

LA MOSAICA LATINX VOL.1

AN INSIGHTS REPORT
BY BOLD CULTURE

THOUGH THE LATIN~~X~~ COMMUNITY HAS SHARED EXPERIENCES

THAT MAKES IT ONE OF THE LARGEST GROWING DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE UNITED STATES.

NUANCES BETWEEN GENERATION~~S~~ AND CULTURES WITHIN ~~OUR~~ THE COMMUNITY ARE COMMONLY

MISPLACED OR LOST. THIS INSIGHTS REPORTS GIVES HOLISTIC AND NUANCED CULTURAL INSIGHTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LATIN~~X~~ PROFESSIONALS.

OUR NAME CHOICE. ~~LA~~ MOSAICA ~~A~~ LATIN~~X~~ IS A NOD TO THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT ATTEMPTING TO GENDER NUTRALIZE THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

LA MOSAICA IS AN INSIGHTS PRODUCT OF BOLD CULTURE, LLC

BOLD CULTURE is a data-driven multicultural communication agency. Our agency works with executives and managers from all business units to create a more equitable workplace and/or better marketing messages to diverse communities.

HERE'S HOW:

Insights – our cultural insights reports offer unique qualitative and quantitative data useful for marketing messages and hiring/retention practices

Consulting – whether your creative team needs a second eye on that new cultural project or if you want to ensure employees at your company feel represented, included and mentored, our cultural awareness programs, microaggression and antibias workshops and multicultural marketing programs are a great start.

Connections – Excited to diversify your staff or vendors but need help? Our connections services helps you find and hire the best diverse media companies, influencers and/or full and part-time candidates for roles across the ladder.



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WE ARE NOT A MONO LITH

BY HUGO BALTA

Management Consultant and President of the National Association for Hispanic Journalists

Hugo Balta is a Management Consultant, applying intersectional thinking in helping leaders develop strategies that make diversity and inclusion initiatives operational in the workplace, best serving clients and meeting business goals.

"HOLA A TODOS." THE YOUNG WOMAN GREETED HER FAMILY IN SPANISH AS SHE WALKED INTO THE ROOM. "GUESS, WHAT, GUYS." SHE CONTINUED IN ENGLISH. "I GOT MY FIRST PAYCHECK TODAY!" AND JUST LIKE THAT I WAS HOOKED.

Wells Fargo demonstrated in the first 5 seconds of a 30-second commercial spot about mobile banking that it "gets me" as a Latinx in the United States. As a bilingual, bicultural, second generation Peruvian-American, I can relate to the story of a young person interacting with their family in two languages and the subtleness of distinct greetings between generations. It's a reflection of the experience shared by many children of immigrants in this country.

The authenticity of the brief message is due to its cultural proficiency more than its language proficiency. This is an important dynamic to understand if media and advertising professionals are going to be successful in producing content relevant to the diverse US Hispanic population. A common mistake made by marketers is the one-size-fits-all approach, usually centered around Spanish language and the Mexican community. These one-dimensional initiatives are patronizing and fail to build bridges between people, products and services. What's clear is that companies need better insights and a better grasp on the heterogeneous US Latinx community.

The Latinx community is more vast and distinctive than the tired stereotypes perpetuated by mass media. While many Latinx self-identify as Spanish-speaking, dominion of the language does not make one more or less of a member of the community. It is important to consider that while there are more than 20 countries where Spanish is the most popular language spoken, nuances in dialects, vocabulary and grammar greatly differ. A familiar greeting between friends in one Latin American country can be an insult in another. It's also worth noting that the US is the second largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. *Aqui, se habla español!*

Mexico, our immediate neighbor to the south, is numero uno in terms of native Spanish speakers. Since Mexicans and Mexican-Americans make up the largest community of US Hispanics, it is no surprise that advertising and commercial messaging leans towards them. Still, the idea of producing content that is relevant to all Mexicans is a fallacy. It's like trying to reach an American in, say, Missoula, MT with the same ad as you would create for a New Yorker. These people may live in the same country and speak the same language but have largely different everyday lives, experiences and cultures. The challenge in reaching "all" US Hispanics is compounded when considering also people from - or who trace their roots to - other countries like Puerto Rico, Cuba, Guatemala, Colombia, etc.

Bold Culture's insights report, *La Mosaica Latinx*, a holistic perspective of Latinx consumers and the media industry, is key in better understanding the Latin American diaspora in order to make genuine connections and nurture long-lasting relationships between communities, companies and consumers.

