

# Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence

## HSI Strategic Plan - 2023 to 2028

As of September 2023

### Introduction

As the Jesuit, Catholic University of the Rocky Mountain West, Regis University is called upon to immerse itself in the history and realities of the region and to educate for justice. Our world needs leaders who possess the empathy, the ethics, and the critical thinking and communication skills necessary to tackle the most pressing challenges of our time—including rampant inequality, life-threatening climate change, unparalleled migration, and paralyzing political divisions. Leaning into our Mission of providing a transformational education at the intersections of faith, reason, and culture, Regis is poised to lead in the formation of problem solvers.

Further, our designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) amplifies our responsibility to immerse ourselves in the realities of our region, as the diaspora from Latin America joins an established Mexican American population, contributing to rapidly shifting demographics and power dynamics. These Latine students and their families and communities are drawn to Regis specifically for its mission, its Catholic identity, and its reputation for excellence as a pathway to social mobility. Our responsibility, then, is to truly serve these students.

Our HSI identity brings both responsibilities and opportunities within this context. The opportunities will move us toward the transformation of our institution into one of equity, justice, liberation, love, joy, and healing. This strategic plan will guide us in this journey of transformation.

This journey is not the responsibility of just one office or division or college. It requires the talents and hard work of everyone. To motivate, educate, and unify the community around this work, we have chosen to use the Mayan concept of *In Lak'ech*. You are another me. I am your other self and you are my other self. It is only in our togetherness and in understanding our interrelatedness that our community thrives. Thus, our HSI designation means you are HSI, I am HSI, we are HSI. HSI is not what we do. It is who we are. Our commitment is to the Jesuit principle of *Magis*—a “holy restlessness” according to Fr. Bryan Massingale—for deeper love and community as we serve our students and one another.

### **In Lak'ech**

*Tú eres mi otro yo. / You are my other me.*

*Si te hago daño a ti, / If I do harm to you,*

*Me hago daño a mi mismo. / I do harm to myself.*

*Si te amo y respeto, / If I love and respect you,*

*Me amo y respeto yo. / I love and respect myself.*

--from the poem, *Pensamiento Serpiente*, by Daniel Valdez, 1973

## **Connection to Our Jesuit Catholic Mission and History Guiding the HSI Strategic Plan:**

### **Our Jesuit Principles:**

- *cura personalis*
- Individuals with and for others – pursuing justice on behalf of all persons; standing with the marginalized
- A faith that does justice
- “A Jesuit University is called to be a social force. It must transform and enlighten the world in which it lives”—Fr. Ignacio Ellacuria, SJ, *Speech at Loyola Chicago*, 1986
- “We believe that we belong to each other, and that each person shares responsibility for the long, hard work of shaping an inclusive community where all can flourish” –Fr. John Fitzgibbons, SJ, *Regis University Principles*, 2017

### **Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs)**

- Walking with the historically excluded
- Accompanying youth in the creation of a hope-filled future

### **Our Historical Legacy**

- Jesuit Missions were created to serve those on the margins
- Jesuit schools were located in places convenient for the millions of immigrants who were arriving in America’s cities in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Regis was founded as a Hispanic Serving Institution:
  - Located in Northern New Mexico, near Santa Fe and Taos, Las Vegas College in Las Vegas, NM, was established in 1877 by Italian Jesuits to serve the Spanish-speaking Hispano communities of Northern NM

These principles and realities have guided our work with students for generations, and they will continue to serve as our moral compass in our work as a **Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)**.

**Context:**

Hispanic Serving Institutions are “defined in Title V of the Higher Education Act s not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25% Hispanic...with not less than 50% of all students eligible for need-based Title IV aid”

HSIs emerged out of the post-Civil Rights era efforts of the Hispanic Higher Education Coalition, which sought to address the achievement gaps that persisted for Hispanic students. In 1986, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) formed, and in 1998, they had successfully lobbied for the formation of the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program, under Title V of the Higher Education Act—a federal grant program to improve higher education for Hispanic students.

