

HISPANIC/LATINO  
COMMISSION  
OF MICHIGAN

# Accomplishments Report 2020

Advise. Build. Connect.



# Accomplishments Report 2020

## Contents

1. Message from the Executive Director
2. Podcast Series
3. 2020 Election Support
4. 2020 Hispanic Heritage Month
5. Commission Meeting
6. Statewide College Graduation
7. COVID-19 Response
8. Roundtable Event with Gov. Whitmer & 2nd Michigan Latino Legislative Day
9. Appointments
10. Be Counted - 2020 Census Support
11. Media
12. Our Commissioners





HISPANIC/LATINO  
COMMISSION  
OF MICHIGAN

# 1 Message From The Executive Director

First and foremost, I would like to publicly thank our staff, commissioners, and our community partners for the unconditional support we have received this year. We worked hard to help improve the quality of life for Hispanic/Latino populations across Michigan. We had to adjust and reinvent the way we serve our community due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, we are happy to report that this year's outreach efforts have impacted more people than ever before due to our ability to innovate and use technology.

This pandemic required us to think outside the box. Technology allowed us an opportunity to reach a broader audience that in the past were not able to participate due to the lack of transportation to events and commission meetings. This pandemic also exposed the lack of technology access, health access, and many other disparities in our community. We realize that we have a long way to go to address inequalities, and that even though we were able to reach many more people this year, countless others were left behind due to the lack of access to technology.

We are excited to share that this year we reached more than 186,000 constituents who participated in our virtual outreach efforts. HLCOM commissioners and staff also attended and presented at many other virtual events that are not accounted for with the 186,000. Events such as Census 2020, Get Out and Vote campaign, Hispanic Heritage Month events, presentations to various organizations, and other commitments.

Our commission is an indispensable link between government and our growing community, and we are committed to the development and implementation of policies that address the needs of these populations in Michigan. Our total operating budget for 2019-2020 was \$289,200. From that, we spent \$214,226 on salaries, \$40,369 on operational costs, \$28,000 for scholarships, and \$6,605 on contractual costs.

Finally, I would like to mention that it is an honor to serve in my role. There is a lot of work ahead of us. Feel free to e-mail me at: [lopezsustaitaf@michigan.gov](mailto:lopezsustaitaf@michigan.gov)

Gracias,

Felipe Lopez Sustaita, Ed. D., MSW  
Executive Director



**Felipe Lopez Sustaita, Ed. D., MSW**  
Executive Director, Hispanic Latino Commission Of Michigan  
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity





## 2 Podcast Series

HLCOM started a bilingual video podcast series to promote 2020 Census participation, interviewing community members from across the state who were undertaking census promotion efforts. We found the podcast format to be an extremely useful tool for digital engagement with our constituents. This encouraged us to begin shifting the podcast to include other topics such as voting advocacy, racial disparity issues, and recognition of Hispanic/Latino community leaders. In total, we have reached 20,627 constituents through a combined series of 16 interviews.

The HLCOM will continue to record podcast sessions into 2021 as we look to expand our social media presence.

We would like to take a moment to thank the community leaders we interviewed through 2020: Juanita Bocanegra, Sonya Hernandez, Marisol Garcia, Floren시오 Hernandez, Monica B. Reyes, Rudy Flores, Miriam Ramos, Dale Freeman, Jesse Venegas, Jessica Cruz, Representative Vanessa Guerra, Daniel Soza III, Ana Manzano, Loida Tapia, Consuela Barber-Lopez, Juan Flores, and Jesus Martinez.



## 3 2020 Election Support

HLCOM shifted focus in September to provide bilingual information and materials on how constituents could participate in this year's elections. Most of our work focused on collaborations and partnerships with both state and community organizations to encourage all eligible Hispanic/Latino voters to cast their ballots this November. We recorded four special podcast sessions on the topic of voting.

Guests included Representative Vanessa Guerra for Saginaw's 95th District, Juan Flores from MSU's Office of Student Services, University of Michigan (U of M) graduate student Ana Manzano, and Loida Tapia with the ACLU. The HLCOM staff also worked with Hispanic/Latino students from MSU and U of M to host a Facebook Live roundtable conversation on the importance of participating in the voting process. Our total reach is estimated at just over 10,000 constituents.

