

# Colorado's Next Hispanic Serving Institution



<b>Overview</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>Why</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>09</b>
<b>Culture First</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Culture First (continued)</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Outcomes to Date</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Strategies and Tactics in Progress</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Timelines</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Events</b>	<b>21</b>



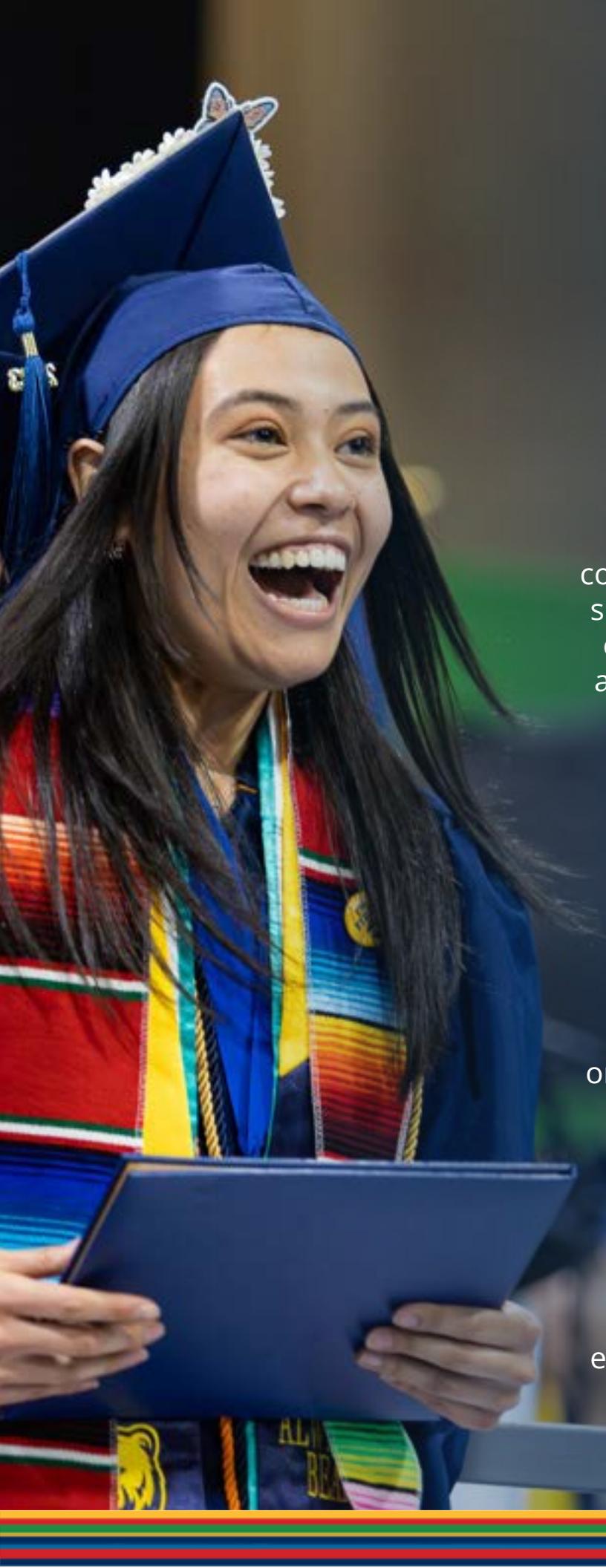


# Overview

The University of Northern Colorado is proud to be a Students First university committed to serving Hispanic, Chicana/o/x, and Latina/o/x students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as the local community and our region. We believe that our diversity is our strength and are committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where all members of our community feel welcome and supported.

As an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), we have a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Hispanic and Latinx-identifying students, and are committed to providing them with the resources and support they need to succeed academically, socially and professionally. We also believe that it is important to celebrate Hispanic culture and heritage on our campus, and offer a variety of programs and events that highlight the diversity of Latinx cultures our students and their families bring with them to UNC.



A young woman with long dark hair is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. She is wearing a blue graduation cap with a tassel and a blue graduation gown. She is holding a dark blue diploma in her hands. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor graduation ceremony.

