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## LATINX HERITAGE MONTH

September 17, 2020

To: The John Jay College Community  
Re: Celebrating Latinx Heritage Month

Latinx Heritage Month is officially underway. As a proud Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) we're excited to celebrate the many ways in which Latinx people have positively impacted our nation, our city, and our communities. Throughout this month—and throughout the year—we hope to encourage pride in *all* Latinx identities and cultures; continue to educate people on Latinx history; and uplift Latinx voices, stories, and experiences.

At John Jay, we know that diversity is our strength, and a vital aspect of that diversity comes from our Latinx students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. Our Latinx faculty and staff encourage our students to embrace their heritage, while also giving them the academic tools to challenge falsehoods about their identity. By using culturally responsive curriculum and programming, our faculty and staff help Latinx students reinscribe themselves into narratives that they've historically been excluded from. Currently, our undergraduate student body is 46 percent Latinx, and our freshman class is 50 percent Latinx. John Jay awards the most bachelor's degrees to Hispanics in New York State. And, almost one-third of our students were born in another country.

It doesn't matter if your family has roots in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, or Venezuela, every distinct and dynamic Latinx culture provides a vital contribution to our community's unique and powerful story, as beautifully depicted in our most recent video "[Latinx at John Jay College: Yo Soy John Jay.](#)"

I'm happy to announce that John Jay College has joined [Excelencia in Education](#) as an affiliate school. By joining Excelencia, a Latinx-led organization focused on accelerating Latinx student success, we will have the opportunity to partner with other Hispanic-Serving Institutions to learn together and promote evidence-based practices that support Latinx student success and help close the equity gap in degree attainment.

Our Latinx students continually make us proud with their academic excellence and achievements, their unfailing commitment to public service, and their passion for supporting their fellow students. Whether it's La Voz and LASO students hosting a human rights event; ¡Adelante! students interviewing public officials on a panel; or a Ronald H. Brown student interning with a prominent New York City judge; John Jay's Latinx students are embracing their heritage, applying what they're learning, and empowering future generations.

Kicking off the month's events, the [Urban Male Initiative](#) will be hosting a distance-learning focused event on Thursday, September 24, called "[Studying en la sala: Building Boundaries for a Successful Semester.](#)" And, on October 8, we'll be holding a virtual panel discussion with alumni that dives into [Colorism and Allyship in the Latinx Community](#). We hope that you'll attend these events—and more to come—throughout our celebration of Latinx Heritage Month.

As our Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, CUNY's first Latinx Chancellor, recently said, "National Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity to pay tribute to the customs, traditions, histories, and cultures that have greatly enriched the communities of our University." By honoring and celebrating Latinx experiences and achievements, we're truly uplifting everyone in our community. Please continue to support each other, stay connected, and take pride in our rich diversity.

Warmly,

Karol V. Mason  
President