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ANNUAL REPORT



LATINA
LEADERSHIP

podcast

We Are On A Mission To Bridge The Gap Between Latinas

Mentorship for me has been life-changing. As a Latina. As a woman. As a first-generation Mexican American. I can honestly say I was almost a statistic. A single mother who had dropped out of school, couch surfing at my friend's and family's homes when they would allow it. I was uncertain about my future in my early twenties, but I knew I had the potential to do more. What I lacked was the opportunity to be able to do so. Had it not been for my high school principal -taking the time to call me and challenge me to go back to school, who knows if I would have dared to do it on my own?

Later in life when my mental health became prohibitive, I was once again faced with a challenge. I could either stay there or find a way to push forward, at my own pace. I was in my forties before I was officially diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder. Mental health was not something we talked about growing up. If we did, like in so many other Latino households, it was either jokingly or in a disparaging way. It took me four decades to reconcile that. It took me just as long to accept that taking medication was not a sign of weakness, but a necessity in my case. It has taken my mother almost as long to start to understand my mental health and I can proudly say now, to also become an advocate for mental health herself.

These two facets of my life are just two of the reasons why in 2020 when the Latina Leadership Podcast was first established, every fiber of my being was telling me this was the right thing for me to do. Just over two years earlier my sister Erika had passed away, and her loss was devastating. I couldn't help but to think what could have been for her life, and for my own, had we had access to more resources, opportunities, and mentors when we were growing into ourselves. I thought about all the inner-city young girls who were growing up just like us, or who had, and I knew we had to do something to create change. You can imagine my excitement when upon launching the podcast Latinas from all walks of life began to share with me how much they could relate in their own way and how committed they were to supporting the journey we were embarking on. I say we because the Latina Leadership Podcast and the conversations it facilitates are about all of us. For all of us.

In 2023, we officially changed our name to the Latina Leadership Podcast and welcomed four new voices to the community we are building. Colombian American - Carolina Arenas, Mexican and Costa Rican American - Sonia Ramirez, Chicago Latina, by way of Northwest Arkansas Diana Rubi, and proud Latina Texan Jacqueline Villagomez. Each of these ladies bring a different perspective to the interviews we are hosting and to the mission of our budding purpose-driven media platform. We are truly a podcast for Latinas by Latinas.

The Latina Leadership Podcast was recognized as Podcast of the Year in 2022 by the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter. That same year we were awarded a proclamation by the City of Houston designating October 13th annually as Latina Entrepreneurship Day in the City of Houston. On December 8, 2022 – on Latina Equal Pay Day – we hosted our inaugural Latina Leadership Annual Dinner event in Houston, which brought together powerhouse Latinas from across the fourth-largest city in the United States. The success of this event has now led to a forthcoming lunch and learn series with events in Houston and Chicago planned for 2023, and an annual conference that will take place on Latina Entrepreneurship Day in Houston this year.

This growth and momentum would not be possible without the support of our listeners, our online and offline community, and that of our generous corporate sponsors.

I am excited about what is on the horizon for us and about continuing to scale because we are bridging the gap for young girls and women like me and Erika who wouldn't otherwise have had the opportunity to hear directly from inspiring women like Ellen Ochoa, Adassa, or Ada Ortega. And vice versa, giving these leading Latinas access to be able to inspire the next generation who they may never meet. Enjoy reading about what we have accomplished so far in the following pages, and join us to continue to effect change for all of us. We need your support too, amiga.

Sincerely,
Anjelica Cazares
Founder
Latina Leadership Podcast

One Latina at a Time

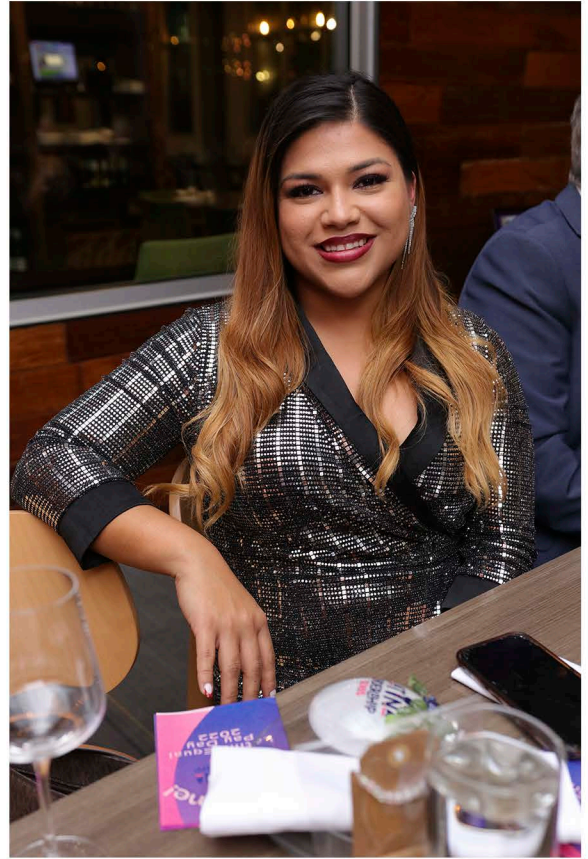
The Latina Leadership Podcast highlights the trajectory of Latinas from all walks of life, locally and nationwide. We showcase their journey and delve into how they became the Latina powerhouses they are today in our community. Elvia Quintanilla- Founder and CEO of the Texas Technical Trade School, is one of the many Latina entrepreneurs positively impacted through her partnership with the Latina Leadership Podcast.

