

memo



To: Gamma Alpha Omega Membership
From: National Headquarters
Date: 10/15/2021
Re: 2021 Hispanic Heritage Month Parting Words

As it comes to an end, September 15th to October 15th is a nationally recognized month for the many identities within the Latina, Latino, Hispanic, and LatinX spectrums. While these are not the only terms used to identify with, we recognize the many layers that may go into the terms. Some prefer Brown, some Chicano, and others Latin American. 91% of our membership is reported as Latina/Hispanic. Our very existence comes from 8 strong Latina women. We celebrate those members inside and outside of our organization as notable members nationally and internationally.

Hispanic Heritage Month began in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson. It only lasted a week. With time and pressure, there is now a month long observance. During this month we acknowledge and celebrate the history, cultures, and contributions of people whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. We extend our deepest gratitude to the following women for creating a pathway for future generations of leaders, scientists, entertainers, politicians, authors, and more! We end this year's Latina/LatinX/Hispanic Heritage Month with a few other influential and notable women that you should now:

- Joan Baez: a folk singer who performed at the March on Washington for civil rights in 1963
- Justice Sonia Sotomayor: the first Latina to serve as a US Supreme Court Justice
- Selena Quintanilla: a Tejano Superstar
- Ellen Ochoa: the first Hispanic woman to travel to space
- Sylvia Rivera: a pioneer for LGBT activism and advocate for trans rights
- Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: the youngest woman ever to serve in the United States Congress
- Gina Torres: the first Afro-Latina to star, create, and produce her own show
- Lupe Serrano: first Latina principal dancer of the American Ballet Theater

It is also important to note that because of organizations like Gamma Alpha Omega, thousands of leaders are initiated each year. Many set out to accomplish the purpose and goals of Latino/a fraternities and sororities: "to liberate Puerto Rico from the

United States, to unite Latin American countries so that they could stand up to perceived U.S. imperialism, yet others wanted to create a network of students from Latin America studying in this country.” (Fajardo, 2015, History of Latino Fraternal Movement and Why it Matters on Campus Today)

In addition to those more well-known names, please also help us in recognizing the following Gamma Alpha Omega members on their accomplishments:

- Candace Sanchez, Epsilon Chapter: Author of Unspoken and Podcast Host for [Unspoken Conversations](#)
- Dede Gamex, Alpha Chapter: Founder of [Adelante Mami](#)
- Brianna Davis, Xi Chapter: Founder of [Esperanza de Tejas](#)
- Marcia Torres, Kappa Chapter: Podcast Host for [F* the Seat](#)
- Lorena Gonzalez, Delta Chapter, Seattle City Council and [Running for Seattle Mayor](#)

We know there are many more of you and we want to know who you are! Send your story to rosevine@gammaalphaomega.org

As we continue to advocate for women of color and as members of Gamma Alpha Omega, we encourage you to be the advocate for your passions, issues you care about, and more. With that said, we leave you with these topics as part of your own individual research:

- Canela Lopez' Essay: *“It's time for non-Black Latinx people to talk about anti-Blackness in our own communities — and the conversation starts at home”* <https://www.insider.com/anti-blackness-non-black-latinx-spaces-racism-2020-6>
- Victoria Arena's Essay: *“It will take two centuries for the gender wage gap to close for Latinas if we do nothing”* <https://latinasinbusiness.us/2021/03/25/it-will-take-two-centuries-for-the-gender-wage-gap-to-close-for-latinas-if-we-do-nothing/>
- Hispanic & Latino Chemists you should know About: <https://cen.acs.org/people/profiles/Hispanic-Latino-chemists-should-know/99/web/2021/09>
- The Racial Impacts of COVID-19: <https://www.embracerace.org/resources/disproportionate-racial-impacts-of-covid#latinx>
- National Hispanic Medical Association Vaccinate4All Campaign: <https://www.nhmamd.org/-vaccinate4all-campaign>

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If you have any questions about this memo, please email nationalhq@gammaalphaomega.org