LANGUAGE-LESS & LATINA

BY KAI DEVERAUX LAWSON

GROWING UP. I WAS EXPOSED TO ALL OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE LATIN CULTURE I WAS BORN INTO. EXCEPT FOR WHAT SEEMS LIKE THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE: LANGUAGE.

The music, food, dances, values and traditions were all a part of my day-to-day experience, but the Spanish language was as foreign to me as my parents were to this country. I remember looking forward to my mother's evening routine of coming home from work, cooking dinner, sipping wine, and watching telenovelas. I would sit in the kitchen with her and focus on the television screen in hopes that if I watched the shows long and hard enough, I just might be able to simulate an immersive experience and be able to fluently understand the words and speak the words perfectly.

For context, I am a first generation, American-born Afro-Latina. I come from a family of Black, Spanish-speaking immigrants who've traveled to the United States in search of opportunity and success. My mother was born and raised in Costa Rica and my father was born and raised in Panama. Both were raised speaking Spanish as their primary language and converted to English upon their settling in the United States as teenagers.

In retrospect, I dedicated a lot of my childhood to over-compensating for my lack of Spanish language training. I spent countless hours memorizing the lyrics to Selena songs, and of course, the script to the movie. I danced to Gloria Estefan and La India, and I flipped between Univision and Telemundo whenever I could. I would even sometimes let out a sincere "¡Aye Dios Mio!" in moments of frustration to drive my culture home. I suppose this was cool, but with Spanish not being the primary language spoken in my household, I was stuck, and quite often left feeling insecure about the authenticity of my heritage.

“**THESE DAYS I DON'T PUT AS MUCH PRESSURE ON MYSELF BECAUSE OF LANGUAGE OR MY LACK THEREOF. I'VE DECIDED I IDENTIFY AS LATINA WITH AND WITHOUT IT. IT'S IN MY BLOOD, AND IT'S A PART OF MY EXPERIENCE.**



Kai Deveraux Lawson, uses her life long passion for culture, and 8 years of experience in advertising, to tell honest stories that shed light on the need for Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace. Her experience led her to launch the culturally focused platforms, Mixed Company Podcast and her blog, Mylifeofkai.com. On these platforms, she shares her first hand experiences in life, travel and career, from the perspective of a millennial woman of color.

I experienced moments of extreme shame when attending family functions. It's usually during these events when I realized just how Latino I couldn't possibly be. It was expected that at some point during the function, an aunt or uncle would walk up to me or any 'unsuspecting' young person and ask the same annoying question - "Why don't you speak Spanish?" They would then proceed to tell us that we need to hurry up and go learn Spanish, as if somehow it was as easy as adding 50 cents to a vending machine. To them, it never mattered that I was taking Spanish classes in school or that I had a good enough understanding of the language, but could only respond in English. If I wasn't parading through the party sporting my shiny new Spanish words, I pretty much felt like a cultural failure.

I often wondered why my parents stood by and just watched as these interrogations took place. I mean if anyone had the answers it should have been them, right? If I was to speak Spanish fluently, it would be because of their rearing, right? Yet instead, I was the only one on trial and therefore I was the one who was sentenced to a guaranteed 30 minutes of public shame, and unsolicited salsa lessons - usually by that one aunt or uncle who was going to show me how things in this family are really done.

As I entered my 20s, I made it my business to purposely travel to places where I was forced to speak Spanish. Subconsciously, I had plans to make my family proud, and I will say, I've been relatively successful thus far. Realistically I probably only have about 500 words in my Spanish vocabulary. However, I do recognize that I've become proficient enough to ensure I'm able to find food, a bathroom, safety, THE BAR, and decent conversation with a taxi driver for trips longer than 30 minutes but less than 90. I acknowledge that it has been the combination of ambition, fear of dishonoring my family name, Google Translate, Duolingo, and random episodes of "Luz Clarita," as a child, that have helped me learn a basic level of conversational Spanish. However, upon reaching this level, I've come to recognize that there is deeper context to the complex relationship with my experience with Latin culture and language.

Much like the generations of immigrants before them, my family came to this country and worked hard, in hopes to acquire a small piece of the American Dream, which promises picket fences, large plots of land, happy and successful children and a legacy that could potentially rival that of the Rockefellers, within several generations. To their credit they've been rather successful so far. My generation and I do pretty well for ourselves financially, we're well traveled, and most of us are college educated. To my detriment, their aspirations to the American Dream forced a disconnect to my Latin experience.