On March 30, 2023, the US Department of Education designated Regis as an HSI, approving our Pell waiver. We submitted our first Title V grant on June 13 and the Department of Education should notify us any day.

**The Vision of the HSI Strategic Plan:**

We envision an equitable and transformative student experience, which includes the development of an inclusive and culturally-responsive curriculum, co-curriculum, faculty and staff. We envision a campus space characterized by equity, justice, liberation, love, joy, and healing. Our HSI work not only supports the recruitment, retention, and flourishing of our Latine students, but supports all of our students.

By striving to become a campus that truly *serves* our Latine students, through validating and empowering experiences, we will enhance the experiences of all of our students, and indeed all of our faculty and staff. As the old adage says, “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

The following outline of strategic goals over one, three, and five years will guide our work. Please see Appendix A for a visual of the Five Areas of Focus around which we have organized our work.

## Strategic Goals for Years 1, 3, 5

### Overall Goal: Regis as a Hispanic *Serving* Institution

#### Year 1 Goals

##### Area of Focus #1: Inclusive and Welcoming Campus

- Messaging:
  - Integration of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)/Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)/Mission—framework, values, responsibilities
- Internal Newsletter to update Regis University community
  - Accomplishments
  - Opportunities
  - Highlights
- External Communication to our Community Advisory Group
  - Events on campus
  - Regis in the community
  - Highlight community contributions
- Begin Process of Installing Multilingual Campus Signage
- Bilingual Commencement Booklet
- Parent newsletter and informational workshop sessions in Spanish
- Internal- and External-facing Website—mission statement, strategic plan, resources
- Repository of Data: student graduation data, stories
- Institutional Buy-in—messaging
- Communicate vision for expectations re: personal development/departmental commitments to development—“*In Lak’ech*” messaging

##### Area of Focus #2: Infrastructure to Support and Sustain our HSI work

- Create HSI Staffing Chart and Grant Governance Structure
  - Form small grant-writing teams – student support, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), Humanities/Social Sciences, Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions (RHCHP), Anderson College of Business and Computing
  - Appoint STEM lead—Dr. Allyson Sterling in Biology
  - Establish HSI grant liaison in Advancement—Ms. Laurel Petralia
  - Apply for 3 Grants (Title 5, STEM)
    - Submitted Title 5 *Camino Claro* grant proposal (June 2023)
- Map out Staffing Needs to be funded by Grants
  - Director of First-Generation Student Success Center to manage Summer Bridge and First-Generation student advising and scholarship programs
  - Full-time HSI Director to manage grants, programming, partnerships
  - HSI liaisons to each of the colleges

**Area of Focus #3: Equity-minded, culturally-responsive Staff/Faculty/Administration**

- Professional Development opportunities
  - Workshops—Annual Academic Excellence Workshops—HSI theme
  - Conferences
    - Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
    - Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE)
    - AJCU Conference on Diversity and Equity (CDE)—Regis will host in June 2024
  - Learning Communities in each of the colleges
  - Visits to our HSI neighboring schools to learn best practices—CSU Pueblo
  - Colorado HSI Consortium

**Area of Focus #4: Transformational, culturally-enhancing educational experience**

- Expand Summer Bridge Program
  - More targeted recruitment with Admissions, incl. from Porter Billups Program
  - First-year mandatory study sessions and check-ins
  - Math Focus
- Enhance supports for first generation students with grant resources
- Support existing Latin American Studies Program proposal with grant resources
- Contribute HSI expertise to Regis College Core Curriculum Revision Process and Curricular Conversations in Anderson and Rueckert Hartman
- Student Center Mural Project, led by Tony Ortega and funded by Mission
- Good Trouble Conversations
- Second Annual Day of the Dead Celebration
- Inclusive Hiring with goal of faculty mirroring diversity of student body

