

**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
The United States Department of Veterans Affairs
And
The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities**

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to provide the cooperative framework for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) to develop initiatives and perform outreach to increase employment and educational opportunities in VA for students of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), other HACU member institutions, and Veterans.

II. Parties

The parties in this MOU are the VA and HACU. Nothing in the MOU shall obligate either party to the commitment of any funds.

III. Goals and Objectives

The goal of the MOU is to establish a robust, collaborative working partnership that fosters collaboration, between VA, HACU, and HSIs to the extent that such coordination, collaboration, and resource sharing is consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, to support their respective missions and to achieve the parties' common aim to increase outreach to the Hispanic community, including HSIs, HACU member institutions, and Veterans, for employment and educational opportunities in VA.

To accomplish these objectives, the parties will engage in activities that serve to:

- Increase awareness of the parties' developmental programs and employment opportunities through targeted outreach and cross-marketing for the purpose of enhancing diversity and addressing potential barriers to Hispanic representation within VA for students from HSIs and the national Hispanic community.
- Provide outreach for speakers, coaches, mentors, and webinars to support each other's developmental initiatives.
- Provide information on opportunities for training, mentoring, and shadowing experiences.
- Strengthen the Department's support for Executive Order 13555, "White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics."
- Conduct outreach to brand VA as an employer of choice to HSIs.

IV. Overview of VA

VA's mission is to fulfill President Lincoln's promise, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

The Veterans Health Administration provides services to more than 6.6 million Veterans who have unselfishly served their country. VA operates the Nation's largest integrated health care system, with more than 1,500 hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and other facilities.

The Veterans Benefits Administration administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, their dependents, and survivors.

The National Cemetery Administration operates 131 national cemeteries in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Burial and memorial benefits are available for eligible Servicemembers, Veterans, and family members.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) is an organization within the Office of Human Resources and Administration. ODI's mission is to build a diverse workforce and cultivate an inclusive workplace to deliver the best services to our Nation's Veterans, their families, and beneficiaries.

V. Overview of HACU

HACU is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, whose mission is to champion Hispanic success in higher education by:

- Promoting the development of member colleges and universities;
- Improving access to and the quality of post-secondary educational opportunities for Hispanic students; and
- Meeting the needs of business, industry, and government through the development and sharing of resources, information, and expertise.

HACU is a national and international association of higher education institutions and is based in San Antonio, Texas. Established in 1986, the association represents more than 482 colleges and universities that collectively enroll approximately 2/3 of all U.S. Hispanics in higher education.

HACU's U.S. membership includes HSIs (where Hispanics constitute a minimum of 25 percent of the total full-time equivalent enrollment at the undergraduate level); associate members (where Hispanics constitute a minimum of 10 percent of the enrollment or at least 1,000 students); Hispanic-Serving School Districts (a new member affiliation comprised of K-12 school districts whose total enrollment is at least 25 percent Hispanic); and since 2000, partner institutions that do not meet the

enrollment criteria for full membership, but have an interest in and a commitment to Hispanic higher education. In 1996, HACU initiated an international membership program, which currently represents approximately 50 universities in Latin America, Spain, and Portugal.

HACU manages numerous college-level, pre-collegiate, scholarships, research, technology, and workforce development initiatives, programs, and conferences. HACU also maintains offices in Washington, D.C., for public policy advocacy purposes and for the HACU National Internship Program (HNIP)—the Nation’s largest Hispanic college internship program, and in Sacramento, CA, for Western states regional policy advocacy.

VI. Responsibilities of the Parties

Per availability of resources, both parties shall be responsible for the goals and activities cited in this Agreement, and shall contribute to this partnership, as appropriate.

A. VA Responsibilities

1. Advise Administrations, Staff Offices, and other VA organizations of this MOU and disseminate information about its provisions VA-wide.
2. Provide Administrations, VA Staff Offices, and other VA organizations with information on HACU’s services, including its member HSIs offering major fields of study which meet the requirements of VA mission related career fields.
3. Collaborate with other VA organizations, as appropriate, to promulgate the provisions of this MOU to promote access to and participation of HACU/HSI students and Veterans in VA’s Pathways Internship Program and the National Diversity Internship Program through HNIP.
4. Participate in career fairs, on-campus career orientations, and diversity outreach efforts, as appropriate and budget permitting, to support the aims of this MOU.
5. Provide HSIs with information about available VA scholarships, fellowships, stipends, internships, and grants.