My aunt tells a story of coming to the United States, already having decided that she would identify as African American upon stepping foot on U.S. soil. Opting to raise her children in a predominantly Black Baptist church, so they could identify with the people who resembled them the most in this country. My uncle arrived on U.S. soil at the age of 7 speaking only Spanish, but by his teenage years English was his primary language and he had admittedly forgotten most of his native language. He shared his story of hiding his Costa Rican heritage in an effort to avoid his language skills being tested. The story that hurt the most to hear was from my mother. When asking her why she hadn't spoken Spanish to my brother and I while growing up, I could hear the dread in her voice as she delivered her truth, "I stopped speaking Spanish to you because I didn't want you to be made fun of the way I was when I came to this country, for sounding different." It's hard to hear my mother acknowledge that stifling her culture, was her form of protection for herself, and for me. More explicitly, it hurts to do so.

It's ironic to me that in this same country that rewards its native citizens, who learn additional languages, with higher salaries in many industries, and access to exclusive institutions in academia; there is a population of people who have immigrated to this country and have purposely opted to shed the language of their mother country. All in an effort to seamlessly assimilate into American culture. These days I don't put as much pressure on myself because of language, or my lack thereof; I've decided I identify as Latina with and without it. It's in my blood, and it's a part of my experience. The goal is to get better, so I lean into what I do know, look up what I don't, and embrace my journey to this point.

BOLD VOICES ON COLORISM

CURATED BY BIANA BAKMAN

What is a member of the Latinx community “supposed” to look like? For a rich culture that spans continents and hemispheres, there can be no standard. And yet there are individuals who identify as Latinx and/or Hispanic who are often accused of not looking the part, whether they be Afro-Latinx or “too White.” Here we compiled a series of quotes from members of the community who, in one way or another, have been made to feel like outsiders at some point in their lives.



MONICA VELOZ

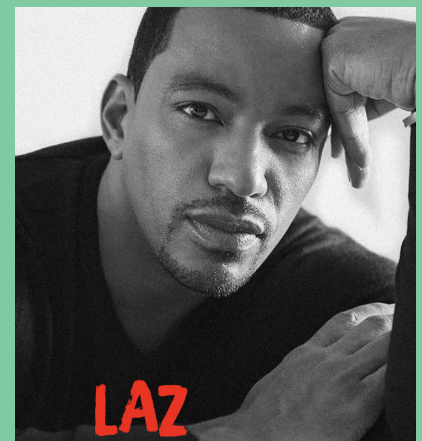
—SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER

“

Growing up **I NEVER SAW PEOPLE IN TELENOVELAS THAT LOOKED LIKE ME** and my family, and we would watch them every night at dinner. I grew up having an identity crisis; even people [in the Dominican Republic] would say that I was too black to be Dominican, yet my entire family was as dark as me and looked like me. [...] When I see a dark-skinned Latina on a Spanish network as the lead actress, I’ll shut up - but until then I’m going to keep talking and I’ll keep making people uncomfortable.^{12.1}

“

I WAS ONLY A LATIN PERSON IN MY HOUSE. ANYTIME I WENT OUTDOORS. I WAS AFRICAN-AMERICAN. My entire life, I grew up in D.C. and there were no Latin blacks. You had to play the part. I wasn’t white, so naturally, I was black. And that’s what it was – totally living those two identities, and living it, not faking it. Identifying as an African-American ... and also dealing with everything that comes with that. Nobody said, ‘Oh, we’ll give you a pass because you speak Spanish.’ No. Nobody cared. Anything that anybody else had to deal with, I had to deal with it too. I had to overcome it too, and I had to experience everything – both good and bad. ... And I thank God that I did, because it just gives me such a rich background and experience to draw from when I play characters. Playing them from a very real and authentic place. I’m not faking it – I’m not faking an experience, I’m not faking a reaction, I’m not faking a feeling. I’m actually authentically drawing from some place that I know intimately, from my own life and experience.^{12.2}



