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UCLA Scholars Launch Latina-Focused Research Policy Lab

The Latina Futures, 2050 Lab will fund research and support policymaking for a better future in Latina health care.

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Two UCLA leaders have launched the Latina Futures, 2050 Lab, a project that will provide essential insights on the experiences of Latinas throughout the country and conduct research to support policy change.

Veronica Terriquez, who directs UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center, and Sonja Diaz, founding director of the Latino Policy & Politics Institute, founded the Latina Futures, 2050 Lab with support from the California Latino Legislative Caucus and $15 million in state funding. As part of one of the lab's first projects, early-career faculty will work with leading scholars to conduct research regarding the state of education, civil society and the labor market for Latinas.

"By building on the canon of our scholarly predecessors, we seek to produce cutting-edge research, elevate new voices and deepen community partnerships," Terriquez said in a UCLA news release. "Ultimately, we aim to inform action and track progress toward achieving more equitable and inclusive institutions where Latinas can thrive."

Latinas are disproportionately affected by the economic, social, political and health crises in the United States. The U.S. Census estimates that Latinas will make up 13% of the United States population by 2050 and account for 11% of the labor force.

"Latinas have shouldered the heaviest burden during this pandemic, yet they have remained invisible, disposable and inconsequential at decision-making tables," Diaz said. "This is not only bad for children and families, but for all Americans."

Terriquez emphasized the importance of supporting research that can inform current policy and ensure that adequate resources are available to Latinas when needed. She went on to say that focusing on a new generation of Latina researchers is just as important to the project.

"As we work to build a future that centers Latina leadership, we must pay special attention to ensuring that youth voices help define the future of our public institutions and workplaces," said Terriquez.

“Through innovative cross-sector partnerships, the 2050 Lab will build the pipeline of academic and policy leaders for generations to come,” Diaz added.

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