

National Hispanic Heritage Month



September 15, 2023 - October 15, 2023

National Hispanic Heritage Month

Celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson.

September 15th is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively.

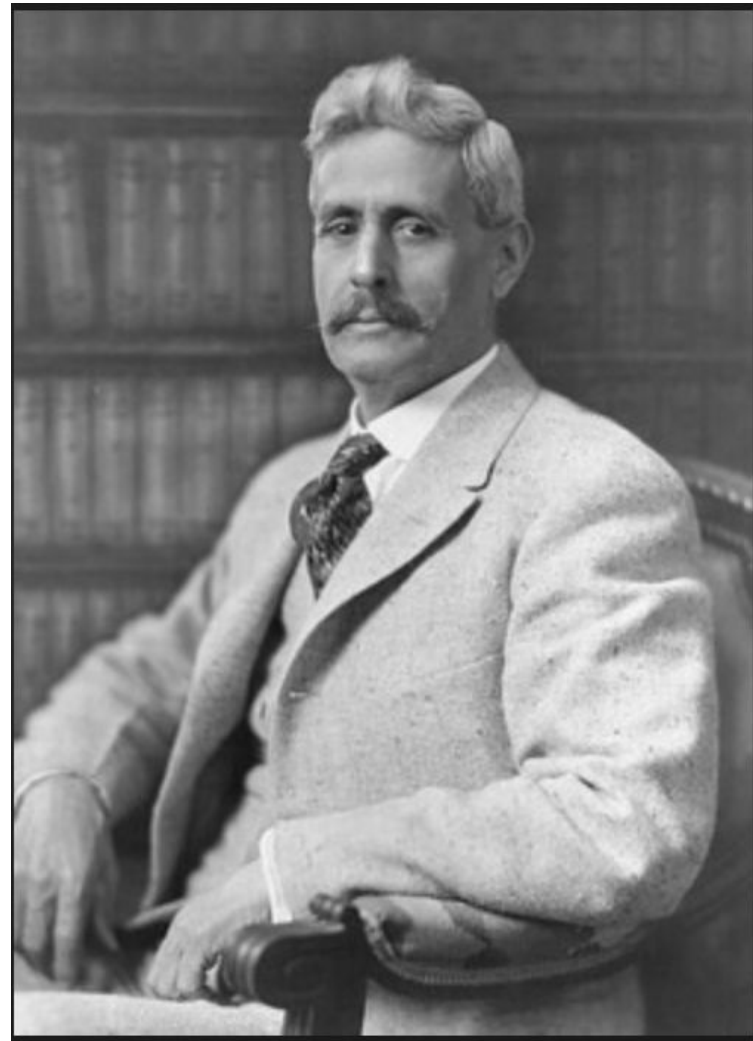
“When Latinx kids don’t see themselves represented on stage or film or television or newspapers or history textbooks, what they’re told is, ‘You don’t matter’.

But when they see themselves represented,
then they are told ... “You are important. You are
authors. You are scientists. You are explorers. You are
special. You are leaders. You are respected. You are the
reason we are here.”

