



U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

The State of Latinos in the Law Symposium

Identifying Challenges, Defining Strategies & Impacting the Pipeline

Sponsored by the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois

Partner Organizations include Illinois Latino Judges Association, Hispanic National Bar Association, Puerto Rican Bar Association

This event is free.

Sign up:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-state-of-latinos-in-the-law-symposium-and-the-hlai-latina-lawyers-commission-hispanic-heritage-tickets-48151619791>

CLE Application Pending

HLAI is the course provider.

If CLE application is approved, participants attending the entire symposium will have the opportunity to earn 4.75 credit hours, including 1.0 hour of diversity and inclusion.

Under the leadership of Chief Judge Rubén Castillo, the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois (HLAI), Hispanic National Bar Association Region IX (HNBA), Illinois Latino Judges Association (ILJA), and Puerto Rican Bar Association of Illinois (PRBA), an array of experts have been assembled in the academic, legal, and public policy communities to identify the root cause of challenges Latinx face in the legal profession, their educational journey, and their career cycles.

These discussions will derive specific strategies and recommendations that will empower stakeholders within our communities to effectively address and resolve those underlying conditions.

After the Symposium, join us at the Chicago Bar Association, 321 South Plymouth Court, for the HLAI Latina Lawyers Commission Hispanic Heritage Month Reception.

October 12, 2018

9:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.

Dirksen U.S. Courthouse
Ceremonial Courtroom
25th Floor
219 South Dearborn St
Chicago, Illinois

Panelists include:

Hon. Rubén Castillo, Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for Northern District of Illinois

Hon. Gustavo A. Gelpi, Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for District of Puerto Rico

Hon. Dora L. Irizarry, Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for Eastern District of New York

Hon. Maria Valdez, Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court for Northern District of Illinois

Hon. Jesse G. Reyes, Presiding Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Fifth Division

Hon. David R. Navarro, Circuit Judge, Pretrial Division, Circuit Court of Cook County

Hon. Ramon Ocasio, III, Municipal Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County, Fourth Municipal District

General counsels and firm partners, academics, law school administrators and advisors, high school teachers and administrators, recruiters and hiring directors, non-profit leaders.

The State of Latinos in the Law Symposium Program

Friday, October 12, 2018

**Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse
Ceremonial Courtroom, 25th Floor**

Under the leadership of Chief Judge Rubén Castillo, the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois (HLAI), Hispanic National Bar Association Region IX (HNBA), Illinois Latino Judges Association (ILJA), and Puerto Rican Bar Association of Illinois (PRBA), an array of experts have been assembled in the academic, legal, and public policy communities to identify the root cause of challenges Latinos face in the legal profession, their educational journey, and their career cycles. These discussions will derive specific strategies and recommendations that will empower stakeholders within our communities to effectively address and resolve those underlying conditions.

The State of Latinos in the Law Symposium will feature many of the nation's attorneys, legal scholars, corporate counselors, and judges. The Symposium will consist of an opening and closing plenary session, a guest lunch speaker, and concurrent panels running throughout the day.

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Registration, Continental Breakfast, & Networking
25th Floor Hallway

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Welcome & Problem Statement

Ceremonial Courtroom

Speakers:

- Martín Montes, Director, Regulatory Affairs, ComEd
- The Honorable Rubén Castillo, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Symposium Moderator:

- Angel Gomez, President, AG Gomez Consulting

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Plenary Session: The State of Latinos in the Law—The Numbers
Ceremonial Courtroom

Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States, yet Latinos make up a small percentage of lawyers. Without a significant increase in Latinx lawyers, there will be a growing gap between Latinos in society and in the legal profession.

This Session will discuss the current State of Latinos in the Law and raise questions for further research. It will present general demographic data on Latinos in the United States, discuss the pipeline for Latinx students from college to law school to law practice, and conclude with a review of the American Bar Foundation's national study of lawyer careers with a special focus on the Latinx lawyer. A White Paper on this presentation will be available for download from the HLAI website (hlai.org) after the Symposium.

Speakers:

- Robert L. Nelson, American Bar Foundation
- Meghan Dawe, American Bar Foundation
- Monica Llorente, Faculty Member, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
- Steven Hernandez, Senior Counsel, BP (Retired)
- The Honorable Ramon Ocasio, III, Municipal Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County, Fourth Municipal District

10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Morning Break

Symposium Moderator:

- Angel Gomez, President, AG Gomez Consulting

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Breakout Session Track I: Early Education – Extending the Pipeline

Breakout Courtroom

Early childhood education is a key element to ensure that children get on the road to success. Many young children, however, do not have access to such early education programs, and this lack of access creates barriers to the critical building blocks needed to foster an environment of learning. Our high schools are not equipped to support the number of challenges many of our youth face – social pressures, economic instability, and crime. In order to increase the number of Latinos in the legal profession we must extend the pipeline and begin looking at the risk factors and challenges that begin in early childhood.

