

LATINO AMERICAN COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED IN 1972 | SUMMER 2013 NEWSLETTER | WWW.LATINOAC.NEBRASKA.GOV



Mission Statement: The mission of the Latino - American Commission is to serve as a voice in the Nebraska State Government for Latino Americans/ Latinos.

Vision Statement: The vision of the Latino - American Commission is to empower the Latino Community through a pro-active approach to issues that affect their access to educational, political, economical and social opportunities in Nebraska.

Latino Documentaries Airing on NET

The mission of Nebraska's own PBS affiliate and teleproduction company, NET, is to enrich connect communities and celebrate Nebraska with services that educate and enlighten will be airing several documentaries that focus on Latino stories and issues such as education and immigration

NET aired the first major documentary series "Latino Americans" that chronicled the rich and varied history and experiences of Latinos. The series aired from Sept. 17 and concluded on Oct. 1, the series is now available for limited viewing online on www.pbs.org and is available to order on DVD.

NET will continue to air local and national documentaries featuring Latinos with a variety of films available on public television in October and November.

NET1 and NET-HD are part of NET Television. NET Television is a service of NET. For a complete program schedule, visit NET's Web site (netNebraska.org/television).

Additional Schedule Listing for October:

- Monday, Oct. 28, at 9 p.m. – Independent Lens: The Graduates

/ Los Graduados, Pt. 1: Examine the roots of the Latino dropout crisis and the ongoing effort to increase graduation rates in this two-part series, concluding Nov. 4.

- Monday, Oct. 28, at 10 p.m. – VOCES on PBS: Escaramuza: Riding from the Heart: Follow a gutsy team of women rodeo riders vying to represent the U.S. at competitions in Mexico.
- Friday, Nov. 1 at 7:30 p.m. - Dia de los Muertos: Nebraska Stories - While candles, incense, marigolds and sugar skulls are part of Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, the Mexican holiday celebrated around the world is above all a commemoration of life. In the opening segment of "Nebraska Stories," travel to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Sheldon Museum of Art and the Bancroft Gallery in South Omaha to look death in the eye with humor, music, dancing and art. This segment will air again on Friday, November 1, at 10:30 p.m. CT, and again on Nov. 4 at 10 p.m. on NET1.
- Monday, Nov. 4, at 9 p.m. – Independent Lens: The Graduates / Los Graduados, Pt. 2 - We meet three young men who have struggled with challenges such as immigration status, brushes with the

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Dia de los Muertos Celebrations in Nebraska

The traditional holiday Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead in English, has become very popular in the United States in recent years.

Dia de los Muertos is a holiday dating back to pre-Colombian days before the Spanish arrived in Mexico. The holiday is now considered a Catholic holiday and is observed on Nov. 2, with Nov. 1 is observed as Dia de los Inocentes, or Day of the Innocents for children.

Individuals celebrate the lives of the deceased with food, drink, parties, and activities the dead enjoyed in life usually placed on an altar, or ofrenda. Traditional items include marigolds, pan de muerto (bread of the dead) salt, sugar skulls and skeletons especially La Catrina the elegantly dressed female skeleton, images that were made popular by the illustrator Jose Posada.

Many communities and organizations are staging their own Dia de los Muertos celebrations throughout Nebraska. Upcoming events are:

- First Friday - Day of the Dead at Sheldon:** Friday, Nov. 1 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. mariachi performances, food, pan de muerto, face painting, and ofrendas from UNL student organizations Sigma Lambda Beta Fraternity, Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority, Lambda Theta Nu Sorority, and the Mexican American Student Association (MASA). The Sheldon Museum of Art is located at 12th and R St. in Lincoln on the UNL campus.
- Loom Weaves Day of the Dead:** Saturday, Nov. 2 starting at 8 p.m. with live music, ofrendas, pan de muerto, masks and face-painting. House of Loom is located at 1012 S. 10th St. in Omaha. This

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Lazaro Arturo Spindola
NLAC Executive Director

Latino American Commission Commissioners

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Chabella Guzman (Vice-Chair)

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Visit Our Website:
www.latinoac.nebraska.gov

A Message from the Executive Director

Buenos Dias,

This past Spring and early Summer has been very busy for the Commission.