To achieve UNC's Rowing, Not Drifting 2030 strategic plan, the pursuit of a federal Hispanic Serving Institution designation stands out as a crucial component within our overarching commitment to prioritizing our students' success and their sense of belonging on our campus. Our community is actively advancing this mission by ensuring that our faculty and staff are well-prepared to meet the needs of today's students, that our campus community has the resources and training to effectively support every student's growth and success, and that we are cultivating a culture where all students, faculty and staff feel welcome, included and safe. Through these deliberate efforts, we aim to graduate individuals who not only excel as leaders but also contribute significantly to enriching Colorado's culture and economy

By becoming a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, UNC will continue its long tradition of preparing and graduating leaders who serve and enrich Colorado's culture and economy.





# The Vision

We are a Students First university committed to serving Hispanic, Chicana/o/x, and Latina/o/x-identifying students, faculty, staff, alumni, the local community, and our region. Based on the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging, we will develop and implement policies, structures, and culturally responsive pedagogy and practices to increase the educational and career attainment, as well as social mobility, of these populations.

Through the success of being a federally designated HSI combined with the thoughtful and intentional effort of servingness by all members of the university community, we will contribute to the success of every student while making gains in closing educational equity gaps present at our university. In addition, UNC will continue its long tradition of preparing and graduating leaders who serve and enrich Colorado's culture and economy. We know that doing so will positively impact people's lives and the future of our state.

# The Why

According to the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado's largest and fastest-growing ethnic group, Hispanic/Latinx, has the lowest average educational attainment and the lowest college enrollment rate of any ethnic group in the state.

	White, non-Latino	Hispanic/Latinx
<b>National</b> % of adults who hold a college degree	46%	24%
<b>Colorado</b> % of adults who hold a college degree or certificate	64%	29%
<b>UNC</b> Four-year graduation rate for 2019-2023 cohort	39%	31%
<b>UNC</b> Fall 2022 retention rates among first-time, full-time freshman	77%	71%

*"Latinos are the largest ethnic minority in the United States, totaling over 62 million individuals. Demographic projections posit that by 2050, nearly one in three U.S. residents will be Latino. This demographic expansion is reshaping societal structures, introducing multifaceted perspectives, and catalyzing societal progression."*

*Rafael Magaña, The Growing Influence of Latinos in the U.S.*



# Goals & Objectives



## **Goal 1: Increase Latinx Enrollment (Retention, Persistence and Graduation)**

Objective 1.1: Enhance recruitment efforts focusing on Latinx students.

Objective 1.2: Develop retention strategies to ensure the success of Latinx students.

Objective 1.3: Implement programs to support the transition and integration of Latinx students into the university community.

## **Goal 2: Enhance Academic Support and Success**

Objective 2.1: Develop academic support programs tailored to the needs of Latinx students.

Objective 2.2: Establish mentorship initiatives connecting Latinx students with faculty and staff.

Objective 2.3: Strengthen partnerships with K-12 institutions to prepare Latinx students for higher education.

## **Goal 4: Build Community Engagement and Partnerships**

Objective 4.1: Collaborate with local Hispanic-serving organizations to strengthen communities.

Objective 4.2: Create outreach programs to engage with the broader Hispanic community.

Objective 4.3: Involve alumni in mentoring and supporting current Latinx students.

## **Goal 3: Foster a Culturally Inclusive Campus Environment**

Objective 3.1: Integrate Hispanic culture and perspectives into the curriculum and campus events.

Objective 3.2: Promote cultural competency and awareness among the university community.

Objective 3.3: Establish safe spaces and resource centers to support Latinx students.

## **Goal 5: Create an Institutional Infrastructure**

Objective 5.1: Establish dedicated HSI offices and resources.

Objective 5.2: Enhance data collection and analysis

Objective 5.3: Develop collaboration Initiatives among academic departments, student affairs, and external partners to enhance support for Latinx students.

Objective 5.5: Establish cross-functional task forces and committees by [date] to foster collaboration and facilitate the exchange of ideas and strategies that promote Hispanic student success.

## **Goal 6: Create a Culture for Research and Grants**

Objective 6.1: Establish research grants for HSI initiatives.

Objective 6.2: Facilitate grant writing workshops and training and build capacity among faculty and staff to secure grants targeting initiatives supporting Latinx students and communities.

Objective 6.3: Encourage community-engaged research and promote research that actively involves the Latinx community and addresses their unique needs and challenges.