Some of the questions we will strive to answer include: What is keeping high school students from going to college and law school? What ways can high school students be supported academically, and, on a more personal level, what are the tools needed to support our youth both mentally and emotionally? What opportunities can high school students be exposed to in order to increase their confidence in entering the legal pipeline? What role do parents and the community play in our children's success?

Speakers:

- Preston Kendall, President, Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep
- Laura Blackburn, Pre-Law Teacher, Jones College Prep
- Rather Stanton, CEO & Co-Founder, Legal Prep Charter Academy
- Jessica Velez, Associate, Johnson & Bell (President of the Associate Board of Just the Beginning - A Pipeline Organization)

Moderator: Mary Bird, Director of Public Service Programs, Loyola University of Chicago School of Law

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **Breakout Session Track II: Law School Admissions – Entering the Pipeline**
Ceremonial Courtroom

Once youth overcome the many challenges they face in their developmental years, the next challenge is applying for graduate school. For many of our youth, they will be the first in their families to graduate with a college degree. Thus, the idea of continuing onto graduate school entails not only taking on large amounts of educational debt but also deferring a full-time job with immediate economic rewards. For some of our youth, it might also implicate the uncertain legal consequences of being a DACA recipient.

The questions this panel will address include: What are the primary challenges preventing or discouraging undergraduate students from applying to law school? What are the primary reasons for Latino students that do apply to law school and are denied admission? Are rejection rates higher for top-tier schools? What methods can be employed to encourage undergraduate students to apply to law school? Is mentoring enough?

Speakers:

- Ann K. Perry, Associate Dean for Admissions, University of Chicago Law School
- Austen L. Parrish, Dean and James H. Rudy Professor of Law, Indiana University Maurer School of Law
- Jamie Thomas-Ward, Director of Pre-Law Advising Services, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Moderator: Jennifer L. Rosato-Perea, Dean and Professor of Law, DePaul University College of Law

12:00 – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch & Keynote Speaker: The Honorable Gustavo A. Gelpi, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico**
Ceremonial Courtroom

Chief Judge Gelpi will discuss his new book “The Evolution of Puerto Rico and Other U.S. Territories (1898-Present),” which provides a good background for a discussion of the Hurricane Maria relief efforts by the United States.

Speaker:

- The Honorable Gustavo A. Gelpi, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico

1:00 – 1:15 p.m. **After Lunch Break**

Symposium Moderator:

- Angel Gomez, President, AG Gomez Consulting

1:15 – 2:30 p.m. **Breakout Session Track III: Law School Education – Getting Through the Pipeline**
Breakout Courtroom

Law school is the necessary tool to become a lawyer, yet Latinos only made up 13% of law school admissions in 2017. For many, the primary obstacle to applying to law school may be the prospect of

large financial debt, and for others, it may be a limited understanding of the complicated process of law school admissions. Yet, for others, it may be the difficult academic workload they have not been sufficiently trained to undertake.

Experts on this panel will discuss: What is keeping law students from succeeding academically, especially in comparison to their white peers? What is keeping law students from advancing into certain networks, especially in those outside of immigration and criminal law? In what ways can Latinx law students be better supported and taken into consideration by their institutions, outside of student led groups and affinity bar associations?

Speakers:

- Juan Perea, Curt and Linda Rodin Professor of Law and Social Justice, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
- Tiffany Harper, Associate Counsel, Grant Thornton LLP (Co-Founder, Diverse Attorney Pipeline Program)
- Josie Gough, Curt and Linda Rodin Clinical Assistant Professor of Law and Social Justice, Director of Experiential Learning, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
- Arthur Acevedo, Professor of Law, John Marshall Law School

Moderator: Monica Llorente, Faculty Member, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

**1:15 – 2:30 p.m. Breakout Session Track IV: Public Sector – Advancing
Ceremonial Courtroom Through the Public Pipeline**

Having overcome significant barriers in the path to becoming a lawyer, now the decision comes as to which career path to choose – the private or public-sector path? For many Latinos becoming a lawyer was rooted in the idea of seeking justice and helping the Latino community. Why should this mean sacrificing a high-paying private sector job? Entering the public sector can bring several different exciting and fulfilling career opportunities, some of which many of our young people may not be aware of but will still provide much distinction and success.

