phonetic chameleon."

### Examples of sounds X include:

- **Ks** – as in "tax" or "example"
- **Z** – as in "xenophobic" or "xylophone"
- **Gz** – as in "executive" or "examine"
- **Kzh** or **Ksh** – as in "luxury" or "obnoxious"
- **Silent** – as in "faux pas"

## The Debate Around the Term "Latinx"

As you can see, the letter X is versatile. For the non-English speaker or someone learning and using English as a second language, this can be difficult to understand or get right every time in simple terms.

In Spanish, the letter has some similar uses and some that are completely different, such as an "H" sound in names like "Don Quixote" or the Spanish pronunciation of "Mexico." Speakers of certain Spanish dialects pronounce X with a "sh" sound; Xela, Guatemala's second-largest city, is pronounced "SHEH-lah."

Beyond the language, the cultural perception of the letter X is different between the countries that make up Latin America. As Billboard's Leila Cobo notes, in Mexico or Colombia, a person referred to as "equis" (X in Spanish) is the equivalent to John or Jane Doe. It also could be interpreted as "nobody" or being someone with a bland personality.

There are also varying cultural and symbolic translations of the letter X throughout centuries. It has a long history of being a number or symbol of representing someone being incorrect, evil, dangerous, exact, unknown, prestigious, canceled out, pornographic or it denoting a status, death, quantity, size, generation or chromosomes.

This one letter has such varied meanings that by its very nature, it is ambiguous and ubiquitous. For those in search of a term that encapsulates their identity and life experience, it's not surprising that Latinx hasn't been met with widespread embrace.

### What Can You Do?

While the search goes on for a neater way to create an inclusive language for the Latinx population, the best thing that companies and their HR teams can do in the meantime is simply learning and respecting how these individuals self-identify.

In the end, people will use language to express their life experiences how they see fit. Many will embrace language that already exists, but in either case, the terms used do not create the person's reality. Ultimately, this is what you are trying to give your respect, empathy and consciousness to.

For a growing number of people, Latinx makes sense and is something they identify with. Those numbers may continue to grow as widespread media usage and the government's application of the term wields a certain amount of influence over these matters. But for those who don't, perhaps it's time we let them set the terms they are most comfortable with.



## Discussion Questions for Employees

- How should colleagues establish an understanding of their Latinx peers and their preferred ethnic and gender terms? Is it inappropriate to ask questions about their ethnic identity?
- What can we do as a company to be more supportive of our Latinx colleagues?
- What do you think about American influence over Hispanic language and culture?

## Facts and Figures

After discussing Hispanic/Latinx history and identities, the next step is to look at the available data to understand why equality for Hispanic and Latinx people has profound demographic, financial, educational and business benefits, addressing issues that these communities face or have overcome.

Here, we also include DiversityInc’s exclusive data on Hispanic/Latinx leadership and employment in our Top 50.