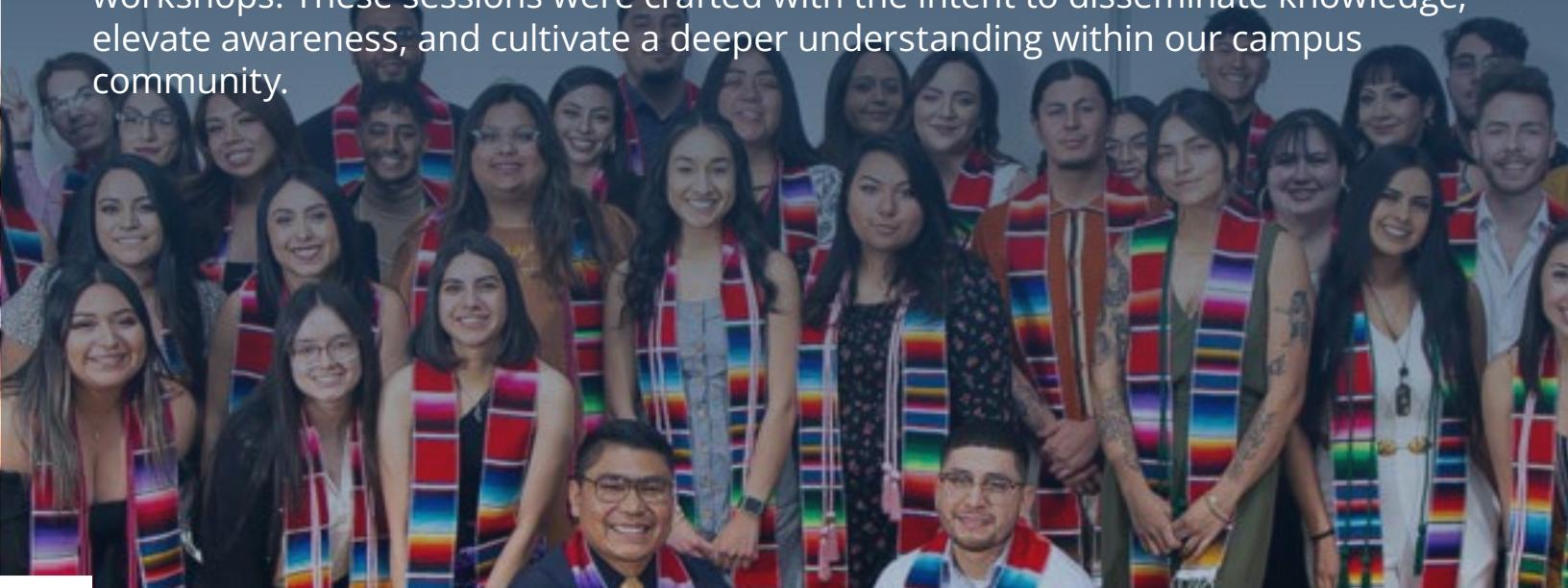
# Culture First

Since the inception of UNC's HSI initiative, we've placed significant emphasis on understanding and fostering our campus culture in alignment with our HSI goals, particularly emphasizing "Servingness". The concept of prioritizing culture at the outset of organizational initiatives entails focusing on shaping or aligning an organization's culture when beginning a development or transformation process. This prioritization involves establishing a desired organizational culture as a foundational step before delving into other organizational facets, such as structure, processes, strategies, or systems. It's vital to recognize that organizational culture significantly impacts overall performance, employee conduct, and the organization's overall effectiveness.

At the heart of our journey to become Colorado's premier Hispanic-Serving Institution lies the principle of "Culture First." This ethos emphasizes the paramount importance of pre-assessment, education, and awareness. Our first steps in this transformative path involved hosting inclusive campus dialogues. These enriching sessions provided a platform for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni leaders to share their perceptions about UNC's metamorphosis into an HSI.

To further enrich our understanding, we orchestrated a survey targeted at our faculty and staff. This survey was meticulously designed to capture their insights on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and our HSI endeavors at UNC. The feedback gathered acted as a beacon, guiding the formation of pivotal recommendations and highlighting key insights.

In tandem with these efforts, strategic partners spearheaded enlightening workshops. These sessions were crafted with the intent to disseminate knowledge, elevate awareness, and cultivate a deeper understanding within our campus community.





