

# 2020

## Annual Report



UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative





# 2020



**Annual  
Report**

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## ✧ OUR VISION ✧

The UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative believes there is no American agenda without a Latino Agenda. Thus, our work is focused on confronting the challenges facing Latinos head-on to find solutions now. Through research, advocacy, mobilization, and leadership development we propel domestic policymaking that expands genuine opportunity and enables all Americans to pursue life with dignity.




❖ 2020 ❖

A Year Of Challenge And Opportunity



**Sonja Diaz**

Founding Executive Director



Our call to action for 2020 was a vision for the nation that recognized there can be no American agenda without a Latino agenda. With a global pandemic putting a spotlight on inequity and the needs of our most vulnerable communities, it was made painfully clear just how integral Latinos are to the fabric of our country.

Amid COVID-19, we learned how essential the labor of Latinos and other communities of color is in powering our economy through a crisis. Yet, we also learned that essential often meant disposable. Latinos paid the price for their frontline role in the pandemic with their health, suffering disproportionate rates of death and infection that at the January 2021 peak meant Latinos were dying at three times the rate of white residents in Los Angeles County.

The pandemic unfolded during the most consequential presidential election of our lifetimes, where the future of climate change, public health, the economy and our very democracy were on the ballot. Once again, it was communities of color who protected us all by voting to restore decency, providing key margins in swing states that put President Biden in the White House and comprehensive reforms on the table in the U.S. Senate.

At the UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative, we wanted to ensure that these stories, those that represent the communities that are too often left behind, were memorialized to chart the path forward, and we used our most powerful tool: the research prowess of California's leading academic institution to do just that.

As we begin to imagine a path toward recovery, UCLA LPPI will continue to place a necessary spotlight on the importance of a critical lens that clearly defines that every issue is a Latino issue. Our research shows that Latinos faced the greatest economic and public health consequences from the pandemic, all while stepping up as essential workers and voters to strengthen the future of this country. A Latino agenda is an essential part of a successful and just recovery.

That means a jobs and stimulus plan that specifically targets low-income residents and communities of color who will only fall further into a cycle of poverty and inequality if we don't ensure they aren't left behind. It means cultivating a leadership pipeline in all bodies of government so that people making key decisions look like the communities they represent. It means bolstering our safety net and systems so they are ready to help the most vulnerable in our next moment of crisis. Through our work with the UCLA Voting Rights Project, we are also fighting to ensure that it means fair and equal access to the most sacred of our constitutional rights.

At UCLA LPPI, we know that our vision is inextricably linked with the movement for Black lives, with our Asian American neighbors and with all communities that throughout history have been disenfranchised and marginalized by laws and policy. Through data and research, we work to highlight that excluding the nation's new majority from relief and recovery is not only unjust, but hinders shared prosperity and our fragile democracy. And as we work toward increasing the visibility of Latinos, we know it can never be at the expense of Black and Asian communities. Instead, it must be done in solidarity to ensure all of us are uplifted.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside our allies, partners, funders and supporters in making a Latino agenda possible. In this unique moment of advocacy and hope, we need all hands on deck to fulfill the promise of America.

» RESEARCH «  
**THAT SAVES LIVES**

COVID-19 Through A Latino Lens

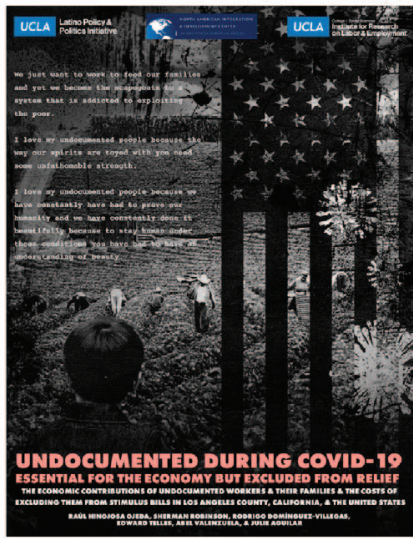
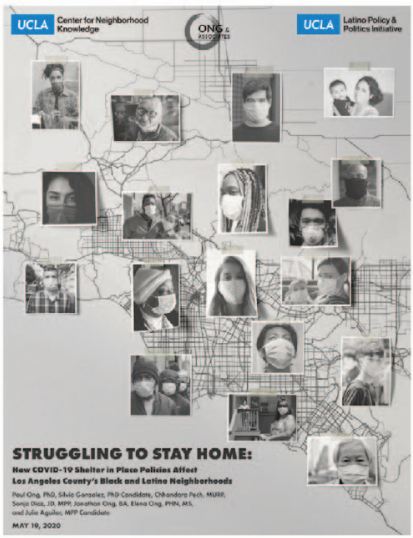