—John Leguizamo

Octavio Ambrosio Larrazolo

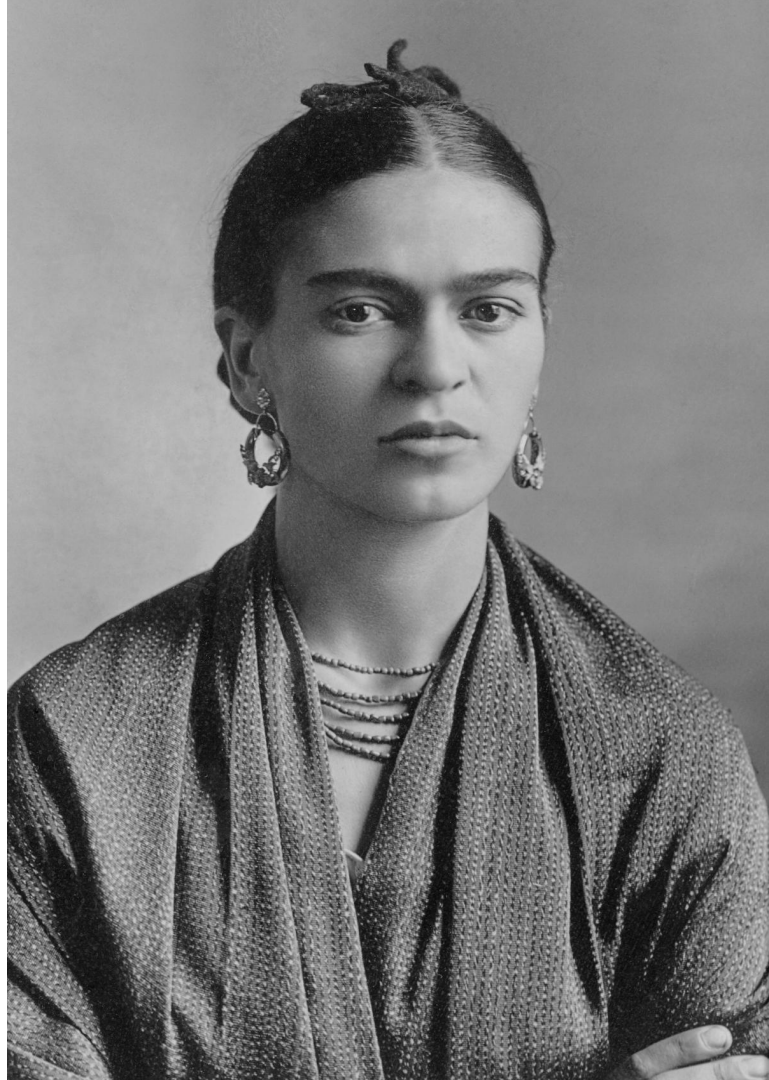
In 1928 Octaviano Ambrosio Larrazolo was elected to fill the unexpired term of New Mexico senator Andrieus A. Jones, who had died in office. Upon taking his seat on December 7 of that year, he became the first Hispanic American to serve in the United States Senate. Larrazolo, who was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, on December 7, 1859, was known as a gifted orator and a champion of civil rights.



Frida Kahlo

Mexican painter best known for her uncompromising and brilliantly coloured self-portraits that deal with such themes as identity, the human body, and death. Although she denied the connection, she is often identified as a Surrealist. In addition to her work, Kahlo was known for her tumultuous relationship with muralist Diego Rivera.

“At the end of the day, we can endure much more than we think we can.” —
Frida Kahlo

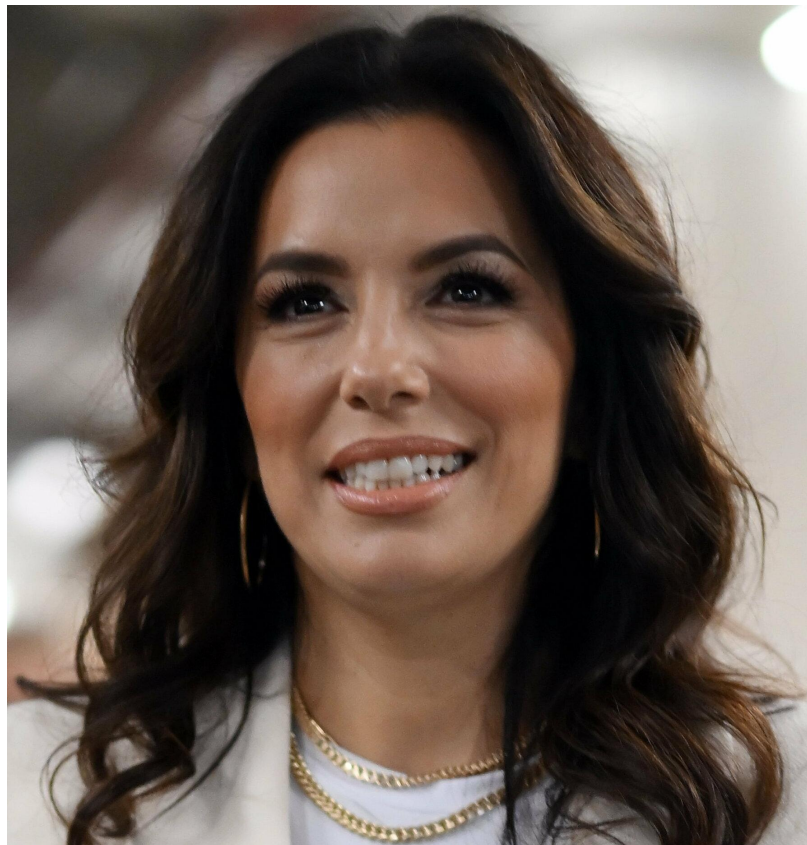


Eva Longoria

Eva Longoria is an award-winning actor, producer, director, entrepreneur, philanthropist and “Desperate Housewives” alumna.

