



HACU

HISPANIC
ASSOCIATION
OF COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES



PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH LEADERSHIP PROFILE

The **Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' (HACU)** Governing Board invites nominations and applications for the position of President and CEO. HACU's next President and CEO must be a visionary leader and passionate advocate for Hispanic success in higher education. The President and CEO will lead the organization into its next chapter, building on the strong foundation and accomplishments achieved during Dr. Antonio Flores' remarkable 30-year tenure, while bringing fresh perspectives, new ideas, and a vision for the future. The HACU Governing Board now seeks to identify and recruit an energetic and mission-driven leader to define HACU's future, as it responds to the shifting political landscape and challenges facing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and the students they serve.

MISSION

HACU's mission is to champion Hispanic success in higher education. HACU fulfills its mission by promoting the development of member colleges and universities; improving access to and the quality of post-secondary educational opportunities for Hispanic students; and meeting the needs of business, industry, and government through the development and sharing of resources, information, and expertise.

THE ASSOCIATION

HACU was established in 1986 with a founding membership of eighteen institutions and has rapidly grown in number and national impact. Today, HACU employs 40+ staff members, has an annual budget of more than \$20 million, and represents more than 400 colleges and universities committed to supporting and promoting the success of Hispanics in higher education across the United States, Puerto Rico, Latin America, Spain, and U.S. school districts. Based in San Antonio, Texas, with regional offices in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, California, HACU is the only national education association that represents HSIs. While Hispanic-Serving Institutions comprise just 22% of all colleges and universities serving undergraduate students, their impact is profound. HSIs educate more than 6 million undergraduate and graduate students, representing 31% of the nation's total postsecondary enrollment, and serve as critical engines of opportunity, access, and upward mobility.

Through its efforts in advocacy, leadership development, strategic partnerships, and student-focused programs, HACU works to expand educational opportunity, strengthen member colleges and universities, and support student success. Recognizing that the nation's economic and social success rests on the level of skills and knowledge attained by students and that education is indisputably the key, HACU programs and services are available to all students, faculty, and staff at HACU-member institutions—home to more than two-thirds (68.2%) of all Hispanic college students, 38% of whom are Pell recipients. Thousands of students benefit from the many programs HACU provides, as do administrators, faculty, and staff who support these students in their educational journey at HACU-member institutions. Truly, HACU is a champion of student success in higher education and demonstrates its commitment through its advocacy endeavors and programmatic offerings.



ADVOCACY

HACU has demonstrated a strong commitment to advocacy and government relations from its earliest days, with a major achievement in 1992, when HACU spearheaded a successful effort to secure federal legislative recognition for HSIs. This marked a turning point in expanding access, visibility, and resources for these institutions and the students they educate and serve. Soon after, HACU and its allies were instrumental in convincing Congress to appropriate money specifically for HSIs. For the first time ever, HSIs were granted \$12 million in 1995 from federal resources. Since then, funding has increased significantly because of HACU's persistent advocacy. In FY2025, for example, \$228.8 million was appropriated for the HSI undergraduate program under Title V, Part A of the Higher Education Act.

Firmly nonpartisan, HACU works collaboratively with policymakers and stakeholders across the political spectrum to advance its mission. As the only national association dedicated to representing HSIs, HACU's leadership is defined not by ideology, but by a steadfast commitment to student success, institutional resilience, and the long-term economic prosperity of the nation. Through its advocacy efforts focused on expanding access to high-quality education, HACU supports HSIs that transform individual lives and strengthen communities, while preparing a diverse and highly skilled workforce equipped to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving global economy. The HSI designation enables eligible institutions to compete for federal funding intended to strengthen academic programs, expand research capacity, and enhance student support services, benefiting the entire campus community.