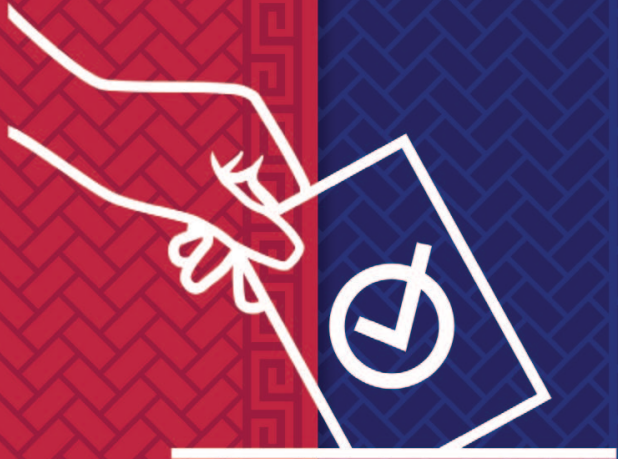
From the earliest days of the pandemic, it has been clear that COVID-19 is a virus that preys on our social vulnerabilities, devastating communities of color. At UCLA LPPI, we jumped in right away to use our most powerful resource in the fight against this virus - data-driven research - to put a Latino lens on the pandemic. Our work was aimed at bringing to light the disparate impact of COVID, underscoring the inequities across our systems and highlighting the opportunity to fundamentally shift course and reallocate resources in the recovery effort. Our reports have included analysis of early data that served as a warning that communities of color would need targeted assistance to overcome the disproportionate public health and economic impacts - help that often failed to arrive.

We also highlighted the challenges that undocumented immigrants and mixed status families faced to ensure that they did not stay in the shadows. Additionally, we put a bright spotlight on the urgent need to use the pandemic as an avenue to create greater access to healthcare that was culturally and linguistically competent. In doing so, this research provided advocates and policymakers with the concrete data and analysis needed to create targeted programs to get resources to impacted communities that were being left behind. In the coming months, we will continue to leverage the academic prowess of California's leading research institution to push for an equitable recovery process that leaves no one behind.



Battle For The Future Of  
**DEMOCRACY**

THE 2020 ELECTION





The data make it clear that Latinos were decisive in determining the outcome of the November election up and down the ballot. Latino civic organizations in places like Arizona and Georgia activated historic turnout of the Latino electorate to join a coalition of Black and Asian-American voters who shifted the leadership balance in the U.S. from red to blue. And in swing states like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, Latino voters provided the critical margins necessary for victory. UCLA LPPI was on the frontlines of the conversation about the Latino electorate, providing critical research insights and real-time commentary on the impact of the Latino vote. This work, which sits alongside the grassroots organizing of so many, has helped to shift the conversation about the fight for democracy from one that focuses on white working class to one that flows through Latinos and other communities of color.

## Election Night Real-Time Data

**UCLA LPPI** @UCLA\_LPPI

In Arizona, comprehensive analysis shows strong support for Joe Biden from Latino voters.

In Maricopa County, Biden gathers over 75% of the vote in precincts with high Latino density.

**UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative**

In Maricopa County, AZ, precincts with high concentrations of Latino voters show over 75% support for Biden.

10:58 AM · Nov 6, 2020 · Twitter Web App

**UCLA LPPI** @UCLA\_LPPI

Latino Vote in #Pennsylvania

We pulled almost 4,000 precincts across 7 counties in PA and we estimate Biden won around 80% of the Latino vote in PA.

#ElectionResult2020 #votolatino2020

**UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative**

Latino Precincts (2018-2019) vs. Biden Support (2020)

11:58 AM · Nov 10, 2020 · Twitter Web App

**UCLA LPPI** @UCLA\_LPPI

#BREAKING Data Alert on Latino Voters in #Texas

In Dallas County, #Texas Biden got as much as 78% of the vote in precincts with high concentrations of Latinos

#LatinoVote2020 #Elections2020

**UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative**

President Joe Biden County TX

11:50 PM · Nov 6, 2020 · Twitter Web App

## Election-Focused Research

**UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative**

**TOP ISSUES FOR LATINO VOTERS IN SWING STATES FOR THE 2020 ELECTION**

Arizona, Texas, Nevada, Florida

Rodrigo Dominguez-Villagas, Ph.D. and Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, Ph.D.