She founded the Eva Longoria Foundation in 2012 to help Latinas build better futures for themselves and their families through education and entrepreneurship.

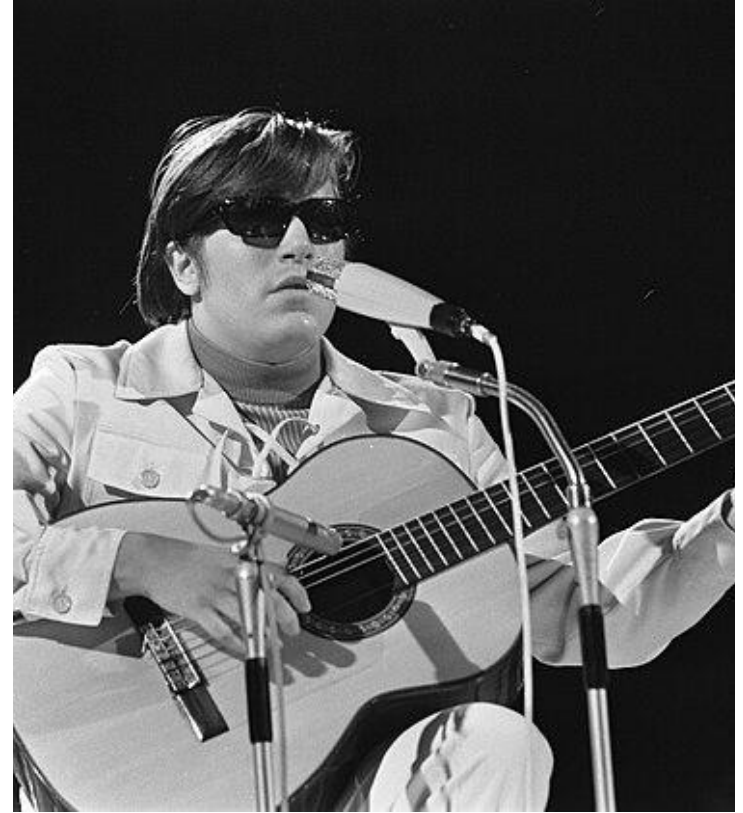
A pillar in the Latino community, Eva sits on the boards of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF) and La Plaza de Cultura y Artes.



Jose Feliciano

José Feliciano is recognized as the first Latin Artist to effectively cross over into the English music market, opening the doors for other artists who now play an important role in the American music industry.

Feliciano has been acclaimed by critics around the world as “The greatest living guitarist.” Referred to as “The Picasso of his Realm,” José Feliciano’s accomplishments are highly celebrated. Awarded over forty-five Gold and Platinum records; he has won nineteen Grammy nominations, earning nine Grammy Awards, including the “LARAS Award for Lifetime Achievement.”

