



# ICLA

Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs

## Meeting Minutes

05/21/2021 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM

<p><b>Commissioners Present</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caleb Knutson, Story City</li> <li>• Marlu Abarca, Des Moines</li> <li>• Dalina Sajadian, Mason City</li> <li>• Louis Moreno, Des Moines</li> </ul> <p><b>Commissioners Absent</b> Lorena Gingerich</p>	<p><b>Staff Present</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sonia Reyes, Office of Latino Affairs</li> <li>• Abigail Cortez, Office of Latino Affairs - <u>Latinos CAN</u> Coordinator</li> <li>• Trevalova Augustin, API Affairs Office</li> <li>• Monica Stone, DHR Deputy Director</li> <li>• San Wong, DHR Director</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joe Moralez, Bettendorf. LULAC council member</li> <li>• Kassidy Arena, Iowa Public Radio. Reports on Latino Affairs</li> </ul>
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### I. Welcome and Introductions

Abigail Cortez, Latinos CAN Coordinator

New staff member with the Office of Latino Affairs - Latinos College Access Network. She has experience in postsecondary education institutions in the Sioux City area.

Latinos CAN strives to eliminate barriers for Latinos to earn a postsecondary education in Iowa.

Abigail presented the Latinos CAN Data Dashboard and Consent Agenda.

Latinos constitute for 6.3% of Iowa's population

40.2% Latino postsecondary enrollment rate (2018)

A. Trevalova Augustin, API Affairs Office

New staff member



## II. Public Comment

- Kassidy Arena, The public is invited to listen to the [Journalism Salute Podcast](#).
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## III. Approval of 01/29/2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Louis Moreno

Second: Caleb Knutson

Passed Unanimously

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## IV. Report from DHR Board Representative

Report from Knutson

DHR members participated in a video about DHR in which he talked about the need for language access around the state.

It is inspiring to learn about what other commissions are doing.

The Latino Affairs Commission is one of the most active.

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## V. Commission Vacancies

- A. We need representation from the Eastern part of the state

Knutson: It's frustrating that the Governor's office hasn't filled the two vacancies we have.

Knutson shared that he has reached out to the Governor's office multiple times but they have not been filled. He mentioned that the commission needs representation from different parts of the state and nationalities.

Arena asked what the negative impact is when there are vacancies in the commission. Knutson mentioned that the negative effects of not having a full commission are not having representation from the whole state, not having quorum and only having five members make decisions.

Knutson personally recruited people who applied to join the commission, but they have not heard back from the Governor's office and that other commissions are getting their vacancies filled, just not the Latino Affairs Commission.

- B. For those interested in applying to joining the commission, they can apply here: [Iowa Talent Bank Application](#)

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## VI. Commission Initiatives/Community Involvement Updates

### A. Iowa Latino Hall of Fame:

Abarca: We had a great and successful event last year, practicing social distancing and limited attendance.

The commission has been accepting applications since last year.

Anyone can be nominated, regardless of how long they have been in the state.

1. Date: October 17, 2021
2. Location: Des Moines Art Center
3. Nominations Deadline: July 1, 2021
4. 2021 Selections Committee members
  - a) Marlu Abarca, Chair
  - b) Dalila Avila-Sajadian
  - c) Louis Moreno
  - d) Caleb Knutson, Ex-Officio
  - e) Vanessa Santos-Nila, Des Moines
  - f) David Suarez, Ottumwa
  - g) Gabriela Rivera, Iowa City (2020 recipient)

### B. Iowa Queer Communities of Color Coalition

Abarca will email any information, she had to leave the meeting early.

### C. Latinos You Should Know Project

Caleb Knutson, committee chair.

- a) The goal is to get Latinos nominated to highlight their everyday work. The Unsung heroes
- b) We want their stories to be told
- c) Representation is important
- d) Role models are imperative for youth
- e) In partnership with Hola Iowa
- f) The profiles will be released during Latino Heritage Month
- g) Nomination Form
- h) No deadline established yet.

