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The Center for Politics and Governance at The University of Texas at Austin Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs is committed to developing new approaches to political institutions that will foster affective policymaking and implementation.

The Center proposes a Hispanic Leadership Initiative to examine the Hispanic population's growth and its growing potential for leadership across Texas and in the nation. The initiative will measure emerging political and policy trends in the Hispanic community, recognize Hispanic leadership, develop and host information relevant to the Hispanic community and increase recruitment of Hispanic students to the University and the LBJ School.

The mission of the LBJ School is to develop leaders and ideas that will help our state, nation and the international community address critical public policy challenges in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. The Center for Politics and Governance advances this commitment by striving to improve the responsiveness and effectiveness of our political institutions and to produce real solutions and capable leaders.

To fulfill its mission, the Center has as one of its objectives the development of resources to help emerging leaders and policymakers understand the evolving role of Hispanic Americans in the political arena both in Texas and the nation.

The University of Texas at Austin and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs have a rich history of preparing leaders for public service. Alumni have served at the highest levels of government, shaped public policy, and established themselves as proven leaders in every area of civic life.

As the nation and the State of Texas face new challenges, such as the economic downturn, education, health care, and immigration policy, there remains an urgent need to prepare the next generation of leaders. Recent demographic data make it increasingly clear that many of these leaders will come from the Hispanic community, which is the fastest growing population in Texas. The University of Texas at Austin is uniquely positioned to develop leaders in the Hispanic community to confront the challenges of the 21st century.

The University can ill afford to rest on its laurels, however. According to data presented by *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, in 2000, The University of Texas at Austin was the top university in the number of doctoral degrees awarded to Hispanics and among the top five universities in the number of bachelor's and master's degrees awarded. By 2008, the University fell to fourth in the number of doctoral degrees awarded to Hispanics, 10th in the number of bachelor's degrees and 23rd in master's degrees awarded.

While the University's number of Hispanic alumni is large and diverse, the percentage of those alumni participating in Texas Exes remains small. The wide array of resources available to Hispanic students and alumni is a terrific asset, but the lack of focused efforts to publicize these resources leads to underutilization and limits cooperation among students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Preparing emerging leaders in the Hispanic community is a critical task for the state's flagship University. As the LBJ School Center for Politics and Governance focuses on effective policy implementation, it must ready the next generation of Hispanic political leadership.

The Hispanic Leadership Initiative, a program of the Center for Politics and Governance in partnership with the Texas Exes, is a first step toward addressing these needs.

Over a three-year period, the Hispanic Leadership Initiative will examine the growth of the Hispanic American population and the potential for the group to have commensurate growth in political power. It will look at the implications of this growth and potential for leadership from both academic and practical perspectives, and will promote Hispanic leadership.

The Hispanic Leadership Initiative has five main objectives to be achieved over a three-year period.

1. Highlight Hispanic leadership and the emerging role of Hispanic Americans in influencing public policy
2. Recognize outstanding achievements in leadership by Hispanic alumni
3. Provide mentoring and networking opportunities for Hispanic alumni and students
4. Introduce Hispanic undergraduate students to the LBJ School of Public Affairs
5. Reconnect Hispanic alumni with the University of Texas on an annual basis

In its first year, the Center for Politics and Governance and the Texas Exes will host an event featuring a keynote address by The University of Texas System Chancellor, Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, the first Hispanic in the nation to lead a major university system. Alumni and students will be invited to the event, which will launch the multi-year Hispanic Leadership Initiative. The Texas Exes will announce the endowment of the Hispanic Challenge Grant Scholarship Fund. In year two, the program will be expanded. A data set will be added to the UT Austin Texas Poll, a regularly occurring, non-partisan poll conducted by The University of Texas at Austin Department of Government. The data set will focus on emerging political and policy trends in the Hispanic community. The Center will issue a call for papers to be published and discussed at the Hispanic Leadership Summit in the spring. This conference will examine emerging trends and policy issues, bringing together academic and prominent leaders from across the country,

and introducing Hispanic undergraduates to the LBJ School. The Summit will include panel discussions and a keynote address. The Texas Exes will also recognize outstanding contributions by Hispanic alumni and promote the Hispanic Challenge Grant Scholarship Fund.

In addition, a web portal will be created. Currently, information about research, student organizations, faculty and staff activities, alumni news, and events is fragmented. The website will be a “one-stop shop” for information targeted to the Hispanic community, including research activities, events, and alumni news.

In year three, the Center will launch a newsletter to highlight the accomplishments of Hispanic alumni. The UT Austin Poll data collection will continue, and the leadership summit will be provided via live webcast to Texas high school students. The webcast will bring the focus on leadership and the many accomplishments of Hispanic alumni into high school classrooms, enhancing the University’s recruitment efforts and encouraging students to pursue higher education opportunities and public service.