Quintanilla shares the Latina Leadership Podcast has been instrumental in helping her highlight her business to the community at large and the story behind her business. "That matters when you have a business and are trying to [help] the community," Quintanilla said. "I feel like they have been the only ones to capture my story the right way. I feel like it's genuine."

Quintanilla has over 10 years of experience under her belt in areas ranging from education, business leadership and management, career placement assistance, student and business networking, and business infrastructure. She has created tuition-free educational opportunities for students and graduates to pursue and succeed in trade fields that are in demand.

Serving the needs of underserved communities and making sure they know about the scholarship program at Texas Technical Trade School is a mission Quintanilla is passionate about. "It's different, [the program] is more employer-based, student based, not just what the education system has become," Quintanilla said. "I'm all about the community, so I love spaces like these where we can celebrate women or how women are changing things."

With family and roots that run deep in Texas and Mexico, this local Houstonian admits that supporting her Mexican and American communities is of the essence for her. It was only fitting that our Founder and host of the Latina Leadership Podcast, Anjelica Cazares, would reach out to Quintanilla to celebrate her accomplishments on an episode of the series in 2022.



OVER / 75_K



Over **75,000** downloads of the Latina Leadership Podcast

OVER / 55_K



Our digital footprint includes a growing **online community over 55K** strong

45⁺
EPISODES

More than **45** video and audio episodes over five seasons have been published

70⁺
GUESTS

More than **70** guests have been a part of the conversation on the podcast

3
EVENTS

The Latina Leadership Podcast team is hosting **three** annual in-person events.

Quintanilla admits Anjelica made her feel right at home; after reaching out to her via social media to learn more about her background and her work with the Texas Technical Trade School. "From there, we became really good friends," Quintanilla said, as she described Anjelica as having the same goals of "empowering our people and letting them know about resources and not just men or women but everybody that's underserved."

Not only did Quintanilla and Anjelica bond over common issues, Quintanilla said they connected instantly; when she found out the cohort she was overseeing last summer was the same underserved high school Anjelica had graduated from years prior. Quintanilla called their meeting a "divine connection."

After seeing Anjelica's interaction with the students in Quintanilla's cohort and how the students appreciated Anjelica sharing her experiences, the relationship grew from there, Quintanilla said. "I started networking more because my business was taking off, so I started seeing her in a lot of the same events. The Latina Equal Pay Day Dinner being among them.

"Impactful" is a word Quintanilla used to describe her experience- over the past year working with the Latina Leadership Podcast. "If you want your story heard and getting it out there, they are perfect for it. You may know your business, but you don't know how to tell the story, and the story is the most important thing because that's how people connect to you," Quintanilla said. "If you can't be authentic, if it's not what [the community] can relate to, then you're leaving that demographic on the table, and that's the people you're trying to reach." Who you work with and put your brand in the hands of is of the utmost importance, according to Quintanilla.



Latina Equal Pay Dinner

Latina Equal Pay Day is a day marked for advocating for change. Latinas are still among the lowest paid demographic regardless of their education level or industry. Latina women currently stand to lose over \$1.2 million dollars in the span of their career due to the inequality in pay. These numbers do not cover the whole story, either. This figure leaves out Latinas who were unemployed or who worked part-time jobs, even if they wanted to be employed full-time.

This day has fallen on varying dates each year to represent how much longer Latinas must work to make the same amount as white men in the prior year. Latina Equal Pay Day fell on October 29th, October 21st, and December 8th for 2020, 2021, and 2022 respectively. This year, the date will fall on October 8th - indicating that Latinas need to work 10 additional months to make the same amount that white men made in 2022.

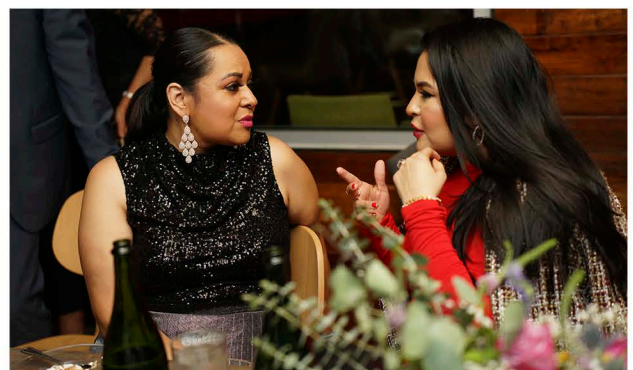
Latinas everywhere are calling for pay equity. A movement in Houston, Texas has been growing as Anjelica Cazares, founder of the Latina Leadership Podcast, brought together Latinas from around Texas and surrounding states this past year. On December 8, 2022, Latinas gathered to bring more awareness to this issue and generate powerful connections between one another that can push this movement forward.

