

LATINO LEADERS NETWORK™

MICKEY IBARRA, FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN

**Remarks by:
Jose Hernandez-NASA Astronaut
Latino Leaders Luncheon Series**

**March 1, 2010
Capital Hilton Hotel
Washington, DC**

Jose M. Hernandez: Muchas gracias, Tony. I'm glad you changed the names to protect the innocent. But, you know, you said about topping things, I think Senator Feinstein is going to retire in a few years, so; we'll see you at the campaign trail, all right?

All kidding aside, I am truly honored and humbled to be here at the Latino Leaders Luncheon, and I'm very, very gratified to see that we have a large number of Latino leaders here and a large contingent of students as well. I just want to recognize the fact that the Washington Center has brought a lot of students. I know some of them are from Veracruz and some from Puerto Rico.

What I'm going to do today is I'm going to tailor my talk and talk about leadership, about Latino leadership, and it's going to be in a sense, in a form that I like to call anecdotal with respect to talking a little bit about my life in terms of how there are leaders in every aspects of our lives in terms of how they behave and basically help us along the way, por que this journey of becoming an astronaut and going to space was not a journey of one man but it was a journey of a familia, it was a journey of teachers, it was a journey of professionals that helped me along the way to achieve a dream. And I'll be talking about that throughout my talk.

One thing I did want to do is I want to recognize our ambassador to Mexico, the Honorable Arturo Sarukhan, who was kind enough to accompany and represent our president de Mexico in Kennedy Space Center during our launch. He represented President Felipe Calderón. Thank you very much for being there with my family. I appreciate it.

A lot of people always ask, they say, "Okay. How did you become an astronaut? What was the process and how did it happen? Como paso Mexicano

del barrio, you grew up in Stockton, California. I mean, how did you get there from there to become an astronaut?" I think it's worth talking a little bit about my life in terms about how it all originated.

As most of you know, I come from a typical migrant farm-working family from La Piedad, Michoacán. A lot of people say, "Well, what's a typical migrant farm-working family like?" A typical -- see, if we would've used a NASA Velcro, this wouldn't happen. That's one of the benefits of NASA, all right? So, if anybody ever asks you what has NASA ever done, we invented Velcro and it works. So, what's a typical migrant farm-working family like? Well, let me just paint the scenery for you. And a lot of you are going to be able to resonate with my story because a lot of you have very similar experiences. And please tell Mom I'm not here.

What we did was every year around February timeframe, my father - we would be in La Piedad, Michoacán -- my father would load up us kids, the four of us, in the car with my mom and we would make a two-day trek up to Southern California. We would start off in Ontario and we'd start working, picking strawberries. And from there, we would then work our way up to the Central Valley, up to Salinas, working la lechuga asadon, vetabel, sugar beet hoeing. And then we would spend a bulk of our time up in Northern California, in Stockton, Modesto, and Lodi and we would work picking cucumbers, picking cherries, picking durasno, peaches, and then we would end the journey with the grapes in the grape season. This would take us about November timeframe.

In November, what my parents would then do is they would say, "Okay. We're going to go back to Mexico. It's tiempo de las fiestas Navideñas, so it's not worth it to put you guys in school in Mexico. We want you to get three or four months' worth of homework, this was maestras and you take it to La Piedad with you," and then we would self-study ourselves there. And then, come February-March, that whole process would repeat itself.

So, you can see how difficult it was in the early days for us for our education process. This happened all the way until I was about 12 year old, 11-12 years old. Because we would go to three or four different school districts throughout the school year, we would miss three or four months of school, and so what happened to me was that it was tough for me to learn the English language because we were Spanish-speaking en la familia. Even though I was born in the States, I was speaking Spanish in la casa, y eso si en la espanol derecho. It wasn't formal Spanish. It was Spanish and -- and I think what made us different from a typical migrant farm-working family was the fact that my parents, in spite of their third-grade elementary school education, they gave a lot of importance to education. Now, what made them different is that Monday through Friday, they always saw us that we went to school. Wherever we went, three or four different school districts, wherever we went, we're enrolled in school. Eso si se llegaba Sabado y Domingo y fregarle en el campo, we were working in the field Saturday and Sunday. And while every kid loves summer vacation, you can imagine we dreaded it por que that meant we were going to be out there seven days a week as opposed to two days a week.