October 14, 2020

**UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative**

**VOTE LATINO VOTE 2020 OF ELECTION**

**VOTE CHOICE OF LATINO VOTERS IN THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

JANUARY 19, 2021

RODRIGO DOMÍNGUEZ-VILLAGAS, NICK GONZALEZ, ANIELA FERRER, KASSANDRA HERNÁNDEZ, MICHAEL HENDON, ANA GARCÍA, MICHAEL RIOS, MARCEL ROMÁN, TY BURR, AND DAISY VA

# The UCLA VOTING RIGHTS PROJECT

The UCLA Voting Rights Project is the flagship project of the Latino Policy & Politics Initiative aimed at creating an accessible and equitable system of voting for all Americans through impact litigation, research, and clinical education. The Voting Rights Project's mission is to train a new generation of voting rights lawyers, expert witnesses, and policy makers.





The Voting Rights Project was actively engaged in the crucial work of protecting our constitutional right to vote across the nation, including:



Representing voters in the *Texas League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) v. Abbott* case that fought against the Governor's order to only allow one ballot drop box per county regardless of population.



Participating in the *Garcia vs. Abbot* case challenging Texas' discriminatory requirements that voters under age 65 have an excuse to be eligible for vote-by-mail.



Publishing the first policy reports on how to implement safe elections through vote-by-mail in March 2020 and partnering with medical experts the UCLA Geffen School of Medicine on real-time analysis on how to keep voters safe at the ballot box.



Participating in litigation to challenge a Georgia requirement that voters using mail ballots were required to pay the postage fee, a modern day poll tax.



Changing voting laws in New Mexico through research and policy partnerships to ensure that voters using mail ballots would be able to correct mistakes on their ballots or "cure" their ballots.

The 2020 election demonstrated that the fight to protect voting rights is far from over, and our team was engaged in cases across the nation. 2021 may be one of the most racially discriminatory redistricting cycles in the past fifty years and voting protections are at their lowest levels. The work to ensure that all communities can safely and effectively exercise their constitutional right at the ballot box must continue.

Mobilizing For Representation

## ▶ THAT MATTERS ◀



Latinos are the largest non-white population in the United States; the plurality in California, our nation's most populous state; and a growing force in key states like Arizona. Yet, they are often left out of important civic opportunities and policy decisions that determine how key decisions are made about our shared future. UCLA LPPI is actively engaged in advocating for a more inclusive democracy that fully integrates the perspectives and needs of Latinos.



Recognizing the electoral power Latinos can wield, UCLA has partnered with the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials since our beginning. Through this work, we have been deeply engaged with helping elected officials in Arizona navigate shifting political realities that resulted in turning Arizona blue for the first time in over two decades.

## The 2020 election is a key test for Latinos. But so is the census and redistricting

*Opinion: Latino voter participation will be decisive and likely to shape Arizona politics beyond this election cycle.*

**Sonja Diaz** opinion contributor

Published 6:00 a.m. MT Mar 1 2020



Additionally, UCLA LPPI has been at the forefront of advocacy efforts that make Latino leadership a reality, from pushing for a Latino to replace Vice President Kamala Harris' former senate seat, to advocating for Latino representation in redistricting in California, to driving the call for top-tier appointments in the Biden Administration's cabinet.

### Increasing calls for more diversity as Biden's cabinet takes shape

Talking about the importance of Latino representation in "top-tier" cabinet positions: "We need to have substantive representation for better decision-making," says Sonja Diaz, founding director of the UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative and founding member of the alliance for Latinx Leadership and Policy.

FOR: UNIVISION  
4 DIC 2020 - 04:14 PM EST

 REACCIONA

 COMPARTE

**UCLA** Latino Policy &  
Politics Initiative

"As the nation confronts the third wave of a devastating pandemic that has infected and killed Blacks and Latinos at disproportionate rates, Alex Padilla will provide a crucial lens on the importance of centering future U.S. Senate policies on the frontline communities that are critical to economic recovery."