We were involved and watching the legislative session all the way to the end on June 5, 2013 where we testified on many bills and the Racial Profiling Bill we worked on with Senator Mello is now law. We are already getting ready for the 2014 legislative session. If there is a law or issue that you feel needs to be addressed please let us know.

Even though the session is done, that does mean you have to wait until next year to voice your opinion to your senator. If there is a local or national issue you are concerned about, please contact your local senator and share your concerns and let them know what you would like for them to do about this issue. You can find all of the senator's contact information on www.nebraska.gov, including a chart on how to find your district representative.

The Summer may be slow and a time to relax, but not for us. We worked with the College of St. Mary to help plan and organize the 2013 Latina Summer Academy, we joined the Hate Crime Advisory Task Force with the Dept. of Justice; Dr. Roger Breed, former director of the Department of Education received our report on Latino parental involvement, the Minority Justice Committee has held a number of Focus Groups facilitated by the Commission over interpreter availability within the court system. We continue our work with the Governor's Human Trafficking Task Force and many other projects.

The Commission is here for you.

Dr. Arturo Spindola
Nebraska Latino-American Commission Director

Dia de los Muertos Celebrations

event is hosted by Athena Ramos and Alejandro Bustillos.

- **Dia de los Muertos "Stories by Heart":** Saturday, Nov. 2 starting at 5:30 p.m. with traditional music and dancing, including performances by Comunidad Maya Pixan Ixim and Ballet Folklorico Xiotal. Dia de los Muertos inspired artwork will be on display. The event will be held at Metropolitan Community College, Fort Omaha Campus, Building 21, the "Mule Barn," on 32nd & Sorensen Parkway, in Omaha. This event is hosted by the Mexican American Historical Society of the Midlands.
- **Dia de los Muertos Museum Exhibit:** El Museo Latino in Omaha is displaying a Dia de los Muertos exhibit with ofrendas and artwork from Oct. 12 to Nov. 16. Papel Picado workshops will take place on Nov. 2, 9 and 16 from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. If interested, please register in advance. Call 402-731-1137 for more information and registration. El Museo Latino is located at 4701 S. 25th St. in Omaha.
- **Community Ofrenda Celebration:** The public is invited to register for an ofrenda display on Sat., Nov. 2, at Plaza de la Raza (24th and N St.) in Omaha. The public can bring items for their own ofrenda to be publicly displayed. Vendors will be present and are invited to register. Interested individuals must register by Oct. 31 online at www.diadelosmuertosomaha.eventbrite.com.
- **Dia de los Muertos Celebration:** Sunday, Nov. 3 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sheldon Museum of Art. There will be mariachi music, ballet folkloric dancing, a theatrical performance of *Los Vendidos* by Luis Valdez presented by Lincoln High School, food, pan de muerto, ofrendas, face painting, letter writing and masks. The Sheldon Museum of Art is located on 12th and R St. in Lincoln.

If there is a Dia de los Muertos event not mentioned, please email Jasel.Cantu@Nebraska.gov with information.

Full Tuition Scholarships Now Available

The following national full-ride scholarships are currently accepting applications.

Coca-Cola Scholarships

The Coca-Cola Scholars Program Scholarship is an achievement-based scholarship awarded to graduating high school seniors each year. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, and their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities.

The online application will request biographical information and have questions regarding school activities, community activities, academic information and employment information.

Please do not be discouraged by the number of questions and amount of information requested. To stand-out from the millions of high school seniors graduating this year, requires a significant amount of detailed information.

Eligibility:

- Student must be current high school or home-schooled seniors attending school in the United States;
- Student must be U.S. Citizens; U.S. Nationals; U.S. Permanent Residents; Refugees; Asylees; Cuban-Haitian Entrants; or Humanitarian Parolees;
- Anticipating completion of high school diploma at the time of application;
- Planning to pursue a degree at an accredited U.S. post-secondary institution;
- Carrying a minimum 3.00 GPA at the end of their junior year of high school.

Students can apply online at: <http://coca-colascholars.org/>

Application Deadline: October 31, 2013.

There are also two other smaller scholarships offered by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation:

- Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team – Fifty Gold \$1,500, fifty Silver \$1,250, and fifty Bronze \$1,000 scholarships. Current students at two-year community colleges may apply between October 1 and December 2. This scholarship is administered by Phi Theta Kappa, and application details can be found on their website: www.ptk.org.
- Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise – 180 scholarships of \$1,000. Current students at two-year community colleges may apply between February 27 and April 30. This scholarship is administered by Phi Theta Kappa, and application details can be found on their website: www.ptk.org.

