



[UnidosUS](#) (formerly the National Council of La Raza)- the largest national Latino civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States—works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations, UnidosUS reaches millions of Latinos each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. UnidosUS is driven by the mission to build a stronger America by creating opportunities for Latinos. To achieve its mission, UnidosUS conducts applied research, policy analysis, robust programming and advocacy, providing a Latino perspective in five key areas—assets/investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health.

Through a portfolio of twelve, youth leadership development programs, UnidosUS promotes equitable access to quality education for Latinos. The UnidosUS, K-16 programs, also known as *Líderes*, fill a programmatic gap by providing evidence-based programs with a tailored and culturally competent approach to student supports, services, and curricula.

The *Líderes* programs focus on four priority areas: Leadership development, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), College & Career-Readiness and Post-Secondary Success. These programmatic areas address pressing needs in our students' academic skill sets and target academic fields and industries with an underrepresentation of Latinos.

In 2016, UnidosUS, with the support of UPS, established *Entre Mujeres*, a Latina-focused initiative to address the pressing needs impacting the lives of Latinas. On average, women in the U.S. are paid 20% less than men—and for Latinas, it's even worse. Though Latinas have outperformed Latinos in academic achievement, they are also still underperforming when compared to other racial and ethnic subgroups. A contributing factor in the surge of teen pregnancies is a lack of self-esteem among Latina youth. UnidosUS recognized that the state of young Latinas should not be compared solely to their Latino counterparts.

The *Entre Mujeres* program is guided by a set of principles that include:

- Providing a safe environment for Latina students to discuss issues and barriers to create positive outcomes in their personal, educational, and professional realms.
- Engaging Latinas in culturally relevant and age-appropriate topics that address their needs.
- Providing experiential learning activities that will complement and reinforce knowledge and skills gained by the *Entre Mujeres* curriculum.
- Developing a Latina Leadership Development Plan that includes and monitors goals in three key areas: journaling and personal development, academic achievement, and leadership growth and civic engagement.

The ultimate mission of *Entre Mujeres* is to empower Latina high schoolers to recognize their personal worth, strengthen their leadership abilities and self-confidence, and help drive them to make change in their communities and beyond. The *Entre Mujeres* program strives to provide participating educators access to positive femininity curricula, opportunities for professional development, and ongoing technical assistance as they implement the *Entre Mujeres* program in their schools and organizations.

Entre Mujeres has served over 300 Latina high school students since its inception. Each year, the *Entre Mujeres* Celebration also brings together instructors and students participating in the program to network amongst each other and discuss their accomplishments. This past year, the *Entre Mujeres* Celebration brought together select students and teachers from across four states to UnidosUS' headquarters in Washington, DC during the Changemakers Summit.

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