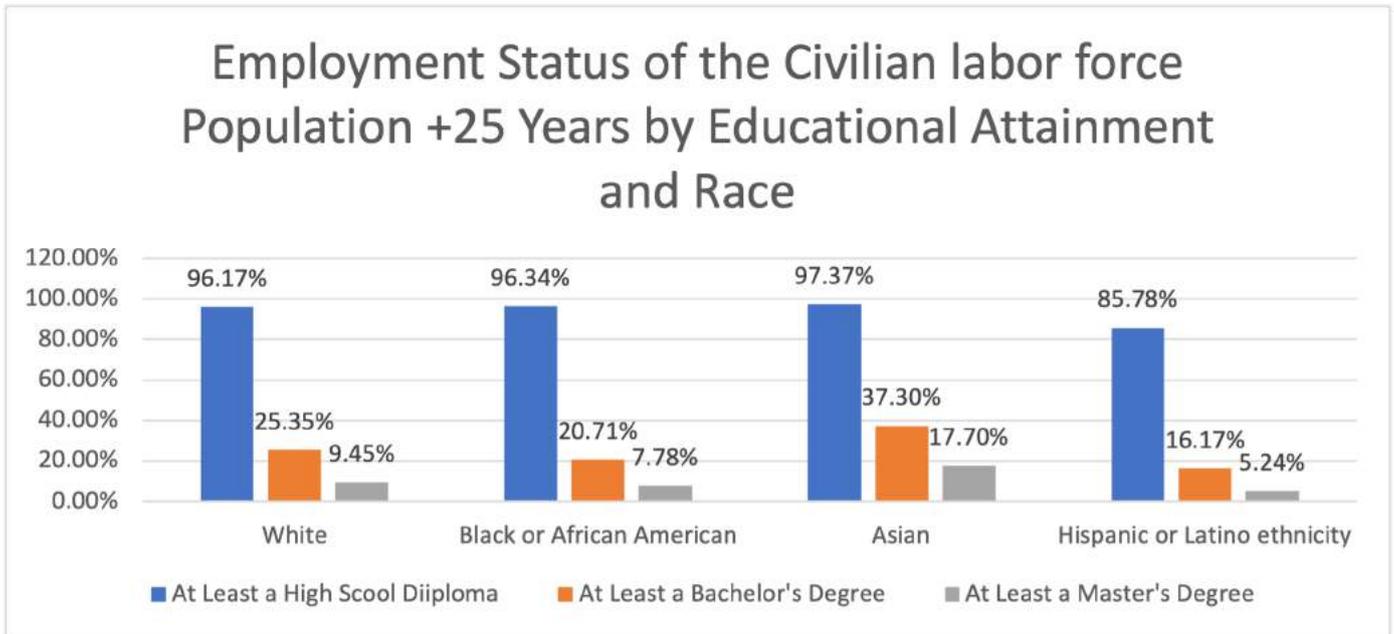
### Demographics

Year	Population	Percent of U.S. Population
2020	62.08 million	18.70%
Projected 2060	111.20 million	28.00%

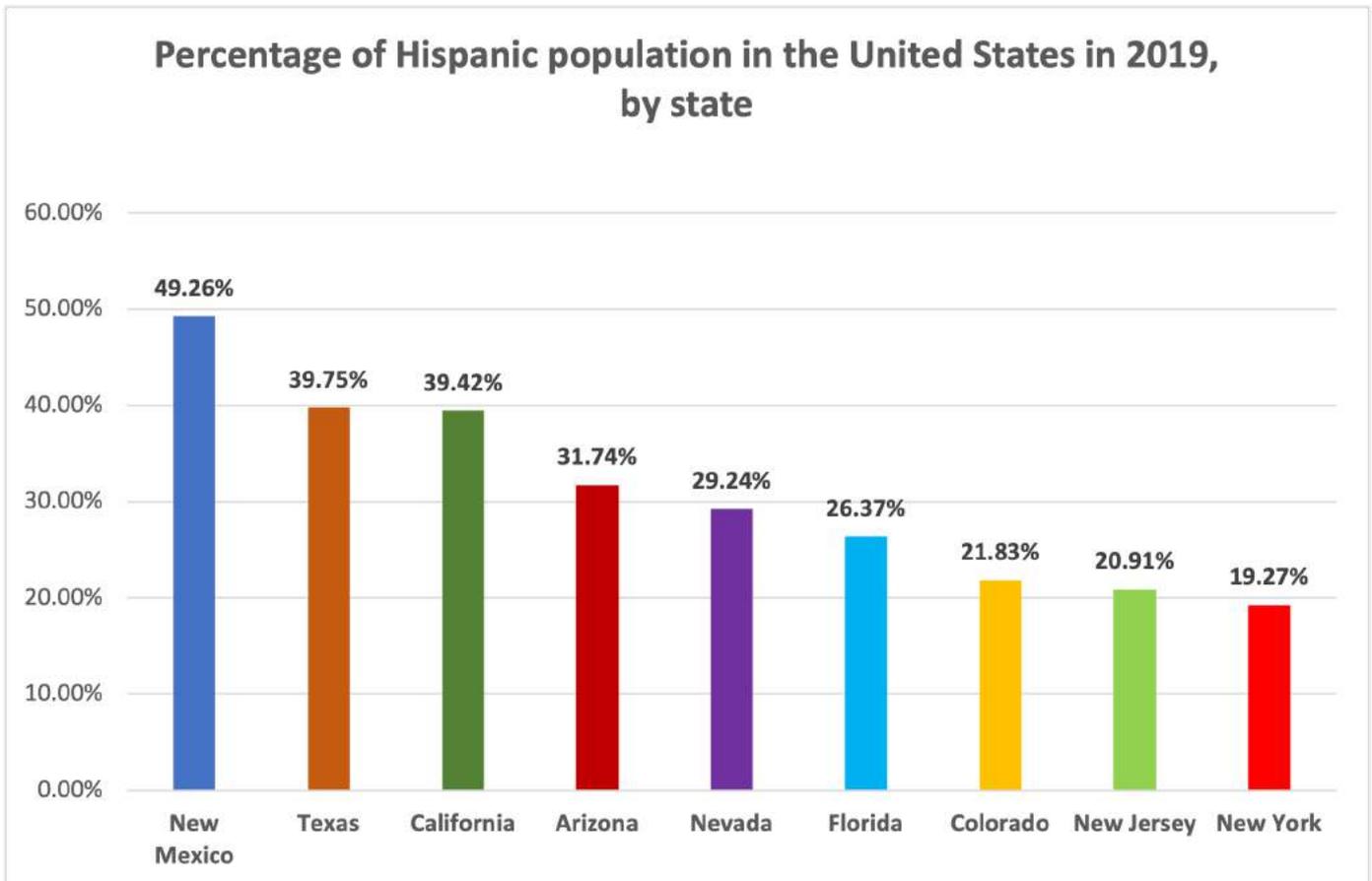
## Hispanic/Latinx in the Workforce - DiversityInc Top 50