**ROUNDTABLE:**  
**"IMPORTANCE OF THE HISPANIC/LATINO VOTE IN MICHIGAN"**

*The importance of exercising one's right to vote is more relevant than ever. Join us for a live roundtable discussion where we will talk about the power behind our Hispanic/Latino vote, and how you can make sure your voice is heard during this election year!*

**MODERATORS:**  
**LOIDA TAPIA,**  
 Consultant with the ACLU  
**FELIPE LOPEZ SUSTAITA,**  
 HLCOM Executive Director  
**DANIEL CARREON-CAMBEROS,**  
 HLCOM Program Coordinator

**STUDENT PANELIST:**

<b>GUADALUPE GONZALEZ III</b> Senior at University of Michigan - School of Information Information Analysis	<b>JANET IBARRA</b> Senior at Michigan State University - Social Relations & Policy and Political Science (pre-law) with a minor in Chicano/Latino Studies	<b>RAFAEL PAZ</b> Junior at Michigan State University - International Relations

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23  
 1- 1:45 PM EDT

MichiganVoting.org | HISPANIC/LATINO COMMISSION OF MICHIGAN



## 4 Hispanic Heritage Month 2020

As part of our mandate to host a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration each year, 2020 was celebrated in a digital format. Although the COVID-19 pandemic presented major challenges to our traditional Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration plans, we are proud of our digital celebration's success in reaching an incredibly wide audience. In lieu of our Hispanic Heritage Month Gala and award presentations, the HLCOM produced a weekly series of interviews with Hispanic/Latino leaders making a significant impact in their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Vision, Innovation, Determination and Advancement (VIDA) Awards were granted to seven individuals/organizations, with 34,610 total constituents reached through these videos and other initiatives. We'd like to once again thank and recognize the following individuals/organizations for their work:

- LaSED (represented by Mary Carmen Munoz & Guadalupe Lara)
- HLCOM Commissioner Anthony Rubio
- Rudy Flores (Chair of the Southeast IMRC)
- Sergio Cira-Reyes
- MIRC (represented by Diana Marin)
- ELLAS (represented by Maricela Alcala)
- Jesse Costilla (Great Lakes Bay Health Centers)

Additionally, the HLCOM awarded \$35,000 in scholarships to 35 Hispanic/Latino students attending Michigan-based higher education institutions, chosen out of a pool of nearly 200 applicants. We hope to expand next year's available scholarships, as the need for college education funding is higher than ever. This initiative reached 19,201 constituents through promotional materials and recognition of scholarship recipients on social media.



SCHOLARSHIP MADE  
POSSIBLE BY:



COMCAST  
NBCUNIVERSAL





# 5 Commission Meeting

The Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan is mandated to hold six commission meetings across the state. In 2020, the meetings were hosted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. HLCOM public meetings saw a surge in participation this year. Our ability to hold public meetings in a digital format allowed us to provide wider access to our community. There were a total of 180 combined participants across our six 2020 commission meetings. These meetings provide HLCOM with a platform to inform constituents of the commission’s work, while also receiving direct input from community members in their respective cities. HLCOM uses this to understand the issues and concerns within the state’s Hispanic/Latino communities from first-hand sources and adjust their areas of focus accordingly. Presenters for our meetings included:

- Celeste Sánchez Lloyd, Program Manager Strong Beginnings – Healthy Start (Latinx Health Disparities/Data Collection)
- Doug Ross, Senior Advisor for Michigan Prosperity (Future Frontliners)
- Loida Tapia, ACLU of Michigan (Voting Presentation)
- Kim Trent, LEO Equity and Inclusion Officer (EIO)
- Kerry Ebersole, LEO Senior Advisor/Director of Sixty by 30 Office
- Connie Cook and Karen Twyman, Voters Not Politicians (Jerrymandering)

Finally, we want to extend a thank you to our Executive Committee members Chairperson Monica B. Reyes, Vice-Chair Sonya Hernandez, Trustee Juanita Bocanegra, and Treasurer Esperanza Cantu for their leadership and congratulations for their re-appointment to the 2021 Executive Committee.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS!