I remember what started changing things for us -- well, first, let me tell you one thing that my dad was. I think he was a master at getting us motivated. Every day after working in the fields, we would get in the car, Saturday and Sunday we'd get in the car, we'd have the crusted Levi's because in the morning it's soggy and wet and so you get mud on your Levi's, by the end of the day, it dries and it's caked and baked so it's stiff. You get in the car and you're all dusty, sweaty, and you're in the back of the car and every day before he started the car, he would look back at us and he said, "Como se siente?" We said we were tired. And he said, "So, remember this feeling." He says, "Because if you don't go to school, es lo que van a hacer toda su vida. This is your future if you don't go to school." A very powerful message that sort of stuck to us.

I think my mom was more of a -- I swear, if she went to college, she would have been a great psychologist because mothers have the ability to put the burden on you, to challenge you. She says, "Ay mijo, ustedes van a tener una mucho mejor vida que nosotros y ojala nos puedan ayudar cuando esten grandes," and all that, you now. There they are. Putting the guilt trip on you, right? But the important thing was that she set the bit on us because she would always talk about college. She would always -- when we go to a nice clean office, she would see el señor con corbata y todos, she would say, "Mira, se quiero relas ustedes, trabajando en una oficina no en el campo como nosotros, but she will sit at the bench, she would always talk of when we went to college, when we went to the university. She would never say, "If you go." She would say -- she expected us to go, and that set the bit right away. And to me, those were very powerful messages that they gave.

The other thing that they did which I think was very different from typical migrant farm-working families was they sat down with us every day at home and we did the homework in the kitchen, Now algo pare comer y nose cedia but she said "no se levanten hasta que terminen la tarea." And first, second, third grade that worked fine because they could help us with homework and all that. Fifth, sixth, seventh grade, ya ni papas que le entention, but they were still smart enough to realize if we finished the homework. And I guess, my point here is that as parents, because I'm a parent of five kids, is that we need to spend time with our kids doing the homework process. It's not just a matter of telling the kids, "Oye mijo haz la tarea y dejame ver la novella Destilando Amor." I'm not sure what novellas are out there are now, but I remember during that time period, that one was a big one. And it doesn't suffice for the fathers to go out con los amigos con los amigos afuera del arbolito y tomar unas cervazas. The whole thing is you've got to engage, you've got to be a family, and you've got to be together.

A lot of times, we put the burden a lot on the public school system, but you know what, it starts in the family. If the family has to start that process, and then we can then point to the school systems, say, "Okay, why isn't my kid doing this?" Once you answer the question that I'm doing everything at home to make sure my son succeeds or my daughter succeeds, then I think we can hold the public school system accountable. But it starts at home.

The other thing that happened during my education system, as you know, we start -- we would go up and down California, what happened in terms of what made us stop doing the, what I call the "California circuit," was a visit by a second-grade teacher. And it was amazing. Out of the youngest of four in my family, and it was November and it was time to go -- I was in second grade and it was time to go back to Mexico, my dad said, "Okay. Arreglen las cosas nos vamos, agarren sus tareas." Of course, I went to my second-grade teacher, and at that time, era una chinita, fresh off of college, very young, beautiful, and she was tall -- I was in second grade so she seem tall. Ahora la veo y esta bien chaparrita. But she was tall at that time, and I told her and I asked her, I said, "Hey, we're going to go to Mexico. Can I have three or four months' worth of homework?" And of course, she had been through that with my other three siblings, she's been through that process. I saw her roll her eyes and she said, "You know what, Jose, tell your parents I'm going to be in your home tonight. I'm going to go visit your house." I said, "Okay." Of course, I went running home that day to tell my parents, trying to give them as much notice as possible. And we lived about a mile, a mile and a half from the school. Y En ese tiempo, you could walk to school for a mile and a half. Now, we'll get arrested if we have our child walk a mile to school, right? But en ese tiempo, we'll go through tracks and everything, and we ran home from the school.

So, I ran home, and of course, you get home, you get two different reactions from your parents. First thing I tell my dad, "ahora la veo y esta bien chaparrita." And of course, he says, "¿Qué hiciste, muchacho? What did you do? What kind of trouble did you get into now?" I said, "No no, va venir porque no se le dije que vamos ir a Mexico." And the other reaction is completely opposite, la mama. "Va a venir la maestra, vamos a limpiar la casa a hacer tortillas de harina. Para darle de comer a la maestra" You know how mothers are, right, especially Mexican mothers. They want to be as hospitable as possible and they prepare the dinner and everything.