#### D. 2022 Latino Day in the Hill

- The 2021 Latino Day on the Hill didn't happen due to the pandemic. Moreno encourages the commission to hold this event in 2022. It would be the same format as the previous years.
  - Knuston, the Latino Day on the Hill, is important. We should have gender balance, age balance, geography balance - not all from Des Moines
  - We must continue to be at the capitol and not be ignored
  - Needs:
    - Form a committee
    - Sponsorships
    - Set up a date
    - Commissioners will let Louis know about their availability
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### VII. Office of Latino Affairs Report

#### A. Mexican Voter ID

1. Reyes has met with the Mexican Government about their request to meet with the Governor and leaders of Iowa's state agencies to inform them about the new Mexican Voter ID.
2. A proposal was submitted to Monica Stone, DHR's deputy director, who will work on getting the meeting scheduled.
3. The Mexican government would like to set up clinics in Iowa to get Mexican citizens their new ID.

#### B. Disabilities Awareness Campaign

1. The Office has partnered with Disability Rights Iowa to create an awareness campaign around disabilities for the Latino community.
2. Weekly posts about disabilities are posted in the DHR social media accounts. The Commission has shared these also in their Facebook page.

#### C. Latinos CAN

1. FAFSA Videos were created in English and Spanish.
2. Meeting with Buena Vista University
  - a) Reyes and Cortez participated in a meeting with Buena Vista University and community leaders from Storm Lake and statewide organizations to talk about the benefits of the creation of a Dream Center, which would help and support Immigrant and Refugee students interested in postsecondary education.
3. Presentation to AEA Staff
4. Iowa College Aid Grant
  - a) Reyes and Cortez have been working on the Year III Latinos CAN grant application.

#### D. Iowa Latino Alliance

1. The Iowa Latino Alliance is formed of the Latino serving organizations in the state of Iowa, Latino leaders and advocates.

Knutson: The Alliance is separate from the commission. It's a separate entity. The current members want to ensure there is representation. It will be more fluid.

2. Línea de Ayuda en Iowa/Iowa Spanish Helpline will be receiving the Iowa IDHRC Don Hampton Group Volunteer Award
    - a) The Iowa Spanish Helpline was created by a group of Latino volunteers (Spanish Helpline Taskforce) across the state. These volunteers signed up to create the structure, support and answer the calls from Spanish speakers who needed information about COVID-19. Once formed, the Taskforce partnered with EMBARC who provided 14 AmeriCorps staff members to answer the calls. It was then that this effort became a state supported initiative, as the Office of Latino Affairs supervised and provided oversight for the initiative and applied for a grant, which now pays for the full time Spanish Helpline Coordinator.
  3. Spanish Helpline
    - a) Continues to serve Spanish speakers in Iowa.
    - b) Nayely Hurtado, Coordinator and there are four AmeriCorps staff members
  4. Latino Vaccination Campaign
    - a) The Spanish Helpline has been a fundamental part of these local efforts.
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## VIII. Other Business:

### A. Undocuprofessionals Series

Marlu will send out this information at a later time. She had to step off the call.

### B. Policy Advocacy

Knutson: There are short and long term policies that need to be addressed. The Governor is not reading the Commission policy recommendations. We need to include other underserved groups, so we have a broader voice. Unless something really bad happens in Iowa, housing policies are not going to change if we continue to have the same governor. The commission needs to get other organizations to support our recommendations. This would help retain Latinos in the state, we need representation everywhere. We need to unite and call other organizations and reflect on what policies we want to create. Data is available in the state.

Monica Stone offered to partner with Caleb Knutson around data and the African American Commission's Chair.

C. Representation for Latinos in Awards

Knutson: There are a lot of awards in the state. We need to get Latinos nominated. Latino children need role models.

D. Meeting with the Governor

Knutson: There's no new updates, we had a meeting scheduled but it got canceled. The commission is supposed to have a direct line with the governor. The process of how these meeting requests are supposed to be done changes. Commissioners were encouraged to reach out to the Governor's office directly, then told to go through DHR staff. The process is unclear.

San Wong, spoke with the Governor's office. DHR should hear back soon now that the legislative session is over.

Knutson: please see the Commission meeting dates for the following year.

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**IX. Adjourn at 11:40**