STUDENT PROGRAMS

HACU provides the following programs to enhance the student experience and develop their leadership skills:

Scholarships, Internships, and Career Opportunities

- The **HACU Scholarship Program** connects students with scholarships funded by HACU's corporate, federal, or nonprofit partners.
- The **Private & Corporate Sector Internships** program connects leading U.S. corporations with talented students from HACU-member institutions to participate in meaningful internship opportunities.
- The **Public Sector Internships** program offers one of the best paid internship programs in the country, providing invaluable professional experience interning within a federal agency.
- The **Voces Nuevas (New Voices)** program is a competitive program for students from HACU-member institutions across the U.S. and Puerto Rico to receive leadership, advocacy, and career development training while serving as HACU ambassadors promoting the Association's programs.
- The **¡Lánzate!/Take Off! Higher Education Travel Award** program strives to enhance educational access and persistence by awarding roundtrip flights to undergraduate and graduate students across the country for whom long-distance travel is a major barrier in pursuing higher education.

Student Career Readiness Experiences

- The **Building Hispanic Talent Initiative** between HACU and Dominion Energy, launched in 2022, is designed to develop a highly skilled workforce by increasing the number of undergraduate students interested in pursuing careers in the energy industry.
- The **Capital One Launchpad: Legacy & Leadership** program offers selected students enrolled at a HACU-member institution an opportunity to embark on an extensive and immersive personal, professional, and technical development journey under the leadership of Capital One associates.
- HACU's **Emerging Leaders' Summits** combine regional in-person and virtual sessions for students from HACU-member institutions to develop their leadership potential.
- HACU's **¡Adelante! Leadership Institute** is a three-day career leadership, development, and networking symposium where students learn about opportunities and skills needed to be successful in launching and developing their careers.
- HACU's **Capitol Forum** provides first-hand advocacy experience by allowing students to be part of their state delegations and participate in meetings with Members of Congress on Capitol Hill.
- HACU's **Career Readiness Program** prepares students for success in internships and the workplace, helping students to build the skills employers value most and guide them in communicating those skills with confidence.



PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

HACU offers numerous programs aimed at developing the leadership skills of university professionals from two- and four-year colleges and universities who serve Hispanic students. These programs include:

Leadership Programs

- HACU's **Leadership Academy Fellow Program / La Academia de Liderazgo** program prepares the next generation of culturally diverse higher education leaders for executive and senior level positions at HSIs, Emerging HSIs, and other colleges and universities.
- The **Enlace Mid-Level Leadership** is a six-month developmental experience for college and university professionals at the mid-level of their higher education organizations, including academic department chairpersons, education program directors, student support directors and coordinators, team leaders, etc.
- The **Visioning, Organizing, Leading, and Advancing the Research Enterprise (VOLARÉ) Institute** is a yearlong initiative providing research capacity-building workshops and strategic support to help two- and four-year institutions of higher education strengthen and expand their research enterprise.



POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the HACU Governing Board, the President and CEO of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the Association and serves as its principal spokesperson. As the chief executive officer, the President and CEO oversees strategic planning, policy development and advocacy, fundraising, programs and services, and coordinates the governance of the Association. In close collaboration with the Executive Committee, the incumbent assists the Board in fulfilling its governance and fiduciary duties through its designated Standing Committees. The Executive Committee of the Governing Board evaluates the work of the President and CEO as appropriate.

The President and CEO directly supervises the Executive Vice President for Programs and Operations, the Executive Vice President for Policy and Government Relations, and the Chief of Staff and Administrative Secretary to the Governing Board. Moreover, the President and CEO ensures that HACU's mission, vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives are realized. The President and CEO will carry out the following responsibilities:

- Lead senior staff in assisting the Governing Board and its Executive Committee to conduct their governance and fiduciary duties consistent with related public laws and internal control mechanisms.
- In consultation with the Governing Board, develop a five-year strategic plan for HACU and update it between cycles as appropriate.
- Guide and direct immediate reports in the management of HACU's finances, public policy development and advocacy, programmatic initiatives, and operational needs of the organization.
- Represent HACU in external organizations and coalitions of like-minded associations and groups, including but not limited to the Washington Higher Education Secretariat and ad hoc alliances.
- Develop and nurture strong relations with elected officials, particularly with those overseeing policy, legislation, and funding for higher education to advance HACU's mission and priorities.
- Establish and maintain working relationships with government agencies and senior officials to promote related HACU programmatic and policy initiatives.
- Build and strengthen partnerships and alliances with private-sector organizations, including corporations and philanthropic entities, to enhance HACU's programs and fundraising outcomes with such organizations.
- Market and promote HACU as a membership, higher education association to maintain and expand a solid base of institutional members from across the nation and beyond, particularly with those enrolling and serving a majority of low-income and first-generation college students.
- Authorize and approve HACU contracts for appropriate execution under procedures and policies that safeguard related resources and the proper expenditure of funds.
- Spearhead public relations and communications to promote HACU policies and programs through publications, social media, and other media for maximum public impact.
- Represent HACU at international forums and events abroad to promote the Association's cross-national education priorities