Group	Representation	Top 10 & HOF	Top 50 & HOF	All Participants
Board of Directors	Avg % of Latinas	1.35%	1.32%	1.42%
	Avg % of Latinos	4.29%	3.36%	3.06%
	Avg % of Latinx	5.64%	4.68%	4.47%
Management	Avg % of Latinas	4.23%	3.62%	3.48%
	Avg % of Latinos	4.68%	4.18%	3.96%
	Avg % of Latinx	8.91%	7.80%	7.44%
Workforce	Avg % of Latinas	6.95%	5.95%	5.95%
	Avg % of Latinos	6.89%	5.62%	5.80%
	Avg % of Latinx	13.84%	11.58%	11.76%

## Education



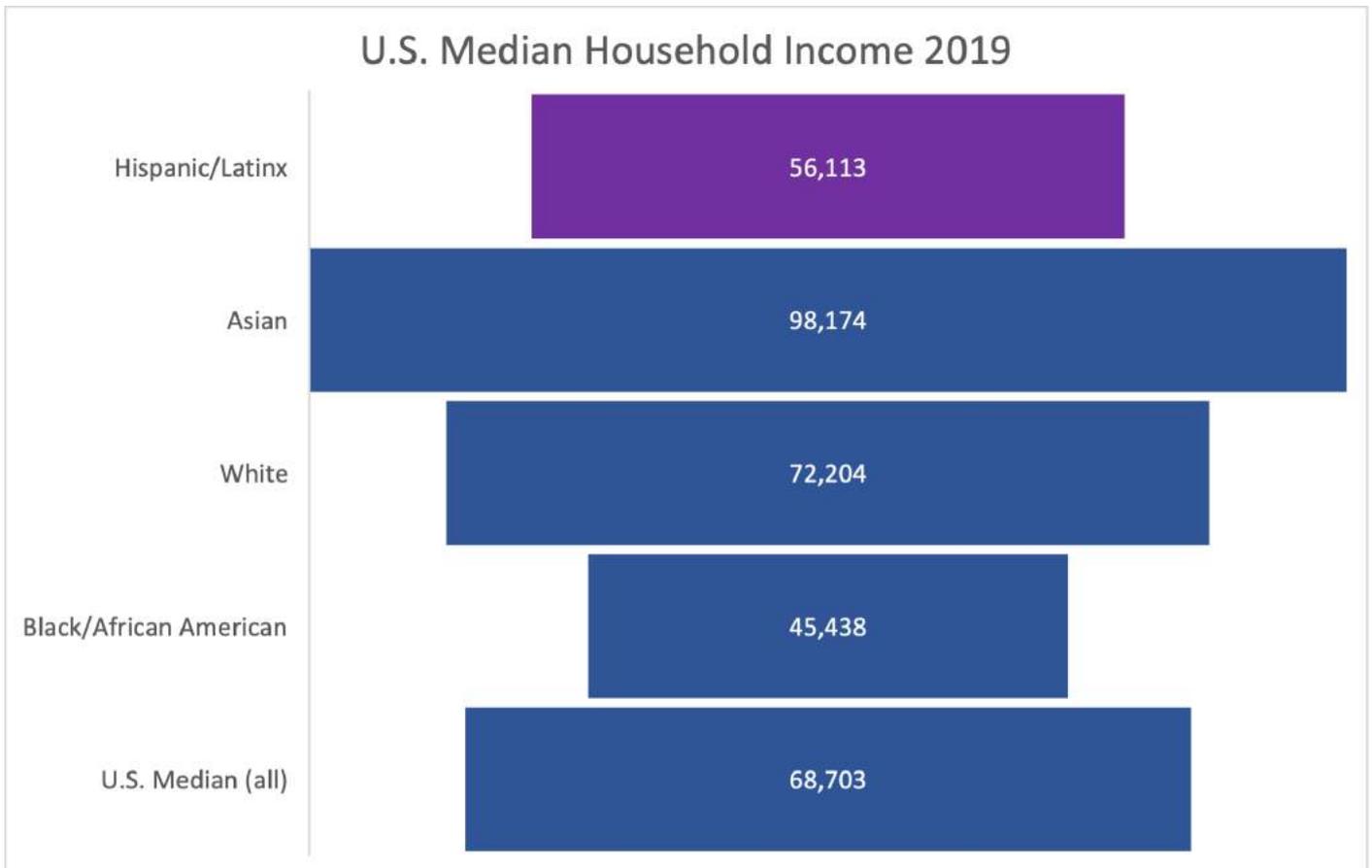
## States with the Highest Hispanic/Latinx Population