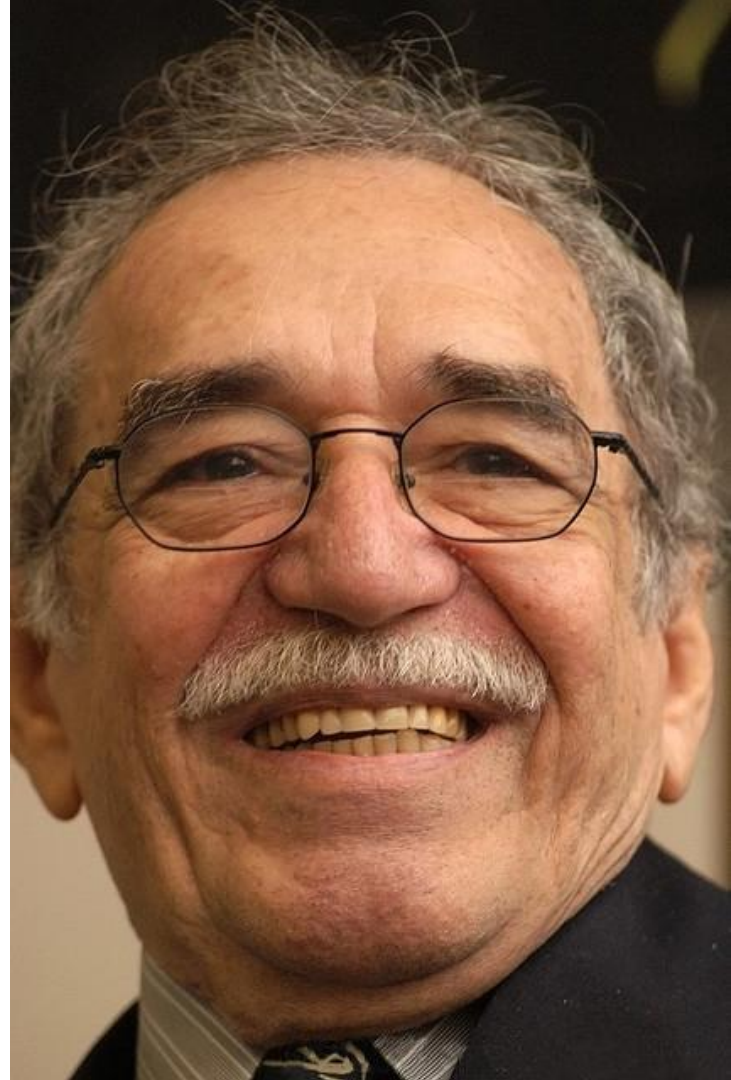


Gabriel Garcia Marquez

A Colombian novelist, short-story writer, screenwriter, and journalist. Considered one of the most significant authors of the 20th century, particularly in the Spanish language.

Awarded the 1972 Neustadt International Prize for Literature and the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature. He pursued a self-directed education that resulted in leaving law school for a career in journalism.

“It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old, they grow old because they stop pursuing dreams.” —*Gabriel García Márquez*



Diego Rivera

Diego Rivera was a prominent Mexican painter and muralist, born in Guanajuato, Mexico. A pioneer of the Mexican Muralist movement, his works depicted the lives of working-class people and indigenous Mexicans.

Rivera's paintings dealt with highly controversial themes such as communism, economic inequality, oppression and their effects on society. He was a committed communist and drew many criticisms for his politically charged works.

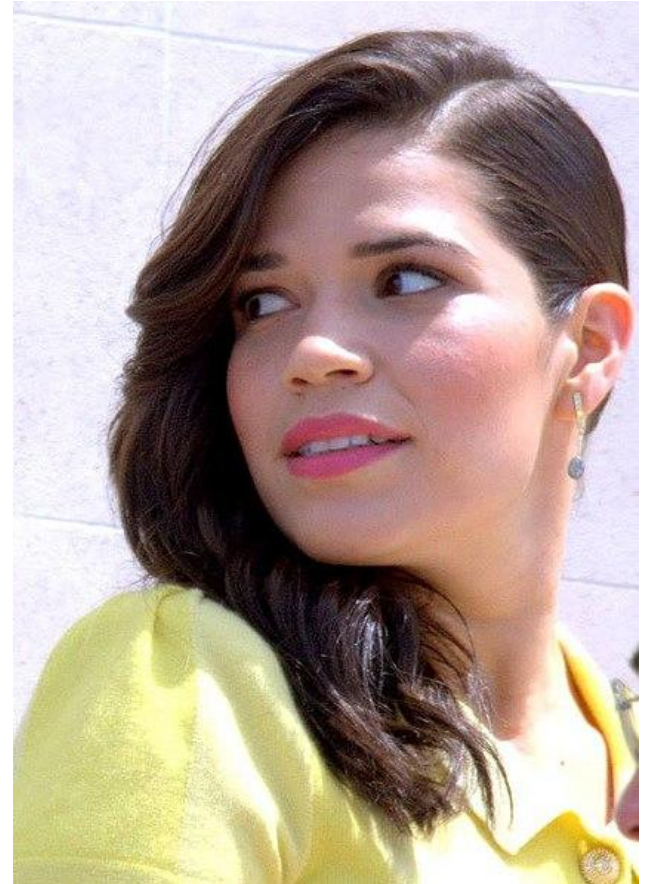
Diego was married to the famous artist Frida Kahlo. Rivera's contributions to Latin American fresco paintings revival were significant and continue to inspire artists all over the world. He leaves behind an immense body of work that will forever stand testament to his skill as an artist and his insatiable hunger for meaningful political discourse through creative expression.