-SONJA DIAZ, FOUNDING DIRECTOR







In 2020, UCLA LPPI convened over 80 multigenerational and multisectoral Latinx leaders to discuss the biggest issues facing U.S. Latinos amid COVID-19. The end result was a 21st Century Latino agenda focused on policy recommendations that can improve opportunities for all Americans. In July 2020, the vision document was shared with state and federal elected officials and the two presidential campaigns, and is now being pointed to by advocates as a roadmap for inclusive policy for a just environment and quality healthcare.



# ➤ PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS ➤

## WASHINGTON

Columbia Legal Services  
University of Washington  
Latino Center for Health

## ARIZONA

Arizona Latino Legislative Caucus  
Center for Latina/os & American  
Politics Research (CLAPR)  
Arizona State University  
Mi Familia Vota  
Mijente

## NEW MEXICO

Center for Social Policy  
The University of New Mexico

## CALIFORNIA

California Latino Legislative  
Caucus  
Filipino Voter Empowerment  
Project  
Hispanas Organized for Political  
Equality  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense & Educational Fund  
National Association of Hispanic  
Real State Professionals  
Stanford Law School Supreme  
Court Clinic  
The Unity Council

## TEXAS

Texas State LULAC



The capacity of policy to meet the needs of the nation's new majority requires impact-driven partnerships rooted in data and facts about diverse Americans. UCLA LPPI has been proud to partner with organizations across the nation to ensure Latinos and other communities of color have a seat at the decision-making table and fair opportunities to thrive. Using the convening power of the nation's leading public university, we connect and engage with innovators who can drive change through the streets, boardrooms, the courts, and elected office. As we look toward recovery, these partnerships are integral to ensuring that the nation's youthful and growing communities are meaningfully included and reflected in a prosperous future.



**NEW YORK**

ACLU Voting Rights Project  
Drug Policy Alliance  
Latino Justice PRLDEF

**D.C.**

ASPEN Institute  
Latinos & Society Program  
Hispanics in Philanthropy  
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)  
National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials

**GEORGIA**

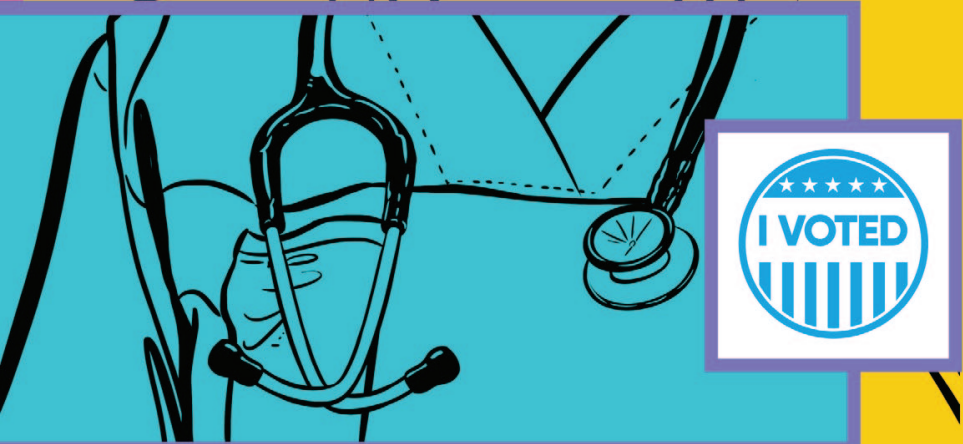
ACLU of Georgia

**FLORIDA**

Samuel Proctor Oral History Project  
University of Florida

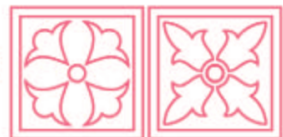
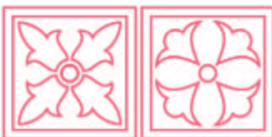
# THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION

Shaping A New Narrative





The Latino story remains on the margins of the American story. All too often, it is either ignored or told by others who are not on the ground in our communities. UCLA LPPI has been committed to ensuring that Latinos are not only visible across key policy debates, but that Latino stories are told by Latina/o experts who can back lived experiences with rigorous research. Over the last year, our experts have been putting a spotlight on the immense contributions of Latinos to this nation, especially the outsized role they have played during COVID as essential workers. And from health care access and immigration, to racial injustice and COVID federal relief, LPPI has made sure that issues that matter were seen through a Latino lens.