This panel of experts will tackle the following: Do starting salaries (and unpaid internships) play a role in the decisions new Latinx lawyers make when seeking public sector jobs? Does large school debt prevent young lawyers from entering the public sector? What are some different career opportunities one can achieve in the public sector?

Speakers:

- Sonia Antolec, Director of Legal Hiring and Recruiting, Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office
- Thor Inouye, Director of Attorney Recruiting and Professional Development, Illinois Attorney General’s Office
- The Honorable David R. Navarro, Circuit Judge, Pretrial Division, Circuit Court of Cook County
- Maribel Fernandez-Harvath, Director – Investigations, Global Compliance & Risk Management, Shire PLC

Moderator: Sergio E. Acosta, Co-Chair, White Collar Crime and Government Investigations Practice,
Akerman LLP

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.
Breakout Courtroom

**Breakout Session Track V: Private Sector – Advancing
Through the Private Pipeline**

For many law students, working in the private sector may seem like the “golden prize,” however, for many of our Latino youth this is a path that can seem out of reach. Whether the reason is self-doubt, a lack of understanding as to what the law firm or in-house counsel hiring process may entail, not having the academic credentials often sought by law firms, or all of the above, Latinos still make up a small percentage of the attorneys in law firms and an even smaller percentage of the attorneys in corporate legal departments.

Our panel of experts will discuss: How does a low, or non-existent, exposure to private sector attorneys play a role in Latinx lawyers entering, and staying in, private sector jobs? How do we help prepare our youth with the tools needed to achieve the high academic success often sought by law firms? What role can law firms play in diversifying their ranks and supporting attorneys of color? Do hiring practices and firm/corporate culture play a role in the hiring and retention rates of Latinx lawyers? What affirmative steps can corporations take to increase their pipeline of Latinx lawyers?

Speakers:

- Michael E. Martinez, Managing Partner, Chicago Office, K&L Gates LLP
- Jesse Ruiz, Partner, Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
- Dennis Garcia, Assistant General Counsel, Microsoft
- Gloria Santona, Of Counsel, Baker McKenzie

Moderator: Sulema Medrano, Partner, Smith Amundsen LLC

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.
Ceremonial Courtroom

**Breakout Session Track VI: Judicial Sector – Advancing
Through the Judiciary Pipeline**

The prestige of becoming a judge is often seen as an unattainable goal for most attorneys, and nowhere is this more evident than in the Latinx legal community. Becoming a judge can be veiled in mystery depending on what is needed for a judicial appointment, judicial election, or application for an open position in the judiciary. At times, it can mean not having the right preparation or experience, or it can simply mean not having access to the right information to inform one’s decision to make a move to the bench.

Our esteemed panel will share their thoughts on: What considerations should young lawyers consider now to prepare for a judicial career? How important is fundraising to running for an elected judgeship? Would you encourage more senior attorneys to make the switch to the bench and what methodology should they employ?

Speakers:

- The Honorable Jesse G. Reyes, Presiding Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Fifth Division
- The Honorable Maria Valdez, Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

- The Honorable Dora L. Irizarry, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York
- The Honorable Gustavo A. Gelpi, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico

Moderator: The Honorable Rubén Castillo, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Afternoon Break

Symposium Moderator:

- Angel Gomez, President, AG Gomez Consulting

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Closing Plenary Session & Call to Action

Ceremonial Courtroom

All participants will reconvene in the Closing Plenary Session for a discussion on the key insights and actions necessary to address the issues examined in the respective Breakout Sessions. Leaders will dialogue on the underlying challenges and root causes of the barriers Latinos face in law as identified throughout the Symposium. They will call on key stakeholders in the academic, legal, and public policy communities to take decisive action to help Latinos overcome the challenges they encounter. Chief Judge Rubén Castillo, United States District Court, Northern District Illinois will provide closing remarks and a final call to action.

Speakers:

- Martín Montes, Director, Regulatory Affairs, ComEd
- Juan Morado, President, Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois
- The Honorable Rubén Castillo, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District Illinois

Symposium Moderator:

- Angel Gomez, President, AG Gomez Consulting

5:30 – 7:30 p.m. HLAI Latina Lawyers Commission Reception

**Chicago Bar Association
321 South Plymouth Court**