Okay. So, that happened and the teacher came and gave a -- in her broken Spanish, my parents' broken English, they got the message together in a language that my parents could understand and I remember her saying, "Han de plantar raices un un lugar, set roots in one place, "por que tienen hijos que son muy inteligentes y les gusta la escuela, denles una chansa para estudiar, give them a chance so they can study." And to my parents' credit, he took that to -- heed that advice and he started making Stockton our home. Eso si for a migrant farm worker to stay in one place, that's tough because farm work is not available year round in one particular place. I remember mi pobre papa used to go out in the tule fog in the middle of winter when it was cold and freezing and he would go and work en la porra, pruning cherry trees, peach trees, and all that, just to make ends meet. So, it wasn't an easy life after that, but it was a sacrifice that he made that we realized that he was making.

Unfortunately I have to confess that I'm old enough to remember the tail end of the Apollo program. And so, I was about seven, eight years old when the Apollo program was going on. And of course, everybody during that time saw the astronauts on TV as they walked on the moon, 'eda, we were no different. Our only difference is we had the old consola TV with the

integrated speakers, that's cuatro partitas, you know, blanca y negra, and very fuzzy snowy picture, y aveces. Sometimes you get that horizontal bar that you would have to go like that so that it stops. You guys remember that, right? Well, that's our TV.

Satellite didn't exist at that time and also we couldn't afford cable, so we had what you'd call the rabbit ear antennas. And so, whenever something happened that was very important -- first of all, we didn't have a remote, so guess who the remote was -- the youngest in the family was just yours truly, cambiar el canal y subirle el volume y todo eso. I would do it all. And then, of course, when something important happened, my dad would ask, "Muchacho, facusta la antenna para - to get better reception." And then, what happens when you go and you grab the antenna? You get good ground, right? I'm an electrical engineer, I knew that, you get good ground? And so, what does your dad tell you? "Get up there, get up there ahi quedate ahi quedate." So, I'm doing conforma contortionista, trying to look at the image as I'm adjusting the TV to make sure I get a glimpse of the astronauts as well. And now I kid with my siblings, I said, "Ya ven it was through osmosis that the signals went through my brain and that's how I became an astronaut. The astronauts came through me ya ven por eso." That's why I became an astronaut.

But that's really truly when the dream was born, is that I was about eight years old when I first saw the astronauts walking in the moon. And the images I saw, you hear them talking and you hear that beep, one-sixth of gravity so they're kind of like floating, in slow motion, and then I would run outside and you would see the full moon and I'd see it. I'd run inside and I'd see the astronauts walking on the moon. I do the same thing again and do that. And I'm sure every eight and nine year old at that time was fascinated and wanted to be an astronaut as well. And so, what happened with me was I got hooked on that and said, "You know, I'm going to be an astronaut." And of course, I shared that dream with my parents, and to their credit, they allowed me to dream.

That's the other thing that we don't do. We don't allow our kids to dream. Sometimes we put our own barriers in front of us and we don't allow our kids to dream. My parents were very supportive and said, "You see hijo, just study hard and lo puedes lograr." I'm sure in the back of their minds though, "pobrecito deja que suene, pero hay que animarlo. Let's encourage him. He doesn't stand a chance but let's not break his bubble." But I was naive enough to think that I could get selected. It was not an impossible dream, and I kept working towards that. I kept saying that's what I'm going to do.

And you know, what happened, here's another thing, the power of mentors, even if you don't know the mentors, just by example. I was a senior in high school getting ready to graduate. I knew I was going to the University of the Pacific to major in engineering because English was not my strongest suit; it was math. Because of the inability of learning English in the early years, I migrated to math and two plus two is four en cualquier idioma. And so, I knew I was going to major in engineering.

But then I heard some astounding news, and that was that Dr. Franklin Chang Diaz got selected as an astronaut. The name Chang no me parecia, Chang que onda? But then I heard "Diaz." I said, "Wow. That sounds like Hernandez, Diaz. I wonder if he's Latino." I started looking at his bio, and I noticed that he was the first Latino astronaut, the Latino-American astronaut to get selected by NASA. He had a Ph.D. and he came from humble beginnings just like me but he came from Costa Rica. Entonces me dio envidia. I was jealous. Pero, envidia de la Buena, a good type of jealousy.