# Experts Leading THE CONVERSATION

Leveraging the big stories of 2020 - COVID-19, racial injustice, the election, and economic crisis - through op-eds, media interviews and virtual events, LPPI consistently put a spotlight on the needs of the nation's diverse Latino communities. This translated into engagement with elected and community leaders across the U.S. that has enabled us to push for a 21st century Latino policy agenda on society's biggest challenges and opportunities.

## CAL MATTERS

MY TURN

### California should be a leader in telehealth services for low-income communities

California, with its multilingual populations and rural communities that lack medical care, is the perfect place to implement telehealth.

By Arturo Vargas Bustamante and Carmela Castellano-Garcia, Special to CalMatters



Opinion

LIVE TV

## Don't call it 'social distancing'

Opinion by Cecilia Menjivar, Jacob G. Foster and Jennie E. Brand



The New York Times

PLAY THE CROSS

Opinion

## No, Mr. President, Your Immigration Powers Are Not Unlimited

Freezing immigrant admissions won't protect public health or save American jobs.

By Jennifer M. Chacón and Erwin Chemerinsky

Ms. Chacón is a professor of law at the University of California Los Angeles Law School and Mr. Chemerinsky is dean and professor at the University of California Berkeley Law School.

Bloomberg Opinion

Politics & Policy

## Covid-19 Relief for Undocumented Would Boost the Economy for All

Depriving workers of \$1,200 checks caused a \$10 billion loss in economic activity.

By Lorena Gonzalez and Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda  
September 30, 2020, 1:00 PM PDT



Amid the pandemic, virtual events offered an opportunity for us to convene important conversations about national issues. We put a spotlight on key topics, ranging from the vulnerabilities of immigrant communities amid natural disasters, to the importance of voters of color in the 2020 election, to creating greater solidarity between Black and Brown communities. Utilizing the convening power of UCLA, we brought together journalists from major outlets like POLITICO and The New York Times; elected officials, such as Karen Bass and Julian Castro; world-renowned academic experts like David Hayes-Bautista and community leaders to discuss solutions and the brighter future ahead.



# ➤ BUILDING THE LEADERS ➤

## of today and tomorrow

2020 put the nation's leadership vacuum on full display. The intersecting crises of structural racism, a public health pandemic, growing inequality, and climate disasters left the nation's youthful and growing communities of color further behind. To counteract the underrepresentation of Latinos across society, from politics to academia to newsroom, UCLA LPPI is investing in the civic leaders of tomorrow, now. These emerging leaders are determined to make an impact, and through UCLA LPPI, they are being exposed to the policy challenges of today coupled with the research training necessary to inform a better tomorrow. Our fellows program gives undergraduate, professional and graduate students an opportunity to participate in action-oriented research and policy advocacy to prepare them for their role in building a more just America in the halls of power.

## FELLOWS



**Bryanna Ruiz**

"I'm learning skills at UCLA LPPI that will be critical to the advocacy and policy work that I want to do that will uplift my community"



**Nick Gonzalez**

"As a UCLA LPPI fellow, I not only gain research skills, but have been brought into a professional network that will support me as I move and grow throughout my career."



**Chelsea Jones**

"Voting is a key pillar of our democracy. The UCLA Voting Rights Projects has equipped me with the skills and knowledge to help protect and expand this fundamental right, and ensure my community has access to the ballot box "





# THE TEAM

Behind

## UCLA LATINO POLICY

&

## POLITICS INITIATIVE



Building a great team is hard work, and at UCLA LPPI, we have built one of the best. With an organizational staff and advisory board steeped in policy and advocacy and one of the deepest benches of Latino experts in the nation, we are ensuring that “every issue is a Latino issue,” isn’t just something we say, but is backed by research and data that leaves no one behind and creates opportunity for all.

## UCLA LPPI STAFF

UCLA LPPI is led by a high-performing team of interdisciplinary and cross-functional leaders who are committed to an inclusive democracy that accelerates the resiliency of the nation's growing, youthful and diverse Latino communities to navigate challenges and opportunities. Together, they are committed to create a model for research in action, responding to the urgency of the moment with the values of a shared and vibrant future.



