

# Excelencia in Education Spotlights Mercy College and the University at Albany for Advancing Latino Student Success

*These Institutions Are First in New York and the Northeast to Earn the Prestigious Seal of Excelencia*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Excelencia in Education, the premiere authority in accelerating Latino student success in higher education, recently hosted a special event in New York City to showcase Mercy College and the University at Albany SUNY as the first college and university in New York, and the entire Northeast, to earn the prestigious [Seal of Excelencia](#), a national certification for intentionally serving Latino students.

At an invitation-only Midtown reception on April 4, 2023, with approximately 150 guests, Excelencia was joined by New York Secretary of State Robert J. Rodriguez, New York State Higher Education Services Corporation President Guillermo Linares, New York Commissioner of Transportation and Excelencia Board Member Marie Therese Dominguez, as well as representatives of the national network of Presidents for Latino Student Success from Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, and leaders in higher education, policy, philanthropy, government, and policy.

Excelencia Co-founder and President Sarita Brown said, "At this moment in New York and throughout the country, it is vital to engage and propel the vibrant and growing Latino community to meet America's workforce and civic leader needs and ensure our country's bright future. We want people to know the colleges and universities exhibiting national leadership through their work with Excelencia and each other in common cause to enroll and graduate more Latinos students and all students."



From (L-R): Excelencia CEO Deborah Santiago, University at Albany President Havidan Rodriguez, Mercy College President Tim Hall, Excelencia President Sarita Brown and New York Secretary of State Robert J. Rodriguez at Celebrating Latino Student Success reception.

“Seal of Excelencia certified colleges and universities are not just enrolling Latino students, they are intentionally SERVING them,” said Deborah Santiago, Co-founder and CEO of Excelencia in Education. “The University at Albany and Mercy College are holding themselves to a higher standard for accelerating Latino, and all, students’ educational success, and are thus at the forefront of transforming higher education.”

NY Secretary of State Rodriguez said, “For almost 20 years, Excelencia in Education has taken the responsibility of chronicling the impact of higher

education for Latinos in American universities and colleges. Institutions now face the reality of having a high number of Latino students looking for a college degree. Our Latino community knows that higher education is a way to learn and move up in a society in which a career allows people to support a family and live a better life. Education provides a different perspective on how to approach our way in society, and to contribute to our state and nation. The leadership at Excelencia in Education knows this.”

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*Deborah Santiago, Co-founder and CEO, Excelencia in Education*

The event brought positive attention to Mercy College and the University at Albany for being the first Northeast institutions to earn the Seal of Excelencia certification. In his remarks, Sec. Rodriguez said Seal of Excelencia certification is “becoming the ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval’ for Latino student success in higher education.”

Mercy College President Tim Hall and UAlbany President Havidan Rodriguez also addressed the crowd and spoke about the impact and importance of the Seal certification, which has assisted them to more intentionally serve their Latino students. Both institutional leaders are part of Excelencia’s national network of Presidents for Latino Student Success, which represents 4% of America’s colleges and universities yet, in 2022, enrolled 31% and graduated 33% of all Latinos students in the United States.

Within this network, 30 institutions have earned the Seal of Excelencia for demonstrating,



New York Secretary of State Robert J. Rodriguez addresses the crowd at the Excelencia in Education Celebrating Latino Student Success event in New York on April 4, 2023.

through data, practice, and leadership, how they intentionally serve Latino students while serving all. The Seal institutions, which now include Mercy College and the University at Albany SUNY, are trendsetters in higher education.

The following day, Excelencia convened with leadership teams from Presidents for Latino Student Success from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut for a closed-door Policy Forum. Excelencia facilitated a frank discussion with institutional leaders on key issues for Latino student success in higher education including:

- Workforce
- Affordability
- Leadership and the future of higher education
- Intentionality in serving Latino students

Going forward, Excelencia in Education will incorporate input from the New York Policy Forum with input from similar forums with Presidents for Latino Students Success in other regions of the country. The perspectives of the Presidents and Chancellors in the network will inform Excelencia as it continues to advance Latino student success and shape the agenda for a National Policy Forum to be held in Washington, DC in conjunction with the organization's annual Fall Convening, September 28-29, 2023.

#### About Excelencia in Education

Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting Latino student achievement, conducting analysis to inform educational policies, advancing institutional practices, and collaborating with those committed and ready to meet the mission. It has published more than 100 analyses, highlighted over 385 programs from across the country to advance effective, evidence-based practices, and distributed more than \$2 million to promote programs producing results for Latino students. Launched in 2004 in the nation's capital, Excelencia has established a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy's needs for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leaders. For more information, visit: [www.EdExcelencia.org](http://www.EdExcelencia.org).

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An engaged and energetic crowd of 150 guests applauds higher education leaders at the Excelencia in Education's Celebrating Latino Student Success event in New York on April 4, 2023.

Excelencia in Education

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