LAZ ALONSO
ACTOR



**RICK
RAMOS**

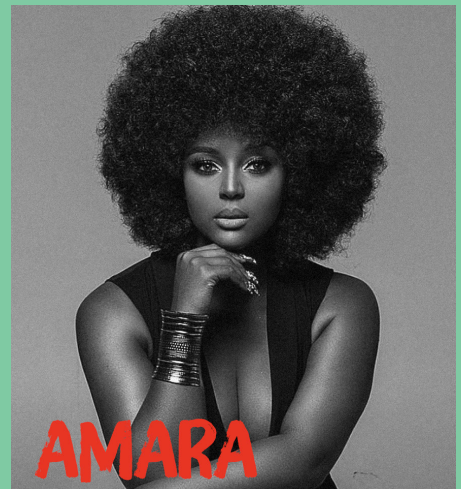
**CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER
OF HEALTHJOY**

“

I've traveled all over America and lived in Kansas City, Chicago, New York and Miami. I always get the same reaction everywhere I go that "I can't be Latin" or "You're not really Latin" but I am. **I JUST DON'T LIVE UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT THEY THINK A LATIN SHOULD LOOK LIKE.** Both my parents are from Cuba, as well as my grandparents and great-grandparents. After that the family tree goes to Spain for the few generations that I know about. I grew up culturally in a Latin household, eating Cuban food, listening to Cuban music and laughing at Alvarez Guedes. I consider myself Latin even though I don't speak it perfectly, have green eyes and I'm white. There isn't a race called "Latin," it's about where you were born and the culture you were surrounded by growing up.

“

I've always been black and my skin is like that, it comes in my DNA, it's part of my race. For years Afro-Latinos have been ignored. **THERE IS NO LATIN COUNTRY WHERE THERE ARE NO BLACKS AND THEY STILL DON'T TAKE US INTO ACCOUNT.** They do not see us in soap operas, in movies, or on magazine covers. And it is not because we are not prepared—they do not consider us because they believe that we don't look Latino enough, and that bothers me.^{12.3}



**AMARA
LA NEGRA**

SINGER AND ACTRESS



8 LATINX LEADERS BUILDING A COMMUNITY

BY DARREN MARTIN JR

Community building is one of the most important parts of any movement—particularly one that deals with institutional change, such as increasing the number of Latinx individuals in the communication and tech industries, and creating environments where they feel supported and are apt for growth.

Those movements are usually lead by multiple groups who organize through both unique and common techniques. Those groups are effective because of the people who are committed to the mission, and the vision and influence of their leaders.

Here are some Latinx leaders who are creating community for Latinx communication and tech talent:



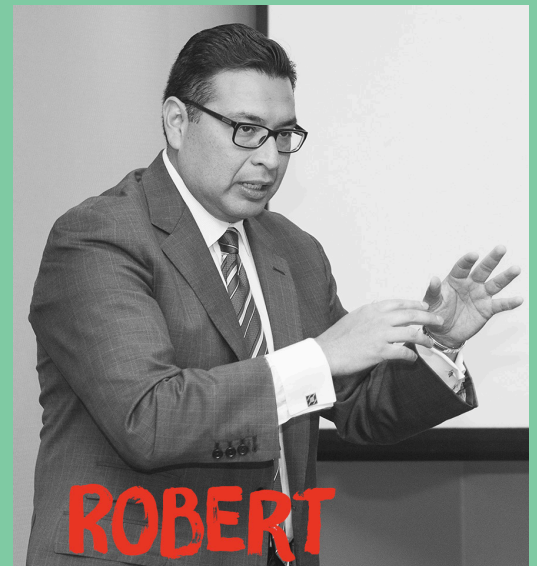


JANEL MARTINEZ

FOUNDER, AIN'T I LATINA?
CO-FOUNDER, 2020SHIFT

JANEL MARTINEZ is the Founder of Ain't I Latina?, an online destination created by Afro-Latina for Afro-Latinas. Martinez was inspired by the lack of representation in mainstream media, as well as Spanish-language media. She then created a space where millennial Latinas can celebrate their diversity.

Martinez is also the co-Founder of 2020Shift, which helps tech and digital media companies diversify their recruitment process, retain minority talent and provide leadership and skills-based training to the industry's next leaders.

