

## **Inclusion and Diversity Report – 2015 Hispanic/Latino Faculty and Staff Caucus**

**Chair: María del Carmen Caña Jiménez  
Vice-Chair: Vinodh Venkatesh**

### **Purpose Statement:**

The Caucus provides a forum for Virginia Tech faculty, staff, and students with common concerns, among them to serve the University community and to work toward the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanic students, faculty, and staff, as well as campus-wide education and advocacy for issues related to Hispanic and Latino American people, and the celebration of the diverse Hispanic cultures at Virginia Tech.

### **Demographic Data:**

- **Faculty:**
  - 102 (2.6%) faculty of Hispanic origin.
  - Since 2002, the number of Hispanic faculty has grown from a low of 34 total in 2003 to its current high of 102 faculty. The greatest gains have been made among tenured and tenure-track faculty, from a low of 21 in 2003 to 55 currently.
- **Staff:**
  - 35 (1.0%) staff of Hispanic origin.
  - Since 2002, this number ranged from a low of 14 (0.4%) in 2003 to its current high.
- **Students:**
  - In 2013-14, 9.2% (7,513) of all Virginia high school graduates and 7.0% (1,719) of all Virginia enrollees in four-year public colleges and universities were Hispanic.
  - In 2014-15, Hispanics comprised 5.3% of undergraduate students and 3.3% of graduate and professional students at Virginia Tech.
  - Since 2003, the graduation (in 6 years) rate of Virginia Tech Hispanic students has grown from a low of 73% to a current rate of 81.8% for students entering in the cohort of 2008. This number is still below the high of 82.2% from 2002.
  - Virginia Tech ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in the state for graduation rates for Hispanics. The University of Mary Washington leads all institutions with a 100% rate.

### **Initiatives 2014-15:**

- Gesta Latina – graduation and achievement ceremony for Hispanic/Latino graduates.
- Latino Lecture Series – symposium organized around research presentations by Hispanic/Latino graduate and undergraduate students.
- Caucus leadership has taken an active role in the advisory community for Inclusive VT.

- Caucus leadership has joined other caucus groups at Virginia Tech to form a Caucus Coalition that has formed a common agenda that represents our diverse constituents.
- Mentored TechDREAMERS, a student organization that represents and advocates for DREAMER students at the university, state, and national level.
- The Caucus worked closely with Virginia Tech Libraries to secure an American Library Association / National Endowment for the Humanities Grant on Latino Americans. This competitive grant provides screening rights for a documentary on Latino history and contributions to the United States, and includes funding for different programming ideas that are in place for academic year 2015-16.
- Caucus members attended several conferences for professional development, including the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities conference, and the Latin American Studies Association conference.
- Caucus leadership established first steps towards creating a Faculty Fellow in Residence Program in IEC.

#### **Initiatives 2015-16:**

- Identify Hispanic/Latino faculty, staff, graduate students, and allies at Virginia Tech and encourage their participation in the Caucus.
- Mentoring: Create tangible networks of mentoring among different members of the Caucus. Create a system of assigned mentors for all new members to the community. Mentoring should also extend to the Latino graduate student community.
- Retention: Ensure that VT provides a competitive package and benefits for all Caucus members. Ensure that issues of salary equity for current members is at the forefront of any retention efforts made by the university.
- Space: Work towards the creation of a dedicated Center for Hispanic/Latino Affairs, which has been part of the InclusiveVT conversation.
- Endowed Chair: Work towards creating an endowed chair in Hispanic/Latino Studies.
- Academic: Work towards the implementation and development of a Latino American Studies program, which starts with a Pathways Minor.
- Faculty Fellow in Residence Program in IEC: Work with the Division of Student Affairs and the Provost towards the establishment of a faculty fellow or post doctoral fellowship in IEC.