**Area of Focus #5: Family, Alumni, and Community Engagement and Partnerships**

- Parent newsletter and informational workshops in Spanish
- Financial Aid and First-Generation parents’ informational workshops
- Outreach to Latine leaders and community organizations
  - Latin American Educational Foundation (LAEF) and many others
- Begin outreach to Spanish-speaking Catholic Parishes
  - College information workshops
- Form HSI External Advisory group, with support from Nita Gonzales
- Implement *Camino Claro* Grant Programs
- Host AJCU CDE Conference in June 2024, highlight our HSI work to advise other AJCU schools that are working toward the designation.

## Year 3 Goals

### **Area of Focus #1: Inclusive and Welcoming Campus**

- Multilingual Signage on Major Buildings and Campus signs
- Robust, user-friendly internal- and external-facing website
  - mission statement, strategic plan, grant-funded projects, faculty highlights, program updates, community partner updates
  - Extensive Data Repository with graduation rates and alumni updates in both narrative and video format
  - In-depth descriptions of the programs we offer
- Internal and External Newsletter
- Repository of *servingsness* resources for faculty, staff, students
- Campus art reflects diversity of student body
- Library resources reflect needs of diverse student body and inclusive curriculum
- Improvement in Retention and Sense of Belonging of Faculty and Staff of Color

### **Area of Focus #2: Infrastructure to Support and Sustain our HSI work**

- Fund Essential Positions
  - Director of First-Generation Student Success Center to manage Summer Bridge and First-Generation student advising and scholarship programs
  - Full-time HSI Director to manage grants, programming, partnerships
  - .50 FTE or .75 FTE HSI liaisons in each of the colleges and library
  - Full-time grant writer to assist with HSI grants
- Send key faculty and staff to HACU/AHSIE Conferences, who in turn will hold workshops for Faculty/Staff in their units.
- Goal by year 3: receive 2 HSI grants—STEM and Student Supports
- Data Repository for quick access and accuracy when writing grants
- Assessment of HSI initiatives with results informing future planning
  - Individual, departmental, university
  - Student Progress
  - Climate Survey

### **Area of Focus #3: Equity-minded, culturally-responsive Staff/Faculty/Administration**

- HSI Professional Development Workshops
  - Inclusion in New Faculty and Staff Orientation – modeled after Mission
  - Ongoing Faculty and Staff Development
- Learning communities led by college HSI liaisons
- Send more faculty and staff to HACU/AHSIE conferences
- Maximize partnerships with Colorado HSI Consortium for Professional Development Opportunities
- Expanded retention efforts for diverse faculty and staff

**Area of Focus #4: Transformational, culturally-enhancing educational experience**

- Expand Summer Bridge to 50 students in two tracks: STEM and Humanities
  - Including Full-time, 12-month Summer Bridge/Programming Coordinator
  - More targeted recruiting
  - First year co-seminar for Bridge students
- Build out Second Semester of First Year Experience Second Semester with grant resources (*Camino Claro* Grant)
- Expand supports for first generation students
- Increase faculty diversity to reflect student body diversity
- Implementation of Grant-funded programs
- Provost Academic Affairs Strategic Plan
  - HSI best practices
  - Curricular Revisions
  - Expand Latin American Studies Proposal – minor, major, student and faculty research opportunities)

**Area of Focus #5: Family, Alumni, & Community Engagement and Partnerships**

- Continue to engage external partners
- Expand partnerships with local Spanish-speaking and Latine Catholic parishes
  - College informational workshops
- Establish Student Fellowship Program – first-generation students placed in local businesses, organizations, nonprofits for paid internships/fellowships
- Engage Latine Alumni Association in targeted fundraising projects
- Cultivate a culture of giving back among students and alumni
- Host Denver Public Schools Spring Hispanic Heritage Day
- Regis Outreach on Justice Issues affecting Latine community
- Expand partner participation - TIAA, JP Morgan/Chase, and US Bank