I said, "Si este vato puro porque yo no." If he was able to do it, why can't I? I mean, he seems like a homie like me, so I'm going to go ahead and -- And so, that's when I gave the promise to myself, a personal promise, that I was going to do everything in my power to get selected as an astronaut. If that means going to graduate school and getting advanced degrees, that's what I was going to do. And of course, that's where I had the blessing of meeting my good friend, Tony Cardenas, who hopefully -- encourage him to run for mayor but don't run for Senate. Ahi te gano. I'm just kidding there, Tony.

So, what happened was then I went ahead and finished graduate school and started working at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. And there basically I worked -- in my career, worked on three major projects there. I worked in the *Star Wars* project, the development of X-ray laser which meant electronic equipment being deployed up in space so that allowed me to learn orbital mechanics.

Second one was working on a mammography project, developing the first full-field digital mammography project for the early detection of breast cancer. This opened up a whole new field of study in developing cancer detection algorithms for images in digital and imaging processing. So, we worked with a company in Denver, Colorado, Fischer Imaging, and helped them develop the first full-field digital mammography system.

And the third was full circle. I worked with the Russians. I spent two years here in the Department of Energy working on the nuclear non-proliferation that we know, where we basically helped the Russians dispose of nuclear material. And so, in that process, [Speaking in Russian] I was able to learn a little bit of Russian.

And the reason why I did that is that during this whole time, I was applying for the NASA for the astronaut program, and every year I would ask myself, "Jose, what have you done differently to make yourself more attractive, more marketable to NASA to become an astronaut?" And if I couldn't answer that question, I'd say, "You're slacking, dude. You've got to do something different. You've got to improve yourself." And so, that's why it wasn't an accident that I started working in the *Star Wars* project because that was space-related, medical. The more you know about your body and medicine, the better the NASA likes it because there's a lot of self-care, self-management, self-medication up in space when you don't have a doctor.

And then, the nuclear non-proliferation project, I worked because it was during that time that the U.S. and Russia had signed an agreement to develop an international space station. I put two and two together right away, I said, "You know what, vamos a estar trabajando con los Ruzos alla." So, when this project came up to work with the Russians and learn the Russian language and culture, I jumped on it because I said that's what's going to make me more attractive to NASA. And I applied for six straight years and I would always get a formal letter that says, "Hey, don't call us. We'll call you." And it wasn't until the sixth year that I got interviewed.

The way the process works is there're over 4,000 people that applied to the NASA program for the astronauts. Out of those 4000, they down selected 300. They check your references. Out of those 300, they'll select a 100 lucky ones that get interviewed for one whole week at NASA. These 100 people get invited, and then of course, you get a battery of psychological exams. You get a battery of physical exams where you get poked and prodded everywhere -- and those males over 40 know what I'm talking about. And then you get interviewed by a committee. And then, everybody goes home, and you wait until you hear the results. And then, of course, I sort of got cocky because I ya la hice, I'm in the final 40, me van seleccionar. Of course, I got news and I didn't get selected.

And then, so, the next two years went by for the next selection. I got selected -- I mean, I got interviewed again, year eight, and the same thing happened, went down to the 40 finalists, and ni mangos, I didn't get anything. I did get an invitation though. I was finishing up my two-year rotation here, getting ready to go back to California at Lawrence Livermore Lab, and when I got the news that I didn't get selected in year eight. But I did get the invitation to go work for NASA as a civil servant. I was a contractor for DOE, at Lawrence Livermore lab, pero, it came with some caveats. They said, "Well, you need to come back. You need to come work for us as an engineer. There are no guarantees that we'll even interview you again. We just want to have a better look at you; so we're making clear that we're not even going to guarantee that were going to interview you. And by the way, you've got to take a pay-cut and you've got to move to Houston."

Well, you can see how well that went over with my wife. In a sense, I said, "Hey, honey, we're not going to nice weather California. We're going to hot and muggy Houston. And by the way, you can't spend more money. You've got to tighten up the belt." But in all honesty though, she was actually the one that encouraged me because I was - always look out for the family first. That's the thing I was saying. I had 13 years at Lawrence Livermore Lab, had a nice career going, nice trajectory which is why they brought me to DoE, so I could go back and manage a program when I came back. And so, I had to give all that up.

My wife told me something that I would never forget. She said, "Siempre vas a tener el gusanito." She would say this in Spanish, "Siempre vas a tener el gusanito. You're always going to have that little worm inside you that's always going to be asking you, gnawing at you, saying, what if, what if; if you didn't take that job, what would have happened." Because it was obvious that if I didn't take that job, they weren't going to

consider me in the future. And so, that sort of stuck with me and she said, "Don't disqualify yourself. Let them disqualify you. So, don't make that decision of not going. She said let's go, we'll make ends meet, and we're going to be all right in Houston. If you don't like it, then we'll go back to California."