America Ferrera

An award-winning actress, producer, director and activist. Ferrera is best known for her breakthrough role as Betty Suarez on ABC's hit comedy, *Ugly Betty*, for which she won Golden Globe, Emmy, Screen Actors Guild, ALMA, and Imagen Awards. She produced and starred in the acclaimed NBC workplace comedy, *Superstore*.

In 2016 Ferrera co-founded HARNESS, an organization connecting storytellers and activists to amplify the cultural narrative around social justice. She speaks throughout the country as an advocate for human and civil rights and was the opening speaker at the monumental Women's March on Washington in January 2017.



Bad Bunny

Bad Bunny Puerto Rican rapper, singer, songwriter, record producer, and occasional professional wrestler. His musical style is primarily defined as Latin trap and reggaeton. Bad Bunny is credited with helping Spanish-language music achieve mainstream popularity in the worldwide market.

Bad Bunny is an activist supporting the needs of impoverished Puerto Ricans through humanitarian aid, with his Good Bunny Foundation, as well as an ally of LGBTQ rights and freedoms.



Erika L. Sanchez

A daughter of Mexican immigrants. Her debut poetry collection, *Lessons on Expulsion*, was a finalist for the PEN America Open Book Award. Her debut young adult novel, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, was a *New York Times* bestseller, a National Book Awards finalist, and Tomás Rivera Award winner. Time has recognized it as one of the best YA novels of all time.

Sánchez was a Fulbright Scholar, a 2015 Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent fellow from the Poetry Foundation, a 2017-2019 Princeton Arts Fellow, a 2018 recipient of the 21st Century Award from the Chicago Public Library Foundation, and a 2019 recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship.



Sylvia Rivera

In addition to being an influential Hispanic American, Sylvia Rivera is also an iconic figure in the gay and transgender rights movement.

Rivera, born in New York City in 1951 of Puerto Rican and Venezuelan descent, had a rough upbringing. Forced to leave home when she was 10, making her way through in the streets of New York City. Often facing discrimination and violence, compelling her to begin her activism.

Rivera and her friend, Marsha P. Johnson, made an indelible mark in the advancement of LGBTQ rights. Heralded alongside Johnson as the mothers of the gay rights movement, Rivera was honored as one of the 50 activists included in the Stonewall National Monument, the first national monument dedicated to LGBTQ rights. Rivera died February 2002.



Luis von Ahn

Co-founder and CEO of the language-learning app, Duolingo. He is also the co-creator of CAPTCHA, and creator of reCAPTCHA. In 2018, von Ahn received the \$500K Lemelson-MIT Prize for groundbreaking inventions in global computer technology.

Duolingo's Mission: We're here to develop the best education in the world and make it universally available. Our global team works together to make language learning fun, free, and effective for anyone who wants to learn, wherever they are.

He is the founder of The Luis von Ahn Foundation to support local community leaders and nonprofit organizations working on improving the lives of individuals, especially women and girls, in Guatemala.



Lin-Manuel Miranda

Miranda was born in 1980 in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City to Puerto Rican parents, who immigrated to New York to pursue academics.

Miranda was raised around musicals and started writing his first title in 1999, *In the Heights*, loosely based on his own experiences growing up, opened on Broadway in March 2008.

His musical *Hamilton* opened on Broadway in 2015, Miranda reimagined the beginnings of America told by all actors of color, whose ancestors didn't have a say in how the country was built. The hip-hop musical quickly became one of the most profitable shows to ever hit Broadway.



Dolores Huerta

Dolores Huerta stands as a giant in the fight for Hispanic American labor rights.

Born in 1930, the New Mexico native of Mexican descent grew up in a farm worker community in Stockton, California.