## Buying Power

Race/Ethnicity	2010	2018	Projected 2023
White	\$9.43 trillion	\$12.15 trillion	\$13.88 trillion
Hispanic/Latinx	\$1.02 trillion	\$1.54 trillion	\$1.92 trillion
Black/African American	\$961.2 billion	\$1.3 trillion	\$1.5 trillion
Asian	\$603.5 billion	\$1.01 trillion	\$1.3 trillion
Native American	\$82.5 billion	\$114.6 billion	\$136.4 billion

## Finances





## Discussion Questions for Employees

- The data shows an education gap for Hispanic/Latinx citizens. Why do you think that is and what can be done to address it in corporate America?
- As the Hispanic/Latinx population grows, so does its buying power. How do you think companies need to change their ways of doing business to better serve this demographic and thus improve the outlook for the business?

## Leadership Spotlight

Perhaps the most notable workplace trend of 2021 has been the number of people leaving it. It's now referred to as the "Great Resignation" as people come to the grip with the finite nature of life and opt to seize the day by pursuing careers in new fields they find more invigorating and fulfilling.

This mass movement of talent is also becoming known by some as the "Great Opportunity." With increased turnover and hiring on the rise, there has never been a better time to develop a personal brand that can be used to pursue the career you've always wanted.

For Hispanic/Latinx professionals looking to reshape their futures, developing their personal brand around their abilities is as easy as it is for everyone else, but building it around their possibilities is an opportunity that should not be left for another day. To help with that journey, here is some advice from Hispanic/Latinx and diversity leaders on how to go about reshaping your career.



"We cannot change the past and we may not be able to change our present circumstances. What we can do is choose positivity over negativity and action over inaction. We can choose to meet adversity with resilience and uncertainty with inquisitiveness. We can seize the smaller win that leads to the bigger victory. Opportunity is always present. Personal growth should be constant. Choose to look ahead, go forward, and live fully."

–**David Rodriguez, Global Chief Human Resources Officer, Marriott International**



"Bring intention and purpose to all the paths you pursue and the challenges you take on. As you navigate the new opportunities in today's changing business world, it is a welcome relief to meet someone who is purposeful and mindful of their personal growth."

**–Salvador Mendoza, Vice President, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, NBCUniversal**



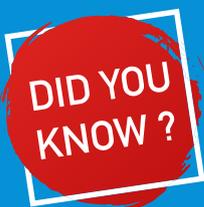
"Behind every great personal brand is a story. Beyond your career, you carry an identity that brought you to where you are today. Think through that identity and the path you followed to arrive at your current destination. Who were your guiding lights? How did your experiences support your interests? What skills do you possess? How do those skills play into your strengths? Then, craft your narrative and tell your story as you're building relationships in person or via your professional networks online. Use your résumé as a place to continue the dialogue. Call out the unique skills you have, such as bilingual fluency, critical thinking, agile project management, or strategic planning. Remember that your diverse cultural heritage and background are a dynamic plus as our country and world continue to diversify. Lastly, don't worry about having a plan. Stay open to new possibilities. Some of the best career choices and opportunities happen unexpectedly."

**–Carly Sanchez, EVP of Talent Acquisition and Diversity Recruiting, Wells Fargo**



"Building a personal brand may sound intimidating. To help you get started, ask close friends, family and coworkers you trust to help you identify your brand elements. Do not be afraid to be vulnerable. If English is not your first language, use that as a strength because it shows you are bilingual or multilingual, which can be a competitive advantage. Be open and willing to take risks, share your personal story about what differentiates you, and do not be shy about the value you bring. Be authentic and genuine about it. Have a clear vision on what you want to do next and go get it!"

**–Tony Tenicela, VP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Sodexo USA**



The U.S. population grew by 22.7 million people from 2010 to 2020. Hispanics/Latinx people accounted for 51% of this increase, a greater share than any other group.