## **Hispanic Serving Institutions In Practice: A Guide To Transforming Institutions of Higher Education**

Dr. Gina Garcia is a leading scholar on Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) who is dedicated to advocating with and for HSIs in order to transform colleges and universities that serve the most diverse student populations. Dr. Garcia inspired our UNC community to think critically about how we can achieve equitable graduation outcomes while also providing a culturally enriching

### **UNC: Colorado's Next Hispanic Serving Institution**

UNC hosted Dr. Roberto Montoya, former chief educational equity officer for the Colorado Department of Higher Education, for the conclusion of his statewide tour of HSIs. During the event, UNC leadership highlighted long-standing efforts to serve Hispanic/Latinx-identifying students and celebrated recent institutional accomplishments. Dr. Montoya also took the opportunity to launch Colorado's statewide consortium of HSIs alongside Dr. Manuel del Real of MSU-Denver.

### **Anti-Blackness**

This educational session focuses on demystifying the socio-political, historical, and modern iterations of Anti-Blackness in the US and globally. Participants will engage interactively to understand the intersection of anti-Blackness and HSI, and relevance to their work, students, and our campus communities. Through this session participants will reflect on their socialization related to Blackness and racism, distinguish nuance between racism broadly and Anti-Blackness specifically, and develop personalized action plans contextualized by the socio-political, historical, and modern contexts of Anti-Blackness.



# Culture First (continued)

## HSI 101 – Why Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution Matters

Why Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution Matters, focuses on 3 main outcomes. 1) Learn terms, definitions, historical context and critical facts related to HSI's. 2) Understanding why academic and career success through greater college-attendance rates and higher degree-attainment rates contributes to 'closing the achievement gap of Latinx students.' 3) Reflecting on current institutional practices, policies, and structures that might impact our work with Latinx students at UNC.

## HSI 201 - Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution – 'Servingness' in Practice

Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution – 'Servingness' in Practice, focuses on the important differentiation of being Hispanic serving and not just Hispanic enrolling to achieve the HSI designation. Join in this session to learn about the concept, indicators, and application of servingness (Garcia, Nuñez, and Sansone, 2019) and begin to develop actionable steps and strategies that pertain to your community of practice.

## Mexican American Studies Annual Conference (MASAC)

A collaborative effort between the University of Northern Colorado's Department of Chicana/o and Latinx Studies, District 6 High Schools, and committed scholar-practitioners to increase the enrollment of Mexican American, Chicana/o/x, and Latina/o/x/e, and other underrepresented students in higher education. The conference brings outstanding community leaders to facilitate interactive and dynamic breakout sessions around topics like academic identity and higher education, cultural awareness, social issues in the community, professional opportunities in fields like STEM and medical fields, civic engagement, and youth empowerment, to mention a few. The MASAC is open to all students regardless of district affiliation or region.

Rooted in the history of Chicano Movement youth leadership conferences, the Mexican American Studies Department hosts an Annual Conference to achieve the following outcomes

- Increase the enrollment in college of Mexican American, Chicana/o/x/e, Latina/o/x/e, and other underrepresented students.
- Foster pride and self-esteem through cultural activities and topics related to students' daily experiences.
- Cultivate a college-going culture and academic identity among high school students and local communities.
- Help students navigate the college application process and provide them with resources/networks to be successful.
- Develop critical and autonomous thinking around social issues to increase community engagement and advocacy.
- Expose students to role models and professional opportunities in all fields, particularly in STEM and medical professions.



# Outcome

UNC launched a 30-person HSI Steering Committee with representatives from almost every college and academic unit.

Leadership hosted representatives from the Colorado Department of Higher Education to highlight UNC as Colorado's Next Hispanic Serving Institution.

UNC launched the *Noticias* HSI newsletter that goes to more than 10,000 internal and external constituents.

UNC's HSI Fellows, Dr. Jonathan Alcántar and Cristóbal García, were named as members of Colorado's 25-person Statewide HSI Consortium to lead the conversation on servingness at the state level

More than 150 staff and faculty have participated in UNC's HSI 101 and 201 sessions through the UNITE program.

UNC's HSI leadership hosted a 60-person Summer Book Club on Dr. Gina García's *Transforming Hispanic-Serving Institutions for Equity and Justice* where servingness and HSI readiness were discussed.