Co-founding the Agricultural Workers Association in 1960 and collaborated with Caesar Chavez to found the National Farm Workers Association in 1962. Her activism continued in California, where she supported and lead various strikes for workers' rights. Later stepping away from the union to focus on women's rights.

Huerta runs the Dolores Huerta Foundation and has received several accolades, including an inaugural Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights in 1998 under President Clinton and the Presidential Medal of Freedom under President Obama in 2012.



“We must use our lives to make the world a better place to live, not just to acquire things. That is what we are put on the earth for.” — Dolores Huerta

Celia Cruz

A Cuban singer and one of the most popular Latin artists of the 20th century. Cruz rose to fame in Cuba during the 1950s as a singer of guarachas.

In the following decades, she became known internationally as the "Queen of Salsa" due to her contributions to Latin music. Throughout her career, she was awarded numerous prizes and distinctions.

"Forgiving is not forgetting. Forgiving is remembering without pain." — Celia Cruz



Jose Andres

Washington, D.C.-based, Spanish-American chef and restaurateur. He has won a number of awards, both for his cooking and for his humanitarian work. He is a professor and the founder of the Global Food Institute at George Washington University.

Andrés is the founder of World Central Kitchen (WCK), a non-profit devoted to providing meals in the wake of natural disasters. He was awarded a 2015 National Humanities Medal at a 2016 White House ceremony for his work.



“I realized very early the power of food to evoke memory, to bring people together, to transport you to other places, and I wanted to be a part of that.”— José Andrés

Guillermo del Toro

An award winning Mexican filmmaker and author. His work has been characterized by a strong connection to fairy tales and horror, with an effort to infuse visual or poetic beauty in the grotesque. He has had a lifelong fascination with monsters, which he considers symbols of great power.

When del Toro was about eight years old, he began experimenting with his father's Super 8 camera, making short films with Planet of the Apes toys and other objects. One short focused on a "serial killer potato" with ambitions of world domination.



Ellen Ochoa

The first Hispanic American woman to go to space with a nine-day mission in 1993.

She first obtained her physics degree from San Diego State University and later her masters and doctorate from Stanford University's department of electrical engineering by 1985.

NASA selected Ochoa in 1991 and she became an astronaut in July of that year. Two years later, Ochoa made history on board the Space Shuttle *Discovery*. She later completed three more missions.

Ochoa became the first Hispanic American director of the Johnson Space Center in 2013, only the second woman to take the helm. After retiring with 30 years of service, Ochoa continues to advocate for women in STEM.



"I tell students that the opportunities I had were a result of having a good educational background. Education is what allows you to stand out."— Ellen Ochoa

Jennifer Lopez (J-Lo)

Jennifer Lopez was born in the Bronx, New York, to Puerto Rican parents who supported her ambitions to become a singer. Lopez made her breakthrough performance in *Selena*. The 1997 movie—in which she played the beloved Mexican singer Selena Quintanilla.

Lopez is one of the most notable Hispanic American figures in the movie and music industry. She launched the Lopez Family Foundation. The nonprofit organization seeks to increase the availability of healthcare for underprivileged women and children.



Gloria Estefan

Born in Cuba in 1957, Estefan's family fled to Miami during the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

Her lengthy career has earned her three Grammy Awards and a Presidential Medal of Freedom under President Obama in 2015, as well as the Kennedy Center Honors in 2017.

In June 2023, Estefan became the first Hispanic woman to be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.



Julia Alvarez

One of the most critically revered Latina writers and has published poems, novels and essays throughout her career. Some of her most famous books include *In the Time of Butterflies* and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*.

Alvarez was born in New York City in 1950 before her family moved to the Dominican Republic.

President Barack Obama presented Alvarez the National Medal of Arts during a 2014 ceremony.



Sonia Sotomayor

A Bronx native of Puerto Rican descent, Sonia Sotomayor became the first Hispanic American to serve as a member of the Supreme Court.

She quickly made education a priority through her mother's insistence after her father died when she was 9. "I was going to college and I was going to become an attorney, and I knew that when I was ten. Ten. That's no jest."

Twelve years later, Sotomayor made history when President Obama picked her as his first nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2009.



