



## **Latino Policy Forum's 2019 Multicultural Leadership Academy Announced**

**CHICAGO** –At a time when Donald Trump's rhetoric has sought to divide Americans and when elected leaders have used immigrants as a political lightning rod, the Latino Policy Forum is proud to launch its third cohort of the Multicultural Leadership Academy, intended to bring the state's largest minority communities together. The challenging times have sparked collaboration among the 24 civic leaders with backgrounds in community organizing, policy, art and culture who sought out opportunities to collaborate and devise solutions to issues of immigration and gun violence that affect everyone in Illinois.

The Academy's mission is to bridge Latinos and African Americans, encourages intercultural collaboration and social action. The Academy draws on the traditions of a diverse range of cultures to increase cross-cultural understanding and develop a network of leaders who will be able to call upon each other in the future.

"The Forum is proud to welcome its third cohort of the Multicultural Leadership Academy this year. The Academy has given Latino and African American leaders in Chicago and throughout Illinois the platform to have important conversations around their respective communities and how they can collaborate with one another," **the Forum's Executive Director Sylvia Puente said.**

"This year, Chicago will be voting to elect its next mayor, presenting a unique and powerful opportunity for the Academy, and all Latinos and African Americans in Chicago for that matter, to talk about relevant issues effecting each community and how a collective, community voice can benefit the city and the next administration overall. I'm looking forward to working with this year's cohort."

The Academy graduated 24 community leaders last year who committed to social change, policy impact, and/or community improvement to benefit communities of color throughout Illinois. The graduates continue to collaborate and support each other with on-going projects and utilize the networks they established at the Academy.

### **The 2019 Multicultural Leadership Academy cohort:**

Akeya Channell	Citizens For Marcus C Evans Jr.	Maurice Perkins	Teamwork Englewood
Amy Diaz	DePaul University	Melody Jackson	Metropolitan Family Services
Ayom Siengo	United Way of Metro Chicago	Michael Tafolla	Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation
Christian Diaz	Logan Square Neighborhood Association	Mireya Fouche	One Heart One Soul Coalition
Credell Walls	Forest Preserve of Cook County	Nancy Garcia	Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project
Eira Corral Sepulveda	Village of Hanover Park	Paloma Arroyo	Planned Parenthood of Illinois
Graciela Guzman	Heartland Alliance	Rodolfo De Jesus	Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Hector Torres	Building a Better Man		Chicago Scholars
Kathleen Bolamba	Embarc	Sasha Pena	Good News Partners
Latrice Davis	MSBARC	Timothy Jones	University of Chicago Center
Lola Jenkins	Westside Association for Community Action	Wendy Williams	Heartland Human Care Services
Matt Woods	Urban Gateways / Street-Level	William Sanders	
		Willis Frances	

**The Forum would like to thank the sponsors of the Academy:** MacArthur Foundation, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, The Chicago Community Trust, The Reva & David Logan Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, Allstate Foundation, American Express, and JP Morgan Chase.

**About the Latino Policy Forum**

The Latino Policy Forum is the only organization in the Chicago area that facilitates the involvement of Latinos at all levels of public decision-making. The Forum conducts analysis to inform, influence and lead. Its goals are to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and engage diverse sectors of the community, with an understanding that advancing Latinos advances a shared future. For more information, visit [www.latinopolicyforum.org](http://www.latinopolicyforum.org).