Fall 2021. Leo Tanguma: Chicano Muralist (more than 1,500 people visited the exhibit; this was the first solo exhibit dedicated to a Chicano artist)

A close-up photograph of several marbled eggs, likely made of clay or ceramic, in shades of yellow, blue, and white. They are arranged in a cluster, with some in the foreground and others slightly out of focus in the background. The marbling pattern is clearly visible on each egg.

# es to Date

Fall 2022. Installation of the architectural mural "A Glimpse of Our Cultural Symbols" by Leo Tanguma in Candelaria

Fall 2022. CLAS, the Mexican Cultural Center, and District 6 hosted El Dia de Los Muertos/ the Day of the Dead. UNC's El Dia de los Muertos is one of the oldest-known celebrations hosted in Colorado.

Fall 2023. Unveiling of Centro de Educacion de Aztlan Mural in Michener Library. A Project led by Brenda Vargas in collaboration with Leo Tanguma.

Spring 2023. 1st Annual Chicana/o and Latinx Film Festival. Four acclaimed film directors presented their films and visited local schools. (600 viewers participated in the film festival)

A new faculty member will join the Department of Chicana/o and Latinx Studies to teach courses in Central America and Indigenous Studies.

15 members of the UNC Community participated in the National Association of Mexican American Studies conference in the Spring of 2023 along with leaders in the field from across the United States.

LatinXcellence. Increased the participation of Latinx families and recognized the academic achievements of Latinx students.

# Strategies and Tactics in Process

Develop programmatic initiatives that are coordinated across campus, aligned to the mission and servingness definition, and that reflect the Latinx culture.

Identify particular campus units for culturally responsive professional development to increase and maintain the number of Latinx students, faculty, and staff at UNC. Examples include admissions, financial aid, academic affairs leadership and others.

Engage UNC Advisor Network, faculty, Student Affairs staff, and students in continuing professional development programs, including HSI UNITE sessions, anti-racist and anti-Black discrimination training, and community-wide readings/discussions.

Launch an HSI Webinar Series that features the research and scholarship of faculty and staff (on campus and nationally) whose work centers around Latina/o/x/e, Black, Indigenous, Undocumented, and other historically marginalized students and communities.

Develop the infrastructure necessary to manage a Hispanic Serving Institution designation, including leadership, organization, reporting, staffing, and budget management processes.

Gather current qualitative and quantitative data and construct a set of metrics and objectives as we prepare to apply for the Federal Hispanic Serving Institution designation.

Investigate competitive HSI grant funding options with colleagues in the UNC Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, as well as university faculty and staff. Utilize these efforts to clarify capacity-building requirements when applying for highly competitive funding when HSI designation is realized.

Work with and develop an aggressive admissions recruitment plan to increase the number of Latinx students to sustain our positive trajectory of Latinx students. Specific attention in areas with high Latinx populations will be prioritized.

Creating a strategy to effectively track the research grant pipeline and develop a research agenda aimed at helping faculty recognize and capitalize on opportunities for a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)

Pilot a faculty clustering/cohort hiring program to attract more HSI-ready and equity-minded individuals from historically marginalized groups and increase diversity and a sense of belonging at UNC.

Form a campus-wide HSI Steering Committee to carry on the preliminary work of the introductory working group which was established in Phase 1 and concluded in Phase 2.

Conduct a comprehensive Mapping and Analysis project studying the distribution of college students across different academic majors, broken down by ethnic or racial groups, to understand patterns, disparities, and preferences in major selection based on ethnicity.

Build stronger community partnerships and collaborations in Denver and across Northern Colorado to bolster our outreach efforts, allowing us to create a more inclusive and supportive environment.