Dell Scholarship

Dell Scholars receive \$20,000 each to complete their higher education over the course of six years. In addition, the Dell Scholars Program provides its students with technology, a private scholar networking

community, resources, and mentoring to ensure they have the support they need to achieve their college degrees.

Scholars become part of a support network for each other that is made up of themselves, their schools, families, peers and a dedicated Dell Scholar team at the Michael & Susan Dell foundation.

Eligibility:

- Students are participating in a Michael & Susan Dell Foundation approved college readiness program in grades 11 and 12;
- Graduating from an accredited high school this academic year;
- Earning a minimum of a 2.4 GPA;
- Demonstrated need for financial assistance;
- Eligible to receive federal student aid;
- Planning to enroll full-time in a bachelor's degree program at an accredited higher education institution in the fall directly after your graduation from high school.

The list of approved college readiness programs include:

- AP Strategies
- Aspire
- AVID
- College Forward
- Cristo Rey Network
- Fulfillment Fund
- GEAR UP
- Genesys Works
- Uplift Education
- Upward Bound
- Upward Bound - Math Science

Several of the above programs are in Nebraska, to check if your school has a program, visit: <http://www.dellscholars.org/scholarship/college-readiness-programs/>

Students can apply online at: www.dellscholars.org.

Application opens on Nov. 1, 2013, application deadline is: Jan. 15, 2014.

Gates Millennium Scholarship

This scholarship offered by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation selects 1,000 talented students of color each year to receive a good-through-graduation scholarship to use at any college or university of their choice nationwide.

Students selected as Gates Scholars will receive funds in an amount to be determined by GMS based on financial need. The award will be based on the cost of tuition, fees, books and living expenses for the 2013-2014 academic year, as well as the availability of grants and other scholarships reported on the financial aid award letter.

The student will need two professionals to help them complete the application. An application consists of a: Student Application (Nominee Personal Information Form), Educator's evaluation of the student's

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2013 Latina Summer Academy

Eighty-one Latina high school students from across Nebraska and surrounding states converged on the College of St. Mary in Omaha to participate in the 12th Annual Latina Summer Academy.

The College of St. Mary (CSM) is a private all-girls Catholic university in the heart of Omaha that is dedicated to the education of women. The Latina Summer Academy is a one-week educational symposium offered by CSM to encourage education, leadership and self-confidence in Latina high school students with seminars, field trips, and discussions with local professionals.

“The Latina Summer Academy is an important program for CSM in its commitment to reach out to the local community, specifically to young women from this population,” stated Maria Luisa Gaston, Director of Latino Community Outreach. “Through this experience these young women will see the many careers that are open to them in the future if they work hard in high school.”

The Academy, which took place from Sunday, June 23 to Friday, June 28, hosted a mix of freshmen, sophomores and juniors who wanted to learn about college life and future careers while still in high school.

The 81 students hailed from 20 different high schools in rural and urban areas including schools in Omaha, Papillion, Crete, Lincoln, Holdrege, and Fremont. Twenty-six students traveled from Iowa and Missouri to attend the Academy. The girls represented many nationalities with backgrounds from Chile, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico.