So, I took that risk in year eight, moved with the family to Houston, that was about 2000. And of course, found out, with the understanding that there was going to be a selection in 2002, well, they cancelled that selection and there wasn't a selection until 2004, so what ended up being a two-year experiment was a four-year experiment. But I started working there, and put in four good years, ended up being the branch chief of the Materials and Processes branch. We actually had the shuttle accident that we had in Columbia, and my group was -- because we do non-destructive testing so we do forensics, my group was very instrumental with the reconstruction of the accident and finding root the cause. So, it sort of gave me visibility at the management level that when the new selections came by in 2004, I was actually selected. So it was 12 years after I started applying, three interviews before I finally got selected as a NASA astronaut in 2004.

And obviously, when you first get selected as an astronaut in 2004, you're not eligible for flight assignment because you're just coming off the street. So, you get -- the title was actually "astronaut candidate," and you train for two years which was 2006 when we graduated and we became what we call card-carrying astronauts eligible for flight assignment.

In 2008 was when I got my first assignment which was STS-128 to fly on board the Discovery, and the date for the flight was last year. We trained for about 14 months as a crew of seven. We trained for 14 months, and we actually executed the 128th mission of the space shuttles and ours was Discovery which was the 32nd mission, and flew from August 28 to September 11. During those 14 days, we were up in space and went around the Earth 217 times at approximately 17,500 miles an hour, and travelled a total of 5.7 million miles. There're two things I always say about that, is I wish there was a Frequent Flyer program for that. And for the ladies, tengo mucho kilometrahe, pero don't worry about that. I have a lot of mileage but don't worry about that.

You know, the experience of going up in space is -- you just cannot put words into it. It's just one of the most awesome feelings in the world. And let me just lay the groundwork for the launch: You dress up in your orange pumpkin pressurized suit, you get strapped in the seat, and there's about three hours of nice, quiet time that you can even take catnaps before the launch counts down to zero. You're down there and you have time to make peace with your Maker, if you will, and start reflecting. One of the best feelings I had there was I was sitting there, I was looking at my suits, looking at my partners there and I was saying, "I was my son's age -- my son is 15 -- I was out there picking cucumbers during the summers. Now I'm here representing the United States as an astronaut. How cool is that?"

It truly is a great country where you can make your dreams a reality. And as the count progressed, it progressed to zero, and you go from dead

silence, quiet all of a sudden everything rattling and rolling, a lot of noise. And I don't remember but my mission specialist One, I'm the flight engineer so I sit right behind the two pilots, I get the best seat in the house and I'm also the busiest during those eight-and-a-half minutes of the most dynamic phase of flight, reaching space, but my neighbor said that as soon as it started taking off and everything, you feel a thrust and you finally go, he said, "Pero me porcine". I said, "I don't remember." Pero no me consta. I probably did. I'm a religious man, so I'm sure I did. So, I guess you can say for that millisecond that that I felt scared, yes, I probably did for that millisecond. I did say to myself, "What did I get myself into," as it started rattling and rolling. But then after that, you feel a thrust and you're off the ground and you see the pad on the side of you and the tower, and then your training takes over. It's amazing. Your program, your training takes over. You start hawking all the instruments, start making sure you're making the milestones turning those eight-and-a-half minutes of dynamic flight. I call it the best Disneyland e-ticket ride ever. You reach space in those eight-and-a-half minutes, and all of a sudden, you're floating, things are just floating, everything quiets down, and now you're going 17,500 miles an hour around the Earth, which is truly amazing, truly amazing.

We joined with the International Space Station, it took us one day to get close to it and dock to it. We performed three main objectives: we traded one of our crew members, Nicole Stott, a woman engineer. We traded her for another person, who had been up there for four months, Tim Kopra, brought him home. We conducted three space walks. And then we also transferred seven tons of material and equipment, including exercise equipment for the crew that's going to stay in the International Space Station.

During that time, that dock time, there were seven of us from the shuttle, six from the station, a total of 13 astronauts up there. It's the International Space Station that's completely built now as of the last mission, the size of about five-bedroom home, and there were 13 of us there, it didn't feel crowded at all, representing five countries -- I always say six countries, it includes Mexico -- I always include a plug in for Mexico there. And so, what happened was we conducted our mission for those 14 days, undocked and came home, and had a flawless landing. Ended up landing at Edwards Air Force Base. Our preference was to land in Florida, Kennedy Space Center, but the weather didn't allow it, so we went over there. Three hours later, I was at a place in Boron called Domingo's. A friend of mine owns a restaurant. I took the whole crew there. Y comieron una comida Mexicana con una cerveza. Life was good.