Rita Moreno

A Puerto Rican actress, dancer, and singer. Noted for her work on stage and screen in a career spanning over seven decades. She is one of a few performers to have been awarded an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony (EGOT). Additional accolades include the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Medal of Arts, the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award, the Kennedy Center Honor, and a Peabody Award.

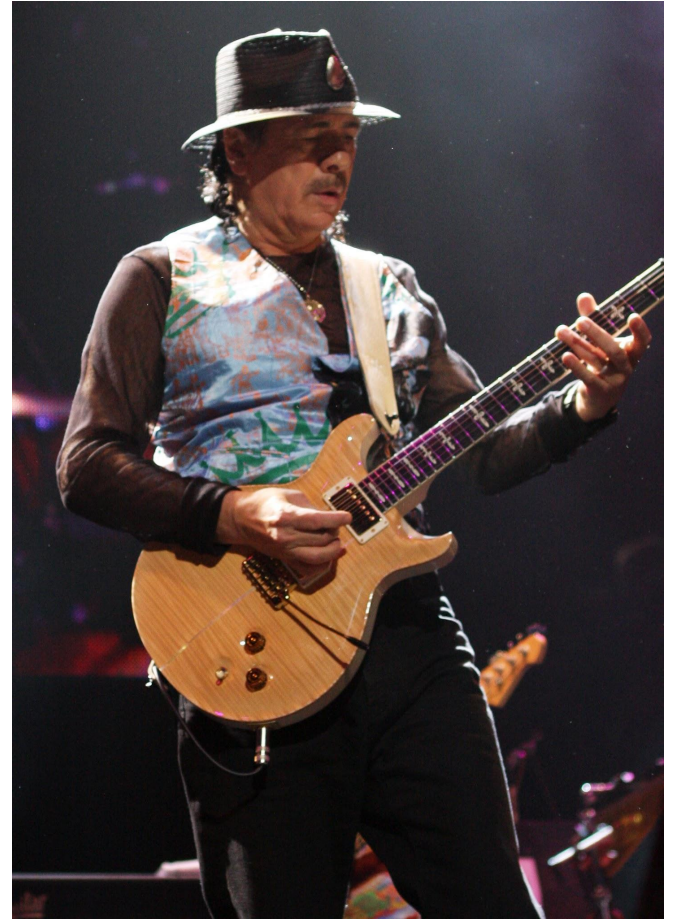
Moreno's early work included supporting roles in the classic musical films *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) and *The King and I* (1956), before her breakout role as Anita in *West Side Story* (1961), which earned her the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress, becoming the first Latin American woman to win an Academy Award



Carlos Santana

For more than four decades—from Santana's earliest days as a groundbreaking Afro-Latin-blues-rock fusion outfit in San Francisco—Carlos has been the visionary force behind artistry that transcends musical genres and generational, cultural and geographical boundaries.

The arc of Santana's performing and recording career is complemented by a lifelong devotion to social activism and humanitarian causes. The Milagro Foundation, established in 1998, has granted more than eight million dollars to non-profit programs supporting under-resourced children and youth in the areas of arts, education and health.



Roberto Clemente

A prolific right fielder born in Puerto Rico, Roberto Clemente paved the way for Hispanic Americans in Major League Baseball.

The Pittsburgh Pirates scouted him during training and Clemente, wearing the iconic number 21, went on to become the first Latin American and Caribbean to win a World Series as a starting player in 1960.

Clemente died in a plane crash in 1972 while on his way to Nicaragua to deliver humanitarian aid when he was 38. In his honor, the MLB renamed the Commissioner's Award to the Roberto Clemente Award, given to the player who all-around exemplifies sportsmanship and community outreach. He was also inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973, making him the first Latin American and Caribbean honoree.



Cesar Chavez

Born in Arizona to a Mexican American family, Chavez grew up around the people he later helped through his activism.

After an honorable discharge from the Navy, Chavez worked as a lumber handler, where he helped set up a chapter of the Community Service Organization, a pivotal civil rights organization for Latinos in California.

The CSO his full-time job, meeting fellow activist Dolores Huerta. The two would go on to found the National Farm Workers Association, later the United Farm Workers labor union, becoming primary figures for Latin American civil rights.

Chavez, still regarded as an important civil rights leader, posthumously received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1993.



“You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.” — Cesar Chavez