

# UA Receives Inaugural 'Seal of Excelencia' in Recognition of Service to Latino Students

University Communications  
June 2019

The University of Arizona has been awarded a "Seal of Excelencia" by a national organization focused on accelerating Latino student success.

The honor was announced Thursday at an event in Washington, D.C. Representing the University were UA President **Robert C. Robbins**; **Marla A. Franco**, assistant vice provost for Hispanic-Serving Institution initiatives; **Andrea Romero**, vice provost for faculty affairs; **Julia Smith**, assistant vice president for federal relations; and **John Mester**, associate vice president for research.

"We've come a long way, yet there's no such thing as reaching a finish line when it comes to this work," Franco said. "It's important that we tend to some of the institutional work to ensure the UA is a place that attracts, supports and promotes diverse learners, scholars and partners."

The [Seal of Excelencia](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, which was awarded to nine institutions, is designed to create demand in the higher education market for improving Latino student success by leveraging the momentum of a growing Latino population as they evaluate and choose to attend colleges and universities that show evidence of truly serving Latino students, according to Excelencia in Education, the organization that awards the seal. This is the first year that the Seal of Excelencia has been given.

To be eligible for the seal, institutions had to demonstrate that they had reached benchmarks in the core areas that [Excelencia in Education](#) <sup>[2]</sup> has determined are more likely to lead to Latino student success. Specifically, the institutions were evaluated on:

- Alignment of data and practice in serving Latino students.
- Strategies and practices that have been institutionalized in serving Latino students.
- Evidence of effectiveness and intentionality in institutional practices in serving Latino students.

The UA has been identifying and collecting relevant data on Latino students for some time. In April 2018, the University was designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education in recognition of its success in enrolling Hispanic students and in providing educational opportunities to them.

"The Seal of Excelencia helps further the conversation about what institutional commitment might look like when Latinx students and other students with diverse backgrounds are well served and supported by the colleges and universities they attend," Franco said.

Earlier this year, Robbins became a member of Presidents for Latino Student Success – a group coordinated by Excelencia in Education – and expressed the UA's commitment for becoming a leading member of Excelencia in Education.

"Serving Latinx and Hispanic students is central to our mission as Arizona's land-grant university and status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution," Robbins said. "We are committed not only to enrolling Latinx and Hispanic students, but to serving them and providing them a welcoming environment conducive to learning where they can attain a degree that prepares them for lives of purpose and passion after they graduate."

---

**Source URL:** <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/ua-receives-inaugural-seal-excelencia-recognition-service-latino-students>

## Links

[1] <https://www.edexcelencia.org/seal-excelencia> [2] <https://www.edexcelencia.org/>