

Thank you!

Mil gracias y fuerte abrazos a todos!

I come up here with a deep sense of gratitude for you all. I am grateful for 20 years of support, encouragement, time, sharing of your dreams and investing into our collective work with the GALEO familia. Thank you!

I thank the board of directors for both GALEO & the GALEO Impact Fund for your continued trust and support. You continue to provide me with the opportunity to continue to serve our community as CEO of the great work we are accomplishing.

I want to thank the sponsors of this event and our funders in the philanthropic community. You have helped invest in our work's tremendous impact in transforming our Latinx community in Georgia.

I want to thank our staff at GALEO, who continue to dedicate their energy & work daily to carry forward our mission. We all know this is a team effort, and I am grateful to have you all serving our community with me.

In addition, I want to thank our canvassers, volunteers, facilitators, members, and followers. Without your support & engagement, we wouldn't be here today.

Let's not forget to take the time to thank the staff at the hotel.

Thank you all for the great food and excellent service, as always!

Lastly, I want to highlight my special appreciation and love for my husband, Ray Deeb. Thank you, mi amor, for your leap of faith with us and for believing in our vision when we started GALEO.

Without your ongoing love and support for our work today, I could not do what I do. In a few short days, we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and I love you more every day we are together. So, thank you for your patience and continued support for my passion in our work with the community.

Together with all of us, we continue to build power for our Latino community to build the Georgia we all deserve.

Twenty years have gone by in what seems like an instant.

You blink, and things move quickly in life.

So, how will Georgia be a better place for our communities in 20 years because of our work at GALEO?

I've been reflecting upon this question often as we have looked back to understand and appreciate what we have accomplished.

But we also look toward the horizon of what is ahead and what we still need to do collectively.

***Please close your eyes...and look into the future with me.***

***The year is 2043...***

Through new scientific developments, I have a full head of hair...  
just kidding...

Ok. No more of my attempts at jokes...Thanks for that joke

Andres.

***Seriously though, we have come a long way and made tremendous progress.***

***Please join me as we peek into the crystal ball 20 years into the future...***

***Once again, the year is 2043...***

Sandra Hernandez was going to the Georgia World Congress Center for the annual Latino Leaders Summit and GALEO Institute for Leadership reunion. She is excited about reconnecting with friends and colleagues who she has not seen in a while. She has been quite reflective the last couple of months because she just turned 45 and still has more she wants to accomplish.

She gets a call from her father. “Hola, papa. Como estas?”

Her father, Emilio, called her to thank her once again for finally establishing Spanish language access statewide for election purposes. Serving her second term as Secretary of State of Georgia, she was able to work with local elections officials and make it an easy implementation. Even though the Voting Rights Act of 2029 created a new formula for allowing more language access to voters, there were still gaps across the state. As Secretary of State, Sandra worked with local officials to proactively make language access available to voters. Through continued developments with AI technology, the translation of information has become much more efficient. Spanish is not the only language offered, but Georgia now provides voter information in at least 20 languages, fully embracing its incredible diversity.

Emilio was excited to vote in the upcoming local elections because he had just become a U.S. citizen. He was excited to vote for Lionel Messi, who was running for Mayor in the City of

Atlanta. After playing Atlanta United in 2023, he fell in love with the city and switched teams. He then made Atlanta his home and retired here. Messi wanted to become Mayor and continue efforts to elevate soccer in his new home.

Emilio, Sandra's father, became a U.S. citizen with the bipartisan immigration reform that passed in 2029. It took him longer to become a U.S. citizen than his daughter because she had DACA status and he was undocumented. The DREAM Act finally passed and was signed into law in 2026. This happened before we could work to get enough bipartisan support for immigration reform.

The Georgia Congressional Delegation, pivotal in passing both the DREAM Act of 2026 and the Dignity Act of 2029, was led by another GALEO Institute for Leadership alumni, Republican U.S. Representative Francisco Garza from Dalton. The Dignity Act of 2029 was the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill, finally passed in Congress with overwhelming support. Millions of

people across the country benefited from the Congressional solution that could not have happened without the strong Latino leadership from our state. The Georgia delegation led effectively to craft the bipartisan solution that is indeed a model for other nations to both embrace immigrants, provide enough workers for our growing economy, and provide paths to citizenship for immigrants to join our communities fully.

Those policy accomplishments set the stage for Georgia to remain a focus for national politics as we have a U.S. Senator from south Georgia, Patricia Solis. Senator Solis is also running for President of the United States as the leading Democratic candidate in 2043. She has been traveling nationwide for her Presidential campaign but committed to returning to Atlanta to provide the keynote address for the Latino Leaders Summit. As the daughter of farmworkers from Tifton, the commitment and broad support for her in our state is significant. She won her last election with over 75% of the vote. She is especially loved by the

Latino community, which is now over 2 million people and accounts for 25% of the state's population.

