



Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY

HSI 2026 SUMMIT

April 17 • 17 de abril

2026 HSI SUMMIT AGENDA

Western Oregon University • April 17, 2026

8 - 8:50 a.m.	Check-in, coffee, light breakfast snacks & networking WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
9 - 9:15 a.m.	INTRODUCTION WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
9:15 - 10:15 a.m.	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: Dra. Marla Franco WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
10:15 - 10:25 a.m.	Break
10:25 - 11 a.m.	STUDENT PANEL: Nancy Contreras Colin, Yair Gomez Romero, Belen Santiago Hernandez, Alexia Sifuentes, Monty Toledo Garcia, and Andres Torres Diaz. Moderated by Dra. Marla Franco WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
11 - 11:10 a.m.	Break
11:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.	WORKSHOP: Dra. Marla Franco WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
12:15 - 1:15 p.m.	LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT: Casa de la Cultura Tlanese WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • PACIFIC ROOM
1:30 - 2:20 p.m.	CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS: Legacy Success Project with Deysi Cisneros Maciel, Yulissa Flores-Lopez, Mario Uribe Saldaña, and Teresa Alonso Leon WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • COLUMBIA ROOM From Data to Doors: Building Equitable Pathways to College Access and Success with Ricardo Acevedo-Solis, Virginia Antunez, and Dulce Nash INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER • ROOM 211
2:20 - 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 - 3:20 p.m.	CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS: The Research Institute: Improving Systems and Supporting Communities with Bertha Camacho and Lupita Nunez-Morales WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • COLUMBIA ROOM Bridging Campus and Community: Data-Informed Support for Student Wellbeing with Jesus Maciel and Scott Perfect INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER • ROOM 211
3:20 - 4 p.m.	CLOSING SESSION WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER • COLUMBIA ROOM and INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER • ROOM 211

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: **Dra. Marla Franco**

Dra. Marla Franco serves as the Special Advisor, Hispanic Serving Institution Initiatives at the University of Arizona (UA). She has worked in higher education for nearly 25 years at public universities in California and Arizona, having served in various roles within academic and student affairs to champion greater college access and degree attainment among underserved and minoritized students, which strongly informs her work today.

Dra. Franco led efforts that resulted in the UA becoming the first four-year public university in the state of Arizona to be federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education in April 2018. She is now working across the university to develop a centralized vision for maximizing this designation in a way that truly benefits students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members from diverse backgrounds. This federal distinction has widespread implications for the UA, the greater Tucson community, and the state of Arizona.

In 2017, Dra. Franco co-lead efforts with faculty that resulted in UA becoming the first recipient of the National Science Foundation's HSI conference grant, which supported the convening of over 100 thought leaders from five states within the southwest region of the United States aimed at transforming STEM education at HSIs. As a result, she became co-founder of the STEM in HSI Working Group, co-authored *Transforming STEM Education at Hispanic Serving Institutions in the United States: A Consensus Report*, engaged in a broader impacts road trip to present key insights and recommendations nationally, and co-facilitated an adaptive case study competition to incite transformation in STEM education at HSIs across the nation.

As a scholar-practitioner, she has co-authored publications to inform improved practice at HSIs, including *Assessing the Readiness of Hispanic Serving Institutions to Serve Latinx Students: Moving Beyond Compositional Diversity and Engaging Community Partners to Improve STEM Education at HSIs*. Dra. Franco's contributions to the field of higher education and the community are well recognized. She has received the John Hernandez Leadership Award from



the American College Personnel Association, the Edith Auslander Outstanding Support of Hispanic Issues in Higher Education Award from the Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation, the Exemplary Leadership Award from Valle Del Sol, and Hispanic Business Woman of the Year from the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. In June 2019, Dra. Franco's leadership also resulted in the UA receiving the inaugural Seal of Excelencia, aimed at recognizing institutions that demonstrate intentional impact and success in the three core areas of work that Excelencia has determined lead to latino student success: data, practice, and leadership.

Dra. Franco is a first-generation college graduate, having earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley, a master's degree in counseling from California State University, Long Beach, and a doctoral degree in higher education leadership from Azusa Pacific University. Dra. Franco leads strategically, courageously, and with a fierce passion for what she does.



WOU Student Panel



**Nancy Contreras
Colin**

Sophomore
Linn Benton Community
College
Political Science major



Andres Torres Diaz

Sophomore
Western Oregon University
Business major



**Monty Toledo
Garcia**

Freshman
Western Oregon University
Secondary English Education
major
ESOL minor



**Belen Santiago
Hernandez**

Junior
Western Oregon University
Public Health major
Business minor



Yair Gomez Romero

Sophomore
Western Oregon University
Exercise Science major
Concentration in Pre-Clinical



Alexia Sifuentes

Sophomore
Western Oregon University
Accounting major
Criminal Justice minor

Entertainment

Casa de la cultura Tlanese (Ballet Folklórico Tlanese)

Casa de la Cultura Tlanese is a family-run cultural organization with a traveling dance troupe. Casa supports the expression of Mexican heritage in the greater Salem area through dance, music, and community cultural events.



Concurrent Sessions



Jesus Maciel

Bridging Campus and Community: Data-Informed Support for Student Wellbeing

Jesus Maciel helps families in Polk County get connected to resources either at their Independence office, or within their community.



Scott Perfect

Scott Perfect is an LPC (licensed professional counselor) and NCC (national certified counselor). He has been the Counseling Director for 20 years and served WOU in various capacities for 32 years. He is also an instructor for several graduate programs including the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program at WOU. Scott serves on the CARE Team, and has a background in community mental health. He has a private practice as a consultant and clinical supervisor.