## Year 5 Goals

### **Area of Focus #1: Inclusive and Welcoming Campus**

- Report on Learning and Growth, Progress made by university units—present to Senior Leadership and Board and Community Partners
  - Continued communication of vision for individuals, departments, divisions
- Multilingual Campus
- Art reflects the diversity of the student body
- Programming reflects the diversity of the student body
- Faculty diversity more closely mirrors that of the student body
- More multicultural spaces on campus with additional support staff

### **Area of Focus #2: Infrastructure to Support and Sustain our HSI work**

- HSI Office – fully-staffed
  - HSI Director
  - Full-time First-Generation Student Success Program Director
  - Full-time HSI Fellows in each unit—send to HACU and AHSIE Conferences
  - Grant Manager
  - Bilingual, Bicultural Counselor
- Grant Progress
  - Goal by year 5: receive 3 HSI grants
  - Assess effectiveness of funded initiatives
  - Set/reset funding priorities to include campus infrastructure projects—buildings, labs, collections
- Assessment Data included in data repository – personal, departmental, university.
  - Also assess success of all demographics
- Multicultural Center

### **Area of Focus #3: Equity-minded, culturally-responsive Staff/Faculty/Administration**

- Well-established program of workshops, learning communities
- HSI fellows create and implement HSI professional development at college level
- Send more individuals to HACU/AHSIE conferences
- Assessment of staff/faculty/administration

### **Area of Focus #4: Transformational, culturally-enhancing educational experience**

- Enhanced Summer Bridge Experience and Beyond
  - More intentional recruitment of a diverse group
  - First year co-seminars
  - Second year engagement
  - Sophomore Fellowship Program
  - Expanded Study Abroad/Travel Learning Opportunities

- Assessment of FYE second semester enhancements
- Grow supports for first generation students with additional grant resources and assessment of those enhancements
- Develop Regionally-respected Research and Teaching Center—Race, Ethnicity, Migration
  - Umbrella research center for Latin American Studies Program
  - Visiting Scholar appointments
  - Research positions for students

**Area of Focus #5: Family, Alumni, & Community Engagement and Partnerships**

- Engagement with External Partners
  - Grant-funded collaborative projects
- Strong Partnerships with Local Spanish-Speaking Parishes
- Strengthen our outreach to parents and families
- Larger Student Fellowship Program – first gen students placed in local businesses, organizations, nonprofits for paid internships/fellowships
- Engagement with Latine Alumni Association—regular events, fundraising, travel learning, fellowship opportunities for students
- Established international partnerships with Jesuit universities in Latin America and Spain

## **Resources**

### **Books**

#### **For information on HSIs:**

Garcia, Gina Ann. 2023. *Transforming Hispanic-Serving Institutions for Equity and Justice*.

Garcia, Gina Ann, editor. 2020. *Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in Practice: Defining Servingness at HSIs*.

#### **For information on the history of Jesuit Institutions in the United States:**

Rizzi, Michael T. 2022. *America's Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A History*.

### **Articles**

#### **For information on HSIs:**

Garcia, Bucher and Villarreal Sosa. "Decolonizing Faculty Governance at Hispanic Serving Institutions," *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 2023.

"Defining 'Servingness' at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): Practical Implications for HSI Leaders" <https://www.equityinhighered.org/resources/ideas-and-insights/defining-servingness-at-hispanic-serving-institutions-hsis-practical-implications-for-hsi-leaders/>

#### **For information on the Jesuit founders of Las Vegas College in New Mexico:**

Bohme, Frederick G. "The Italians in New Mexico." *The New Mexico Historical Review* 34, 2 (1959)

### **Podcasts**

#### **Excellent Conversations about HSIs:**

¿Qué pasa, HSIs? <https://www.ginaanngarcia.com/podcast>

## Appendix A

### HSI Areas of Focus