HISPANIC/LATINO  
COMMISSION  
OF MICHIGAN

# NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMISSION MEETINGS

**January 22, 2021**  
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Online

**March 19, 2021**  
Time: 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.  
Online

**April 16, 2021**  
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Online

**September 17, 2021**  
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
City: TBA

**October 15, 2021**  
Time: 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
City: TBA

**November 19, 2021**  
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
City: TBA



## 6 Statewide College Graduation

The annual Statewide Hispanic/Latino College Graduation Ceremony focuses on celebrating the academic achievements of Hispanic/Latino College and University students across the state of Michigan, and the people who supported them throughout their journey. In 2020, due to COVID-19 response measures, we were unable to host our graduation ceremony. However, we were able to quickly design a method of providing recognition for graduates that had already signed up for our ceremony. Through the use of our social media platform, our event had an overwhelming success by posting and sharing their stories, reaching an audience of 35,435. An album of our 2020 graduates can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/137408979@N06/albums/72157714208403938>

Among these graduates were students from the following 15 institutions in the state of Michigan: Alma College, American Sentinel University, Aquinas College, Central Michigan University, Cleary University, Eastern Michigan University, Ferris State University, Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Valley State University, Michigan State University, Northwood University, Siena Heights University, University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and Western Michigan University. We also had one out-of-state institution, University of Notre Dame, represented by a Michigan resident student.

HLCOM is already setting next year's graduation ceremony into motion, seeking ways of hosting our ceremony in a live digital format.









## 8 Roundtable Event with Gov. Whitmer & 2nd Michigan Latino Legislative Day

During the celebration, we also hosted a Facebook Live roundtable between our commissioners, Gov. Whitmer, and Lt. Gov. Gilchrist. The event reached a total audience of 5,225. We are extremely thankful for this opportunity and wish to extend our thanks to Poppy Sias Hernandez, who worked diligently with the HLCOM staff to make this happen. Furthermore, the HLCOM participated in the LLEAD 2020 Virtual Conference as an event sponsor. The event reached 428 total individuals through our social media platform.

HLCOM also partnered with the Michigan Latino Legislative Caucus and other community organizations to plan and organize the second Michigan Latino Legislative Day. The event was hosted online this year, and included representatives from the Michigan Legislature, Governor's Office, Secretary of State, and community partners along with the HLCOM's Executive Director Lopez Sustaita.



Picture from 2019 Hispanic Heritage Month; Pictured from left to right: Juanita Bocanegra, Monica B. Reyes, Governor Gretchen Whitmer & Jesse M. Bernal



## 9 Appointments

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to our colleagues Ivonne M. Soler from Wayne County, Angela Baldwin from Oakland County, and Carlos Pava from Kent County for their service and dedication to the Hispanic/Latino Commission.

We would also like to congratulate Florensio Hernandez from Ingham County for his reappointment to the commission. Along with our reappointment, we also extend our congratulations to Jesus M. Hernandez from Wayne County, Celeste Sanchez Lloyd from Kent County, and Jose Sanchez III from Ionia County, who have all been newly appointed to the Hispanic/Latino Commission for the 2021 period.



LEARN  
MORE!



facebook.com/hlcommission

<https://www.flickr.com/people/137408979@N06/>



# 10 Be Counted - 2020 Census Support

To mirror 2020 Census advocacy efforts from the Governor’s Office, the HLCOM undertook key tasks throughout the year to promote Hispanic/Latino participation. Working closely with our Chairperson, Monica B. Reyes, the commission established a Statewide 2020 Census Committee made up of commissioners, staff and 10 community partners from key locations across our state including Adrian, Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint, Kalamazoo and Saginaw.

Meetings were held on a biweekly basis to keep everyone updated on individual efforts within our communities. In partnership with Latino Leaders for the Enhancement of Advocacy and Development (LLEAD), a Latino community advocacy network, we hosted a townhall meeting to promote the 2020 census. We had a total social media reach of 298 audience members, including attendees of the LLEAD townhall meeting. Executive Director Lopez Sustaita also promoted 2020 Census participation to various communities around the state, including the MSU High School Equivalency Program, and the Interagency Migrant Resource Council.

Executive Director Lopez Sustaita was also appointed to the Michigan Statewide Census Committee to provide recommendations on strategies to increase Hispanic/Latino participation. Finally, the HLCOM staff worked closely with the Michigan Statewide Census Director to distribute Census materials in both Spanish and English to communities across the state.