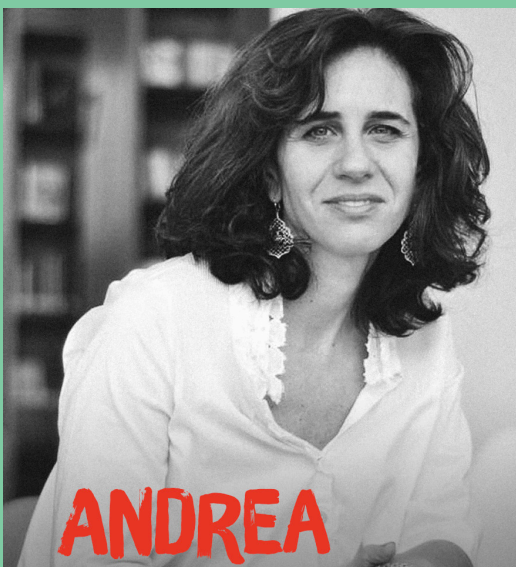


ROBERT RODRIGUEZ

CO-AUTHOR OF AUTHENTICO,
THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LATINO CAREER SUCCESS

DR. ROBERT RODRIGUEZ is a trusted advisor to over 100 firms which include some of the world's leading business, non-profits and institutions. He is the Founder and CEO of DRR Advisors, a firm that specializes in enterprise diversity strategy planning, employee resource group optimization and LatinX talent management initiatives.

He is also the co-author of *Authentico, The Definitive Guide to Latino Career Success*, which "digs deep to understand the external forces of conscious and unconscious biases, and the internal forces that create tensions for many Latinos about whether to assimilate, opt out, or double down on their cultural identities in their quest to get ahead."



ANDREA GUENDELMAN

CO-FOUNDER & CEO, THE WALLBREAKERS

ANDREA is the co-founder and CEO of The Wallbreakers, the professional network for Latinx in tech, connecting large tech companies to promising Latinx college talent. Andrea attended Harvard Law School and after she graduated she worked as the associate director of the Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education and later practiced law as a corporate attorney at Debevoise & Plimpton, the Export Import Bank of the United States, and Microvest Capital Management. Andrea has experience in promoting Latinx education and entrepreneurship through her work with The Wallbreakers and at non-profits such as the Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education and the National Center for Women in Technology. At NCWIT, she spearheaded the creation of an initiative for Latinas together with Televisa.



HUGO BALTA

PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF HISPANIC JOURNALISTS (NAHJ)

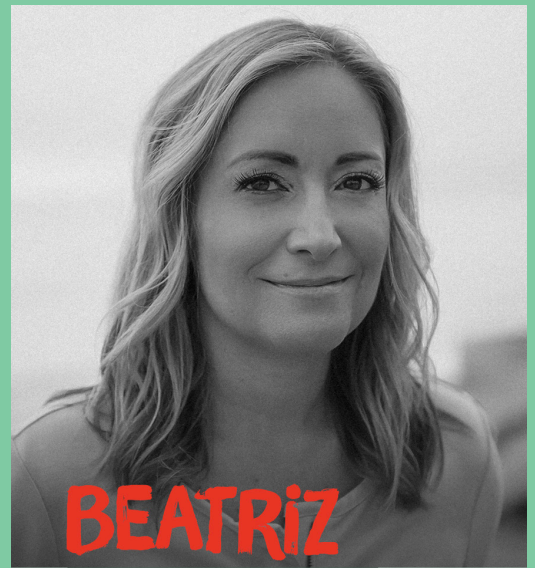
HUGO BALTA is a seasoned Diversity & Inclusion consultant and is the former Senior Director of Hispanic Initiatives at ESPN. In his recent role at ESPN, Balta lead a start-up unit focused on initiatives to raise the quality, profile and delivery of diverse news gathering and storytelling. One of his responsibilities included the creation of video and multimedia content targeting the US Hispanic audience across all ESPN and ESPN Deportes platforms.

Balta is also the president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) and has been applauded for his servant-leadership by receiving the 2014 Hispanic Heritage Leadership award.

A popular author and guest speaker, Hugo travels across the country giving lectures, joining discussion panels and leading training sessions on career management, team building, media, innovation and D&I.

BEATRIZ ACEVEDO is a three-time Emmy Award winning producer and digital media pioneer with more than 20+ years experience creating content for major TV networks from the Food Network to Discovery to USA Network. Beatriz has dedicated her life's work to creating opportunities for Latino youth in an effort to empower their voices, and to diversify and influence culturally relevant depictions of Latinos in media.

As the Former President and Founding Parter of mitú, Beatriz had the privilege of leading the next generation of storytellers and creators who are challenging the status quo through content rooted in their unique POV on the world. Beatriz is an incredibly passionate speaker and enjoys insightful discussions around diversity in the media, female empowerment and the future impact of multicultural youth on America.