This year’s theme was “Art or Science? Explore The Connections.” CSM

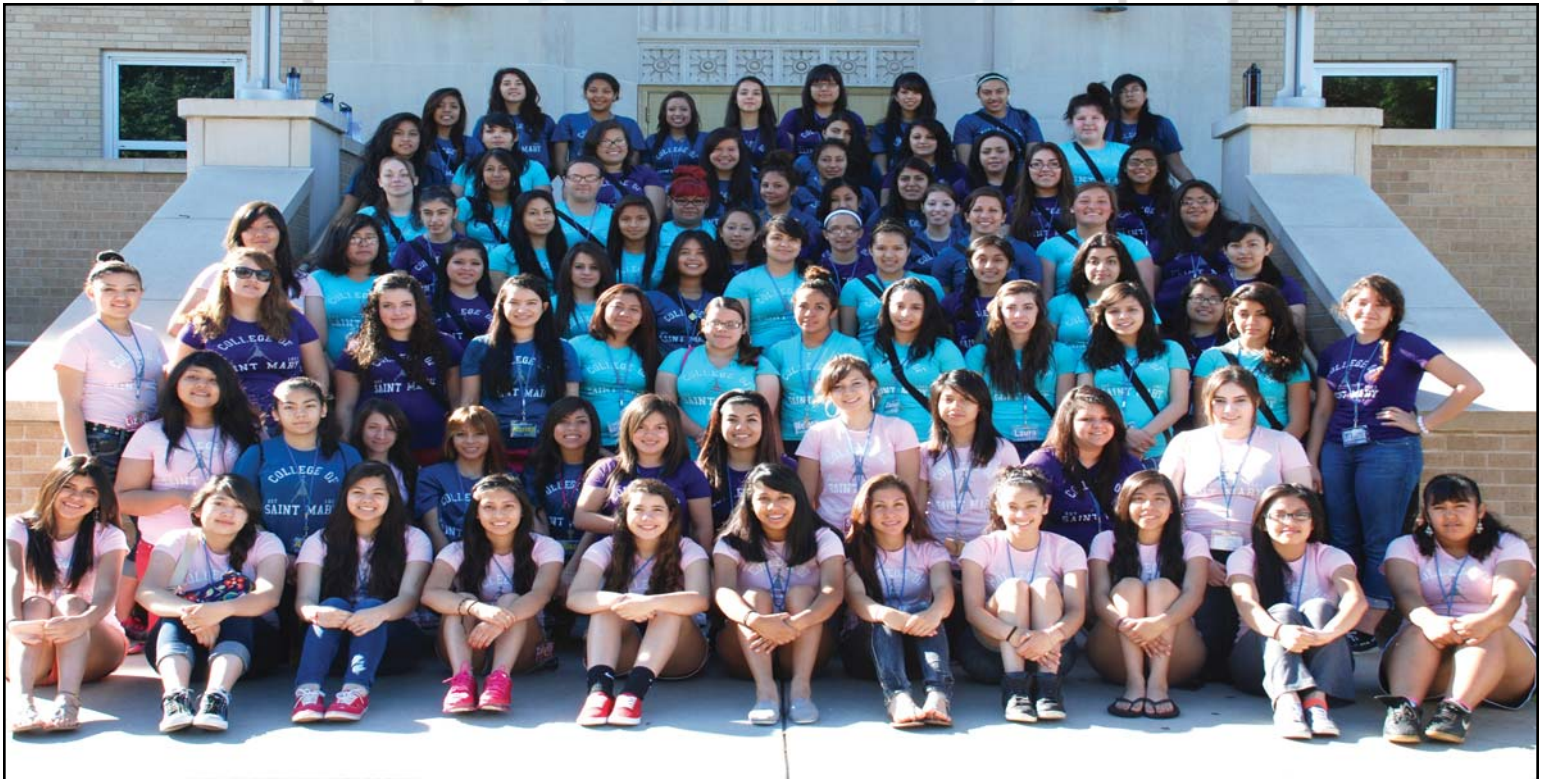
Sisters of Mercy, Academy coordinators and college students served as chaperones and oversaw all activities. The students boarded in the college residence halls and had their meals in the dining hall.

Each day began with classes in science and art; just like a regular college student. Classes were taught by local Latina artists, graphic designers and scientists who shared their own stories to encourage the students they can achieve anything. Each day ended with a topic discussion and questions with their chaperones to promote communication and self-reflection. Wednesday ended with a dinner with various Latina professionals from the Omaha area who shared advice on careers and college. Thursday night featured a showing of the Oscar-winning documentary, “Inocente” and a local documentary on Justice For Our Neighbors.

The Academy concluded with a graduation ceremony followed by a picnic with family and staff on the campus lawn. All of the girls who participate in the Academy became eligible for a special scholarship to the College of St. Mary.

The next Latina Summer Academy will take place in June 2014, students can request applications from their counselors or can contact Maria Gaston, Director of the Latina Summer Academy at 402-399-

The 81 Latina Summer Academy students (Below) and their St. Mary student chaperones pose for a group photo on the steps of the Walsh Hall’s Hilmer Art Gallery. The students were divided into smaller groups by color to allow for a better close-knit community and kinship experience at the Academy.