## Thank you!

We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who made themselves counted this Census, along with all the workers and community advocates across our state that worked diligently to ensure our Hispanic/Latino community was counted!

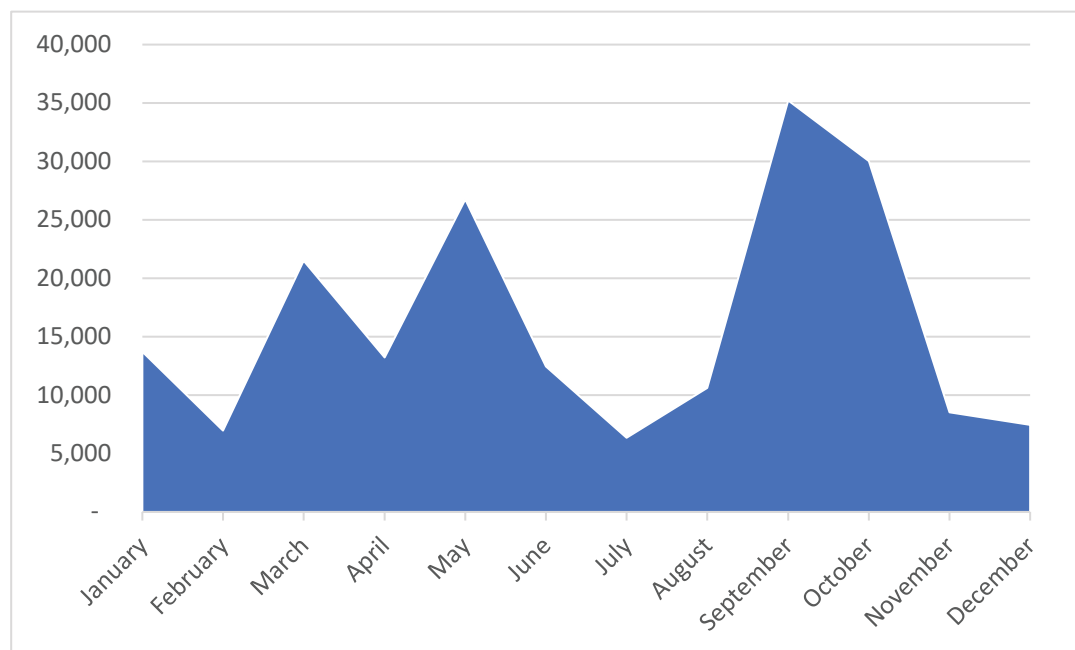


Image above from NALEO Educational Fund.

# 11 Media

This year has been a challenging year for everyone, our staff had to adjust and reinvent the way we serve our community due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, we are happy to report that this year’s outreach efforts have impacted more people than ever before due to our ability to innovate and use technology allowing us to reach over 186,000 constituents via social media.



Data for graph collected via Facebook analytics for HLCOM official page.

# 12 Our Commissioners



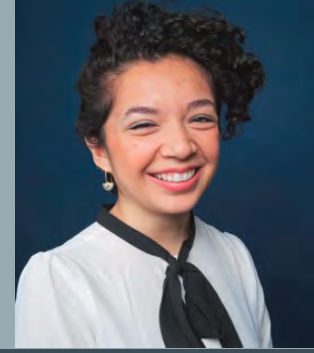
Monica B. Reyes  
Saginaw County



Sonya Hernandez  
Muskegon County



Juanita Bocanegra  
Ottawa County



Esperanza F. Cantu  
Oakland County



Abril Valdes-Siewert  
Oakland County



Angela Baldwin  
Oakland County



Consuela Barber Lopez  
Wayne County



Floren시오 Hernandez  
Ingham County



Jesse M. Bernal  
Kent County



Jessica Cruz  
Marquette County



Jeremiah Hernandez  
Ingham County



Juan Marinez  
Ingham County



Carlos E. Pava  
Kent County



Anthony Rubio  
Wexford County



Ivonne M. Soler  
Wayne County

# Our Staff



**Felipe Lopez Sustaita, Ed. D., MSW**  
Executive Director, Hispanic Latino Commission Of Michigan  
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity



**Daniel Carreon-Camberos, MSW**  
Program Coordinator, Hispanic Latino Commission Of Michigan  
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity



**HISPANIC/LATINO  
COMMISSION  
OF MICHIGAN**