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Media Contact: Marissa Plascencia
(562) 376-0655 | marissa.plascencia@ogilvy.com

The Future is Latina: HOPE Releases New Study Pointing to the Undeniable Impact Latinas Have on California and the Nation's Economy

Report also states Latina-owned businesses and buying power continue upward climb

- Latina-owned businesses in California increased by 111% in 2016 from 2007
 - Latinos in the U.S. held \$1.4 trillion in purchasing power in 2016, up 167% since 2000
 - 74% of Latinas who graduated high school in 2012-2014 enrolled in college, more than non-Hispanic white and African American students
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LOS ANGELES, CA – March 10, 2017 – Today, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE) released the second phase of the [Economic Status of Latinas Report - A Snapshot of the Nation, California and the HOPE Sample](#), the second in a series of Latina case studies that examines the increasingly important role and impact Latina women have on California and the U.S. and how the economic well-being of Latinas is inextricably tied to the economic well-being of the country and state as a whole.

Despite a significant increase in the Latina population in California over the past years and the rise in levels of educational attainment that has escalated buying power and higher income, Latinas continue to face challenges that HOPE through this research is looking to shed a light on for policymakers.

The report examines both demographic and economic trends of Latinas and is meant to ignite a dialogue with policymakers and stakeholders on the corporate and public policies that can be implemented to foster the economic health of Latinas to benefit all communities, the state and the nation.

“Our first report on the economic status of Latinas sought to understand the new economic realities of Latinas in the wake of the Great Recession” said Helen Torres, executive director of HOPE. “As the U.S. has rebounded from the Recession, HOPE wanted to highlight how Latinas are playing an increasingly important role in our economy’s long-term health.”

The Economic Status of Latinas Report highlights the population growth trends of Latinas, their strong interest in entrepreneurial ventures, and escalating buying power and rising levels of educational attainment. These demographic and economic trends attest to Latinas’ increasing impact on business, education, political and government sectors.



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Key research findings include:

- **A growing population:** There are 27.9 million Latinas in the U.S. and 7.4 million Latinas in California. By 2060 over 1 in every 4 women in the U.S. will be Latina. In California, 1 in 5 people are Latina.
- **A young population:** Latinas are a young demographic with the average age of Latinas in California 17.8 years younger than white women. One in 4 Latinas in both the nation and California are millennials.
- **Large proportion of K-12 students:** 1 in every 4 children in U.S. public K-12 schools was a Latino in 2016. In California, 1 in every 2 children in any (public and private) K-12 schools was a Latino in 2015.
- **Increasing purchasing power:** Hispanics in the U.S. held \$1.4 trillion in purchasing power in 2016, up 167% since 2000, and is projected to reach \$1.8 trillion by 2021. In California, the Hispanic purchasing power of \$359 billion was 19.5% of the state total in 2016.
- **Growing wage gap:** The wage gap between Latinas and white, non-Hispanic men in California grew by nearly 5% between 2011 and 2015. Latinas earned less than 43 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men, lower than the 45 cents they earned in 2011. Latinas in the San Jose and Los Angeles metropolitan regions fared even worse, earning only 35.5 and 37.5 cents, respectively, for every dollar earned by a white man.
- **More small business growth:** Latina-owned businesses in California posted impressive growth with 433,300 firms in 2016, a 111% increase from 2007.

Although many disparities can still be found between Latinas and other demographic groups, particularly white women and men, this report underscores the progress being made to bridge those gaps. “The greatest opportunity for California, and indeed the nation, to prosper now and in the future is through inclusion, and Latinas are playing a major role in ensuring the long-term health of our economy,” said research author, Dr. Elsa E. Macias.

In order to foster the positive economic trends experienced by Latinas and to remedy areas where persistent gaps in success exist, HOPE’s report provides public policy recommendations to policymakers, corporate leaders and Latinas.

Key policy recommendations include:

- **Wage Parity:** Ensure corporate management and HR professionals are properly trained to adhere to state laws on wage parity.
- **Education:** Review and evaluate “community college free tuition” plans to determine viability to reduce student loan debt and student loan interest rates.
- **Small Business:** Increase investment in Latina-owned small businesses through substantial and sustainable public and private contracts.
- **Financial Literacy:** Increase access to financial literacy education and resources tailored to the needs of first generation Latinas.



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HOPE led primary research (original research) efforts with oversight and guidance from prominent academic advisors. Primary data was gathered through surveys and in-depth interviews with the women who participate in HOPE's signature programming across California, the HOPE Sample. Secondary data (established research) was collected to compliment research findings and assist in the creation of public policy recommendations.

The research was made possible by a foundation grant from Wells Fargo. "Wells Fargo is committed to building partnerships with organizations that support women entrepreneurs," said Lisa Stevens, Wells Fargo's head of Small Business. "HOPE's research report shows us that Latinas have a strong interest in entrepreneurial ventures. It also shows the work that remains to bridge gaps and foster economic prosperity for Latinas in communities across California. At Wells Fargo we're committed to helping more Latina entrepreneurs realize their dreams, by supporting the important contributions made by HOPE and other community-based organizations, and offering the resources business owners need to achieve financial success through Wells Fargo Works *for Small Business*."

About Hispanics Organized for Political Equality (HOPE)

HOPE is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to ensuring political and economic parity for Latinas through leadership, advocacy, and education to the benefit of all communities and the status of women. For more information on HOPE, please visit www.Latinas.org or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hopelatinas