I just want to close up a little bit with respect to, in terms of my closing remarks, to tell you that some of the things -- a lot of people ask me, "Well, what are you going to do now, Jose? How can you top that," and I'm sure Tony is trembling in his seat right now, but I won't break it to him just yet, but we'll keep that. No, actually, I'm going to be moving down here to Houston for a six-month to one-year assignment at NASA headquarters so I'm going to be working out of the Office of Legislative

Affairs, and I'm trying to work with our lawmakers with respect to spreading the good word of what NASA does with respect to our mission and objectives.

As you know, President Obama changed the mission objectives of NASA just recently. We're actually pretty excited about it. A lot of people think that the budget got cut. On the contrary, I think the budget got increased. The International Space Station which is slated to close in 2015, got extended to 2020, so we are going to be conducting a lot more about science. What did get changed a lot is that constellation program that we're working on. It was an Apollo-like architecture, a capsule that was going to take us to the International Space Station but take us to the moon, where we would set up a long duration base outpost there, and learn how to live on the moon for long duration in hopes of developing the technology that would eventually allows us to go to Mars. That got scrapped. And instead of doing that, what he's doing is the resources for that program is going to be spread among private companies so that we can stimulate private companies in technology to get commercialized, so that these companies can develop their own vehicles, and we would have access to these vehicles and it's in the hopes that things will move a lot quicker and would be cheaper to develop. So, we're pretty excited about that. So, we'll certainly be working with them in the future to make sure that that's a success.

The other thing that I've done is I take my role, just like being the mentor that Franklin Chang Diaz was for me, I take my role as a mentor very seriously. To close the story with Franklin Chang Diaz, when I got interviewed the third time in 2004, remember, I said you get interviewed by a committee? Well, he was on the committee and I was able to meet him for the first time and basically told him to the story during my interview process of how I got inspired. Maybe I was just kissing up but it certainly worked.

And so, what happened was it's very important, role models are very important, so that's why I take my position very seriously with respect to coming out to the community. I was telling Tony that this Friday, I was here for the Migrant Head Start Conference, I was the keynote speaker. I flew to Sacramento on Saturday. I was at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and I was the keynote speaker. Flew Sunday back to Houston, we watched The Lightning Thief, my kids and I. And then, as soon as the movie was over, dropped them off home again and I flew over here for this conference. So, I certainly do take my role very seriously about being a role model and talking to the kids and encouraging them to stay in school. So much that I have a foundation called Reaching For The Stars, Jose Hernandez Reaching For The Stars. You can Google that and see the website to that foundation. What we try to do with that foundation is very simple. We're trying to increase the number of kids going into science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It behooves us to increase those numbers because if we're going to be number one, stay at number one position, from a technical perspective, we need to increase the kids going into science and engineering, especially minorities, Hispanics.

I know there's a lot of talk about immigration reform and all this that needs to be done, but one statistic -- I was reading the paper the

other day by the National Council of La Raza -- so, Ron Estrada, thank you for providing that data. One piece of data that sort of astounded me, blew me away, was that if you look at our population of kids, less than 18 years old, 91 percent are U.S. born citizens -- 91 percent. So, what I'm telling you is that we can talk about immigration reform until the cows come home, but, you know, 15, 20 years from now, that's not going to matter because we're here to stay. We're not going to go back home or anywhere. We are here. Our kids are born here. They're citizens. And if we're going to continue to be competitive in this world, we have to engage all segments of society to get a good education, and that includes our Latino kids. We have to engage them. And specifically, we have to engage them in the STEM areas. Get them involved in science, because that's what makes our country great. That's what is able to make us go to the moon and come back, that's what will enable us to go to Mars. So, that's what we have to do, is we have to keep motivating our kids to move forward and get a good education.

So, having said that, it's basically a simple recipe for success. You have to get yourself a -- first of all, it starts at home, the foundation. The foundation supports starts at home. You have to have a dream. Allow your kids to dream and convert that dream to a plan. And then provide a good education for them. And perseverance, ganas, corazon, and you put all those ingredients together, like Tony Cardenas said, "Sky is not the limit, son las estrellas." So, thank you very much.

[End of transcript]