

CENTER FOR
LATIN
AMERICAN
& LATINO
STUDIES

American
University's
Annual Latino
Public Affairs
Forum



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
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Latinos represent the fastest growing population in the United States, and they are the leading edge of a demographic change transforming the U.S. into a “majority minority” country. Their influence upon the direction of national political, cultural, and economic trends, and many other issues, continues to grow. Recognizing the dynamic role of Latinos in U.S. public life, American University’s Annual Latino Public Affairs Forum (ALPAF) convenes scholars, advocates, policy professionals, journalists, students, and other stakeholders, to address key matters of public policy impacting Latino communities across the country.

Latinos have accounted for half of U.S. population growth since 2000, increasing 51% between 2010 and 2021. As of 2021, 19% of the country, or 62.1 million people, identified as Latino. By 2060, the number of Latinos is projected to grow 115% to 119 million, comprising 29% of the nation’s population.

Understanding the expanding importance of Latinos in American society is thus a key dimension in addressing the country’s present and future.

Held in the Nation’s Capital, ALPAF connects the findings of academic research with the efforts of stakeholders to illuminate the role of Latinos in American society and to enrich Latino lives.



Each year, the Forum focuses on a significant public policy issue that is both impacted by and important to Latino communities in the U.S. Typically, outcomes include the publication of significant original research through the Center’s Working Paper Series. The inaugural Forum in 2015 considered the prospects and possibilities for immigration policy during the last two years of the Obama administration. The following year ALPAF focused on potential impacts of the Latino vote on the 2016 presidential election cycle.

The 2017 Forum addressed the challenges facing Latino-owned enterprises, as increasingly important sources of growth for the American economy. The 2018 event considered access to health services for often undocumented, under served, and at-risk Latino youth.

The 2019 Forum concentrated on urban planning and the development of inclusive communities. In 2020 ALPAF centered on defending and reasserting the primacy of the best interests standard in the treatment of children in the U.S. immigration system. The 2021 Forum highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on Latino-owned enterprises, particularly focusing on challenges accessing aid.