CRITICAL ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Building upon HACU's mission to champion Hispanic success in higher education, the next President and CEO will provide crucial leadership in a number of significant areas including, but not limited to:

- **Preparing for HACU's Next Strategic Plan** – HACU's next President and CEO will have an opportunity to work with the Governing Board and other key stakeholders in developing a bold, new and compelling vision for the future of the Association. With HACU's current Strategic Plan coming to a close in 2027 and the current challenges in higher education at play, the next President and CEO must work collaboratively with HACU's many stakeholders to learn about them and the communities they serve before identifying short-term programmatic goals that will serve as a foundation for the Association's next Strategic Plan. While focused on the current moment, these foundational ideas will serve as the catalyzing agent for a vision for the future that excites and inspires HACU and its current and future member institutions as they begin a shared journey into the future.
- **Developing a Long-Term Financial Plan for the Future** – The next President and CEO must be prepared to play a critical role in the development of a long-term financial plan that identifies new revenue streams, maximizes existing resources and investments, and ensures HACU's future success and support of HSIs across the nation. To achieve this end, the President and CEO must be prepared to work in close collaboration with HACU's senior leadership and key stakeholders to chart a course that aligns financial resources with HACU's aspirations and its organizational mission and traditions.
- **Adapting to a Shifting Higher Education Landscape** – Higher education trends across the country have made it clear that HACU and the member institutions it serves must be agile and responsive to the shifting national higher education landscape. Bearing this in mind, HACU's next President and CEO will lead the Association's efforts to manage an appropriate mix of advocacy, fundraising, and membership offerings that remain true to HACU's commitment to student success.
- **Amplifying HACU's Impact** – The President and CEO will be in the unique and critical role of leading the only organization in the nation dedicated to representing HSIs. From this vantage point, HACU's President and CEO will be in a position to extol the contributions of HSIs to the nation's educational and economic landscapes. To further amplify HACU's impact, the new President and CEO will forge and leverage relationships and collaborative efforts with organizations and institutions within and outside of higher education that serve Hispanic populations. The President and CEO will serve as a highly engaged advocate for HACU's ability to impact policy at a national level and as a passionate and articulate steward of the national conversation regarding issues important to HSIs and the students they serve.



- **Identifying and Developing New Revenue Streams** – HACU’s next President and CEO will play a pivotal and high-profile role in securing resources that will support the Association’s mission and vision for the future. The President and CEO must have the talent necessary to develop new and strengthen existing revenue streams (e.g., advocating for resources, private fundraising, solicitation of grants and contracts, strengthening HACU alumni relationships, etc.). It is clear that to adapt, remain competitive, and ascend in the ever-changing higher education landscape, HACU’s next President and CEO will need to be an energetic, enthusiastic, and strategic advocate and fundraiser. The President and CEO will have the opportunity to engage and excite others about HACU’s mission, vision, and trajectory and will stimulate enthusiasm among stakeholders in the collective effort to achieve new heights of Hispanic success in higher education.
- **Leveraging HACU’s Multi-Location National Footprint** – HACU’s next President and CEO will lead an organization headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, with regional offices in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, California. The President and CEO will be expected to maintain a high level of visibility and engagement with critical decision makers in Washington D.C. To further these efforts, the President and CEO must work closely with staff at each location to explore strategies to develop and implement a cohesive, well-integrated multi-site work environment that leverages the unique culture, attributes, and strengths of HACU on behalf of HSIs across the nation. In doing so, the President and CEO will be able to capitalize on the collective intellectual capital, resources, and impact potential of each location in a manner that best serves HACU’s myriad stakeholders.



KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES

HACU seeks a President and CEO with exceptional leadership skills coupled with superb oral and written communication abilities that address and speak directly to the shifting context of Hispanic success in higher education in the 21st century. The next President and CEO will possess a record of success driving a dynamic organization that embraces excellence, community engagement, collaboration, and passionate advocacy on behalf of its stakeholders and the populations they serve. In particular, the most competitive candidates will possess:

- Doctoral degree and/or equivalent, in an appropriate field is preferred (i.e., higher education, federal and state policy, nonprofit management, and leadership theory and development).
- Excellent communication skills and sufficient proficiency in Spanish to conduct interviews across all forms of media, including TV, print, and radio is preferred but not required.
- Proven experience as a CEO within an organization or senior management experience and working knowledge of nonprofit organization management.
- Experience leading organizations that interface with government agencies, private sector companies, and private foundations in grant procurement and contract negotiations strongly preferred.
- Working knowledge of public and private higher education, as well as administrative or instructional experience in postsecondary education is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated diverse leadership capabilities, including the ability to collaborate with peers, coach and develop staff, and foster cooperative work methods that support HACU's mission, culture, and values.
- Executive-level experience in conflict resolution, supported by strong decision-making skills and a solid understanding of federal and state employment laws.
- Ability to engage and communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders, community partners, and individuals from diverse backgrounds, with exceptional interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills.
- Strong presentation skills, with the ability to clearly communicate complex information to senior leadership, federal agencies, academic and administrative groups, public audiences, business partners, community stakeholders, and governing boards. General media, and increasing social media familiarity and experience, are skills worthy of emphasis.
- Strong understanding of nonprofit financial management, analytical skills, including a proven record of complex budgeting, fundraising, and financial reporting.
- Strong organizational and strategic planning skills, with the ability to manage multiple complex projects simultaneously, address challenges with resourcefulness, and develop alternative approaches and solutions.
- Proven capacity to remain composed under pressure, approach challenges creatively, and guide teams toward effective solutions.



ADDITIONAL QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES

In addition, candidates for the position must also demonstrate many of the following qualities and attributes:

- An understanding, a sincere appreciation, and a passion for HACU's unique history, traditions, and position within the higher education landscape and its mission.
- A commitment to making a difference in providing quality education for students and aggressively addressing issues related to student access and Hispanic success in higher education.
- A proven leader and visionary capable of serving as a national spokesperson and influential advocate on behalf of HACU's member institutions and the communities they serve.
- An authentic, collaborative, and inspirational leadership style that values teamwork and staff and stakeholders.
- An active management style coupled with the desire and administrative fortitude to engage key stakeholders in honest and potentially difficult discussions to develop positive solutions to critical issues.
- A commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards; personal and professional integrity above reproach.
- The ability to provide guidance and support for existing areas of achieved excellence as well as emerging opportunities and initiatives.
- Superior diplomatic and interpersonal skills, including an ability to listen, solve problems, handle conflict and ambiguity, and make and explain difficult decisions when and where necessary.
- The ability to inspire a broad range of constituents in the development of a compelling vision for a complex organization in a shifting social landscape, coupled with the ability to inspire the leadership team in implementing a strategic plan to achieve that vision.
- The ability to envision, articulate, and implement strategic goals; establish assessment mechanisms, and re-align resources as necessary.
- Demonstrated experience building and mentoring strong leadership teams.
- Successful experience establishing clear strategic and tactical goals and meaningful metrics of progress.
- A proven track record of effectively delegating to others and holding them accountable.
- The ability to be a collegial, effective, and supportive developer of talent that promotes and supports innovation across the Association.
- The ability to capitalize on HACU's various strengths, resources, and relationships to determine creative strategies for increasing the Association's profile and impact in higher education nationally.



APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately and continue until the conclusion of the search process. Applicants must submit a detailed letter of interest that addresses the priorities and responsibilities outlined in this profile and a current resume or curriculum vitae. Nomination letters should include the name and contact information of the nominee. All applications and nominations will be handled with the strictest confidence. Inquiries and nominations can be submitted to the search consultants listed below.

Application materials in MS Word or PDF format should be submitted to:

Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner

Will Gates, Founding Partner

Emy Cruz, Partner

Sal Venegas Jr., Partner

Email: apsearch@spaexec.com

Refer to code **"HACU-President"** in the subject line

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