Lupita Nunez-Morales

The Research Institute: Improving Systems and Supporting Communities

Lupita Nunez-Morales supports statewide early learning initiatives through community partnership, technical assistance, and system implementation. Since joining WOU in 2022, she has served in both bilingual project specialist and coordinator roles, bringing a strong focus on equity and access to her work with system partners and working with the funders, including the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC). A bilingual (Spanish/English) and bicultural professional with over 10 years of experience in early childhood education, Lupita has worked alongside children, families, and community stakeholders across diverse settings.

As a first-generation Latina and graduate of Oregon State University, she is deeply committed to advancing inclusive systems that foster belonging and opportunities for all families. Raised in the Monmouth-Independence area, Lupita continues to stay connected to her community and supporting local organizations, Central School District, and the Family YMCA of Marion & Polk Counties.



Bertha Camacho

Bertha Camacho has contributed her expertise for over six years across a range of projects, including Childcare Substitutes of Oregon, SPARK, the Startup Grant, and Assessments. With more than 19 years of experience in the Early Learning field, Bertha brings deep knowledge and a heartfelt commitment to supporting early childhood educators and the programs that serve young children and families. Passionate about presenting and facilitating, Bertha views every presentation as an opportunity to foster connection and mutual learning among educators. Her work is rooted in the belief that early experiences profoundly shape a child's life, a value she carries into every training, collaboration, and projects she leads.



Concurrent Sessions



Mario Uribe Saldaña

Legacy Success Project

Mario Uribe Saldaña, principal at Mcloughlin High School, has more than two decades of dedicated experience in education. He has built a career defined by a deep commitment to student success and systemic growth. He prides himself on staying grounded in the daily needs of his school community while maintaining a forward thinking mindset. He consistently seeks to refine today's systems to ensure a stronger, more effective, and innovative future for everyone he serves.



Deysi Cisneros Maciel

Deysi Cisneros Maciel, M.Ed. is a leader in advancing Latine student success through data-informed strategy, institutional alignment, and systems-level change. She is the Co-Founder and Director of Analytics and Learner Success with the Legacy Success Project, where she leads the development of cross-institutional data systems that track student persistence, retention, and postsecondary outcomes. Her work centers on using disaggregated data to surface equity gaps and drive targeted interventions that improve outcomes for students.

With a background in higher education and student affairs, Deysi has led large-scale efforts to strengthen early-alert systems, redesign advising practices, and align academic and student-support services across institutions. She is committed to ensuring that institutions align their practices, policies, and resources to deliver measurable outcomes for Latine students.



Yulissa Flores-Lopez

Yulissa Flores-Lopez is a leader in advancing Latine student success and expanding access to higher education through community-driven support. She serves as the Volunteer Director of Student Support and Development with the Legacy Success Project, where she leads the design and implementation of culturally responsive supports across postsecondary access, career exploration, and financial literacy. Her work centers on first-generation Latine students and families, ensuring they have clear pathways, consistent guidance, and the resources needed to navigate and succeed in higher education. Yulissa's work reflects a commitment to service, ensuring that Latine students are not only enrolled but also supported in persisting and leading.

Teresa Alonso León is a trailblazing leader significantly influencing Oregon's political scene with impactful leadership. Recognized as the first Latina immigrant and indigenous woman to serve in the Oregon House of Representatives. Representing the 22nd District from 2017 to 2022, she was elected for three consecutive terms. As the daughter of migrant farm workers, she earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree from Oregon universities, which played a crucial role in her rise to leadership. She has served as the first Latina Chair of the House Education Committee and the House Higher Education and Workforce Committee, and as Chair of the Joint Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. Continuing her dedication to public service, Teresa founded Parakata Consulting LLC. Through her company, she applies her extensive experience to support leadership development, organizational growth, and the creation of professional and educational programs for individuals, organizations, and agencies.



Teresa Alonso Leon



Virginia Antunez

Concurrent Sessions

From Data to Doors: Building Equitable Pathways to College Access and Success

Virginia Antunez is the vice principal of Central High School. Virginia Antunez is a first generation high school graduate and an alum of Western Oregon University & Lewis and Clark College. Prior to her journey as an administrator, Virginia served as a Professional School Counselor in the Salem-Keizer School District for nearly a decade.

Virginia is drawn to systemic thinking that promotes equitable practices and is honored to serve the community as a bilingual & bicultural educator. Growing up in an immigrant household, Virginia understands the struggles and barriers many first generation students experience. Her goal as an educator is to inspire the next generation to dream big, and to offer educational opportunities that capacitate students to make the best decisions for their future.



Dulce Nash

Dulce Nash is the principal of Woodburn High School, where she is committed to strengthening school culture and deepening student engagement. She leads with a focus on building effective systems and supports that expand access to meaningful opportunities for every student. Central to her work is fostering a strong sense of belonging, ensuring all students feel valued, supported, and positioned for success.



Ricardo Acevedo-Solis

Ricardo Acevedo-Solis is a senior admissions counselor for Outreach and Community Partnerships, and proud alumnus of Western Oregon University. Having grown up in the Independence community, he brings a personal connection to the region and a deep understanding of the local student experience. His work in admissions has focused on supporting communities around WOU, with a particular passion for supporting first-generation college students.

HSI Summit Working Group

Maricruz Chavez Reyes, NTT Instructor, Education & Leadership

Maria Fernandez, Deputy Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, The Research Institute

Brittany Kima, Executive Assistant for the VP for Student Affairs, Student Affairs

Patricia Lopez Lopez, Bilingual Project Support Specialist, The Research Institute

Cristian Mendez Garcia, Assistant Director of Hispanic Serving Institution Initiatives, Office of Diversity Equity, and Inclusion



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