The Latino Leaders Summit continues to be the place for all Latinos involved in policy, politics, and leaders of all industries. It has grown to include regional influence as other states in the South started forming similar organizations affiliated with GALEO to promote civic engagement and leadership development of the Latino communities within their states.

Georgia is a model of how to get that done. Now, 30% of all elected officials in our state are of Latino descent. Latinos lead the County Commission in Hall & Whitfield counties with deep generational ties to poultry and carpet industries. The Mayors of Gainesville and Dalton are Latinas, and the Latino community is as vibrant as ever.

With more outstanding Latino leadership, Georgia is also leading the nation with renewable energy development after further Congressional and state legislative initiatives were passed in the



last twenty years to deal with the harms caused by earlier inaction on climate change. Rising ocean waters are still affecting many communities along the coast. Because of the rising waters, Sandra's cousins had to move from the coast. Yet, much progress is being made through innovation and decisive government action to adapt and ensure more robust environmental care. Sandra will be moderating a panel discussion with policy experts and elected officials later to discuss ongoing efforts along the coast.

Georgia also leads the nation with educational achievements through solid public investment in our K-12 public schools. Our state is leading the way by providing free access to all colleges, universities, or trade schools for all graduating students who wish to continue their education or learn a trade. This was accomplished through public and private partnerships to ensure Georgia led the way with public education. Sandra's nephew is graduating soon from Georgia Tech with a Ph.D. in

bioengineering, and she could not be prouder of his efforts to find new ways to treat patients. Growing up with a single mother, Sandra knew that her nephew needed extra support, but with free access to education, he could fully develop his talents and make significant contributions to humanity. There is so much promise and potential for him because of smart public policy.

Georgia also leads the nation with a robust public health system to provide everyone access to quality and affordable healthcare. This was accomplished with state initiatives, in partnership with the federal government, to make healthcare less costly, more innovative, and accessible to everyone. This access included mental health access and a full scope of reproductive health, which was restored after the expansion of the U.S. Supreme Court. Sandra could hardly believe that her parents didn't have that kind of access to healthcare while she was growing up. She remembers avoiding seeking a doctor when sick because her parents were uninsured and lacked access to healthcare. She

remembers her mother fondly and wished the policy was in place earlier because it could have saved her life. Unfortunately, she passed away from curable cancer but could not seek medical attention because it wasn't affordable back then.

Sandra gets this way when she is driving across the state.

It gives her time to think and to reflect.

She marvels sometimes of all that has been done.

The State of Georgia has come a long way in her lifetime.

She remembers the history lessons she was taught in school about when Georgia was not leading in these public policy areas.

She remembers the lessons of how robust multi-racial organizing across our state laid the foundation to allow communities to raise their voices together and then build power to ensure they had elected officials responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

Latinos started running and winning spots on school boards, city councils, county commissions, Congress, and as state legislators.

History teaches us that the pivot points started in 2020 but that the infrastructure work of building civic organizations and their capacity had started decades before with the creation of a multi-racial coalition called ProGeorgia. GALEO is still engaged with that work to build power for all our communities.

“Georgia has made tremendous progress, but there is still more to do,” she thought.

As she arrived at the Georgia World Congress Center, she parked her hovercraft and was greeted by Lucero Villarreal, Georgia’s Attorney General. Since she was a co-host for the summit, she wanted to ensure Sandra knew where to go.

Soon afterward, Senator Patricia Solis arrived, and the Latino Leaders Summit was ready to start.

“Mis amigos y GALEO Familia, I am proud to welcome you to the 2043 Latino Leaders Summit. And here to get us started, please warmly welcome one of our own, Georgia’s 1<sup>st</sup> Latina U.S. Senator and the next President of the United States, Patricia Solis!”

You could hear the thunderous applause as Senator Solis received a roaring welcome from the 10,000 attendees at the summit.

PAUSE

I can still hear that thunderous applause.

Now, let’s come back to 2023. Open your eyes if you still had them closed.

What will Georgia look like in 20 years?

The opportunity for us to build a better Georgia is right in front of us.

These are the stories unfolding today all across the state. As we continue to evolve our work and our impact at GALEO, we help write the narrative of our future every day.

Our communities can make that a reality.

True power is all about working across race and ethnicity and building a Georgia that respects all of our contributions.

But the work is still ahead for us.

With your help, we take that step into the future today.

As part of my husband & my commitment to the future of GALEO and our work, I am pledging \$20,000 in my will to support the organization. I want to encourage others to consider designating GALEO for your estate planning. If you have questions about how to make that happen, please get in touch with Elizabeth Scott.

Thank you for your support and commitment to building the Georgia and nation we all deserve.

And now, we can dance the night away to celebrate 20 years of GALEO

Tomorrow, we begin building together the Georgia and nation we deserve.

Please join us for a group picture, and then we start our celebration!