



## THE ECONOMIC INFLUENCE OF LATINAS TAKES CENTER STAGE AT THE UNITED STATES HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 45TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

*During the USHCC's milestone return to Kansas City, conversations centered around the vital role Latinas play in the growth of the Hispanic business community*



*Karen V. Chopra, Bank of America Executive, Stephanie Parra, CEO of All In Education, Jackie Puente, V.P. of External Affairs at Comcast NBCUniversal Telemundo, Dr. Antonia Novello, former U.S. Surgeon General, Mercedes Enrique, President & CFO at CMS Corporation*

**Kansas City, MO – October 24, 2024:** The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's 45th Annual National Conference concluded earlier this month with a clear message: the future of the country's economy is in the hands of the Hispanic business community, specifically Latinas.

For the more than 1,200 attendees, three days of insightful conversations led by industry experts, corporate leaders, and business owners centered around the role of entrepreneurs as innovators in the tech space, the economic vitality of Hispanic businesses, and, more specifically, the impact of Latina entrepreneurs on our national GDP.

Following her appointment as the new USHCC Chair of the Board of Directors, **Jackie Puente, V.P. of External Affairs at Comcast NBCUniversal Telemundo**, reinforced, "Latinas are the backbone of our entrepreneurial spirit, and this conference has spotlighted their innovation, resilience, and the powerful role they play in driving economic prosperity in our communities. I look forward to ushering the USHCC into a new era, leading with the impactful stories of our Hispanic business owners."

## Latinas Leading Economic Growth

According to the [U.S. Latina GDP Report](#), "Dando Vida a la Economía," funded by Bank of America, the conference's Corporate Chair Sponsor, lead researchers Dr. Matthew Fineup and Dr. David Hayes-Bautista presented their findings that the nation's Latina population contributes a staggering \$1.3 trillion to the GDP, representing a 51% growth in the past decade.

At the [conference](#), Latinas were present in various facets of the programming, such as:

- **Inspirational keynote addresses and panel discussions** were delivered by **Dr. Antonia Novello**, the first woman and the first Hispanic Surgeon General of the U.S., **Stephanie Parra**, CEO of Arizona's All In Education, and **Mercedes Enrique**, President & CFO at CMS Corporation, a Hispanic-led business doing billions of dollars in federal contracts. Each speaker, reinforced the value of staying close to one's culture while staying committed to the economic improvement of the Hispanic community.
- **Workshops** led by Google, Verizon, WOC Unidas and others, focused on tangible strategies that Hispanic business owners can employ to enhance their operations and foster leadership pipelines for the next generation of Latina entrepreneurs.
- **Business opportunities**, where business owners met with federal agencies, Fortune 500 companies and prime contractors to drive collaboration and innovation. The conference also hosted its Business Expo Hall sponsored by T-Mobile, which included the third edition of Nationwide's Mujeres Mercado, an all-Latina-led market featuring local entrepreneurs from around the country.

"We're proud to have hosted the USHCC's 45th Annual National Conference in Kansas City, returning to the home of our first office, and working alongside local chamber partner, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City," said **Ramiro A. Cavazos, USHCC President & CEO**.

"This year's conference was particularly special to see the strength of our Latina leaders, from speakers to award recipients and our women-led workshops. Coupled with the recent trends highlighting the economic powerhouse Latinas offer the business community, this reiterates that Latinas are the new wave of economic opportunity for our community."

In between all the excitement at the conference, the USHCC launched a newly designed website and CRM platform at [www.ushcc.com](http://www.ushcc.com), which will provide a custom-made business matchmaking service for its businesses and partners.

By bringing together such a strong group of local and national small business leaders, the USHCC continues to serve the country's largest gathering of Hispanic leaders. Next year's 46th Annual USHCC National Conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia from September 21–23, 2025, in partnership with the Latina-led Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

## Awardees

The conference culminated with its [2024 USHCC National Awards winners and the Ohtli Award recognition](#):

- **Corporation of the Year:** Toyota Motor of North America
- **Chambers of the Year:** First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- **Hispanic Businessperson of the Year:** Mercedes Enrique, President of CMS Corporation
- **LGTQ+ Advocate of the Year:** Daneya Esgar, Pueblo County Public County Commissioner of Colorado
- **Educational Fund Advocate of the Year:** Sharu Goodwyn, Senior Manager, Community Investment at ODP Corporation
- **2024 Hector Barreto Sr. "Con Ganas" Award:** Jeanette Prenger, Founder and CEO of Ecco Select
- **Hispanic Veteran-Owned Business of the Year:** Richard Fierro, owner of Atrevida Beer Co.
- **Employee Resource Group of the Year:** American Airlines' Latin Diversity Network
- **Ohtli Award:** Cástulo de la Rocha, President and CEO of AltaMed

## About the USHCC

The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses that contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. Now in its 45th year, the USHCC is America's largest small business advocacy group, representing over 260 local chambers and business associations nationwide and partners with hundreds of major American corporations. Recognizing the more than \$3.6 trillion GDP contribution of U.S. Latinos, a vital economic force, the Chamber is dedicated to supporting their interests nationwide.