



Power in Participation: Authentic Nonprofit Board Diversity

Latinos LEAD promotes a more inclusive and effective civil society by preparing and recruiting Latinos for nonprofit board leadership; supporting nonprofit organizations to develop governing boards that reflect their constituents; and, collaborating with partners to drive greater diversity in nonprofit governance.

The Challenge

America's nonprofit leadership does not reflect the nation's rich ethnic diversity. In 2017, a BoardSource study found that Latinos made up barely 5% of board members at the 1,759 U.S. nonprofits surveyed. Twenty-seven percent of these boards were all White—a disappointing *increase* from 25% in 2015. The report summarized, *"Boards are no more diverse than they were two years ago and current recruitment priorities indicate this is unlikely to change."*

Dozens of similar studies have found that governing boards in every major sector of the nonprofit industry fall short in reflecting its Latino constituency. Surveys of nonprofit leaders consistently cite several factors contributing to this challenge: A lack of qualified Latino board candidates (*i.e.*, no "pipeline"); doubts that Latinos can meet board member annual giving expectations; and, difficulty in retaining the few Latinos who are elected to boards.

Benefits of Nonprofit Board Diversity

There is overwhelming empirical evidence that ethnically diverse nonprofit boards can catalyze direct and sustained positive outcomes across a wide range of programming, operational, and institutional goals. Socially diverse groups are more innovative and resourceful than homogeneous groups; people with different backgrounds bring new information and are less likely to "rubber-stamp" suboptimal management strategies and program designs. Latino board members can provide access to new donor pools, brimming with prospects who have enjoyed unprecedented growth in household income and personal wealth. Private foundations and donors give greater weight to governing board diversity as a criteria in philanthropic decisions. Latino board members can help nonprofits recruit diverse staff and volunteers, develop culturally authentic programs, and build new audiences.

Operating Principles:

- There is a deep talent pool of highly qualified Latinos who are willing and able to serve on nonprofit boards; we help the nonprofit industry tap into this pipeline.
- Increasing Latino representation on nonprofit boards will strengthen the charitable sector, advance Latino professional development, and fortify Latino community leadership.
- Our program and business models are evidence-based: Studies consistently show that nonprofit programs have greater impact when a nonprofit board authentically reflects its target population and catchment service area.
- Latinos can drive meaningful social justice by leveraging their nonprofit leadership experience to serve in public office, or on advisory boards and commissions.

Business Model

Latinos LEAD collaborates with nonprofit boards and senior staff to provide state-of-the-art governing board recruiting and retention services, customized for the organization's mission and programs. Contract fee revenue covers candidate recruiting costs and governing board inclusion training, while foundation grants and donor gifts support Latino community and candidate engagement, governance training and leadership development, program evaluation, and nonprofit industry outreach.

Programs

- **Board Member Recruiting:** [Pathways to LEAD](#) deploys state-of-the-art executive recruiting techniques to bring Latino talent to the nonprofit boardroom. Candidates for board vacancies apply directly, are nominated by third-parties, or are identified through vigorous referral source outreach. Latinos LEAD taps into its robust database of candidate profiles to begin the search, following leads and seeking the optimum alignment between the candidate's competencies and the priorities of the nonprofit organization. Latinos LEAD screens and interviews promising candidates, then offers the selection committee a slate of strong nominees.
- **Promoting Inclusion:** [Inclusion Readiness Intake](#) helps nonprofit organizations lay a foundation for the successful recruitment and retention of Latino governing board members. Latinos LEAD collaborates with your executive and board teams to develop inclusion guidance customized for your programming, strategic position, target population, and service area demographics. This service is an option for organizations participating in either Premier Board Recruiting or the Board Solutions Network.
- **Leadership Development:** [Ready to LEAD](#) Ready to LEAD offers three webinars designed to prepare Latino professionals for effective service as nonprofit governing board members. Webinar participants receive the Ready to LEAD Toolkit, which includes references and links to other resources in professional development, nonprofit leadership, and nonprofit organization management. Webinar sessions: Fundamentals in Nonprofit Governance; Nonprofit Finance & Fundraising; and Advanced Topics in Nonprofit Governance & Inclusion.

Partners

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