

HACU 40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

40 Years of Championing Higher Education Success: One Graduate at a Time

October 31 - November 2, 2026

Gaylord Pacific Resort & Convention Center • Chula Vista, California



Sunday, November 1, 2026

9:00 - 10:15 a.m.

Concurrent Workshops

Advancing HSI Partnerships Through the AFRL Southwest PIA Model

This session explores how New Mexico Tech leveraged the AFRL Southwest Partnership Intermediary Agreement to strengthen HSI capacity, expand regional collaboration, and build inclusive STEM workforce pathways. Participants will learn how the model positions an HSI as a connector between federal research, Minority-Serving Institutions, industry partners, and regional innovation ecosystems.

Assess and Grow Your Campus Research Enterprise - the VOLARÉ Toolkit

HACU's Visioning, Organizing, Leading, and Advancing the Research Enterprise (VOLARÉ) Institute supports HSIs in strengthening and expanding their research capacity and administration. The cohort-based program delivers accessible assessment tools and expert mentorship to promote systematic and sustainable research capacity-building. Presenters will introduce the research assessment and action plan toolkit, and past VOLARÉ cohort members will describe how they used and adapted the toolkit to envision the next frontier of research capacity at their institutions.

Regional K-16 Collaboratives: Building Seamless Pathways from Education to Workforce

Regional K-16 collaboratives are emerging as powerful models for aligning K-12, higher education, industry, and community partners to improve student outcomes. This session highlights the Inland Empire Regional K-16 Education Collaborative, a cross-sector partnership working to streamline pathways from high school to college and career. Participants will learn practical strategies for aligning institutions, expanding student access, and creating regional systems that champion student success, one graduate at a time.

Completion by Design: Transforming Structures for Latino Student Success

Hispanic-Serving Institutions enroll a growing share of Latino students, yet persistent graduation gaps remain. Complete College America will share data from across our 53-member Alliance on where Latino completion rates are rising, examine the four Pillars of Transformation driving institutional change, and explore how AI-powered tools are amplifying student success at scale. Attendees will leave with a replicable, bipartisan-tested framework for moving from enrollment to attainment.

Belonging Without Borders: Institutional Models Supporting Undocumented Students at HSIs

Undocumented and DACA students continue to face barriers related to immigration enforcement concerns, access to information, and campus belonging. California State University, Stanislaus developed a comprehensive institutional model including multilingual Know Your Rights resources, immigration guidance protocols, and an UndocuAlly training program. This interactive workshop will share replicable strategies that Hispanic-Serving Institutions can implement to strengthen institutional readiness and promote student success.

Mujeres de Maíz: Cultivating Latina Leadership and Breaking the Adobe Ceiling in Higher Education

This panel workshop explores the underrepresentation of Latina leaders in higher education through research and lived experience. Participants will examine how identity, positionality, and cultural capital shape leadership pathways and learn strategies for navigating systemic barriers. Grounded in transformational leadership frameworks, the session highlights approaches for empowering Latina leaders and advancing more inclusive leadership ecosystems in higher education.