U.S. Military Academy Information

Two Nebraska Congressional representatives are currently accepting applications for U.S. military academy nominations.

Acceptance into a military academy provides a full four-year college scholarship estimated to be worth over \$350,000 including tuition, room and board, medical and dental care and a monthly salary.

What are the five service academies?

- U.S. Military Academy (Army) - West Point, New York (Est. 1802)
<http://www.usma.edu/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- Naval Academy - Annapolis, Maryland (Est. 1845)
<http://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>
- Coast Guard Academy - London, Connecticut (Est. 1876)
<http://www.cga.edu/>
- Merchant Marine Academy - Kings Point, New York (Est. 1943)
<http://www.usmma.edu/>
- Air Force Academy - Colorado Springs, Colorado (Est. 1954)
<http://www.usafa.af.mil/>

Students can expect to be educated in discipline, morals, ethics and military science in an environment that fosters development of teamwork, leadership and character.

The service academies provide a first-rate college education in conjunction with military training in preparation to be a commissioned officer in the U.S. military. Upon entry to the academy, except for the Merchant Marine, you will be on active duty in the military.

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academic record (Nominator Form) and an Evaluation of the student's community service and leadership activities (Recommender Form).

Students can usually refer the forms to an educator who agrees to serve as either Nominator or Recommender.

Eligibility:

- Student has to be African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Pacific Islander American or Hispanic;
- Are a citizen, national or legal permanent resident of the United States;
- Have attained a cumulative high school GPA of 3.3 on an unweighted 4.0 scale or have earned a GED;
- Will enroll for the first time at a U.S. located, accredited college or university (with the exception of students concurrently pursuing a high school diploma) in the fall of 2014 as a full-time, degree-seeking, first-year student. First-time college enrollees can also be GED recipients;
- Have demonstrated leadership abilities through participation in community service, extracurricular or other activities;
- Meet the Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria;
- Have completed and submitted all three required forms by the deadline.

All forms can be completed online at: www.gmsp.org

Application Deadline: January 15, 2014.

Upon completion, you will serve in the military as an officer in the branch of your academy. If you are a Merchant Marine graduate, you will have several options of service in the government and military.

Upon graduation from the service academy, you will then have a service contract with the government or military. After completion of your service requirement, you will most likely have earned veteran status which then entitles you to a full range of state and federal benefits which may include the VA homeloan, VA compensation and pension, VA healthcare and education benefits.

How do I apply?

You should apply directly to the service academies through their websites and seek a "nomination" from your U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator. You may also be nominated to more than one academy. Nominations for the service academies are required for all but the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA). Applications to the USCGA are made directly to the academy.

Basic eligibility include:

- Age: Must be at least 17 years old, but not yet 23 years of age on July 1 of the year you will enter the academy (25th birthday for the Merchant Marine Academy).
- Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Marital Status: Must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no

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- law, and bullying. With a combination of community and family support, each student is able to find a program that helps him to remain in school, further his education, and get involved in his community.

"Coffee and Conversations" is an NET community engagement series that invites the public to attend free viewings at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Center on 313 N. 13th St. in Lincoln. After the films, the public is invited to enjoy food and coffee and discuss the film with a panel of local professionals familiar with the issues shown in the film.

Upcoming Coffee and Conversations films include:

- "The State of Arizona," Nov. 17 at 1 p.m. - The divisive battle over illegal immigration in Arizona that came to a head with Senate Bill 1070 frames this tense documentary that tracks multiple perspectives -- activists, politicians, Latino immigrants, controversial Sheriff Joe Arpaio, ranchers and others -- as America eyes the results. Panelists include DREAMers and immigration attorney Shirley James Mora.
- "Las Marthas," Jan. 19 at 1 p.m. - Dating from the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, the annual débutante ball in Laredo, Texas, is unlike any other. "Las Marthas" follows two Mexican-American girls carrying this gilded tradition on their young shoulders during a time of economic uncertainty and political tension over immigration. Panelists and NET airdates to be announced.

Pieces of Nebraskan Hispanic History

Students In The News: Janet Sanchez

Miss Sanchez Goes To Washington

By: Chabella Guzman

Opportunity rarely knocks, but having friends and a passion to make a difference often creates its own opportunity, as Janet Sanchez will tell you.