# Timelines

The timeline for HSI started in Fall 2020. Although a few alterations have been made to the original timeline, this graphic represents the phases in which we are pursuing the HSI process: Exploration, Discovery, Pre-Implementation, Assessment and Implementation. Since UNC has achieved a numerical threshold of being 25%+

To determine Institutional Eligibility for Titles III, V, and VII Grants the federal government follows the process outlined below:

**Phase 1: Exploration**

**Phase 2: Discovery**

**Phase 3: Pre-Implementation**

**Phase 4: Assessment**

**Phase 5: Implementation**

- Facilitated Campus Conversations:
- Focus groups were held to learn more from students, staff/faculty and alumni regarding current strengths and suggested areas of improvement with a focus on what it means to be an HSI
- Themes from focus groups were identified
- UNC as an HSI — finally!
- Deliver on HSI promise — do it right
- Create a student success mindset
- Develop resources and funding to successfully execute
- Create a distinguished HSI and set ourselves apart
- Establish a strong connection with the city, Greeley/Evans schools and Aims Community College
- Formulate a robust leadership commitment & strategic plan

- Refine key strategies to align with UNC's strategic plan
- Research exemplar HSI institutions and programs for awareness and familiarity with HSI
- Launch extensive communications plan and begin campus, community and stakeholder introduction to HSI at UNC
- Utilize coordinated multi-channel messaging, facilitated presentations, focused training and educational workshops
- Conduct campus-wide HSI and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion readiness survey

- Create HSI Fellows program and Culture First campaign
- Launch campus-wide HSI Steering Committee
- Host Colorado Department of Higher Education seminar on emerging HSIs
- Refine strategies through assessment metrics and create feedback from institutional leadership
- Initiate pre-implementation strategies with institution-specific metrics
- Meet with Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) to prepare collection of data for pre-application of federal designation
- Investigate HSI grant funding opportunities

- Evaluate metrics and outcomes for effectiveness and efficiency
- Ensure alignment to UNC's strategic plan
- Apply for HSI grant funding
- Align efforts within Students First institutional framework

- Project accomplishment — UNC becomes an HSI
- Continued evaluation and refinement of efforts
- Delivery of resources
- Student Success
- Financial
- Personnel
- Organizational Design

# Events

## **Latinx Heritage Month Celebration**

### **Kickoff**

Friday, Sept. 15, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at César Chávez Cultural Center

Meet new people and explore clubs and organizations. Free food, music, live entertainment and giveaways. Tour the César Chávez Cultural Center and meet the staff.

## **Dolores Huerta Smithsonian Exhibit**

Opening: Saturday Sept. 16, 6 p.m., at the Greeley History Museum

A collaboration between the Greeley History Museum and the Mexican-American History Project, this exhibit by the Smithsonian features the struggles and work of Dolores Huerta, a civil rights movement activist. A section dedicated to the local struggles and contributions of migrant workers and other minoritized populations will be featured as well. The art exhibit runs through Dec. 2.

## **DREAMer Zone**

Wednesday, Sept. 20, 3-5 p.m., Campus Commons 2300

Dreamer Zone is an in-person workshop that builds awareness around the lived experiences of undocumented students on campus. Participants will engage in activities to increase knowledge on terminology and policy affecting national identity, privilege and advocacy. This training is part of UNITE, which gives the UNC community the opportunity to begin or continue conversations in relation to inclusion across a broad range of identities.

## **¡Adelante!**

Saturday, Sept. 30, 9:20-11:30 a.m.

Adelante is an event designed to guide prospective students and their families through the exciting journey of applying for and financing college education. Join us for a dynamic and informative session, available in both Spanish and English.

## **Latinx Heritage Month Tailgate and Football Game: UNC vs. Weber State**

Saturday, September 30

Tailgate at 10:00 AM; kickoff at 1:00 PM  
Nottingham Field

## **Center for Arts Entrepreneurship**

### **Distinguished Guest Speaker: Tony Garcia**

Monday, October 2

12:20 PM-1:10PM

Langworthy Theatre

## **¡Celebremos! A Festival of Latinx Music & Culture**

Friday, October 13

5:00-9:00 PM

Campus Commons

Celebrate the launch of UNC's new Latinx Music program.

## **Immigration Clinic**

Sunday, Oct. 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., César Chávez Cultural Center

Join the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition and the César Chávez Cultural Center as they host legal experts to help with citizenship applications and other related questions.

## **Latin Crosscurrents: Jazz Meets the Symphony**

Wednesday, November 1

7:30 PM-9:30 PM

Campus Commons Performance Hall

## **Día de Los Muertos Celebration**

Thursday, November 2

5:00 PM-8:00 PM

Campus Commons

## **Pozole Community Lunch**

Monday, November 27

11:30 AM-1:30 PM

University Center