BEATRIZ ACEVEDO

FOUNDING PARTNER & FORMER PRESIDENT, MITU

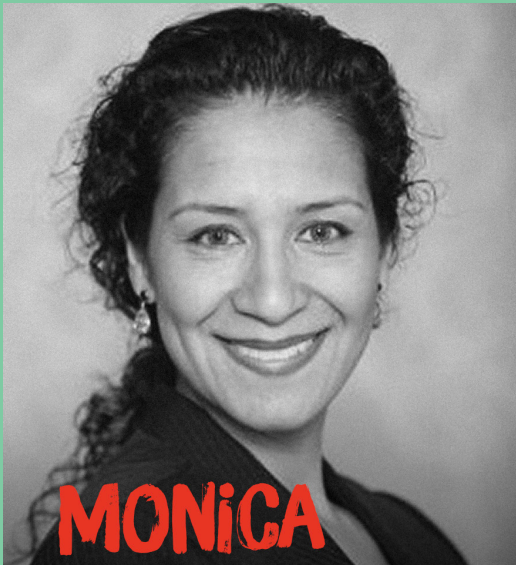


AMANDA PERICLES

CREATOR OF AFROLATINAS

AMANDA PERICLES is the Dominican-American creator of AfroLatinas, a digital platform highlighting the diversity and beauty among Black women of LatAm (Latinx-American) decent. Pericles built the platform to create a community and conversation that is usually overlooked by mainstream media. Using the power of social media, AfroLatina's audience is comprised of women (and men) who resonate with stories about the intersections of their lives and identities. From racial inequality to hair, relationships, and women empowerment, this platform creates conversations that resonates with thousands.

Pericles is also a graduate student at Northeastern University, with a Bachelor's from Boston University.



MONICA MARQUEZ

HEAD OF EQUITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY AT JLL

Monica Marquez recently served as the Global Head of Community Advisory within the Google's Community & Business Inclusion team, which is building a fair and inclusive culture and products within the organization and beyond Google's walls. She is now the Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at JLL.

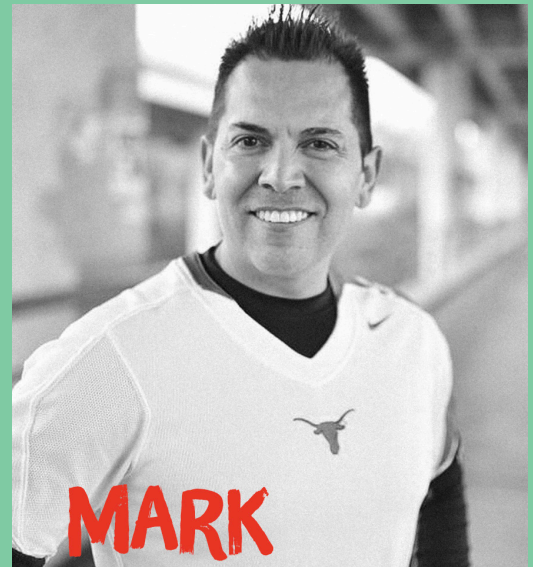
Over her career, she has supported various business industries and regional offices to help drive diversity focused initiatives within organizations, including Ernst & Young, BofA/Merrill Lynch and Goldman Sachs. Marquez developed the Goldman Sachs New Directions® and the Returnship® programs which focus on the firms on-ramping initiatives for individuals who are re-entering the workforce.

She is active in a variety of diversity focused non-profits and currently serves on the Corporate Advisory Board for Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Texas Tech Career Center Advisory Board and the NAFOA Education Advisory Board.

MARK L. MADRID is CEO of the Latino Business Action Network (LBAN), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on strengthening America through funding Latino research and education impact programs at Stanford University.

Previously, Mark served as President/CEO of the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the 2015 United States Hispanic Chamber of the Year. Prior to serving in nonprofit executive roles, Madrid enjoyed a flourishing career in banking that began on Wall Street in 1995 with J.P. Morgan.

Mark is recipient of the Jefferson Award and the University of Notre Dame Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, CSC Founder's Award. He is a United States Army Honorary Colonel and a member of the Forbes Nonprofit Council. In August 2017, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce named Mark the LGBT Advocate of the Year. In October 2017, Mark was appointed to the Honorary Advisory Board of The National Veterans Opportunity Coalition.



MARK MADRID

LATINO BUSINESS ACTION NETWORK

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