Sanchez, a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Scottsbluff native, has been awarded an internship in Washington, D.C., by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute.

"I have a friend and we are both in many of the same classes. He did the internship recently. He suggested I do it as well, as I'm going for my law degree," she said.

Sanchez had help from a couple of friends in graduate school on writing her essay. She said the questions had to do with Latinos, change and coalitions.

"I'm very interested in immigration law and immigration reform," she said. "I also drew from my own experiences growing up in a small town and some of the issues I've dealt with."

Sanchez found out earlier this year she had been accepted to the intern program.

Then came the waiting, where she held her breath to see which senator would offer her an internship.

"I hoped I would get a senator with my same ideals," she said. "Either way, I was excited, but it was scary. I think getting someone with similar ideas is just more comfortable."

Sanchez will intern for Democratic Colorado Sen. Mark Udall, along with several other students from the CHCI program. She is, as far as she knows, the only Nebraskan interning this fall with the program.

The internship will offer Sanchez a look into the making of policy and law, something she is very interested in as a future law student.

"I'm very passionate about immigration law, but like to stay well-informed in politics," she said.

Sanchez said her future plans include law school with a degree in business law. She will graduate in May with a degree in business and a minor in political science.

As an intern, Sanchez will do basic office duties. She said she will answer calls, and mail, and give tours to constituents from Colorado.

"I'll get to sit in on committee sessions the senator is dealing with and if I have free time, I can sit in on other sessions," she said.

Sanchez would like to be in Washington and see the immigration bill



Janet Sanchez

make it out of the House.

"My friend was an intern when the Senate passed the bill," she said. "It would be amazing if I was there and they signed something. It would definitely be a memory for the books."

Sanchez will be in Washington by the end of August and is looking forward to meeting new people and learning new things.

She admits one of the reasons for applying for the internship is to get to know other like-minded individuals.

"It can be hard to find people that share the same views as you in western, or even eastern, Nebraska," she said. "Being exposed to the political system in Washington will be a way different world."

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NOTE: The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute is one of the leading Hispanic non-profit and non-partisan 501(c) (3) organizations in the country located in Washington, D.C. CHCI was established in 1978 to help increase opportunities for Hispanics to participate in and contribute to the American policy making process. This vision was founded on three cornerstones for success: educate, empower, and connect.

Upcoming Events

- **Event: October 4**
Lincoln - Hispanic Heritage Month State Commemoration
- **Event: October 28**
Kearney - Latino Summit
- **Application: November 1**
Dell Scholarship Now Open
- **Event: November 3**
Lincoln - Dia de los Muertos at Sheldon
- **Holiday: November 11**
Veteran's Day
- **Event: November 14-15**
Heartland Latino Leadership Conference
- **Meeting: November 16**
Omaha - NLAC Quarterly Meeting

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www.facebook.com/NLACCommission

www.pinterest.com/nlaccommission



NLAC at NCLR



NLAC Commissioners Ramon Otero and Yolanda Nuncio represented the Commission at the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Annual Conference, which was held in New Orleans, LA from July 20-23, 2013.

First Lady Michelle Obama served as Keynote Speaker with many Latino National Leaders such as Rita Moreno and Rep. Luis Gutierrez as special guest speakers. The Conference offered more than 40 workshops and three town halls tackling a wide range of issues including health care, education, immigration, personal finance and workforce development, among many others. The Commissioners attended many sessions, made new contacts and brought back information and ideas beneficial to Latino Nebraskans.

(Above) From left to right: NLAC Commissioner Ramon Otero, Rep. Luis Gutierrez, and Commission Chair Yolanda Nuncio. (Left) Commissioner Otero was able to get close enough to First Lady Michelle Obama to take this photo.

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legal obligation to support children or other dependents.

What information is included in my application for nomination?

Your applications to the academies and for nomination will contain some personal information including a personal letter or essay, your transcripts including your ACT/SAT scores and any information that will assist the academies in granting an appointment.

Who are my Congressional Representatives?

Currently, only two representatives are still accepting applications, which information can be found on their websites:

- Lee Terry - Congressman, Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District, application deadline is: Oct. 31, 2013. Further information found at: <http://leeterry.house.gov/>
- Adrian Smith - Congressman, Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District. Further information found at: <https://adriansmith.house.gov/>

Students are also recommended to contact their representatives offices for questions.