Chief of Staff at the Consulate General of Israel, Priscila True, was in attendance at the Latina Equal Pay Day Dinner and shares, "It provided an opportunity to learn about the challenges we face as Latinas when it comes to the wage gap. More importantly, it provided a forum where we could have dialogues with one another in ways to support one another. The program and content was educational, informative, and inspiring!"

At the Latina Equal Pay Day dinner, thought-leadership was provided by Cazares, as well as co-host Ada Ortega, Director of Public Affairs, Communications & Sustainability for Coca-Cola, and emcee Mayra Moreno, TV personality and news anchor for ABC13 Eyewitness News. This Latina-centered space coalesced over 25 Latina leaders, ranging from entrepreneurs to young professionals and leaders in their respective fields.

Ortega, who was a previous guest on the Latina Leadership Podcast, is deeply committed to advancing pay equity for women. She states, "As business professional Latinas, we must continue to raise the bar when it comes to advocating for ourselves and lifting each other up. As long as men keep making more than women and Latinas, staying quiet and on the sidelines is simply not an option."

Spaces like the #Latinas4EqualPay dinner are building momentum for Latinas to guide the narrative and gain confidence in advocating for themselves. The Latina Leadership Podcast team is working towards closing the wage gap by continuing these conversations through the podcast and hosting further impactful events by Latinas, for Latinas. Stay in the know on Latina Equal Pay Day by connecting with us!



Meet Our Co-Hosts

As the **Latina Leadership Podcast** has evolved, we've added four new co-hosts to the line-up to bring in fresh perspectives to the conversations: Diana Rubi, Sonia Ramirez, Carolina Arenas, and Jacqueline Villagomez. Meet the new Latina voices behind the mics!

Diana Rubi

Is a first-generation Latina, born in Mexico City and raised in Peoria, Illinois. She is currently based in Northwest Arkansas. Her peers describe her as a curious, tenacious Latina, eager to learn, and open-minded. She represents the new generation, although is wise beyond her years and has an "old soul." Diana is unapologetic about who she is and has grown confident in her own mind and identity. She proudly identifies as a queer Latina and considers being a member of, and advocating for, the LGBTQ+ community something that is becoming increasingly more important to her. She is passionate about coalition-building and community building with other women of color and encouraging women to pursue their dreams and goals. Being free and feeling liberated and owning that as a woman is very important to her.

Jacqueline Villagomez

Is a third generation Latina, born and raised in Houston's East End. She is described by her peers as a boss lady, a visionary, self-motivated and creative. Growing up in a broken home, Jacqueline turned to music, movies, television, writing, any creative outlet, as an escape. That's where her love of the arts began. She is drawn to meaningful stories, whether they be hidden in musical lyrics, on the big screen, or in a good book. She is a very creative person and as an actress and singer/songwriter, Jacqueline feels like she's only just begun. Jacqueline has finally found the confidence to follow her dreams. With a few small projects completed under her belt, she's hopeful about the future and trying to stay open to the dream in her heart and where it may lead her.

Carolina Arenas

Is a proud Colombian American, born and raised in Queens, New York. Her peers consider her a tough New Yorker, gutsy, blunt, but also a softy, cultured and sophisticated. After being a stay-at-home mom, Carolina began to feel a need to do something more fulfilling for herself. She knew she wanted to do something with a mission behind it, which made connecting her business to her cultural roots and her passion for social work. That's when the idea for Meraki Wayuu was born. Through her small business, she is seeing a need and meeting a need in her connection with the indigenous group, Wayuu, behind the designs for the products she sells. Having her own business has taken Carolina all over Houston, where she's had the opportunity to connect with so many other entrepreneurs, many of them Latina. In 2022, she started Poder Hispano, an annual family festival that takes place during Hispanic Heritage Month that is open to people of all cultures and backgrounds.

Sonia Ramírez

Is a multicultural Latina, born and raised in Houston, Texas, and grew up in Houston's East End. Her peers describe her as an intentional storyteller, knowledgeable and willing to learn, a "quiet storm." She is compassionate and giving and is someone that shows up for other women. Growing up, Sonia was always drawn to storytelling. She studied journalism in college and gained early experience writing for small publications, even publishing her first article at the young age of 19. However, upon graduating she feels like she took the rocky path and did it the hard way, instead of doing a traditional internship in a newsroom. It wasn't until years after graduating with her journalism degree that she began working as a paid journalist. If she could go back and do things differently, she wished she would've had more support in terms of mentors and scholarship opportunities. It's for this reason that she loves to support women, especially young Latinas.

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THE PODCAST
FOR LATINAS
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podcast