B. HACU Responsibilities

1. Advise HSIs and other HACU member institutions of this MOU.
2. Disseminate VA materials and communications to member institutions, including but not be limited to:
 - a. Information about available scholarships, fellowships, stipends, internships, grants, clinical residencies, etc.;

- b. Information on education and other VA training available to students and HACU faculty on the mission and scope of VA and on the range of career opportunities within the Agency;
 - c. Information about VA employment opportunities; and
 - d. Information on health and other benefits available to Veterans through VA.
3. Encourage participation by its membership and other HSIs in VA dialogues and other initiatives related to post-secondary education and VA-mission related career fields.
 4. Provide information on HSIs and HACU member institutions offering major fields of study, which meet the requirements of VA mission-related careers.
 5. Share with VA priorities and concerns identified by HSIs serving Hispanic Veteran students to assist VA in securing funding support intended for this underserved population.
 6. Assist in the execution of programs, forums, and workshops focused on increasing employment and training opportunities at VA for students and educators of HSIs and HACU-member institutions.
 7. Assist VA in its recruitment outreach efforts by linking to VA vacancy announcements on their homepage.

C. Both VA and HACU will:

1. Meet or correspond periodically to review the status and progress of this MOU.
2. Notify designated VA/HACU MOU points-of-contact (POCs) regarding upcoming MOU meetings, MOU status updates, and requests related to the terms of the MOU.
3. Track outcomes of VA/HACU MOU activities to the extent practicable to report on areas of achievement and enhancement.
4. Identify opportunities and programs where professionals from VA and HACU can participate in outreach, capacity-building, training, workforce development, and exchange programs.
5. Encourage the expansion of participation of HACU member institutions in VA's student programs through the existing HNIP.

6. Encourage and facilitate the participation of HSIs and other HACU member institutions in outreach opportunities.

VII. Points-of-Contact

VA and HACU will designate POCs within their respective organizations to implement the MOU. The POCs will direct and coordinate partnership activities to ensure that mutual benefits and interests are served. The respective offices responsible for implementation and maintenance will effectively communicate and keep all parties up-to-date on identified responsible parties. ODI will serve as the organizational POC for the purposes of this MOU.

VIII. Periodic Review

Representatives of VA and HACU will annually review, on or around the anniversary date of this MOU, the progress in the implementation of the MOU. This MOU shall remain in effect unless amended or terminated by the parties. Amendments must be agreed to by both parties. This MOU may be terminated at any time by either party upon sixty (60) days notice to the other party.

IX. Costs

Nothing herein shall be construed as requiring VA or HACU and its members to expend funds on behalf of the purpose, objectives, and responsibilities set forth in this MOU, except as specifically agreed to in writing by the signatories or the organizations they represent. All expenditures by VA are subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

X. Effective Date

The terms of this MOU will become effective on the date of the last signature by the parties and will remain in effect until terminated by either party as specified in Section VIII.

XI. Modification

Amendments must be bilaterally executed in writing and signed by authorized representatives of both parties. No oral or unilateral amendments will be effective. Only terminations done in accordance with the terms of this agreement may be done unilaterally.

XII. Other Provisions

This MOU does not create a partnership or a joint venture and neither party has the authority to bind the other. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), decisions or disclosure of information to the public regarding project(s) and program(s)

within this MOU will be made following consultation by the parties to this MOU. Use of the official VA seal is not authorized in the execution of this MOU.

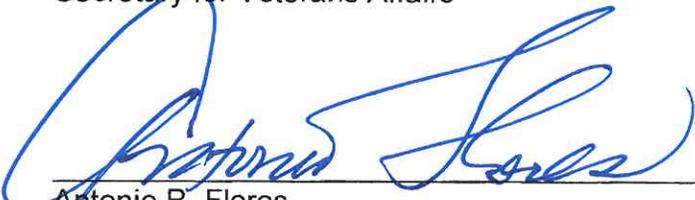
This MOU shall become effective on behalf of the parties by signature of the undersigned:



Robert A. McDonald
Secretary for Veterans Affairs



Date



Antonio R. Flores
President of Hispanic Association of
Colleges and Universities



Date