**Sonja Diaz**  
Founding Executive Director



**Dr. Matt Barreto**  
Faculty Co-Director  
Professor of Political Science  
Chicana/o & Central  
American Studies



**Dr. Rodrigo Dominguez Villegas**  
Director of Research



**Sonni Waknin**  
Voting Rights  
Managing Attorney



**Chad Dunn**  
Director of Litigation



**Kassandra Hernandez**  
Research Analyst



**Nick Gonzalez**  
Policy Analyst



**Dr. Arturo Vargas Bustamante**  
Faculty Director of Research  
Associate Professor  
Health Policy & Management



**Ricardo Quintero**  
Director of Development  
Luskin School of Public Affairs



**Kacey Bonner**  
Strategic  
Communications  
Advisor



**Lys Mendez**  
Strategic  
Communications  
Advisor



**Marvin Pineda**  
Government Affairs  
Advisor

## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Our advisory board members offer their expertise in fields that are essential to shaping the future and success of our communities, including healthcare, philanthropy, finance, law and media. We are fortunate to have their counsel.



**Alfred Fraijo Jr.**

Partner  
Sheppard Mullin



**Alicia Miñana  
de Lovelace**

CEO  
Law Offices  
of  
Alicia Miñana



**Berenice Nuñez  
Constant**

Vice President  
Government Relations &  
Civic Engagement  
Altamed Health  
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Senior VP & National  
Philanthropy Director  
Bank of America



**Erica Bernal  
Martinez**

Chief Operating Officer  
NALEO Educational Fund



**Hector Cuellar**

President  
Gasso Capital Markets



**Joe Waz**

Senior Strategic Advisor  
& Senior Counselor  
Creative Content  
Protection Comcast Corp.  
& NBC Universal



**Juan Cartagena**

President & General  
Counsel  
Latino Justice PRLDEF



**Max Espinoza**

Senior Program Officer  
Global Policy & Advocacy  
North America Organization  
Bill & Melinda Gates  
Foundation



**Michele Siquieros**

President  
The Campaign  
for  
College Opportunity



**Patrick Buttler**

Assistant Chief  
Los Angeles  
Fire Department



**Peter Villegas**

Co-Chair  
Mercury LLC



**Sergio Garcia**

Snr C-Suite  
Executive & Attorney

## LPPI POLICY EXPERTS

In the face of grave Latino underrepresentation across our nation's most esteemed sectors, especially academic faculty, UCLA LPPI is highlighting the value-add of a critical mass of Latino scholars in action. We convene experts from across the university who are leading cutting-edge research on how issues impact or ignore Latinos and other communities of color, offering unmatched multi-disciplinary expertise.



**Abel Velenzuela Jr**  
Labor & Employment



**Alma Guerrero**  
Health Access



**Amada Armenta**  
Immigrant Rights



**Amy Ritterbusch**  
Mobility & Opportunity



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Bustamante**  
Health Access



**Carlos E. Santos**  
Civic Engagement



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Immigrant Rights



**Cecilia Rios Aguilar**  
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Voting Rights



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Arts & Culture



**Chris Zepeda Millán**  
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**Denise A. Chavira**  
Mental Health



**Efrén Pérez**  
Public Opinion



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**José Loya**  
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**Juan Herrera**  
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Hernández**  
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**Laura E. Gómez**  
Civil Rights



**Laura E. Martínez**  
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**Leisy Abrego**  
Immigrant Rights



**Lorena Guillén**  
Education



**María Elena Ruiz**  
Health Access



**Mary J. Lopez**  
Labor & Employment



**Matt Barreto**  
Voting Rights



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Rodríguez**  
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**Michael Méndez**  
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**Miguel M. Unzueta**  
Representation in Business



**Mirella Díaz Santos**  
Health Access



**Natalie Masuoka**  
Public Opinion



**Otto Santa Ana**  
Language



**Paola Suarez**  
Mental Health



**Patricia Gandára**  
Education



**Rachel F. Moran**  
Education



**Raúl Hinojosa Ojeda**  
Immigrant Rights



**Raymond Rocco**  
Civic Engagement



**Rodrigo Dominguez  
Villegas**  
Immigrant Rights



**Silvia R. González**  
Community Development



**Sonja Diaz**  
Civil Rights



**Sylvia Hurtado**  
Education



**Vilma Ortiz**  
Mobility & Opportunity




**Yohualli Balderas  
Medina Anaya**  
Health Access



# Thank You To Our Supporters

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UCLA LPPI could not maintain its ambitious research and advocacy portfolio without the generous support of our institutional, philanthropic and individual donors. We are grateful to all of our partners who make it possible for us to continue advocating for a future where justice and opportunity are possible for Latinos and communities of color.



ACLU Foundation of Georgia, Inc.  
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 Ana Melgoza  
 Andrew Lee  
 Anonymous  
 Avishay Artsy  
 Bank of America  
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**UCLA**

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